

MORPHO-SYNTACTIC ERRORS IN THE WRITTEN ENGLISH OF
FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN KENYA

THIS THESIS IS MY ORIGINAL WORK AND IS NOT
PRESENTED FOR A DEGREE IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY

BY

MARTIN CHEGE NJOROGE

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

THIS THESIS HAS BEEN SUBMITTED BY EXAMINATION
WITH MY APPROVAL AS CHIEF EXAMINER

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

NAIROBI

JUNE 1996

SYNTACTIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITTEN ENGLISH OF
FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE IN KENYA

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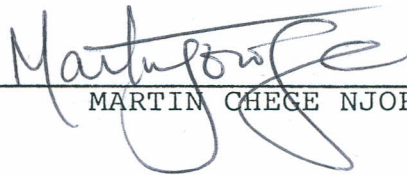
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MARTIN CHEGE NJOROGE

THIS THESIS HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION
WITH MY APPROVAL AS UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR



DR. ANGELINA KIOKO

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

NAIROBI

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

It has not been easy with this work. I thank all those who assisted me through out the course. This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Mr. Joseph N. Gichinga, who always wanted me to progress academically, but never lived long enough to see the completion of my M.A. Course.

who has been very patient, understanding and very helpful to me which has led to the successful completion of this study.

I am grateful to the chairman, Department of English Charles Gicaga, for his words of encouragement which I will ever cherish.

My gratitude goes to my lecturers in the Department of English from whom I have learnt a lot. I am in particular indebted to Dr. Nyamasyo for her invaluable help right from proposal stage up to the completion of the thesis. Her lectures were quite a challenge to me and inspired me to be extremely hard.

My sincere thanks goes to my colleagues, Eunice and Evelyn, who kept on giving me frequent notes, kept on urging me to work with my work. Special thanks to my friends in Othman High School, Ilmorog, who have been very helpful to me.

My thanks go to Mr. Kinyi and Mr. Ndung'u of the Digital Resource Center who were always willing to help me.

Lastly, I express special gratitude to my family and my friends who have all been of great help and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has not been easy to come up with this work and I must thank all those who assisted me throughout the course of this study. I have had to rely on the advice, understanding and patience of other people all through.

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Angelina Kioko, who has been very patient, understanding and sincerely very helpful to me which has led to the successful completion of this study.

I am grateful to the chairman, Department of English, Mr. Charles Gecaga, for his words of encouragement which I will ever cherish.

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Sincere appreciation goes to my colleagues, Eunice and Evelyn, who, from their frequent notes, kept on urging me to go on with my work. Special gratitude to my friends in Olkejuado High School. They have all been very helpful to me.

My thanks go to Mr. Kitivi and Mr. Njuguna of the English Resource Centre who were always willing to help me.

Lastly, I express special gratitude to members of my family and my friends who have all been giving me a lot of encouragement.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS:

- 1) **Anaphora:** An expression that has to take its reference from other expression.
- 2) **Contrastive Analysis:** The comparison of the linguistic systems of two languages.
- 3) **Error:** A linguistic form or combination of forms which in the same context and under similar conditions of production would in all likelihood, not be produced by native speakers.
- 4) **Error Analysis:** The study and analysis of the errors made by second and foreign language learners.
- 5) **Fossilization:** A process in which incorrect linguistic features (errors) become a permanent part of the way a person speaks or writes a language.
- 6) **Interlanguage:** Interim grammar constructed by second language learners on their way to the target language.
- 7) **Interlingual error:** An error which results from language transfer, that is, which is related to the learner's native language.
- 8) **Intralingual error:** An error which results from faulty or partial learning of the target language.
- 9) **Morphology:** The study of internal structure of words.
- 10) **Morpho-syntactic errors:** Errors that occur in the structure of words, phrases, clauses and sentences.
- 11) **Overgeneralization:** A process in which a learner extends the use of a grammatical rule or linguistic item beyond its accepted use, generally making the construction

- 12) **Syntax:** Study of the rules governing the internal structure of sentences, clauses and phrases.
- 13) **Target Language:** The language which a person is learning.
- 14) **Target Language Norm:** Rules of the language which a person is learning.
- 15) **University Students:** First year students in Kenyan state universities.

NOTATIONS

- 1) TL : Target language.
- 2) IL : Interlanguage.
- 3) L1 : First language.
- 4) L2 : Second language.
- 5) EA : Error Analysis.
- 6) CA : Contrastive Analysis.
- 7) SL : Second Language.
- 8) SLA : Second Language Acquisition.
- 9) LAD : Language Acquisition Device.
- 10) LPS : Latent Psychological Structure.
- 11) K.C.S.E.: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the morpho-syntactic errors in the written English of the first year undergraduate students in Kenya. The sample was drawn from the first year students of English in Kenyatta University. All the 315 first year students of English wrote two essays from which a random sample of 120 scripts was selected.

Using the "Let the Error Determine the Categories" approach the errors in the following grammatical categories were identified: Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Preposition, Adjective, Adverb, Complementation, Word order, Concord, Clause Link and Negation.

The identified errors were then described using the Error Analysis Method (Corder, 1974). The errors were determined through a consideration of the deviations of the students grammar from the norms of the target language (English) as described for example in Quirk *et al.* (1985). The data analysis showed that Verb Phrase related errors were the most frequent and the negation errors were least frequent.

Finally, on the basis of the available literature on error analysis, the study discusses some causes of the errors observed and identifies some pedagogic strategies that can be used to alleviate these errors. After considering various causes, it was evident that overgeneralization was the main cause of the morpho-syntactic errors found in the English of these first year undergraduate students.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is

CHAPTER ONE

a general introduction to the study. Chapter two contains the literature review. The findings of the research are presented and discussed in chapter three. Chapter four discusses the possible causes of the errors observed and proposes certain pedagogic strategies that can be used to reduce these errors. Finally, implications, areas for further research and conclusion are contained in chapter five.

English is the language used as the medium of instruction in the education system and it is a compulsory subject at primary and high school levels.

The Ministry of Education English syllabus paragon appreciate the importance of English as the most widely used international language in the world. The ability in English is the yardstick by which young Kenyans are judged. The regular task of the English teacher should be to develop competence total fluency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in the language by stressing on the structural aspects and its grammatical aspects. The basic structural features of the language such as nouns, noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositions and so on are a major part of the structural foundation.

Kenyan learning institutions, English functions as a service subject. For this reason, accuracy and fluency in all the aspects of the language are emphasized.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

English has become a language for international communication and business dealings. It has been one of the major languages used for scientific and technological research and publications. In Kenya, English plays an important function in national affairs since it is the language in which most governmental and judicial businesses are conducted. In addition to this, English is the language used as the medium of instruction in the education system and it is a compulsory subject at primary and high school levels.

The Ministry of Education English syllabus panels appreciate the importance of English as the most widely used international language in the world. "The ability in English is often the yardstick by which young Kenyans are judged"¹. The particular task of the English teacher should be, therefore, to increase total fluency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in the language by stressing on the structure of English and its grammatical aspects. The basic structural features of the language such as nouns, noun phrases, verbs, verb phrases, prepositions and so on are a major part of this structural foundation.

In Kenyan learning institutions, English functions as a service subject. For this reason, accuracy and fluency in all the aspects of the language will undoubtedly enable Kenyan

¹ Kenya, Republic of, Ministry of Education (1990).
Teaching English in Kenya. Nairobi: JKF (p. ix)

students to perform better in all the other subjects. Gecaga (1986:1) notes that:

Competence in English is a goal every student should aspire for. Since most subjects in the school curriculum are taught in English, proficiency in the language will no doubt help the student to understand them easily.

Gecaga (Ibid:13) asserts that English has doubtlessly gained prominence in Kenya and educators, therefore, have a duty to do the utmost to ensure that students attain an acceptable standard of competence in it. He suggests that deliberate measures need to be taken so that students are equipped sufficiently to be able to use the language accurately and confidently. This involves the correct use of English grammar.

One of the general objectives for teaching English at all educational levels is to enable the learner to use its grammar correctly and appropriately. This involves not only the effective use of the main grammatical structure, for example, sentences, clauses, phrases and words, but also the ability to write logically and coherently on a given topic. The learner is expected to demonstrate creativity and flexibility in sentence structures. Yet as Nyamasyo (1992:8) points out, most students leave school with very little competence in English despite the high priority given to the learning of English. There are numerous complaints in Kenya by parents, teachers, lecturers and employers about poor grammar and low standards of English when students leave school. Omondi (1988) observes that a common complaint among businessmen and employers these days is that the standards of English seem to be deteriorating. Many

students use slangy, unpunctuated and ungrammatical expressions.

At the university level, it is assumed that the students, having completed a minimum of ten years of schooling in English, are well versed in the mechanics of the language. Nevertheless, with the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education, there have been complaints that the standards of English are very low at the university level. Mwangola (1993) notes that there is a great problem in sentence construction in university students' written English. Many of the sentences are long-winded hanging phrases and ambiguous, while others are hardly comprehensible due to the numerous glaring errors. Glaring errors in syntax, punctuation, tense and spelling are frequent in the university students' written English (Mwangola, Ibid) and greatly interfere with overall comprehension of ideas being expressed.

To counter this, the public universities have introduced a communication skills course to be taken by all first year undergraduate students. The course was designed to meet the communicative needs of specific disciplines, with a view to inculcating the standards of greater analysis and expression required of mature learners at the university level. The focus for the communication skills course steers clear of grammar (Muchiri 1993), despite the fact that the students keep on displaying incompetence in basics of English grammar. In the same vein, Mukhebi (1988:143) asserts that neglect of teaching grammar has led to a decline in standards of English among Kenyan students today.

It is from this background that the researcher examines the written English of the first year undergraduate students, focusing on the morpho-syntactic errors that the students make as they express themselves in written English.

1.1.1.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study seeks to examine and analyze the morpho-syntactic errors in the written English of the first year undergraduate students learning English in Kenya.

According to Richards et al. (1985) an error refers to the use of a linguistic item in a way which a native speaker of the language regards as showing fault or incomplete learning. For our case, an error refers to a linguistic form or combination of forms which in the same context and under similar conditions of production would in all likelihood, not be produced by native speakers.

Majority of the students studying English in Kenyan universities learn English in order to impart this knowledge of the language to the students at the secondary school level, and to use it as a medium of instruction upon completion of the course (compare 36 B.A. versus 279 B.Ed. students in our sample). Learners of English at all levels are, however, bound to make morpho-syntactic errors in their attempt to achieve a mastery of the language. A systematic identification and analysis of the errors made by first year undergraduate students is necessary in order to create an awareness of the possible causes of these errors and with the help of available literature on error analysis, propose

pedagogic strategies that can be used to reduce these errors.

Morpho-syntactic errors occur in the structure of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. The study focuses on the errors that occurred in the students written English, for example, in the use of nouns and noun phrases, verb phrase, complementation, negation, clause linkers, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, word order and concord.

1.2.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study had the following objectives:

- a) To identify and categorise the most common types of morpho-syntactic errors in the first year undergraduate students' written English.
- b) To find out the frequency of these errors.
- c) To infer, with the help of available literature on error analysis, the possible causes of these errors.
- d) To extract from the available literature on error analysis pedagogic strategies to reduce these errors.

1.3.0 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

This study assumed that:

- a) There are various types of morpho-syntactic errors in the written English of first year undergraduate students in Kenya.
- b) Verb phrase related errors are the commonest in the students' written English.
- c) Overgeneralization is the main cause of morpho-syntactic errors in the students' written English.

d) There are certain pedagogic strategies in the current literature on EA that can be used to reduce the students' errors.

1.4.0 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

According to Corder (1981:1) there always have been two justifications proposed for the study of learners' errors. First, there is the pedagogic justification, namely that a good understanding of the nature of errors is necessary before a systematic means of eradicating them could be found. The second is the theoretical justification which claims that a study of the learners' errors is part of the systematic study of the learners' language, which is itself necessary to an understanding of the process of second language acquisition.

With this view in mind, the findings of this study are hoped to have some pedagogic implications. A study of the morpho-syntactic errors will create a greater awareness of the nature and possible causes of the errors which first year undergraduate students of English make. The findings will reveal the common areas in which first year English students need help, and which departments of English and perhaps the communication skills units at the state universities need to address in order to guarantee production of competent graduates in general and of English teachers in particular.

There have been complaints and observations that the standards of English are very low at the university level. University administrators (see Daily Nation, June 5, 1993) have admitted that many undergraduates are almost illiterate

and cannot even write an application letter for a job. They go further to note that many graduates cannot communicate effectively in English though it is the official language and medium of instruction right from primary to university level. Following such remarks, it was felt important to examine the first year undergraduate students' English and subject it to a linguistic analysis to assess whether the above observations hold true.

Reports (Daily Nation, Ibid:12) point out that state universities have realised there is a problem with English and have introduced a communication skills course for the 8-4-4 students. However, this course seems to focus on helping the students cope with their reading and writing requirements such as preparing assignments, term papers, projects and examinations (Muchiri, 1993). This is because at the university the students are assumed to have acquired the basics of English grammar. The study has examined the students' grammar to find out if they have acquired these basics of English language or whether the communication skills course ought to include some courses on grammar.

This study is hoped to have a theoretical implication too. It is a contribution to the current studies based on performance language data of Kenyan learners of English (see Njoroge, 1987; Maina, 1991; Nyamasyo, 1992). This study is, therefore, a contribution to the on-going research into the analysis of the errors in the English of learners at different educational levels in Kenya.

1.5.0 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study falls within the field of applied linguistics. Its central concern is to examine and analyze the morpho-syntactic errors that occur in the written English of first year undergraduate students learning English in Kenya.

The study is limited to morpho-syntactic errors. These are the errors that occur in the structure of words and in word combination. Morphology, which is the study of the internal structure of words, and syntax, which deals with rules governing the internal structure of sentences, clauses and phrases, are the most important components in the grammar of any language and these will be our main focus.

Errors in this study are determined through the consideration of the deviations of the students' grammar from the norms of the target language (English). This is an approach that Maina (1991) applies in his study of the grammatical errors in standard eight pupils written English. Norms in this case refer to the rules of the standard English as described in Quirk et al. (1985). We used the British English norm because of the absence of a Kenyan norm. Even though there has been an argument that there could be East African or Kenyan English (see Angogo and Hancock 1982), these forms are yet to be codified and put together. As such Kenyan English is not authoritative enough to be used as a yardstick in determining the errors observed in the data.

The study is limited to first year undergraduate students learning English at Kenyatta University. It is assumed that the selected sample will reflect the entire first year university

population because of the following factors: (i) They have gone through the same curriculum, where English is the medium of instruction and a compulsory subject. (ii) They have been examined by the same examination body (Kenya National Examination Council). (iii) They have attained similar university admission criteria. The students are, therefore, assumed to be more or less at a similar level of English competence at the time they join university. On the basis of the three criteria, the first year students of English are taken to be in the same cohort with their counterparts in other departments and universities and the morpho-syntactic errors they make are assumed to be representative of those that may be made by first year undergraduates in Kenyan universities.

The choice of the first year students of English is also based on the fact that they are still learners of English because they are still receiving input of English content (see courses offered by the English Department). This makes the research still fall within the broad area involving the analysis of learners' interlanguage in the field of second language acquisition.

1.6.0 THEORETICAL BASES OF THE STUDY

The analysis of the students' errors in this study was based on the theoretical construct of 'Interlanguage' (henceforth IL). Error Analysis, the concern of this study, has been rightly placed within the 'interlanguage' theory by second language researchers such as McLaughlin (1987) and Ellis (1985). Njoroge (1987) and Maina (1991) too base their studies

within the 'interlanguage' theory while analyzing Kenyan English. This study aimed at analyzing the morpho-syntactic errors in the first year undergraduate students' written English and thus it falls within the field of Error analysis (EA). As such the 'interlanguage' theory is the most appropriate framework.

The term 'interlanguage,' coined by Selinker (1972) refers to what McLaughlin (1987:60) calls 'interim grammar constructed by second language learners on their way to the target language'. IL postulates that learners pass through a number of stages with the goal of achieving a near-target language proficiency. Nemser (1971) called these stages 'approximative systems' and Corder (1971) called them 'idiosyncratic dialects'. The subjects in this study were assumed not to have achieved a native-like control of the English language and that they were learners of English.

Selinker (1972) clearly conceived of IL as being a continuum. An IL continuum is a dynamic, goal oriented language system of increasing complexity. It is a developmental continuum. He puts it that a language learner is actively involved in processing the target language. The IL involves not a restructuring but a creation process. Corder (1981:98) offers a revised definition of IL to read: "a dynamic goal directed language system of increasing complexity".

The assumptions underlying IL theory were stated by Nemser (1971) as: (1) at any given time the approximative system is distinct from the L1 and L2 (2) the approximative

system forms an evolving series and (3) in a given contact situation, the approximative systems of learners at the same stage of proficiency roughly coincide. The grammar of the 'interlanguage' is therefore different from that of the learner's first language and that of the learner's target language.

Selinker (1972) suggests that five processes operate in the IL. These are (1) language transfer (2) overgeneralization of the TL rules (3) transfer of training (4) strategies of L2 learning (5) strategies of L2 communication. The five processes together constitute the ways in which the learner tries to internalize the L2 system. They are the means by which the learner tries to reduce the learning burden to manageable proportions and in so doing deviate from the standard form thus resulting in errors. This study inferred the possible causes of the morpho-syntactic errors found in the first year undergraduate students' written English and categorised the common errors by determining how far the forms deviated from the norm of the target language (English).

As Maina (1991) points out the IL theory is central in the methodology of analyzing errors which focus on the second language learner. We found this theory the most appropriate for our research which sought to identify, describe and explain morpho-syntactic errors in first year undergraduate students' written English in Kenya.

1.7.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.7.1 Study population and Sampling Procedures

The population in this study was first year undergraduate students studying English in Kenyatta University in Kenya. The group of subjects that was used was heterogeneous in the sense that they were from different language groups, sex and age.

All the 315 first year University students studying English were subjected to essay writing after which a total of 120 scripts were randomly sampled by picking every third script until the required scripts were collected. The selected scripts provided the required language data.

1.7.2. Data Collection:

The students were asked to write two compositions on the following topics.

ESSAY ONE:

Imagine you have a house with a bedroom, a table room, a kitchen, a garage attached to it, and a big compound. Describe the house, indicating where you would place various items in the rooms and what you would do with the compound.

ESSAY TWO

Write a composition about a terrible road accident that you witnessed.

The choice to use free composition in eliciting data from the students was based on the fact that writing of free composition was less restricting to students and it gave them freedom to use a variety of language structures.

The first essay mainly elicited data on the use of prepositions, nouns, pronouns and determiners. The essay required mentioning of nouns and pronouns and also the locative of objects. This, therefore, necessitated the use of determiners and prepositions. The second essay mainly provided data on the use of adjectives, clause linkers, adverbs, word order and verbs. The essay involved description of a terrible road accident. For a pictorial description of the incident the students were bound to use adjectives and adverbs, especially adverbs of manner, place and degree. These are features in which learners of English are assumed to have grammatical difficulties.

The lecturers in the department of English assisted in the administration of the research instrument. The subjects spent one and a half hours in essay writing, 45 minutes for each composition, after which the scripts were collected.

The researcher also conducted library research in order to find out from the available literature on error analysis the possible causes of the students errors and to propose possible pedagogic strategies to reduce them. Studies on second language learning, such as Richards (1971, 1974); Corder (1967, 1974, 1981); McLaughlin (1987); Els et al. (1984); Ellis (1985); Davies et al. (1984); were consulted to help in achieving the third and fourth objectives of this study.

1.7.3 Methods of Data Analysis:

Error Analysis in this study was done according to Corder's (1974) procedure:

- a) Selection of a corpus of language.
- b) Identification of errors in the corpus.
- c) Classification of the errors identified.
- d) Explanation of the possible causes.
- e) Evaluation and pedagogical implication.

The analytic approaches of 'Let the Errors Determine the Categories' (Norris 1983) and 'Linguistic Category Taxonomy' (Dulay et al. 1982) were used to categorise and present the morpho-syntactic errors (an alternative approach is discussed in literature review section). The categories were indicated on cards to facilitate the sorting out. The cards were useful in that they could easily be re-ordered and re-categorised. In this way various types of errors were categorised.

A comparative frequency count of all errors was performed to find out how many times an error type occurred. The errors that were identified indicated the grammatical categories. Through the 'Linguistic Category Taxonomy Approach' we identified the types of errors that could be categorised as falling under the Morpho-syntactic component of English. Linguistic Category Taxonomy stresses on two classifications in the presentation of errors observed in language performance data. On the one side, there is Linguistic Category and Error Type while the other side has an example of learner error observed in the data. Frequency ratings were illustrated by means of tables showing frequency counts or percentages.

We adopted the table provided by Maina (1991:9) to exemplify the mode of presentation of grammatical errors.

Table 1: A SAMPLE LINGUISTIC CATEGORY TAXONOMY

NOUN GROUP ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<u>A: Morphology</u> Plural Morpheme omission	He carried two pen.
<u>B: Syntax</u> Determiners Indefinite article omitted.	I saw man.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we review literature related to error analysis. We have divided the chapter into six sub-sections. We first review early studies on second language learners' errors. Secondly, we address ourselves to works related to Error Analysis as an approach to studying learners' errors. The third sub-division examines literature on elicitation of learners' errors. Fourthly, literature on recent studies on second language learners' errors is reviewed. This is followed by literature on describing learners' errors which is in section 2.5. The chapter finally ends with a review of the theoretical bases of the study.

2.1.0 EARLY STUDIES ON SL LEARNERS' ERRORS

Human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the commitment of errors. Misjudgments, miscalculations and erroneous assumptions form an important aspect of the learning of virtually any skill or of acquiring information.

Inevitably learners will make mistakes in the process of acquisition, and indeed will even impede that process if they do not commit errors and then benefit in turn from various forms of feedback on those errors. The mistakes and errors that a person makes in the process of constructing a new system of language need to be analyzed carefully for they aid in the understanding of the learner. This is a view that Corder (1967:167) observes when he notes that a learner's errors are significant in that they provide the researcher

with evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of the language. Ellis et al. (1984) point out that in second language learning, learners regularly produce deviations from the L2 norm. Traditionally, such deviations did not receive much attention. They were labelled as errors and were hardly considered outside publications on teaching. Sridha (1985:221) notes that the goals of traditional error analysis were purely pragmatic. Analyzing errors was performed for its feedback value in designing pedagogic materials and strategies. It was believed that error analysis, by identifying the areas of difficulty for the learner, could help do the following: (i) determine the sequence of presentation of target items in text books and classroom, with the difficult items following the easier ones. (ii) decide the relative degree of emphasis, explanation and practice required in putting across various items in the T.L. (iii) devise remedial lessons and exercises. (iv) select items for testing the learner's proficiency. The present study has gone beyond these by inferring, with the help of available literature on error analysis, the possible causes of the errors found in the first year undergraduate university students' English and proposing suggestions to reduce the errors.

That a learner's L1 influenced his learning of an L2 was an assumption held very strongly by contrastive analysts such as Lado (1957). Contrastive analysis (CA) was founded on the belief that it was possible, by establishing the linguistic differences between the learner's L1 and L2, to predict what problems the learner of a particular L2 would face. Later, in

the 1960s the CA hypothesis was submitted to empirical investigation. The question arose: were the learner's errors traceable to the effects of the L1? The findings of researchers such as Dulay and Burt (1974 a;b, 1975) raised doubts about negative transfer as a major factor in the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). They concluded that CA was flawed from the onset by its static product orientation. It sought to explain psycholinguistic phenomena (SLA) by exclusive linguistic means (description and comparison of languages). In doing so it focused upon the full forms of two existing languages as spoken by native speakers of each, and ignored the speakers of languages in the process of creation and their languages.

Nyamasyo (1992) points out that CA is not appropriate when using learner performance data obtained from learners in a multilingual environment such as Kenya. This is because it does not take into account the possibility that the learner may be learning two or more languages at the same time. It also does not take into consideration the existence of two or more languages in the learning environment.

The major defect of CA seemed to be the attention paid to the analysis of two grammars. Some linguists proposed closer study of the performance of actual learners. Selinker (1972), for instance, suggested that linguists need to study the process of language acquisition and the various strategies learners may use. In the same vein, Strevens (1969) hypothesized that errors should not be viewed just as problems to be overcome, but as inevitable features indicating the

strategies that learners use. The present study adopted a non-contrastive approach.

2.2.0 EA AS AN APPROACH OF STUDYING LEARNERS' ERRORS

The fact that learners do make errors and that these errors can be observed, analyzed and classified to reveal something of the system operating within the learner led to a surge of study of learners' errors called Error Analysis (EA). EA became distinguished from CA by its examination of errors attributable to all possible sources (Richard's 1971), not just those which result from negative transfer of the native language.

In his discussion of EA, Ellis (1985) notes that from a pedagogical perspective, there has long been an interest in the collection, description and classification of commonly occurring errors. He, however, observes that investigation of the psycho-linguistic causes of error was scanty since CA accounted for errors in terms of interference. At best an error was regarded as the manifestation of those interlingual identifications which bilingual speakers are assumed to make between phonemes and between grammatical and semantic features in two languages. As said earlier, this study falls in the EA tradition. The researcher identified and classified the morpho-syntactic errors in the first year undergraduate students' written English in order to shed light on the understanding of their grammar using the EA approach.

2.3.0 ELICITATION OF LEARNERS' ERRORS

Richards (1974) enumerates a number of controlled elicitation techniques used by many applied linguists in their research on learner's transitional competence and the underlying systematic rules involved. These techniques include translation, free composition, elicited imitation, picture composition, sentence completion tasks, structured interviews and story-telling. As stated earlier, the present study used free compositions technique to elicit the required language data.

Richards (Ibid) used translation technique in an analysis of English errors produced by a number of adult students with different L1 background. He noted several sub-categories of error types which seemed to be common to the speakers of diverse languages as they develop hypotheses about the structure of English. These he calls intralingual/developmental errors as opposed to interlingual/interference errors. He observed that although interference is a major source of difficulty in second language learning, many errors emanate from the strategies used by the learner in the language acquisition process and from the mutual interference of structures within the target language. He further noted that the causes of interlingual errors are overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete applications of rules and false concepts being hypothesized. These findings were very useful as our third objective was to infer, with the help of available literature on error analysis, the possible causes of the errors found in the written English of the first

year undergraduate students in Kenya..

2.4.0 RECENT STUDIES ON SL LEARNERS' ERRORS

The findings of Njoroge (1987) show that most of the errors found in the interlanguage of Kenyan school children could be attributed to the strategy of overgeneralization and that the source language does not seem to impinge on the IL forms nor does it determine the relative difficulty experienced by learners in their acquisition of the structures. Maina (1991), in his study of grammatical errors in standard eight pupils' English, verified the same. One of our assumptions was that overgeneralization is the main cause of morpho-syntactic errors in the first year undergraduate students' written English. The findings are discussed in chapter four.

Nyamasyo (1992) and Maina (1991) indicate that errors related to verbs are very common in the language performance data of Kenyan learners. The present study hoped to establish whether the same holds for university students' written English.

Maina (1991) notes that the findings of linguists such as Corder (1967, 1971); Selinker (1969, 1972); Richards (1971) have revolutionized the concept of EA. Corder's (1967) seminal paper claimed that errors are not only unavoidable, inevitable or imperative, but also a requisite component of the language learning process. Thus it was Corder (1967) who focused attention on error from a language processing and language acquisition perspective. Long and Sato (1984) note that an important feature of Corder's (Ibid) ideas is that the learner

makes a significant contribution to learning. This is a view held by other linguists such as Chomsky (1965) in his notion of Language Acquisition device (LAD) and Selinker (1972) in his notion of Latent Psychological Structure that depict the learner as an active participant in the learning process.

2.5.0 ON DESCRIBING LEARNERS' ERRORS

With regard to the methods of EA, Norrish (1983) as quoted in Maina (1991:20) has observed that there are basically two main approaches. The first one is for the researcher to set up his own categories of errors on the basis of pre-conceptions about the learner's most common problems. The second is to classify identified errors into particular areas of grammatical and syntactic problem, that is, the errors determine the categories. The first method is referred to as 'Pre-Selected Category' and the second as 'Let the Errors Determine the Categories'. The present study adopted the second approach through a process of sorting and resorting of errors written on cards. This approach has been widely used by other researchers (see Norrish, 1983; Dulay, et al. 1982). It does not involve pre-judgment of errors. Instead the errors, which are indicated on cards, ultimately determine the categories.

As Corder (1973) correctly observes, the crucial element in describing the learner's system is the correct interpretation of the learner's utterance. This is to be done, he says, by reconstructing the correct utterance of the TL matching the 'erroneous' utterance with the equivalent in

the learners L1. If this can be done by asking the learner to express his intentions in his first language, then it is an authoritative reconstruction. If the learner is not available for consultation, and the investigator has to rely on his knowledge of the learner's system, and his intentions, then it can only be called plausible reconstruction. Plausible reconstruction was used in this study for the subjects were from a heterogeneous group of differing first languages.

Corder (1974) made a distinction between a mistake and an error. He put it that a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes in both native and second language situations. He referred to errors as idiosyncrasies in the interlanguage of the learner which are direct manifestation of a system within which a learner is operating at the time. Dulay and Burt (1972) referred to errors as 'goofs'. An error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the IL competence of the learner. If a learner of English asks:

'Does I can go?'

he is deviating from the native speaker's norm of the language. Errors in this study were determined through the consideration of the deviations of the students' English from the norm of the target language (Standard English) as outlined in Quirk et al. (1985).

2.6.0 REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL BASES OF THE STUDY

On the 'interlanguage' theory, Selinker (1972) has proposed a theoretical construct to account for the 'approximative system' which is a separate linguistic system employed by the learner attempting to utilize the target language (Nemser 1971). According to Selinker, the most crucial fact is that any description of IL must account for its fossilization. Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules and sub-systems which non-native speakers of a particular language will tend to keep in their interlanguage, no matter what the age of the learners or amount of explanation or instruction they receive in the TL. The fossilization mechanism accounts for the phenomenon of the regular re-appearance in the IL productive performance of linguistic errors which were thought to be eradicated. The present study did not seek to identify fossilized structures since the subjects are still learners of English (see courses offered by English department).

Selinker (1972) noted that many second language learners fail to reach target language competence, that is, they do not reach the end of the interlanguage continuum. He also added that the learner's utterances will be characterised by systematic deviations from the TL, since he cannot produce identical utterance to those of the native speaker. This is a view that this study adopted. The first year undergraduate students, subjects of this study, were assumed not to have achieved near native-like proficiency in the English language.

CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with data analysis: the identification, classification, and description of errors. As we said earlier, errors were determined on the basis of the learners' deviation from the norms of the target language, English, as described in Quirk et al. (1985). For classification we used the 'Let the Error Determine the Categories Approach' (Norrish 1983), and identified errors related to the following grammatical categories: Verb Phrase, Preposition, Noun Phrase, word Order, Adjectives, Adverbial, Complementation, Clause Link, Concord and Negation. These categories of errors formed the sub-titles in this chapter.

In each sub-section, we begin with some introductory remarks on each grammatical category under which the related errors fall before looking into the actual errors found in the subjects' interlanguage. We give references where a detailed description of each grammatical category can be found.

A cross-section of the errors observed in each category is presented using Linguistic Category Taxonomy tables (Dulay and Burt, 1982). Frequency tables are used to present the tabulations.

Finally, we discuss, by interpreting the tables the frequency of the errors observed.

3.1.0 VERB-PHRASE RELATED ERRORS

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The majority of the errors observed in the data fell under the grammatical category of the verb phrase (309 out of 1023 errors). This finding corresponds with the findings of other researchers on Kenyan learners' English (Maina:1991; Nyamasyo, 1992). Before we discuss the actual errors, we will briefly describe the English verb phrase.

We adopt the definition of the verb phrase given in Huddleston (1984) and Quirk et al. (1985). According to Huddleston (1984:128) the English verb phrase consists of a head element (verb), an obligatory element, and optionally, one or more dependents. Quirk et al. (1985) say that the verb phrase consists of a main verb, which either stands alone as the entire verb phrase, or is preceded by up to four elements with auxiliary function. This means that the English verb phrase can consist of a single verb (main verb) or the main verb accompanied by one or more auxiliary verbs. The verb phrase exhibits a number of features that are not found in any of the other phrase types, namely, tense, aspect, voice and mood (for details on the English verb phrase see Huddleston, 1984; Quirk et al. 1985; Crystal, 1988).

3.1.2 OBSERVED VERB PHRASE ERRORS

We now look at the interlanguage errors observed in the students' use of the verb phrase. The main area of difficulty was in the use of tenses. There were errors that related to the students' failure to distinguish amongst the various tenses in

English. To begin with, the use of simple present instead of simple past tense was observed as in the following examples from the data:

1. (a) Our teacher run to the nearest police station to report. (instead of ran).
- (b) I board a matatu to leave for home. (instead of boarded).
- (c) It seems many villages had gone to town that day. (instead of seemed).
- (d) I will not forget uncle John whose death meet him when I was there. (instead of met).
- (e) Having told her she send me home (instead of sent).
- (f) I witnessed a terrible road accident that nearly melt my heart. (instead of melted).

Tense errors also involved the choice between past perfect and of present perfect. This can be exemplified by the following construction from the data.

2. Although I have not worked for so long the little time I had has just been enough for me to acquire some household. (instead of have had: reconstructed from preceding discourse).

The use of present perfect tense instead of past perfect tense was observed in the data as in the following examples.

- 3.(a) My mother told me I have to visit my uncle (instead of had).

(b) I wondered what the hell on earth has happened.

(instead of had).

Interlanguage errors were also observed in the use of the 'do' particle while followed by main verb. The following examples illustrate the students' errors.

4. (a) My friend insisted that instead of taking a bus as we always do we should try the buses for a change.

(instead of did).

(b) Little did we realised that heavy downpour was

on. (instead of realise).

(c) The driver of the matatu tried to overtake another

bus but he did not seen the K.B.S. (instead of see).

In example (4a) above there is inconsistency of tense. The past form of the 'do' particle (did) was the appropriate form.

In example (4b) and (4c) the error comes in because of the use of participle form of the verb after the past of 'do' particle (did).

Errors were also observed, related to the omission of the perfective marker 'have'.

5. (a) I also managed to buy a second hand car.

(omission of have: The preceding discourse required the use of have)

(b) The furthest corner of my compound is where I

built the kitchen. (omission of have)

(c) The compound is very big. I divided it into three

sections. (omission of have)

Omission of past perfective marker 'had' constituted another sub-class of errors in the data. The students used deviant sentences as the following examples indicate.

6. (a) Nobody seemed to have the right words to explain what happened. (omission of had)
- (b) I was looking at the faces of the people who died. (omission of had)
- (c) My cousin was with his bicycle which he bought a few weeks before (omission of had)
- (d) We were the only ones who - witnessed the whole incident. (omission of had)
- (e) I tried to figure out what happened (omission of had)

Other errors related to the perfective aspect occurred in the redundant use of past perfective marker 'had' which can be exemplified in the following sentences:

7. (a) Having had built quite a big house, I will need
- (b) good furniture. (redundant use of had)
- (b) I had never had seen a dead body in my life time. (redundant use of had)

The students did not seem to have internalised the rule that the auxiliary verb 'have' is normally followed by the -ed participle form of the verb. Thus the following ungrammatical sentences were common in the data.

8. (a) I would also place a wardrobe in the opposite of where I have place the bed. (instead of placed).
- (b) I could not have believe him. (instead of believed)

Errors were also noted that related to the use of 'to infinitive'. The students used past tense after 'to'. Some examples from the data are:

9. (a) I was to spent a whole month in Nairobi. (instead of spend).
- (b) The driver was trying to negotiated a sharp corner. (instead of negotiate).
- (c) The rain seemed to increased. (instead of increase).
- (d) Then after taking breakfast, I took off to the nearest town to boarded a matatu. (instead of board).

Errors in the morphological structure of the main verbs were observed in the data, as the following examples from the data illustrate:

10. (a) The passengers screamt loudly. (instead of screamed).
- (b) The room was dimly lighted. (instead of lit).
- (c) The first bus stucked on the middle of the road. (instead of stuck).
- (d) To my surprise, I heard screeches of car breaks. (instead of heard).
- (e) The wheel bursted. (instead of burst).
- (f) My body shaked seriously. (instead of shook).

The other area, within the verb phrase, in which students made errors was in the use of modals, as can be exemplified by the following sentences from the data.

11. (a) The headmaster asked us to donate blood so that it can be transfused. (instead of could)
- (b) That gave me the last conclusion that they will never exist. (instead of would)
- (c) At one time or another, the tout will shout "Beba wengi." (instead of would.)

Other errors observed in the use of modals involved the students' failure to use modals where they were obligatory as in:

12. (a) I _ get a contract with a company and attain a pajero. (omission of shall/can).
- (b) I pray that all traffic users be more careful. (omission of will/shall).
- (c) I _ place chairs around the table (omission of shall/will: reconstructed from preceding discourse)

We now present in a Linguistic Category Taxonomy table the various types of errors observed in the VP category.

Table 2: VERB PHRASE RELATED ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
A <u>MORPHOLOGY</u>	
(i) Errors in the structure of the main verbs	The wheel suddenly <u>bursted</u> .
B <u>SYNTAX</u>	
(i) Failure to distinguish between the use of simple present tense and simple past	It <u>seems</u> many villagers had gone to town that day (instead of <u>seemed</u>)

Table 2 Cont.

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
(ii) Use of past perfect instead of present perfect tense	Although I have not worked for long, the little time I <u>had</u> <u>has</u> just been enough to acquire some items. (instead of <u>have</u> <u>had</u>).
(iii) Use of present perfect instead of past perfect	My mother told me I <u>have</u> (instead of <u>had</u>) to visit my uncle.
(iv) Errors in the use of 'do' particle	Little did we <u>realised</u> that heavy downpour was on.
(v) Omission of present perfective marker 'have'	I _ (omission of have) also managed to buy a second hand car.

Table 2 Cont.

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
(vi) Omission of past perfective marker ' <u>had</u> '	My cousin was riding his bicycle which he _ (omission of had) bought a few weeks before.
(vii) Redundant use of past perfective marker <u>had</u>	I had never <u>had</u> seen a dead body before.
(viii) Errors in constructing the present perfective	I could not have <u>believe</u> (instead of <u>believed</u>) him.
(ix) Errors in the use of infinitive	I was to <u>spent</u> a whole month in Nairobi.
(x) Wrong choice of modal	The headmaster asked us to donate blood such that it <u>can</u> be transfused (instead of <u>could</u>).
(xi) Failure to use a modal where it is obligatory	I pray that all road users _____ (omission of will) be more careful.

3.2.0 PREPOSITIONAL ERRORS

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in the introduction, we first of all make some brief remarks on the English prepositional phrase before examining the errors related to the prepositional phrases which were observed in the data.

A preposition is traditionally defined by Curme (in Huddleston, 1984: 336) as a word that indicates a relation between the noun or pronoun it governs and another word, which can be a verb, an adjective or another noun or pronoun. Leech (1989:375) observes that a preposition is a word that typically goes before a noun phrase or a pronoun to express a relationship of meaning between two parts of a sentence, most often showing how the two parts are related in space or time. In the same way, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:143) note that a preposition expresses a relation between two entities. The construction following the preposition is called prepositional complement which is usually a noun phrase, a wh- clause or -ing clause.

13. (a) He travelled by bus.

prep. noun phrase

(b) From what he said he was innocent.

prep. wh-clause

(c) He started the day by swimming in the

prep. -ing clause

pool.

A distinction is made between simple and complex prepositions. Simple prepositions consist of one word while complex prepositions consist of more than one word, for example, 'along with, away from, as for, out of, up to, due to, owing to, because of, by means of, in comparison with, in front of' (see Huddleston, 1984; Quirk et al.; Leech, 1989 for further details).

3:2:2 OBSERVED PREPOSITIONAL ERRORS

Having made these preliminary remarks, we now turn to the actual errors that were observed in our data in the category of preposition. We observed that a majority of the errors in this category were related to the omission of necessary prepositions. This observation agrees with that of other researchers dealing with the errors of Kenyan learners at different educational levels such as Maina (1991) and Nyamasyo (1992). The following examples from the data illustrate omission of crucial prepositions.

14. (a) We stared ___ each other (omission of at)
- (b) I just watched ___ (omission of from) a distance.
- (c) My heart came to a stop and I turned to look ___ (omission of at) what had happened.
- (d) I decided to proceed ___ (omission of with) my journey to Rongai shopping centre.
- (e) They pointed ___ (omission of at) me as if to say I had been there the whole of that day.
- (f) I did not wait ___ long (omission of for)

Other errors in the category of preposition related to the students' erroneous choice of preposition as in the following examples from the data.

15.(a) A green car passed by in a terrific speed

(instead of at)

(b) According to (instead of in) my opinion,

I would advise all the road users to be

careful.

(c) On the garage an expensive Ferrari will be

parked. (instead in).

17. (d) A few people died on the spot while others

never arrived to the hospital. (instead of at).

(e) I was held tight with (instead of by) four

men.

Redundant use of prepositions constituted another subclass of errors in the data. The following examples from the data illustrate this.

16. (a) The conductors turned themselves to deaf

while in the real sense they were not (redundant use of to).

(b) When we were about to reach at Mombasa.

We saw another bus carrying students from another school (redundant use of at).

(c) I would plant some flowers around the

house and near to the wall (redundant use of to).

(d) Then they asked him to explain on what

had happened (redundant use of on).

- Table 3:
- (e) The driver of the bus in which I was travelling in stopped. (Redundant use of 'in')
 (f) This made nobody to perceive it.
 (Redundant use of to)
 (g) It gives me a shock to recall of how the accident that occurred two years ago
 (Redundant use of 'of')

The students' errors in this category also involved the use of incomplete complex prepositions. The following examples from the data illustrate this:

17. (a) The police had to compile a report which they went with (instead of away with)

(b) He was walking ___ with his dog (instead of along with).

Finally, we present the errors found in this category in a Linguistic Category Taxonomy table.

Table 3: PREPOSITIONAL ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<u>SYNTAX</u>	
(i) Omission of obligatory preposition	We had to alight _____ the vehicle (omission of <u>from</u>)
(ii) wrong choice of preposition	I was held tight <u>with</u> four men. (instead of <u>by</u>)
(iii) Redundant use of preposition	I boarded <u>inside</u> the bus.
(iv) Incomplete complex preposition	He was walking _____ with his dog (instead of <u>along</u> <u>with</u>).

3.3.0 NOUN PHRASE RELATED ERRORS

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Quite a large portion of the observed errors fell under the noun phrase category, especially in the use of determiners and modification. As stated in the introduction, we first of all examine the structure of the English Noun Phrase.

The English Noun Phrase is the main construction that can appear as subject, object or complement of a clause. According to Quirk et al. (1985:62) the noun phrase consists of a head (which is typically a noun) and other elements (obligatorily or optionally) which may determine or modify the head or complement another element in the phrase. This is to say that a noun phrase consists essentially of a noun which acts as the centre or the head of the phrase. The noun phrase head refers to the word around which the other constituents cluster and which dictates concord with other parts of the sentence. It is an obligatory element in the noun phrase structure (For a detailed discussion on the rules on the use of the English NP see Leech and Svartvik, 1975; Quirk et al. 1985; Crystal 1988).

Errors were also observed where the student

3.3.2 NP ERRORS OBSERVED IN THE DATA

We now turn to the errors observed in the students' written English which fell under this grammatical category. In the use of nouns and noun phrases the students displayed errors in the use of determiners, pronouns, possessive and plural.

In the sub-category of determiners it was observed that errors related to the use of the articles (the indefinite 'a', 'an' and the definite 'the') were most frequent. Errors related

to the students failure to distinguish between the use of definite and indefinite articles were observed. Thus there was the use of 'a' when 'the' was the appropriate article. The following examples were common in the data.

18. (a) I managed to bring it to a (instead of the) point I was standing.

(b) As a (instead of the) saying goes, experience is the best teacher.

(c) I heard a (instead of the) screech of a car breaks.

Many of the students did not seem to be aware of the rule that the definite article 'the' is used to mark the phrase it introduces as definite, i.e. as referring to something which can be identified uniquely in the contextual or general knowledge shared by speaker and hearer (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 265). On the other hand, the indefinite article is typically used when the referent has not been mentioned before and is assumed to be unfamiliar to the speaker or hearer (Quirk *et al.* Ibid:272)

Errors were also observed where the students used the definite article 'the' instead of the indefinite article 'a' as in

19. (a) All I heard was the noise of the breaks and the (instead of a) bang.

(b) In the bedroom I would place the (instead of a) wardrobe (No mention of the

wardrobe in the preceding discourse).

Still others used the definite article 'the' instead of indefinite article 'an' as in:

20. After some few minutes the ambulance came
(instead of 'an').

In other cases the subjects used indefinite article 'a' instead of 'an' as in:

21. (a) I can situate this behind the house so
that it would not be in a open place
(instead of 'an').
- (b) It touches the bigger one making a L
formation (instead of 'an').
- (c) I would put a iron box in the room
(instead of 'an').
- (d) After a hour there was an ambulance
(instead of 'an').

It was, therefore, evident that the students did not seem to be aware of the rule that the indefinite article 'an' is used before nouns that begin with vowel sounds.

The students also used 'an' instead of 'a', thus resulting to errors as in :

22. (a) There had been an head on collision
(instead of 'a').
- (b) And again she could not have caused such an horrible accident (instead of 'a').
- (c) I felt as if the matatu should travel at an higher speed (instead of 'a').
- (d) I saw my brother lying on an hospital bed
(instead of 'a').

Other errors observed involved the omission of a necessary definite article "the" altogether.

23. (a) Many were crying mostly those who had relatives in _ vehicle. (omission of 'the').
- (b) After an hour in _ accident scene, we took off (omission of 'the').
- (c) I will need a BMW to match with _ house (omission of 'the').
- (d) We were to go for holiday at _ coast (omission of 'the').
- (e) I was _ best among one million and one scholars (omission of 'the').
26. (f) Those who died were taken to _ nearest mortuary (omission of 'the').

Other errors involved the omission of the article 'a' when one was necessary as in the following examples from the data:

24. (a) The second vehicle which was _ matatu was taken to the police station (Omission of 'a').
- (b) There is _ green carpet on the floor (Omission of 'a').
- (c) I suggested we take _ bus instead of _ train (Omission of 'a').
- (d) This according to our belief was _ bad omen (Omission of 'a').
- (e) I saw _ large antelope galloping towards us (Omission of 'a').

(f) A few minutes later a crowd had gathered
evident in (Omission of 'a').

Cases where the students omitted the indefinite article
'an' were also observed as in:

25. (a) Suddenly, I saw a on-coming vehicle

(c) (omission of 'an').

(b) The course had come to a - end (omission of
'an').

(c) I would place everything in a- accessible

(f) place (omission of 'an').

Other errors in the category of articles related to the
students' redundant use of the definite article 'the' as in:

26. (a) My mother noticed my lack of the mood
'pieces of' ('the' unnecessary)

28. (b) We woke up before the cockcrow
(Unnecessary use of 'the').

(c) After arriving at the Sultan Hamud the
boy died (Unnecessary use of 'the').

29. (d) Those who were in the critical condition
were rushed to hospital (Unnecessary use of
'the').

(e) I bought bed sheets of the high quality
(Unnecessary use of 'the').

As stated earlier, proper nouns should not be preceded by
definite article 'the'. However, constructions with proper
nouns preceded by articles were observed thus producing
erroneous constructions (see example (26:c) above)

There was redundant use of indefinite article 'a' evident in the students' written English as in:

27. (a) In the horizon of the road appeared a greenish vehicle at a full speed.
 (b) I have a house with a three bedrooms.
 (c) I had done a good work.
 (d) I ignored it given the fact that I was to go for a business there.
 (e) Some were in a critical condition.
 (f) I had discovered that the one behind me was a toyota corolla make and a brand new.

In the use of other determiners such as quantifiers, the students displayed errors, for example, quantifiers such as 'pieces of', 'loaves of', 'bottles of' were left out as in:

28. It will accommodate various - furniture.
 (omission of pieces of).

29. There was also inappropriate use of 'some' in some instances:

29. The vehicle was some a few metres away from us. (instead of a few metres).

Errors were also noted that related to the use of demonstratives. For example, the students used singular demonstratives accompanied by plural nouns as in:

30. (a) Those who were injured were taken to that nearest hospitals. (had talked of hospitals in the preceding discourse)
 (b) All this things are all on the left of the unit.

- (c) These hour of the morning there were many matatus rushing for passengers.
- (d) This small tables are surrounded by sofa sets.
- (e) This tools do not have any order of arrangement.

Other errors in the use of demonstratives related to the students' use of plural demonstratives followed by singular nouns as in the following examples:

31. (a) These construction is just but a few shelves that I have stocked with books of all kinds.
- (b) These thing is a gas cooker, a fridge, a waste bag, a heater and a side board.

Errors related to the use of 'possession' involved the redundant use of possessive marker as in:

32. (a) With the minimum speed maintained the matatu went through the bushes knocking down every vegetation along it's path.
- (b) I would see to it that it is at it's best.

The omission of possessive marker constituted another subclass of errors in the data as in these examples from the data.

33. (a) I would instal childrens playground and mechanics room in the house. (instead of Children's; Mechanic's)
- (b) It becomes easy to service my customers vehicles. (instead of customer's / customers')

- (c) It would look like a farmers farm.
(instead of farmer's)
- (d) And the next is the visitors room.
(instead of visitors')
- (e) We had to do a weeks preparation.
(instead of week's)
- (f) Pictures of my uncles lovely body were
brought. (instead of uncle's)

Errors were also noted that related to pluralisation. In pluralising nouns, the students demonstrated errors by omitting the plural marker 's' as in:

34. (a) I would plant flower_ of different types.
(b) My detached hand_ were now tired.
(c) My house has two room_ and one is my table room.
(d) The compound holds about ten cow_ and
fifteen goat.
(e) We saw another bus which was still
carrying some student_ from another school.
(f) There was a large crowd of onlooker _
which was accompanied by weeping.

The students used the plural marker with non-count nouns as in:

35. (a) The vehicles cruised at high speeds.
(b) The involved vehicles were taken to the
nearest police station near Muthaiga school for
the deafs.
(c) I will erect a small workshop in the
garage for keeping the mechanic equipments.

- (d) I have left some areas for livestocks.
- (e) There were funny photographs of the best wrestlers, good remarks and advices and all sorts of things.
- (f) Lo! My minds went blank and I just stood rooted half-step.
- (g) The properties I have is well stored.

Other errors related to pluralization involved the wrong choice in irregular plurals as in:

36. (a) The shelves are needed for the storing of the tools needed for repair.
- (b) The chieves of the two locations arrived at the scene of the accident.

In this case, the students generalized the rule that changes the stem in, for example 'thief' to 'thieves' while pluralizing to include 'chief' to 'chieves'.

Other errors observed in the data involved the omission of the head noun. The following examples illustrate this serious omission.

37. (a) The _ (day) was cold.
- (b) There was nothing wrong with the car but eventually _ (we) discovered that it didn't have fuel.
- (c) Luckily enough a matatu arrived and _ (we) got in without wasting time.
- (d) The remaining (people) were busy taking out passengers from the car.
- (e) The fateful _ (day) came and I was up first.

Omission of the head was further observed in the data as in:

38. (a) Finally, we arrived at Machakos Country Bus _
 (T) (station) where we usually board matatus.
 (b) We were given first _ (aid) for those who
 (g) had not been seriously injured.
 (c) It is on a ten-acre _ (farm).
 (d) The coaches operated on the Nairobi Mombasa _
 (a) (road).

Cases where surrogate subject that should have formed a clause was omitted, yet it needed to be included were evident in the data as in:

39. Money is precious too but blood is quite important
 because without it - no life. (omission of there
would be)

Other errors involved unacceptable derivation of nouns as in the following example.

40. I was not in the mood of anxiousness
 (instead of anxiety)

Errors were also noted that related to the use of pronouns. The subjects omitted crucial pronouns as in:

41. (a) To start with when one enters my house _
 shall meet a small but decent. (omission of one)
 (b) It is a very smart compound. _ provides a good
 (c) atmosphere. (omission of it)
 (c) The bus in front of started rolling.
 (omission of us)
 (d) It took _ only thirty minutes before we set off.

there is a table (omission of us)

(e) The accident was so terrible that I still remember up to today. (omission of it)

(f) From the way I saw _ was about 200/= (omission of it)

(g) Another car appeared in front _ and they collided with the oncoming lorry. (omission of us)

In other cases, the students used the wrong pronoun as in:

42. (a) Another friend of him was just walking behind him. (instead of his)

(b) The police did all the investigations you could. (instead of they)

Omission of relative pronoun constituted another subclass of errors in the data as in:

43. Those _ died were twenty in number. (omission of who)

Other errors observed in the use of pronoun involved the wrong choice of relative pronoun as in:

44. (a) There is a long table that has a carving of an elephant and antelopes who surrounds my record player. (instead of which)

(b) Well, it happened to be a weekend and I was from the cinema at around 2.30 p.m that this mysterious adventure occurred. (instead of when)

(c) We were told to write a statement on the occurrence of the accident who (instead of which) claimed many lives.

(d) There is a small cupboard on which at its top

there is a television set. (instead of on whose top)

The following Linguistic Category Taxonomy table summarises the cross-section of NP related errors observed in the First year university students' written English.

Table 4: NOUN PHRASE RELATED ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<u>A MORPHOLOGY</u>	
(i) Use of contracted form of 'it is' in place of the possessive.	I would see to it that it is at <u>it's</u> best.
(ii) Omission of possessive marker.	I would instal childrens playground and a <u>mechanics</u> room.
(iii) Omission of plural morpheme	My house has two <u>room</u> and one is my table room
(iv) Wrong formation of nouns from adjectives	I was not in the mood of anxiousness (instead of <u>anxiety</u>).
(v) Wrong choice in irregular plural form	The <u>shelvs</u> are needed for the storage of tools (instead of <u>shelves</u>).

Table 4 Cont.

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
B <u>SYNTAX</u>	
(i) Use of 'a' instead of 'the'	I managed to bring it to <u>a</u> point I was standing.
(ii) Use of 'the' instead of 'a'	In the bedroom, I would place <u>the</u> wardrobe.
(iii) Use of 'a' instead of 'an'	It touches the bigger one making <u>a</u> L formation
(iv) Use of 'an' instead of 'a'	I saw my brother lying on <u>an</u> hospital bed.
(v) Omission of necessary definite article 'the'	Many of - people were crying.
(vi) Omission of an obligatory article 'a'	I suggested we take - bus instead of train
(vii) Omission of 'an'	Suddenly I saw _ oncoming vehicle.
(viii) Redundant use of article 'a'	I have a house with <u>a</u> three bedrooms.
(ix) Redundant use of article 'the'	my mother noticed my lack of <u>the</u> mood
(x) Omission of NP head (subject)	The _ was cold.
(xi) Omission of NP head (object)	I heard a sharp piercing _ and

Table 4 Cont.

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
	screams.
(xii) Omission of crucial pronoun Examples are:	Those _ died were twenty in number (omission of who).
(xiii) Wrong choice of relative pronoun	It happened to be at 2.30 p.m <u>that</u> (instead of <u>when</u>) this mysterious
(xiv) Using plural marker with non-count nouns	adventure happened. It is near Muthaiga school for the <u>deafs</u> .
(xv) Errors in the use of demonstratives	<u>This</u> (instead of these) things are a gas cooker, a fridge, a waste bag, a heater and
(xvi) Errors in the use quantifiers	a side board. It will accommodate various _ (omission of ' <u>pieces of</u> ') furniture.
(xvii) Inappropriate use of ' <u>some</u> '	The vehicle was <u>some</u> (instead of <u>a few</u>) a few metres away.

3.4.0 WORD ORDER

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Word order, as stated by Leech (1989: 550) refers to the order of the elements in a sentence, phrase or clause.

According to Quirk et al. (1985: 48) an English clause can be analyzed into five different types of clause elements: Subject (S) Verb (V) Complement (C) Object (O) and Adverbial (A).

Examples are:

45. (a) Amazingly he became a teacher

A S V C

(b) The hyena greedily ate the piece of meat

S A V O

Word order in English is important for the identification of grammatical relations. For example the subject is the NP immediately preceding the verb while the object is the NP immediately following the verb.

English word order is generally fixed because the order tells us which element is the subject or object. In English, the unmarked word order in a statement is exemplified below.

46. They elected him chairman last year.

S V O C A

The fact that words are put together and in a certain order is thus very important in English grammar (see Quirk et al. for further details on word order in English).

3.4.2 OBSERVED ERRORS IN THE WORD ORDER OF SENTENCES IN THE DATA

Having examined the notion of word-order in English, we now turn to the actual word-order errors found in the students written English. The first set of errors involved unacceptable fronting of the object. The determination of this sub-category of errors is based on the style of the whole composition that the students wrote. The following examples from the data demonstrate:

47. (a) Beautiful curtains I would hang on

O S V

Examples from the windows.

51. (a) I living in a quite big house

The correct order should have been.

Instead of (b) I would hang beautiful curtains

(b) S V O

52(a) is another example from the data

52. (a) This house itself is a block remain

48. (a) The grass I ensure is evergreen.

The correct order is not to be followed. The correct order

Instead of:

(b) I ensure that the grass is evergreen.

S V O Compl.

49. (a) Kitchen I would place near my house.

The correct order ought to have been:

Instead of:

(b) I would place the kitchen just near my

S V O A

54. (a) house.

50. (a) The other part of the compound I would

use to build rental houses.

V A

Instead of:

55. (b) I would use the other part of the

S V

compound to build rental houses.

(b) V A

The students erred in ordering words in the phrase.

Examples from the data are:

51. (a) Having built a quite big house this is how

I am intending to set it up.

Instead the word order should have been:

(b) ... quite a big house.

52(a) is another example from the data:

52. (a) This house itself is a block permanent

house.

The correct order has not been followed. The correct order should have been:

(b) ... a permanent block house.

53. (a) The people in the peugeot had died all

except for the driver.

The correct order ought to have been:

(b) The people in the peugeot had all died

except for the driver.

54. (a) They were very anxious to see what was
happening really.

The order in the above example should have been:

- (b) They were very anxious to see what was
really happening.

Other examples are:

55. (a) As the cyclist tried to evade knocking
down Mukoya, large male antelope leaped
high.

- (b) We decided what next to do.

The above examples have errors in sequence of words. The correct sequence should have been:

56. (a) ... could no longer support me.

- (b) ... knocking Mukoya down.

- (c) ... what to do next.

Other errors involved the double use of adverbials as in:

57. (a) In this compound I keep most of my things
there.

- (b) In this house, I would like to furnish
the house neatly.

Errors were also observed in the order of elements in a compound construction as in:

58. (a) I and my friends decided to go for a long
walk.

Instead of;

- (b) My friends and I decided to go for a long
walk.

In some cases, students constructed verbless structures as in:

59. (a) A boma of my cattle aside of the bathroom.

(b) My mind not really on the vehicle.

In the above sentences, verbs were omitted.

Lastly we present in a Linguistic Category Taxonomy table a cross-section of errors found in this category.

Table 5: WORD ORDER ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY TAXONOMY	EXAMPLES OF LEARNER ERROR
(i) Unacceptable Object fronting	<u>Beautiful curtains</u> I would hang on the windows.
(ii) Order within phrases	Having built a quite big house...
(iii) Double use of adverbial	<u>In this compound</u> , I keep most of my things <u>there</u> .
(iv) Verbless structures	My mind not really on the vehicle.
(v) Order of elements in a Compound Construction	I and my friends decided...

3.5.0 ADJECTIVE ERRORS

3.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Quirk Adjectives are words which express some feature of quality of a noun or pronoun. Quirk *et al.* (1985:402) note that four features are commonly considered to be characteristic of adjectives. These include:

(i) They can occur in attributive function, that is, they can premodify a noun, appearing between determiners and the head of the noun phrase as in

60. (a) A tall boy.

(b) A brown chair.

(c) A torn cloth.

(ii) They can have a predicative function. In this function they can complement the subject or the object of the verb. Example (61 a and b) show adjectives as subject complement.

61. (a) That you need a car is obvious.

(b) Whether he will resign is uncertain.

The adjective functioning as object complement often expresses the result of the process denoted by the verb.

Examples are:

62. (a) He pulled his belt tight.

(b) He pushed the window open.

(c) He writes his letters large.

(iii) Adjectives can be pre-modified by the intensifier 'very' for example in:

63. The boy was very tall.

(iv) They can take comparative and superlative forms. The

comparative and superlative may be by means of inflections (-er and -est) or by use of a lexical item 'more' and 'most'. (see Quirk *et al.* 1985; Crystal 1988).

3:5:2 ADJECTIVES ERRORS OBSERVED IN THE DATA

We now turn to the actual errors that the students made in the use of adjectives. To begin with, these included errors involving derivation of adjectives. The respondents used other categories, for example nouns, verbs and adverbs as adjectives as in:

64. (a) I was really exciting (instead of excited).
- (b) This will impress my artist mind (for artistic).
- (c) In my storey house there's a table room
(instead of storeyed).
- (d) People were returning to their residence
areas (for residential).
- (e) The day turned out to be a blood day (for
bloody).
- (f) I will buy a grey Turkey carpet (for turkish).
- (g) The road was mud (instead of muddy).
- (h) The trailer had its reared wheel burst. (for _____
rear).
- (i) Others were already death. (instead of dead).
- (j) I went home wondering whether it was really.
(instead of real).

Errors in the omission of adjective were identified too as in:

65. Since I was born I have never witnessed a
 road accident than that one (omission of worse:
 reconstructed from preceding discourse).

Other errors in the category of adjectives related to the students' use of mixed grading. Examples from the data are:

66. (a) Ever since that day, I have considered it
 (b) the most worse road accident I have ever
 witnessed.

The correct form should have been

(b) --- I have considered it the worst road
 accident ----.

Other adjective errors related to the double use of comparative/superlative. The following sentences from the data exemplify this.

67. (a) She was the most prettiest girl I had
 ever seen.
 (b) His condition was now more worse.

In other cases, the students used the lexical superlative 'most' where the morphological form '-est' is expected and vice versa. Examples from the data to illustrate are:

68. (a) I will be the most happy person under the
 sun.

The correct construction should have been

(b) I will be the happiest person under the sun.

Another example from the data is:

(c) I still consider it the terribliest accident I
 have ever seen (instead of "most terrible")

Other errors in the use of adjectives involved the disregard of the rule on the use of the definite article before the superlative form. The following examples illustrate this:

69. (a) The worse now was on the side of the buses. (Comparison in discourse involved three things)

Instead of:

- (b) The worst now was on the side of the buses.

70. (a) After travelling for two kilometres, the worse happened.

This sentence should have been written:

- (b) After travelling for two kilometres, the worst happened.

Other errors in relation to the use of adjectives occurred in the use of absolute adjective as comparative.

Examples from the data include:

71. (a) At once I left with my young brother.
(Discourse required use of comparative)

There is omission of '-er' comparative morphemes. The correct forms should have been:

- (b) At once I left with my younger brother.

The Linguistic Category Taxonomy table below presents a cross-section of the errors found in this category.

TABLE 6: ADJECTIVAL ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<p>A: <u>MORPHOLOGY</u></p> <p>(i) Use of other word categories as adjective.</p> <p>(ii) Use of the absolute as comparative construction</p>	<p>Others were already <u>death</u> (instead <u>dead</u>)</p> <p>I will buy a grey <u>Turkey</u> (instead of <u>Turkish</u>)</p> <p>At once I left with my <u>young</u> sister (instead of <u>younger</u>).</p>
<p>B: <u>SYNTAX</u></p> <p>(i) Use of mixed grading</p> <p>ii) Double superlative/comparative</p> <p>(iii) Use of morphological grading where lexical is the appropriate process</p> <p>(iv) Use of definite article <u>the</u> followed by ordinary or comparative forms of adjectives.</p>	<p>Ever since that day I considered it the <u>most worse</u> road accident I have ever witnessed.</p> <p>She was the <u>most prettiest</u> girl I had ever seen.</p> <p>I will be the <u>most happy</u> person under the sun.</p> <p><u>The worse</u> now was on the side of the buses (instead of <u>the worst</u>)</p>

Table 7 contd.

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
(v) Omission of adjective	Since I was born I have never witnessed a -- road accident (omission of <u>worse</u>) than that one.

3.6.0 ADVERBIAL ERRORS

3.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Leech and Svartvik (1975: 202) define adverbs as words that modify the meaning of a verb, an adjective or other adverbs. Adverbs express different meanings, the most common being manner (e.g. slowly, quickly), place (e.g. upstairs, outside), time (e.g. afterwards, next year), degree (e.g. very, much), frequency (e.g. always, sometimes).

We recognise three types of adverbs: simple, for example 'well, very'; compound, for example, 'somewhere'; and derived adverbs such as 'extremely' and 'timely'. Most derived adverbs are derived from adjectives by addition of the -ly suffix.

There are two main types of syntactic functions of adverbs. These are: clause element adverbial and premodifier of adjective and adverb as in the following sentences.

72. (a) He certainly went to Thika.

Clause Adverbial

(b) The visitors are very frequent.

adverb adjective

(pre-modifier)

(c) The visitors come here very frequently.

Adverb Adverb

(premodifier)

Adverbial phrases normally consists of an adverb as head, optionally preceded and/or followed by a modifying element. (see Quirk et al. 1985; Crystal, 1988; for further details).

3:6:2 OBSERVED ADVERBIAL ERRORS

In the category of adverbial errors, we observed that a majority of them resulted from use of adjectives instead of adverb. The students did not add the '-ly' morpheme which is suffixed to adjectives to derive adverbs. Examples from the data are:

73. (a) As I could see it very clear, it had lost one of its tyres.

(b) It was only dust which choked me terrible

(c) Those who were not serious hurt were discharged.

(d) I ran as quick as possible.

(e) The room was exceeding stuffy.

(f) I walked towards the gate absent minded.

(g) The sun was shining so brilliant.

In all these examples the '-ly' suffix that is morphologically added to the adjective to form adverbs was left out.

Other errors involved the omission of adverb as in:

74. On reaching ____ I narrated all that I had seen.

In some cases the adverb was repeated thus producing such structures as

75. I have a garage where I have placed there my car.

Other errors related to the use of adverb included the use of incomplete bipartite adverbs as in:

76. A lorry from the opposite direction was advancing so fast (omission of that....).

Our general observation was that errors related to the use of adverbs were fewer compared to those in other categories. This observation agrees with Maina's (1991) findings in a study of grammatical errors of standard eight pupils.

We illustrate, by means of a Linguistic Category Taxonomy, the errors related to the adverb that were observed in the students' written English.

Table 7: ADVERBIAL ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<p>A <u>MORPHOLOGY</u></p> <p>(i) Error in derivation of adverbs</p>	<p>As I could see it very <u>clear</u> (instead of <u>clearly</u>), it had lost one of its tyres.</p> <p>The sun was shining so <u>brilliant</u>. (instead of <u>brilliantly</u>).</p> <p>It was only dust which choked me terrible (instead of <u>terribly</u>).</p>
<p>B <u>SYNTAX</u></p> <p>(i) Omission of 'Adverb'</p> <p>(ii) Repetition of adverb</p> <p>(iii) Incomplete bipartite adverb</p>	<p>On reaching _____ I narrated all that I had seen.</p> <p>I have a <u>garage where</u> I have placed <u>there</u> my car.</p> <p>A lorry from the opposite direction was advancing <u>so</u> fast (omission of <u>that...</u>).</p>

3.7.0 COMPLEMENTATION ERRORS

3.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Quirk et al. (1985: 65) use the term complementation to refer to the function of a part of a phrase or clause which follows a word and completes the specification of a meaning relationship which that word implies. In English there is verbal, adjectival and prepositional complementation. We will mainly deal with verbal complementation.

Quirk et al. recognize four main types of verbal complementation, namely, copular complementation, mono-transitive complementation, di-transitive complementation and complex complementation (see Quirk et al. 1985 for further details).

3.7.2 OBSERVED COMPLEMENTATION ERRORS

Various errors relating to the category of complementation were observed in our data. The most frequent were errors on the use of mono-transitive verbs. Some of these errors involved the omission of the direct object. Consider the following examples.

77. (a) It took ___ no time to dress up (omission of object 'me' : reconstructed from the preceding discourse).

(b) I just heard _____ and immediately my eyes dashed to that direction (omission of object: 'the sad news').

(c) For a reason I do not even know, they covered ___ (omission of object: 'the

bodies').

- (d) There is a need for organising ___ for its sanitation (Omission of object: the house).

In the above examples, the students omitted direct object. Thus the students ended up producing deviant sentence structures.

Errors relating to ditransitive complementation were also observed as in the following example.

78. My mother gave (omission of two objects).

The verb 'gave' is ditransitive which requires the use of two objects. The students omitted both objects which resulted to error.

In other instances the students omitted an obligatory adjunct therefore constituting a grammatical error as in:

79. (a) In my opinion I would advise all the road users ___.

- (b) I was convinced we shall reach ___ in time.

In both examples, the students omitted adjuncts. In the first example, what he would advise the road users to do is not given, for example, 'to be careful in their driving' while in the second one, we are not told where they would reach, for instance, Mombasa, Nakuru.

The following Linguistic Category Taxonomy table presents various types of errors observed in the complementation category.

Table 8: COMPLEMENTATION ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
<u>SYNTAX</u>	
(i) Omission of mono transitive Object	I just heard ____ and my eyes dashed to that direction
(ii) Omission of <u>two</u> objects	My mother gave.
(iii) Omission of an obligatory adjunct	In my opinion, I would advise the government _____ I was convinced we shall reach ____ in time.

3.8.0 CLAUSE LINK ERRORS

3.8.1 INTRODUCTION

There are two important processes of combining two clauses in English, namely, coordination and subordination. Coordination involves the expansion of a constituent, phrase or a clause through the use of a coordinating conjunction for example, 'and', 'or', 'but'. It involves the use of these conjunctions to link two units of the same status into a single unit. For example:

80. He mourned and he wailed but nobody listened.

The co-ordinated clauses contract a paratactic relation since they are of the same rank. There are two types of co-ordinations:- overtly marked, called syndetic and covertly marked, called asyndetic. In syndetic coordination coordinating conjunctions are used while in asyndetic coordination, there are no overt markers of conjunction. They are just understood. The following example from Quirk et al. (1985:918) helps to clarify.

81. (a) Slowly and stealthily, he crept towards his victim.

(syndetic co-ordination)

(b) Slowly, stealthily, he crept towards his victim.

(asyndetic coordination)

Subordination, the other process of combining clauses, is a specific grammatical process in which a linkage occurs between grammatical units of unequal status. It usually occurs at clause level, and involves addition of a dependent or subordinate clause to an independent or main clause. Unlike coordination, subordination is thus hypotactic, since the linked clauses are not of equal rank. For example,

82. Because he is foolish, he is always last.

dependent clause independent clause

Subordination is overtly marked and is realised through subordinating conjunctions such as 'since' and 'after'.

Subordinating conjunctions are of 3 types: simple, compound and correlative. Simple subordinators are made up of one word, for instance, as, before, if, since. For example:

(b) The police car and an ambulance arrived.

83. (a) Since I arrived I haven't seen him.

87. (a) dependent clause independent clause

(b) As I walked out I saw him.

88. (b) dependent clause independent clause

Compound subordinators include words such as 'if -- then; in order--that; as in:

84. (a) If I come today then you'll go tomorrow.

89. (a) dependent clause independent clause

(b) He put the books such that I could not notice.

90. (b) Independent clause dependent clause

Correlative subordinating conjunctions occur in pairs. They include words such as 'hardly-- when', 'so-- that', 'no sooner-- than', for example

85. (a) Hardly had we entered the house when it started raining.

86. (b) No sooner had we set out than it started raining.

In the above examples, the coordinator 'such

3:8:1 OBSERVED CLAUSE LINK ERRORS

We now address ourselves to the interlanguage errors observed in the students' use of clause linkers. The most frequent errors involved the coordination of categories that are not of equal syntactic status for example, a sentence and an NP.

86. (a) A police car arrived and an ambulance.

Instead of: There should have been

(b) The police car and an ambulance arrived.

Another example is:

87. (a) The crowd took the wrecked car to the
police station and the driver too.

The correct form should have been:

- (b) The crowd took the wrecked car and the
driver to the police station.

In some cases, the subjects omitted coordinating conjunctions such as in the following example:

88. Everyone cried _ shouted for help (omission of
and).

In the above example, the coordinator 'and' was omitted and this constituted a syntactic error.

In the use of compound subordinators, the subjects displayed errors too as the following examples from the data illustrate:

89. They were in _ critical condition _ we
thought they were dead (omission of such
--- that).

In the above example, the subordinator 'such ---- that' is omitted.

Other examples from the data were syntactically ill formed because the correlative subordinator 'nor' was used without the other part 'neither'. The following example from the data clarifies this.

90. (a) In front of the house is a garage not
small nor big.

The correct form should have been

- (b) In front of the house is a garage which is

Table 9: neither small nor big.

The students also exhibited errors in the use of other correlative subordinators as in:

91. (a) I was excited that I could feel the pain.

(b) No sooner had I known what next there it was
with its tyres facing the sky.

In example (91a) above, the students omitted the correlating subordinator 'so' which goes with 'that'. In example (91b) they omitted the correlative subordinator 'than' which goes with 'no sooner'.

The other error involved the use of double linkers as in:

92. Some are imported and while others are locally
made.

In the above example, there is use of a clause linker 'and' followed by 'while' thus constituting syntactic error.

The errors observed in this category are summarised in the table below.

Table 9: CLAUSE LINK ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
(i) Errors in the use of coordinators	The police car arrived and ambulance.
(ii) Omission of coordinators	Everyone shouted --- cried for help (omission of <u>and</u>).
(iii) Omission of subordinators	They were in -- a critical condition that we thought they were dead. (Omission of <u>such</u>)
(iv) use of double linkers	Some are imported <u>and while</u> others are locally made.

3.9.0 CONCORDIAL ERRORS:

3.9.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Quirk et al. (1985 :755) concord (also termed agreement) can be defined as the relationship between two grammatical units such that one of them displays a particular feature (for example, plurality) that accords with a feature displayed in the other. Leech and Svartvik (1975:220) state that concord is the phenomenon where certain grammatical items agree with each other in number and in person.

93. (a) The teacher wants the assignment

(Sing. subject) (verb agrees with sing. subj.)

(b) The teachers want the assignment

(Plu. subject) (verb agrees with plu. subj.)

In English the question of number concord arises only with present tense verbs and with the past forms of 'be'.

(Compare are/is)

94. (a) He knows the answer.

(3rd person sing. subject) (verb agrees with sing. subj.)

(b) They know the answer.

(Plu. subject) (verb agrees with plu. subj.)

(c) He was present.

(Sing. subject) (Sing. past of 'be' 'is')

(d) They were present.

(Plu. subject) (plu. past of 'be' 'are')

The past singular form of 'be' is 'was' which agrees with the subject 'I' in the above example. Thus the correct form should have been

(b) I was able to inform the police.

3.9.2 OBSERVED CONCORDIAL ERRORS

The most frequent concordial errors were observed in the subject-verb agreement: The students' use of singular subjects and verbs that go with plural subjects. This observation corresponds with that of other researchers who have dealt with this error type (see Maina, 1991; Nyamasyo, 1992). A verb must agree in number with the subject that precedes it. This rule did not seem to be part of the students' interlanguage as the following examples from the data depict.

95. (a) The back door lead visitors in to the house
 (Sing. subject) (verb used with plu. subj.)

This sentence should have been:

(b) The back door leads visitors in to the house

Errors were also observed in such sentences as in:

96. (a) This house have six rooms.
 (sing. subject) (verb)

In this sentence, the verb 'has' should have been appropriate because the sentence has a singular subject. The sentence should have been

(b) This house has six rooms.

Another erroneous example is:

97. (a) I were able to inform the police in time.
 (sing. subject) ('BE')

This sentence is erroneous because the verb 'were' does not agree with singular subject 'I'. The past singular form of 'BE', which is 'was' agrees with the subject 'I' in the above example. Thus the correct form should have been.

(b) I was able to inform the police in time

100. (Sing. subject) (Sing. past of 'BE')

There is another example from the data with concordial error.

98. (a) It is on that date that I truly realised that human life do indeed come to an end.

(sing. subject) (plu. form of 'do')

The above example has 'do' operator that has plural meaning and does not agree with singular subject 'human life.' The singular form of 'do' operator 'does' was required for correct concord.

The correct sentence is thus:

(b) --- human life does indeed come to an end.

The students at times used a plural subject followed by a verb that agrees with a singular subject as in:

99. (a) The following day the newspaper had the title 'Ten people dies in a crash'.

(plu. subject) (verb)

Verb 'dies' does not agree with the the plural subject 'people'. The correct sentence is:

(b)---Ten people die in a crash.

Other concordial errors related to the use of subjects and pronouns. Example 100(a) from the data demonstrates this:

100. (a) Accident! Accident! When will they end?

(sing. subject) (plu. pronoun)

The antecedent 'accident' is in singular and it should be followed by singular pronoun. Alternatively, the antecedent should have been in plural form 'accidents' if the plural pronoun was to be used. The corrected is:

Table 100. (b) Accidents! Accidents! When will they end?

Consider another example from the data:

101. (a) I normally find it easy to ask
people to hold his own plate.

(1) Singular (plu. antecedent) (sing. pronoun) (sing.
 by plural verb object)

In 101(a) the plural antecedent 'people' requires a plural, not a singular anaphoric pronoun. The correct construction should have been:

101. (b) I normally find it easy to ask people to
 hold their own plates.

In other examples from the data, the anaphora did not agree with the co-referent NP. The following example from the data illustrate this:

102. (a) We went to our destination sad man.

(1) Plu. subject (sing. anaphora)

The singular complement 'sad man' does not agree with the subject coreferent 'We' which leads to concordial error.

Instead, the correct form should have been:

102. (b) We went to our destinations sad men.

With the help of a linguistic category Taxonomy table, we illustrate a cross section of errors found in this subcategory.

Table 10: CONCORDIAL ERRORS

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY AND ERROR TYPE	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR
(i) Singular subject followed by plural verb	The back door <u>lead</u> visitors in to the house (instead of <u>leads</u>). The house have six rooms (instead of <u>has</u>).
(ii) Plural subject followed by singular verb	The Dailies read 'Ten people <u>dies</u> in a crash'
iii) antecedent _ anaphora agreement	Accidents! Accidents! When will <u>it</u> end? We went to our destinations <u>sad man</u> .

3.10.0 NEGATION ERRORS

3.10.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:184) the negation of a simple sentence is accomplished by inserting 'not' between the operator and predication for example in:

103. (a) The boy has gone (positive)
 (b) The boy has not gone (negative)
 (c) He is going home (positive)
 (d) He is not going home (negative)

In these sentences there are items that serve as operators namely 'has' and 'is'. When there is no operator the empty 'do' is introduced and this, like modal auxiliaries can be followed by the bare infinitive as in the following example.

104. (a) She goes to the market on Mondays (positive)
 (b) She does not go to the market on Mondays (negative)

Sentences with (lexical) 'BE' as main verb, however behave exactly as when 'BE' is an auxiliary for example in:

105. (a) She is a teacher
 (b) She is not a teacher

The verb 'be' whether, used as an auxiliary or as a main verb, behaves like an operator in this aspect. The negative element in clausal negation can be located outside the verb phrase.

The principal negative elements are as follows:

- (i) 'Nothing, nobody, no one', as heads of NPs, 'never' as head

of an adverbial phrase and 'nowhere' as head of an adverbial phrase or as NP. Consider the following examples:

106. (a) It solves nothing *there* about.

(b) He never finished it.

3.10.2 ERRORS (c) He could find peace nowhere and neither *Errors* could his wife. *negatives included the following*

(ii) 'No' as determiner in NP structure or modifier in the structure of Adjectival phrases or adverbial phrases.

107. (a) He had no patience. *are still on and*

(b) It's no better than the last one. *the*

(iii) 'None' as head in NP structure or modifier in a comparative adjectival phrase or adverbial phrase. (preceding 'the') as in. *the students used 'no' instead of 'none'*

of 'ar' 108. (a) I've got none left and nor has Kimani.

The (b) You're none the worse for it, are you?

(iv) 'Neither' as determiner or head in NP structure and 'neither' and 'nor' as co-ordinating conjunctions or cohesive adverbs as in *covered the dead ones with soil.*

109. Neither proposal was satisfactory. *the cupboard*

(v) 'Not' as modifier to such determinative as much, many, enough, one, or in construction with even as in: *I believe my*

110. (a) Not many people came, did they?

In ex (b) Not even John could do it. *or 'do' was omitted*

(vi) 'Few' and 'little' as determiners or perhaps head in NP structure for example in: *the example the negative particle*

'not' 111. (a) Few of them were perfect, were they?

With (b) There's little chance of improvement, is *le.* *we* there? *present a cross* *ion of errors found in the students'*

of negation.

(vii) The adverbs 'seldom, rarely, scarcely, hardly, and barely' as in:

112. It is hardly worth bothering about.

3.10.2 ERRORS OBSERVED IN THE USE OF NEGATION

Errors in the use of negatives included the following:

113. (a) There was even a drop of blood.

(b) There was hardly no space left.

(c) The street lights were still on and there was hardly no sound left in the surrounding.

In example 113(a), the students used 'no' instead of 'not', while in example (b) and (c), the students used 'no' instead of 'any'.

There were errors in constructing the negative expression. Examples in 114 clarify this.

114. (a) For a reason I even not know today they covered the dead ones with soil.

(b) I went and looked in the medicine cupboard for any pain killers but I could find any.

(c) It was like a dream to me. I could believe my eyes.

In example 114 (a) above the operator 'do' was omitted. In example (b) the correct expression should have been 'none' instead of 'any' while in the example the negative particle 'not' was also omitted.

With the use of Linguistic Category Taxonomy table, we present a cross-section of errors found in the students' use of negation.

Table 11: NEGATION ERRORS INTERPRETATION

LINGUISTIC CATEGORY	EXAMPLE OF LEARNER ERROR AND ERROR TYPE
<u>SYNTAX</u>	
(1) Use of wrong negation	There was <u>no</u> even a drop of blood (instead of <u>not</u>).
(ii) omission of operator	There was hardly <u>no</u> space left (instead of <u>any</u>). For a reason I even <u>not</u> know, they covered the dead ones with
(iii) Omission of negative particle	soil (omission of <u>do</u>). I could __ believe my eyes (Omission of <u>not</u>).

It is evident from the table that the verb phrase errors were the commonest to the students' English with a percentage of 30.43 of the overall frequency of error types. The second highest was prepositional errors. This shows a similarity between the English of Kenyan first year undergraduate students and that of standard eight pupils reported in Main (1991). The least frequent were negation errors with a total frequency of 20 which is 1.96%.

It can be concluded, therefore, that most of the errors made by the first year undergraduate students of English

3.11.0 TABULATIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 12: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS OBSERVED IN EACH GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
Verb Phrase related errors	311	30.4
Prepositional errors	250	24.43
Noun phrase related errors	236	23.1
Word order errors	54	5.28
Adjective errors	42	4.11
Adverbial errors	34	3.32
Complementation errors	31	3.00
Clause link errors	23	2.25
Concordial errors	22	2.15
Negation	20	1.96
TOTAL	1023	100

Table 12 shows the distribution of types of errors observed in each grammatical category in the study data.

It is evident from the table that the verb phrase related errors were the commonest in the students' English with a percentage of 30.4% of the overall frequency of error types. The second highest was prepositional errors. This shows a similarity between the English of Kenyan first year undergraduate students and that of standard eight pupils as reported in Maina (1991). The least frequent were negation errors with a total frequency of 20 which is 1.96%.

It can be concluded, therefore, that most of the errors made by the first year undergraduate students of English

related to the use of the verb and its constituents while the least errors related to the use of negation. This could be explained from the point of view of obligatoriness and optionality. A verb is very central in English and is usually obligatory in every sentence in English. This means that the occurrence of verb in the language data is more frequent than that of the negation which is syntactically optional. Thus errors related to the use of verb were bound to be more frequent.

Table 13: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE VERB PHRASE

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
TENSES	280	90.03
INFINITIVE	11	3.53
PERFECTIVE	10	3.22
MODALS	10	3.22
TOTAL	311	100.00

Table 13 illustrates the frequency of errors in the sub-categories in the verb phrase related errors. Four sub-categories, namely tenses, infinitive, perfective and modals determined themselves. There were a total of 311 errors within the verb phrase related category.

Errors related to the use of tense were the most frequent with a total frequency of 280 which makes 90.03% of the total number of verb errors. The least frequent errors related to the use of perfective which tied with errors in the use of modals

with a total frequency of 10 and a per centage of 3.42 each.

Briefly, we can conclude that errors related to the use of tense may have occurred most frequently because the students have not yet mastered the tense system in English fully, especially the irregular tense forms. As compared to the other sub-categories, tense is more frequently used. Thus the great number of errors in this category can again be explained in terms of obligatoriness.

Table 14: FREQUENCY OF PREPOSITIONAL ERRORS IN SPECIFIC SUB-CATEGORIES

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
WRONG CHOICE OF PREPOSITION	106	42.4
OMISSION OF PREPOSITION	100	40
REDUNDANT PREPOSITION	32	12.8
INCOMPLETE COMPLEX PREPOSITION	12	4.8
TOTAL	<u>250</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 14 shows the frequency of prepositional errors in specific sub-categories. There were 250 errors within the category of preposition. Errors were most frequent in the wrong choice of prepositions with a total frequency of 106 which is 42.4% and least in the use of incomplete complex preposition.

We can observe that the students had difficulties in choosing prepositions. There was little usage of complex preposition in the language data and this may explain why errors related to the complex preposition were least frequent.

Table 15: FREQUENCY IN THE NOUN-PHRASE RELATED ERRORS SUBCATEGORIES

SUBCATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
Determiners	120	50.85
Plural	50	21.19
Possessive	35	14.83
Pronoun	21	8.9
Omission of nouns	<u>10</u>	<u>4.23</u>
TOTAL	<u>236</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 15 shows the frequency and percentages of errors in five categories that fell within the Noun Phrase (NP) related errors. There were a total of 236 errors in the NP related category. The most frequent errors fell under the sub-category of determiner with a frequency of 120 which makes 50.85% of the total number of errors. The least frequent were errors related omission of nouns.

The table shows that errors in the sub- category of determiners frequently occurred in the language data. This observation agrees with Nyamasyo's (1992) finding that errors related to determiners were very frequent in the language data of Kenyan pre-University students. The explanation for this as earlier mentioned, could be obligatoriness of the determiners. In most cases, an English noun (except for proper nouns) obligatorily requires a determiner, especially an article.

Table 16: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES OF WORD ORDER

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
OBJECT FRONTING	20	37.03
ORDER WITHIN PHRASES / COMPOUND CONSTRUCTION	14	25.93
DOUBLE MARKING OF ADVERB	11	20.37
VERBLESS STRUCTURES	<u>9</u>	<u>16.67</u>
TOTAL	<u>54</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 16 shows the frequency of errors in the sub-categories of word order. The total number of errors in this category was 54 with the highest number of errors occurring in the sub-category of object fronting, with a total frequency of 20 and a percentage of 37.03 and the lowest number of errors related to the use of verbless structures.

Table 17: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE USE OF ADJECTIVES

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
USE OF OTHER WORD CATEGORIES AS ADJECTIVE	23	54.76
OMISSION OF ADJECTIVE	6	14.29
LEXICAL INSTEAD OF MORPHOLOGICAL GRADING AND VICE VERSA	4	9.52
USE OF ABSOLUTE AS COMPARATIVE	3	7.15
MIXED GRADING	2	4.76
DOUBLE SUPERLATIVE/COMPARATIVE	2	4.76
USE OF ARTICLE 'THE' FOLLOWED BY ORDINARY / COMPARATIVE FORMS	<u>2</u>	<u>4.76</u>
TOTAL	<u>42</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 17 illustrates the frequency of errors in the sub-categories that fell within adjectival errors. There were 42 errors within this category. Errors related to the use of other word categories were most frequent with a total frequency of 23 which is 54.76%. Due to the fact that most of the students mainly used minimal NPs, not many adjectives were observed in the language data.

Table 18: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE ADVERBIAL CATEGORY

SUBCATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
ERROR IN DERIVATION OF ADVERB	22	64
OMISSION OF ADVERB	6	18
REPETITION OF ADVERB	4	12
INCOMPLETE BIPARTITE ADVERB	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
TOTAL	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 18 shows the frequency of errors in the sub-categories that fell within the adverbial category. There was a total of 34 errors in this category with errors in the derivation of adverb having the highest frequency of 22 which makes 64% and errors that related to the use of incomplete bipartite adverb were least frequent with a frequency of 2 and a percentage of 6.

Errors within this category were not very frequent. This finding corresponds with Maina's (1991) that adverbial errors were minimal in Kenyan learners' English.

Table 19: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES IN THE COMPLEMENTATION

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
OMISSION OF MONO-TRANSITIVE OBJECT	17	54.84
OMISSION OF OBLIGATORY ADJUNCT	8	25.81
OMISSION OF TWO OBJECTS	<u>6</u>	<u>19.35</u>
TOTAL	<u>31</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 19 shows the distribution of errors in the sub-categories in complementation. There were 31 errors in total. The most frequent errors occurred in the students omission of the object of mono-transitive verbs with a frequency of 17 and a percentage of 54.84 and the least frequent were errors in the omission of two objects.

This category did not have a large portion of errors because the students mainly used intransitive verbs which did not require obligatory complements.

TABLE 20: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES OF CLAUSE LINKERS

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
ERRORS IN THE USE OF COORDINATORS	9	39.13
OMISSION OF COORDINATORS	5	21.74
OMISSION OF SUBORDINATORS	5	21.74
USE OF DOUBLE LINKERS	<u>4</u>	<u>17.39</u>
TOTAL	<u>23</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 20 shows the frequency in the sub-categories of clause link. There were 23 errors in this category with errors in the use of coordinators being most frequent with a frequency of 9 and a percentage of 39.13. The lowest number of errors were in the use of double linkers.

Table 21: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES OF CONCORD

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
SINGULAR _ VERB AGREEMENT	18	81.81
ANTECEDENT- ANAPHORA AGREEMENT	<u>4</u>	<u>18.19</u>
TOTAL	<u>22</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 21 shows the frequency of errors in the sub-categories of concordial category. There were 22 errors in this category. Errors in subject _ verb agreement constituted the most frequent errors with a frequency of 18 and a percentage of 81.81 and errors related to complement, anaphora / pronoun not agreeing with coreferent NP were least frequent.

Table 22: FREQUENCY OF ERRORS IN THE USE OF NEGATIVE

SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	%
WRONG NEGATIVE	14	70
OMISSION OF THE OPERATOR	3	15
OMISSION OF NEGATIVE PARTICLE	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>
TOTAL	<u>20</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 22 shows the distribution of errors in the use of negative constructions. There was a total of 20 errors in this category. Three sub-categories emerged in this category with the use of wrong negative form being the most frequent with a total frequency of 14 which is 70%. Use of negation was minimal in the language data, therefore, not many errors related to this category were observed.

sections

3.12.0 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

4.1.0 We note that the findings observed in this study are consistent with the findings of other studies based on performance language data of Kenyan learners of English at different educational level (see Njoroge, 1987; Maina, 1991; Nyamasyo, 1992). It is interesting to note that first year students of English at the university level are as yet to master certain basics of English grammar. For example, a majority of these students have problems in the use of tense, a problem that learners at primary school level (Maina, Ibid) and high school level (Nyamasyo, Ibid) have. Our finding and these findings of other researchers point to the fact that some grammatical difficulties are common to all learners of English in Kenya regardless of the different educational levels.

explanations are part of psycholinguistic theory

Psycholinguistic theory will explain why the language has deviated from the norm of the target language.

Second language researchers have come up with several possible explanations as to why errors occur.

4.1.1 OVERGENERALIZATION CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with two main issues: first we discuss the causes of the errors observed in our data on the basis of available literature on error analysis. Secondly, we suggest pedagogic strategies that can be used to reduce these errors. Thus on this basis the chapter is divided into two main sub-sections.

4.1.0 CAUSES OF ERRORS

It is difficult to determine with any certainty that a certain error is related to a particular cause. Scholars on E.A. have invoked linguistic and psychological theories in order to explain the causes of errors. Linguistic theory provides the terminology for talking about the nature of errors, for comparing the language of the learner with the target language, and for describing what the learner did and what a native speaker would have done in the same circumstances. In other words, linguistic theory will help in explaining how the learner has deviated from the rules of the target language. But linguistic theory does not provide a means of talking about why the learner did what he did. Such explanations are part of psycholinguistic theory. Psycholinguistic theory will explain why the language learner has deviated from the norms of the target language.

Second language researchers have come up with several possible explanations as to why errors occur.

4.1.1 OVERGENERALISATION

One approach to the explanation of learners' errors is that which George (1972) terms 'redundancy reduction' and which Richards (1974) terms as 'overgeneralisation.'

Jakobovists, as quoted in Richards (Ibid:174) defines overgeneralization as the use of previously available strategies in new situations. Over-generalization is an intralingual phenomenon in which the language learner tends to overgeneralize the use of an already internalized or well learnt formation rule of the TL. The learners tend to make errors by applying what they already know of the language to a new situation where such rules do not apply. Overgeneralization covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the TL. Norrish (1983: 31) provides the following examples:

115. (a) * We are visit the zoo.
 (b) * She must goes.
 (c) * Yesterday I walk to the shop and buy

The errors in the above sentences might have been made as a result of blending structures learnt early in the learning sequence. Example 115(a) shows the blending of the continuous and the simple present and in example (b) both the modal verb and the standard third person singular '-s' suffix are used. In example (c) the '-ed' past tense marker is omitted from the stem of the verb. This could be as a result of being confused with the adverb 'yesterday' which in itself signals past tense. In examples (a) and (b) the overgeneralization involves

removing the necessity for concord and overgeneralising the rule which states that in the present simple tense there are no suffixes except for the third person singular, thus relieving the learner of considerable effort.

Overgeneralisation is associated with redundancy reduction. It may occur, for instance, with items which are contrasted in the grammar of the language but which do not carry significant and obvious contrast for the learner. In the end the learner cuts down the task involved in sentence production.

Richards (1974: 175) notes that certain types of teaching techniques increase the frequency of overgeneralized structures. Many pattern drills and transformation exercises are made up of sentences that can interfere with each other to produce a hybrid structure. Richards (Ibid) further gives this example.

116. (a) Teacher: "He walks quickly."

(b) Learner: He is walks quickly

Such kind of error has been described as over-learning of a structure. At other times, 'He walks' may be contrasted with 'He is walking', 'He sings' with 'He can sing', and a week later, without any teaching of the forms the learner produces * 'He can sings'.

We found overgeneralization as one of the main causes of the frequent errors in the data. The students added '-ed' to irregular verbs thus producing deviant structures as in:

117. (a) The first bus stucked on the middle of

the road.

(b) To my surprise, I heard screeches of car breaks.

(c) The wheel of the car burst.

(d) My body shaked seriously

(e) The car had losed control.

(f) We woked up early that day.

These kinds of errors can be attributed to the concept of overgeneralization. The learner knows that regular verbs have '-ed' form to mark the past tense. With this in mind the learner overgeneralised this rule to cover even irregular verbs like burst to produce a deviant form * burst.

Other errors that related to overgeneralisation involve the use of the comparative form {-er} and superlative form {-est} with adjectives that form their comparative and superlative forms by use of phrases. Thus deviant structures as in the following example were evident in the data.

118. I still consider it the terribliest accident I have ever witnessed.

The learner knew that adjectives change into {-er}, {-est} to mark comparative and superlative forms respectively as in 'ugly - uglier - ugliest' and overgeneralised this rule to come up with 'terrible - terriblier - terribliest' instead of 'terrible - more terrible - most terrible.' Adjectives that have one or two syllables usually take the morphological grading, notably, changing to -er, -est forms, for example, in 'fast', 'faster' and then 'fastest'. However, those with more than two syllables typically take the lexical grading; using 'more' and 'most' to

mark comparative and superlative respectively. The students generalised this to include adjectives that would have followed '-er' 'est' morphological changes as in the following examples,

119. (a) I will be the most happy person under the sun.

(b) I have considered it the most worse road accident.

In the area of pluralization it was evident that the students generalised the rule that changes the stem 'thief' to 'thieve' to derive the plural 'thieves' to include 'chief' and so derived the erroneous 'chieves'.

Richards (1974) argues that over-generalization seems to be a major factor in the misuse of prepositions. The learner, encountering a particular preposition with one type of verb attempts by analogy to use the same preposition with similar verbs, for example in:

120. (a) He asked for the book.

may lead to:

(b) He gave for the book.

4.1.2 IGNORANCE OF RULE RESTRICTIONS

Closely related to the generalization is failure to observe the restrictions of existing rules, that is, the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply. Ignorance of rule restrictions occur when rules are extended to contexts where in target language usage they do not apply. This can result from analytical extension of the rote learning.

Richards (1974:175) gives the following examples to exemplify

this.

121. The man who I saw him.

He says that this sentence violates the limitation on subjects in structures with 'who'.

122. I made him to do it.

In this sentence, the learner ignores restrictions on the use of make: it is not followed by to-infinitive. Thus the learner is making use of a previously acquired rule in a new situation.

This can help to explain some errors found in the data especially in the use of prepositions. The students made wrong choice of prepositions as in

123. When we reached at Mombasa, we saw a ship.

The learner may have known that the verb 'arrive' takes the preposition at and by analogy feels that the verb 'reach' too should be accompanied by the preposition at, thus producing a deviant structure.

4.1.3 FIRST LANGUAGE INTERFERENCE

Despite the fact that this study adopted a non-contrastive approach, we cannot ignore the fact stated by second language researchers that First Language interference contributes to some errors observed in second language learners (see Ellis 1985).

The behaviourist's view of language learning (see Skinner 1957) held that if language is essentially a set of habits then when we try to learn new habits the old ones will interfere with the new ones (mother-tongue interference). The notion of

mother-tongue interference as a main contributor to error in learners' use of second language is related strongly to this particular view of how human beings learn a language. If the learner does not know the appropriate expression or structure in the TL, he will fall back on the language he is familiar with, namely, his L1.

This same view is held by many others, notably Banathy, Tragger and Waddle (1966) who claimed that all L2 errors were caused by old habits (that is, L1) which hindered the formation of new habits (that is, L2). Lee (1968) suggested that the prime cause, or even the sole cause of error in second language learning is L1 interference and Schachter (1974) supports this view by claiming that a learner's previous knowledge acts as a constraint on the hypothesis he would form about a target language.

Corder's (1974) observation suggests that many errors bear a strong resemblance to the characteristics of the L1 and he notes that indeed many erroneous sentences read like word-for-word transliteration from L1 to L2. This observation has led to the widely accepted theory of transfer which states that a learner of a second language transfers into his performance in the L2 the habits of his L1. Corder (Ibid) puts it that a learner's starting hypothesis is "L2 is like L1 until I have reason to think otherwise". This approach involves making errors and having others correct them. Thus interference is regarded as a mechanical transference of habits from the source language to the TL and that second language learning is a process which involves the replacement of the old habits by the

new habits. The forms of the first language are therefore of crucial importance because they form the basis for the learner's initial L2 grammar. Interference, therefore, has been seen as the major cause of errors.

Researchers in second language learners in Africa have observed that the main inclination is to believe that interference from African languages plays a critical role as the main source of learner's errors. For instance, Bokamba (1982) notes that one major source of errors that leads to production of deviant sentences is transference from the speakers' language (In Sey: 1973).

Stressing the same view, Angogo and Hancock (1982: 306) observe that English in East Africa functions for the great majority of its speakers as a second language, and the influence of their native language must be considered in a description of their distinctive varieties of English.

The following errors observed in our data can be explained from this perspective.

124. (a) My minds went blank and I just stood there rooted.
 (b) The properties I have are well stored.
 (c) There had been an head on collision.
 (d) I saw my brother lying on an hospital bed.
125. (a) bed.

The cause of the above errors can be attributed to L1 interference. In examples (a) and (b) the words 'property', 'minds' are inflected for plural. Most of the L1s of the subjects of this study can have plural forms of the

equivalents. For example, the Kikuyu singular equivalent for property is 'kindu' and the plural counterpart is 'indo'. Thus a student with such an L1 background will automatically add plural marker to these nouns in English due to the L1 influence. Further, in some L1s spoken by the university students in Kenya, there is the absence of 'h' sound in their speech system and the speakers pronounce some English words such as 'hat' as 'at' and such speakers mostly transfer this even in the written form. It was possible to establish the L1 identity of the subjects of this study from their names. This interference may explain why there were such errors as in examples (c) and (d) above.

4.1.4 INCOMPLETE APPLICATION OF RULES

This involves the failure to learn the more complex types of structure because the learner finds he can achieve effective communication by using relatively simple rules. This means that the learner possesses only a partial knowledge of a particular rule of the TL.

Richards (1974) suggests two possible causes in this case. One is the use of questions in the classroom, where the learner is encouraged to repeat the question or part of the question, as in:

125. (a) TEACHER: Ask him what he eats

(b) LEARNER: What you eats?

The other possible cause is the fact that the learner may discover that he can communicate perfectly and adequately using deviant forms. The learner may be able to make himself

understood by only applying part of the rules and continue to produce deviant forms. This means that the second language learner, interested perhaps primarily in communication, can achieve quite efficient communication without the need for mastering more than the elementary rules. Motivation to achieve communication may exceed motivation to produce grammatically correct sentences and this obviously, leads to grammatical errors.

This concept can explain the occurrence of some of the errors observed in the data. For example, the students did not seem to have internalised the rule that the auxiliary verb 'have' is normally followed by the '-ed' participle form of the verb. The following examples from the data help clarify this.

126. (a) I would also place a wardrobe in the
opposite of where I have place the bed.
(b) I could not have believe him.

While using clause linkers the students seemed to have partially learnt how to use subordinators as indicated by the following errors.

127. (a) I was excited that I could feel the pain
(omission of so).
(b) No sooner had I known what next _ there
it was with its tyres facing the sky.
(omission of 'than').

(c) I wondered what on earth has happened

Other errors that can be attributed to false concepts

being hypothesized include the students' failure to distinguish

between adjectives and other categories in English grammar

4.1.5 FALSE CONCEPTS HYPOTHESIZED

Richards (1974) notes that in addition to the wide range of intralingual errors which have to do with faulty rule-learning at various levels, there is a class of developmental errors which derive from faulty comprehension of distinction in the TL. False concepts being hypothesized, therefore, refer to errors derived from faulty understanding of target language distinctions. Richards (Ibid) suggests that this may occur due to poor gradation of teaching or learning items. For example, 'is' may be treated as a general marker of the present tense as in:

128. He is speaks English.

To summarise this, Ritchie, as quoted in Richards (1974:179) notes:

A course that concentrates too much on the main trouble spots without due attention to the structure of the foreign language as a whole will leave the learner with a patch work of unfruitful, partial knowledge.

This will lead the learners to use the wrongly presented data as part of their hypotheses about the nature of TL.

This phenomenon may explain the occurrence of developmental errors observed in the data such as in the use of present perfect instead of past perfect as in:

129. (a) My mother told me I have to visit my uncle.

(b) I wondered what on earth has happened.

Other errors that can be attributed to false concepts being hypothesized include the students' failure to distinguish between adjectives and other categories in English language.

For example, the students used other categories notably nouns, verbs and adverbs as adjectives. The following examples from the data illustrate:

130. (a) I was really exciting.
 (b) This will impress my artist mind.
 (c) In my storey house there is a table room.
 (d) People were returning to their residence area.
 (e) The day turned out to be a blood day.
 (f) Others were already death.
 (g) I went home wondering whether it was really.

4.1.6 UNIVERSAL HIERARCHY OF DIFFICULTY

Second language researchers (see Chomsky, 1969) suggest that there is, regardless of the age by which a learner has learnt a particular structure, a characteristic order of learning which is almost invariable and according to the degree of the difficulty of learning that structure.

Research on learners of English as a Second language (see Richards Ibid; Ravem 1974) has indicated that this apparent hierarchy of difficulty may explain at least partly some of the learners errors in English. It is further noted that some forms may be inherently difficult to learn no matter what the background of the learner is (Wardhaugh, 1976).

The focus of this study was the morpho-syntactic errors that first year undergraduate students from heterogeneous linguistic background would make in the Kenyan situation. We concur with Richards (1974) that some of the morpho-syntactic

errors observed in this study relate with those linguistic items that learners of English as a second language would find difficult to master due to the inherent difficulty in learning them.

There were errors observed in the data that are reported to be common in the language performance data of most second language learners. The omission of function words such as definite and indefinite articles appears most widespread in the English of the Africans. Bokamba (1982) and Kirk-Greene (1971:133) found sentences such as the following examples in the English of the Nigerian students.

131. (a) Let strong football team be organized.

(b) He won by overwhelming majority.

(c) He gave me tough time.

Similar constructions have been observed by Sey (1973: 29) in what he terms the educated Ghanaian English.

132. (a) I am going to cinema.

(b) I am going to post office.

(c) I may continue with interview or examine
few more applications.

Sey (Ibid) further notes that this deviation is not restricted to the speech and writing of low level speakers of English, for example, those having only a secondary education. It has been observed at higher levels, such as in the universities.

The above findings point to the fact that some errors are difficult to a cross-section of second language learners.

According to Bokamba (1982), the Nigerian speakers of English

displayed difficulties and used the wrong prepositions such as:

4.2.1 * congratulate for

* According to my opinion

Other errors observed in the Nigerian speakers of English related to the use of redundant prepositions as in:

133. We shall discuss about that later.

Difficulties were also observed in peculiar word formation occurring with plurals. As such the following deviant structures were observed in the English of the Nigerian English.

* equipments

* aircrafts

* deadwoods

The above examples show that there are some errors in L2 that are 'universal'. Similar errors were found in the language data in this study. For example, the students used deviant sentences as in:

134. (a) * I have left some areas for livestocks.

(b) * I will erect a small workshops in the garage for keeping the mechanic equipments.

(c) * There were funny photographs of the best wrestlers, good remarks and advices and all sorts of things.

(d) * The properties I have are well stored.

4.2.0 PROPOSED STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ERRORS

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

To most proponents of error analysis, errors are seen as strategies that learners employ in language learning. Corder (1967:25) states that a learner's errors provide evidence of the system of the language that he has learned at a particular point in the course. He argues that the learner is using some system all the time although it is not the right system. He further says that errors tell how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and consequently, what remains for him to learn. In addition, errors provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Most importantly, Corder notes that the errors are indispensable to the learner himself, because the making of errors is a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. Ellis (1985:53) asserts that errors are a guide to the inner workings of the language learning process, as evidence of the learner's active contribution to SLA.

However, this is contrary to what the proponents of contrastive analysis held. Dulay et al. (1982:9) state that CA took the position that a learner's first language interferes with his acquisition of a second language and that it therefore comprises the major obstacle to successful mastery of the new language. Error was viewed as a symptom of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure. Thus to the contrastive analysts

errors had to be remedied by the use of intensive drilling or over-teaching. Except for literature on contrastive analysis as a means of dealing with learners' errors pedagogically, most of the literature consulted had little to offer on pedagogic strategies that can be used to reduce the errors observed in the English of the first year University students. The research did not involve the students giving their L1s, their sex or information on their exposure to English. However, based on what could be said as causes of the errors discussed in the previous section and the available literature from contrastive analysis (see Fisiak, 1985; Lado, 1957; Wardhaugh, 1976), we may suggest the following pedagogic strategies that can be used to reduce the errors observed in this study.

4.2.2 FREQUENT EXAMINATION OF THE LEARNERS' INTERLANGUAGE

The English language teacher at whatever educational level should examine the language the learners use very frequently in order to reduce the errors which may be identified. The teacher can give various topics because a specific topic may show up errors in the use of a particular language form. Other errors may be masked because they are excluded from the topic. Thus, the teachers must bear in mind the problems of finding impartial evidence of the students' level of competence. The errors, or lack of them, in a piece of work being analyzed may be determined by the topic of the exercise or the learner's use of communication strategies.

4.2.3 RE-TEACHING LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

Norrish (1983) suggests that to reduce the errors found in the learners' English, the best thing a teacher can do is to re-teach a given structure in a way which allows the students to see the language item from as many perspectives as possible. It is also important that the learners have a chance to use the item or items in an appropriate situation. This can help to reduce the errors especially those related to overgeneralization.

4.2.4 USE OF CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

The English language teacher should be prepared for the use of contrastive analysis of the two or more languages involved in the process of learning. If a comparative study of the target language (English for our case) and the learner's first language is carried out, the differences between the languages can be discovered and it becomes possible to predict the difficulties that the learners will have. The function of CA is, therefore, to predict the likely errors of a given group of learners and thereby to provide the linguistic input into language teaching materials. Lado (1964) puts it that different emphases in teaching are required for the different language backgrounds. CA may reveal effective ways of overcoming the learners' difficulties in language learning because the analysis will tell him where to expect a high degree of difficulty. Fisiak (1985:155) recommends that a course in contrastive analysis become part of the syllabus in all language departments in the universities and in all in-service

teacher training courses. Thus the English teacher will be equipped with the adequate knowledge of the language and where possible be trained to predict errors related to the main causes as discussed above. For example, the teacher may point out that while in the mother tongue it is possible to express a meaning in a particular way, in English it is not. An example is in the difference between the Gikuyu form of interrogative and the English form as in:

135. (a) Etagwo atia? (Gikuyu)
 (b) He is called what? (transliteration)
 (c) What is his name? (English)

The English language teacher needs to be able to pin-point such areas which will give learners of English difficulty due to the variation between their LI and English (TL).

4.2.5 USE OF PATTERN DRILLS AND DRAMA

The use, for example, of pattern drills and drama, in the teaching of English is another strategy that can be used to reduce errors. The English teacher can give written English exercises that would involve the learner in activities where he would use all language skills. The teacher may introduce role play, or build up a stock of exercises taken from different text books that can be used for practice on the particular language item that the learners have problems with. The teacher may use short drama scenes to practise the language item that is giving the learners a lot of difficulty. He can draw up tables or write on the board patterns and ask the students to make up about 10 sentences quickly. For example, a learner who

is having problems with language forms might well profit from an activity that requires him to put various choices into a substitution table. Dulay et al. (1982:145) propose that drills can be useful in eradicating errors. The pattern drills can be based on the content in the syllabus and especially on areas where the English teacher predicts learners may face greater difficulty. This will lead to more exposure to English and will help reduce the errors associated with overgeneralisation, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesization.

4.2.6 USE OF CORRECTING CODES

The English teacher can also have a correcting code while checking the written English exercises of the students. This will involve the use of a code of indications written on the margins or over a particular error. This will lead the learners to work out for themselves what is wrong and try to correct it. The teacher, for example, can underline the erroneous expression and write 'T' underneath if tense error is involved. The student will, on this basis, try and work out the appropriate expression. This approach involves the learner in more thought about the erroneous forms. If the learner is involved intellectually with the activity, he is much more likely to learn from his experience. The English teacher should further give references to grammar or text books where the particular form which the student has misproduced is dealt with. This strategy will be helpful in reducing the errors related to incomplete application of rules, ignorance of rule restrictions and false concepts being hypothesized.

4.2.7 USE OF ERROR ANALYSIS

The English teacher, through Error Analysis, should be informed of language items that deserve special emphasis depending on the weight of the learners errors and judge what items to deal with. Error Analysis can be especially useful if repeated on comparable tasks with intervals of time in-between. It gives the teacher an idea about how an individual learner is progressing through his interlanguage and indicates any points which have generally not been adequately learned. This will be useful in helping reduce errors related to L1 interference.

Corder (1974:293) points out that the technique of correction is not one of simply presenting the data again and again and going through the same set of drills and exercises to produce the state of over-learning. It requires, on the contrary, that the teacher understands the source of the errors so that he can provide the appropriate content and other information, sometimes comparative, which will resolve the learner's problems and allow him to discover the relevant rules. Learners therefore should be exposed more to the rules of English to counter error related to ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules and overgeneralisation.

4.2.8 REMEDIAL TEACHING

To reduce the errors, remedial teaching should be carried out as a result of the findings of an error analysis. Here the teacher would use a different approach from that tried for the initial teaching activity. Remedial language teaching is seen

as identifying and correcting errors made by learners of a second or foreign language. This strategy of reducing errors is a practical way of dealing with learners' errors in the classroom situation so that their errors are not allowed to consolidate and fossilize. It helps teachers to monitor the language development of the learners. Thus to reduce errors the English language teacher can have remedial lessons based on the learners' written and spoken production. This will ensure that the learners do not 'carry forward' some errors to the next level of English language learning. Rea (1985) has commented that it is necessary to establish remedial teaching at all levels of educational systems. Rea (Ibid) further notes that the English language teacher should always identify the flaws inherent in the learners' interlingual system and then take remedial action. This will be vital in reducing the errors especially those that relate to universal hierarchy of difficulty for the English teacher will be stressing on these difficult language items. Effective remedial action at appropriate time is, therefore, most important if the learners are to develop the required competence in the English language.

4.2.9 IN-SERVICE COURSES FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS

There is a close relationship between the first year undergraduate students and secondary school students because the first year students have just graduated from high school level after sitting the K.C.S.E. examinations. There are some grammatical errors which, if not dealt with at high school level, could be carried over by the students to university

level. We notice that there is always an outcry that there is a shortage of English teachers in high schools in Kenya and as a result quite a large number of English teachers are untrained (see Agalo, 1986). This means they are not competent enough to impart the linguistic knowledge required by the learners. Due to the quality of such teachers, the learners will acquire a variety of English from teachers who have not mastered the target language rules. Some of the teachers may be processing a variety that has certain negative transfers from their respective mother tongues. To deal with this problem, there needs to be frequent in-service courses for the English teachers who will in turn help their learners in achieving adequate competence in the English language. Agalo (Ibid:51) suggests that more courses should be provided for English teachers already in the field to give training in modern methods and the use of learning/teaching materials. He further suggests that local centres of information should be established on divisional levels to facilitate cross-fertilization of teaching methods and material production to improve the English of the students.

4.2.10 SENSITIZATION OF LECTURERS OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Most of the strategies of reducing errors discussed above apply strictly in situations where the L2 speakers are still active learners of English. This fits well with our specific sample : the first year undergraduate students of English at Kenyatta University. However, as we said in chapter one, we intended that the findings of this study be generalised to all

first year undergraduate students in Kenyan Universities. What then can be done about the errors in the English of first year undergraduate students who are no longer studying English? We propose that the lecturers in other departments be sensitised to point out morphosyntactic errors that they may find in the students' English. The lecturers of other subjects in the universities need to become role models for the learners to copy. It should not be thought that it is the task of the English teacher alone. The universities need to have in-service courses where lecturers of English and those of other subjects would share ideas on how to complement one another to help in reducing the errors which may be observed in the written English of the first year undergraduate students.

universities.

The first year undergraduate students of English were taken to be representative of the entire first year population in our Kenyan universities. Bearing in mind the errors observed in this study (see chapter 3), it was concluded that the students had not mastered some important aspects of English grammar by the time they joined the universities. The students were graduates of high school and were expected to have attained the highest level of proficiency in English. The findings of this study are, therefore, significant to enable high school teachers of English to see where students face difficulties and perhaps organise remedial lessons to deal with these areas of difficulty such that by the time the students join university they will not be displaying as many errors as those observed in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This study sought to examine the morpho-syntactic errors in the written English of university students in Kenya. We concerned ourselves with the first year students of English in Kenyatta University. We collected the data from two written tasks in the form of free compositions that the students wrote. We then used the Error Analysis procedure to analyze the data.

5.1 IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have implications for the English teachers at high school levels and for both the departments of English and Communication Skills in our state universities.

The first year undergraduate students of English were taken to be representative of the entire first year population in our Kenyan universities. Bearing in mind the frequency of errors observed in this study (see chapter 3), it was evident that the students had not mastered some important basics of English grammar by the time they joined the University. The students were graduates of high school and were expected to have attained the highest level of proficiency in English. The findings of this study are, therefore, significant to enable high school teachers of English to see where students have difficulties and perhaps organise remedial lessons to deal with these areas of difficulty such that by the time the students join university, they will not be displaying as many errors as those observed in this study.

In addition to this, the results of this study are important to the communication skills units in Kenyan universities. As earlier mentioned, the students did not display a high proficiency in the English language. For those that are still studying English as a subject some remedial programmes may be possible but for the rest of the students, we feel that most of the help can come from the communication skills department. At the moment, the communication skills course steers clear of grammar and only assists the students to cope with their reading and writing requirements. For example, it assists the students in writing term papers, projects, skimming, scanning, note making and note taking. Then perhaps the communication skills units in our public universities ought to tailor the course to include some elements of English grammar especially in the areas where the students face most difficulty.

Finally, the study has implications for the departments of English in our public universities too. The findings of this study indicate that most students of English are yet to acquire the competence which is required of them by the time they join University. The courses offered in the Departments of English at our state Universities assume that the students have achieved proficiency in English and concentrate on theoretical issues such as phonology of English, History of English, Description of English, morphology of English among others. Considering the errors observed in this study, the departments of English need to, for example, put more emphasis on courses that focus on grammar in the syllabus to help the students

achieve a high level of competence in the English language. To assist first year undergraduate students from other departments, the Kenyan universities can have a policy that lecturers of other departments correct grammatical errors in the essays to sensitise the students on their errors.

5.2 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused only on the morpho-syntactic errors. However, from the language data collected it was evident that the university students have errors too in other levels of English. There were glaring errors in lexis and semantics. Thus further research is needed to describe the semantic and lexical levels of the students' English in order to come up with exhaustive observations of the English of the first year undergraduate students.

The study only concentrated on the students' written English and left out the aspects of their spoken English. Research on the spoken English of the students could complement the findings of this study by establishing whether the same morpho-syntactic errors are evident in their spoken language.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the first year undergraduate students have not attained near-native proficiency in English in the area of morpho-syntax. This means that there is still a lot in the area of grammar (morpho-syntax) that the first year undergraduate students have to learn. Language is rule governed and learning a language

involves internalising the rules of grammar. Our suggestions are that the relevant departments (English and Communication Skills Units) will take this into consideration in planning their language courses for first year undergraduates and that high school teachers will work out strategies of ensuring a better output. This is necessary to ensure that the students are able to communicate in English fluently, accurately, effectively and intelligently since English is the medium of communication used in the university and also in job positions.

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sample

Write on both sides of the paper

Question

Handwritten text in the top left margin, possibly a name or title.



APPENDICES

Eight selected compositions from the language performance data written by first year undergraduate students of English of Kenyatta University.

It was a day, in any other, I have had some
 period might me on the road. But it even a
 a man could tell that I was in my self, indeed I would
 it better was in my favorite mood.
 Because of distance and fatigue, caused
 what I couldn't explain I decided to pay a
 visit to my uncle who lives in the neighbouring
 area. At once I left with my young sister who
 led me so clearly that I was able to follow

I could not tell what was up in town
 it seemed as if so many vehicles on motor and
 bicycles all moving in all directions. It is because
 after working time that people are returning to their
 homes. I thought. My young sister Jane
 so afraid that she could not stand it and so
 once she started crying and I had to carry her.
 No sooner had we closed the main road
 we had two buses coming. At the same time
 without some closing the road. At once I closed
 eyes not to see what is following. God help
 me I opened my eyes. Lo! Here is a crowd
 of people running to the scene. Not knowing I had
 left among the crowd. The scene had passed by that
 could judge the scene.

Believe it or not, the following letter
 was written by a student of Kenyatta University

Handwritten notes in the right margin, including the word 'ep' and other illegible scribbles.

Handwritten notes in the right margin, including the word 'ep' and other illegible scribbles.

Handwritten notes in the right margin, including the word 'ep' and other illegible scribbles.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

72

Boy

A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT

It was a day like any other, I have had since my parents bought me on this world. But it even a blind man could tell that I was in my self, indeed I wasn't called neither was in my favorite mood.

prep
?
omission
sp

Because of distress and fatigue, caused by what I couldn't explain I decided to pay a visit to my ^{John} uncle who lives in the neighbouring state. At once I left with my young sister who loved me so dearly that anywhere I go she follow me.

adj
tense

I could not tell what was up in town for it seemed as so many vehicles on motorist and pedestrians all moving in all direction. "It is because is after working time that people are returning to their residence areas" I thought. My young sister Jane was so afraid that she could not stand it and so at once she started crying and I had to carry her.

word formation
sp

No sooner had we closed the main road than we had two lions coming. At the same time a motorist was closing the road. At once I closed my eyes not to see what to follow. "God help!" I said as I opened my eyes. LO! There were 20 many people summarily done. Not knowing I found myself among the crowd. The scene had flooded by blood. None could judge who the victim was.

sp
sp
sp
omission
tense

Believe it or not within the following half an hour I was dump, that I couldn't talk neither

sp

Write
other
margin

Write on both sides of the paper

Question.....

Miss Bell where James. After some minutes I regained my
consciousness only to realize Jane was following me
behind. I decided not to proceed with our journey
and therefore we returned. At home every body was
crying, I couldn't tell also what was up!

cause

My elder brother met us as we entered
the sitting room. I talked with him, but all my attempts
yielded nothing, there I remained stranded. After an
hour My Mother explained to me the matter that my

sp
coolest

Uncle John has died in a road accident as he
was from his office. I opened my mouth to shout
but I could not neither could I yell even not crying.

"What an accident? What a visit?" Only the two
questions were in my heart. I will not forget my

Uncle John whose death meant him when I was there.

Write on both sides of the paper

Do not write in either margin

My House

I have a house, and indeed a big one, with a spacious sitting room, three bed rooms, ~~one~~ kitchen ~~arrange~~ and a decent compound surrounding it.

SP

Now for I have finished the hard part of construction, only fitting the house and arranging the items to their respective places. I called my brother Eric to help in arranging the house.

Pro

First we put the three beds together with beddings, window and door curtains in the three bed rooms. Two tables and enough chairs. My sister Jane together with her friend Anne helped in bringing the wall-drops to my sleeping bed room.

SP

At the same time my loving mother was transferring all the crockery, utensils to the kitchen. My friend Mutua was arranging the sitting room. He had brought two coffee-tables, six sofa-seats and a television. Thus the house looked so nice.

SP

In the garage we pushed my old vehicle there, getting with the motorcycle. The old sheets from my old house, all metal bars, broken chairs and beds and worn out furniture.

omission

All over the compound; the two women were busy planting trees as well as preparing two seed beds so fencing the compound with barbed wire to obstruct cows and goats coming in and kill the young trees and seedlings. By the end of the day the whole compound looked beautiful and cool.

SP

Number

SP

SP

347/1

Name.....

When I stand a distance away and look at my newly built house (I tend not to believe its mine) the house is a beautiful scenic to watch and I think very few own such an elegant house. Yes I had acquired it through along from the Housing Finance of Kenya and I had searched for great ~~great~~ architect to design it and he designed it just in the way I wanted.

The table room is big and with a fire place just in front and I am planning to go to the (ART) the African Retail Trader to hire some the best subset and of course the most expensive. I think I will need about three sets and of course a big dining table just at one corner that will make the table room just have occupied. I will also need some flowers at each corner of the room to great (and) not forgetting a carpet. Of course those curtains will need a model from France to design so I am going to order ^{a set} ~~the~~ from Paris.

The bedroom will need a six by six double decker I prefer French type wardrobe a dressing table and a mirror which the constructor had forgotten.

I will also need a BMW car for that garage to match with house and the big, some flower garden and a fruit garden just ^{at the} ~~at the~~

ESS/0453/93

(42)

Name: Wahman RATED COLA

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ATERRIBLE ROAD ACCIDENT

It was ~~excet~~ excitement turned to sorrow, fear and sympathy. I lived with excitement for almost a week ^{when} after one evening my father ^{home} came from work and informed us that we were to go for holiday at least. I was really exciting when I heard the SP news because I had never been to the coast in a life I imagined of the beaches, the fort Jesus and many scenic places I have ^{been} hearing ^{off} or read in history. So days seemed to be longer than usual because we had to do a week preparation.

The fateful came and I was up first. In the morning I suggested we take bus instead of a train because a bus was faster than train. At seven o'clock in the morning I was very comfortably seated in one of the elegant coaches operating on Mombasa - Malindi, and in a few minutes time the driver was off. The journey looked well and everybody seemed to enjoy it. The music playing added to the excitement and imagined how wonderful the town would be.

As we approached Mtwara the driver picked up speed and accelerated. Suddenly I saw ^{to overtake} an oil tanker. Suddenly I saw on coming bus in high speed coming from the

347/1

KCSE
Do not write
in this
margin

Name.....

and ~~some~~ slow down and swerved the
 the bus behind the tanker and then
 came to halt. but the other bus
 driver seemed have been confused by
 the whole scene and moved
~~then~~ straight towards the tanker. and
 after a second what I heard was
thumps and ~~and~~ then follow by
 an explosion. I at first went out of
 mind when I came back to cones I
 found my self standing outside the
 bus doing nothing instead of helping pull
 those injured from the wrecked bus.
 actual the other bus had meat a
 head on collision with tanker and it
 had rolled several metres from the
 road the tanker had exploded up and
 when the driver had died to jump
 the tanker rolled on him and he was
 lying flat under the tanker the bus
 was even more horrible to look at
 because a pool of blood flowed from bus
~~body~~ with missing heads and with missing
 legs and arms are scattered all over
 the seen to be it look like a
~~more~~ movie or vision I was really
 terrified

urw

SP

Tease
LT

}
}

Tease

SP

SP

347/1 ELECTRICITY

Index No.

Name

KCSE
Do not write
in this
marginMy Compound

Plan

- House
- Bedroom
- Table room
- Garage
- Compound

To have a house like mine you must have a lot of money and wisdom to spend. My house is quite well built and with all modern appliances. In fact I had to employ a staff of twenty workers to manage it.

Well, in my house there are four bedrooms. One bedroom is obviously mine and my better half. In this bedroom, there is a video screen and video cassette player. There are also used when we are in bed with my wife. In case we have got a message. ^{really} ~~we~~ ^{we} want to watch, we go to bed. Also, very important, there is a double bed which really accommodates both of us. The bedroom is built right on your right so you enter the bedroom from outside. Also there is a bedroom for my two kids. In it, it has not many things apart from their single beds and their cabinet. The other two bedrooms are for any guest who ^{can} come and have a night with us.

In the same house there is a large table room. As you enter the house from outside, you will first come into this large ^{table room} ~~bedroom~~. In it you will find a television set, video cassette player, stereo system and a ^{video} cassette player. These are for recreation purposes for all people.

2
SP

rep

Outs.

347/1 ELECTRICITY

KCSE
Do not write
in this
margin

Index No

Name

In the family and the visitors. Also there is a 'bookers' cabinet where you will find almost all types of books and magazines. These are just a few of the things in the table above.

Dwight
del.

Besides these there is a well conditioned garage where I park my well conditioned Mercedes Benz and my wife's ^{500 cc} Peugeot and any other visitor's vehicle. There are ^{four men} ~~four men~~ to keep the garage conditioned all

?

Also there is a well kept compound. This compound is well filled with flowers of almost all types. Also I use the compound to keep animals. The compound holds about ten cows and fifteen goats and a number numerous number of chickens. Also in the compound there are five parrots degs there are ten men to manage the compound. Flowers are well cultivated. My compound is a place to be proud of.

Boy

26

KCSE
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in this
margin

Index No. Ken/100/1/01

Name Andrews Mark Wain

ROAD ACCIDENT

Plan

In the morning

Before the accident

Accident

After words

It was not long since I woke up ^{when} my mother told me I have to visit my uncle to inquire about my fundraising (to get money) for university fees. I didn't have that good mood which I ought to have and I usually had when ~~to~~ I am visiting my kins. Not so long when my mother noticed my lack of ^{the} mood. She good me but I just felt that I wasn't feeling very well.

No sooner had I finished grooming myself than I joined the other travelers at the near bus stop. I had not wait for long before a minibus came. I boarded the bus and I sat on the available seat. Though the minibus was quite well equipped with music apparatuses and it was really playing good music I did not enjoy it. Something inside me was really troubling me. I could feel what it was. The minibus was moving at a very high speed. In fact I started worried. Not even could I speak to any of my seatmates.

Not very long distance from Murang'a town where we came to a sharp corner in the middle of a steep hill. The minibus was now even moving at a higher speed than before. Out of the blue an elephant was crossing the road. When the driver noticed it he braked but instead of stopping the animal forcing us stopped and waited for the high speeding vehicle within a split of a second.

Prep
Tense
Gram
W
7
adj
sp
Pro
W
down

347/1 ELECTRICITY

Index No

Name

KCSE
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in this
margin

From the time I noticed the herald of death, the bus
that knocked the animal ^{and} it was rolling down the
valley. Everybody was ^{and} wailing, mourning. Children were
crying and mothers were shouting nobody could hear the
one (other) somebody was sitting on my head and he
could control his farting within a few minutes I
went alone and I fainted.

Next time I saw myself in a room surrounded by
three ladies in white gowns. What I was doing there
I could not tell what brought me there. I could not
remember either. "How are you feeling, young man?" one
of the ladies asked me. I didn't answer. How
but I asked her "What am I doing here young woman?"
She requested to me what happened and reflected
my mind. The time came to tell her that I'm quite
fine and I am feeling quite well. Just few minutes
after my parents and ^{my} younger brother were standing
beside my bed so I assured them that I'm quite
fine. When the doctor came I was given permission
to go home. The following week I came to know
that I was the long survivor of the accident.
What a luck!

?

Red

Const-

Perf-

Qmiz

Adj

In
tease

SP

Do not write in this margin

Name.....

MY HOUSE.

My house is large and beautiful. It's situated in a big compound near the road. It's a storey house with some of the rooms upstairs. In the compound there is a garage where I (would) park my vehicle as I go into my beautiful house to have a rest. The compound being large, I would plant a variety of flowers to make it beautiful and also a good site for me to relax. I would also plant grass and trees, to create a good atmosphere to relax in the sun after the day's daily duties.

SP
word
form

ink

In my storey house there's a table-room where I (would) put all the furniture. Chairs, tables, shelves for books) to make me comfortable all the time. A side-board I would also bring in to keep my equipments on it would be a television to refresh my mind after the daily tasks. Beside that I would buy a cassette to refresh my mind also and to keep the house lively. flowers (in flower) vases would be plenty to decorate the entire room and beautiful curtains I would hang on the windows which would make the

from
red
ones

white
det

will

order

Name.....

house. even better.

To the interior is a bedroom, big ^{quant} to accommodate various furniture. In it I would put a bed and expensive beddings to keep me comfortable during the night. Beside it would be a wardrobe to handle all my clothings ^{wool} and keep them in the best condition. I would also have a sideboard to keep all my personal belongings in a neat condition. I would also put a ^{let} iron and an ironbox in the room to be using to iron my clothings and a side window would also be in the room to ascertain me that an heat before I leave for other places. I would do all my best to keep my house comfortable and lively and my compound neat and pleasing so that I would have the good feeling of possession.

SP

Name.....

collided with a car and most
 else people were lay lying dead. People were
 pulling out bodies unaware of the situation
 of the people but the unconscious
 ones were carried to the ambulance
 which had just arrived. Within no
 time, the police were at the
scene to take investigations about
 the accident. The dead would be
carried for later transport to the
 mortuary. Moving and screaming was
 the atmosphere in town at the
scene and people were crowded
 to bear witness about the accident.

It just took several seconds to
 change the atmosphere in town. People
 who were busy with their businesses
 other moving to and to various
 places were all brought together
 by this new atmosphere of wailing
 created within seconds.