ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL AND GRAPHOLOGICAL ERRORS IN WRITTEN ESSAYS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF SSS 3 STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL, KARSHI, ABUJA FCT,

BY

GAMBO, MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM
NSU/ARTS/MA/ENG/040/15/16

BEING AN M.A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES, NASARAWA STATE UNIVERSITY, KEFFI, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

DECEMBER, 2019

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation has been written by me and it is my research work. It has not been presented anywhere for the award of Master of Arts in English Language. All quotations are indicated and sources of information specifically acknowledged by means of references.

GAMBO, MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM
NSU/ART/MA/ENG/040/15/16

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must register my sincere thanks to the Almighty God who gives me the ability to embark on this research work. I sincerely acknowledge the efforts of my supervisor the Associate Professor. Joy Aworo- Okoroh for reading several drafts of this dissertation and gives me very useful corrections, materials and guidance which contribute to its success. I am also indebted to my lecturers in English department they are Professor. Adewale .A. Alagbe, Professor. David .J. Ker, Professor. Tehemba Shija, Professor. Nwagbara Chinyere, Professor. Al-Biskak, Associate Professor. Abdulraman Umar, Dr. Alex Maiyanga, Dr. Tanimu Yusuf, Dr. Stephen David and Mr. Philip Daniel Moles. I wish to register a big thanks to the dean, Faculty of Arts Professor. Adewale .A. Alagbe for his encouragement and good leadership in the department. I must also express my profound gratitude to Professor. Fodio Musa Inuwa Former Deputy Vice councilor Academic for his encouragement and moral support. I will never forget to thank Dr. Muhammed Tanimu in the registry department of the university and Dr. Idris Abubakar Iman of Arabic department for their numerous contributions and support to the success of this research work. I must also appreciate the effort of Mr. Adole Shalom Akochi of GSS, Karshi for assisting me while administering the essays of this research work.

A big thanks goes to Malam Yusuf .I. Yakubu (Sai-Buhari) of GSS, Karshi who typed many drafts of this research. I am particularly indebted to all the authors whose work were consulted during this research work and all those who contributed in one way or the other to the success of this research. May the Almighty God reward them bountifully.

ABSTRACT

Poor Performance and Mass failure of students in GSS, Karshi in English language particularly in SSCE, NECO, NABTEB and JAMB has been a source of concern to me. It has also been a source of concern to teachers, Examiners and some concern parents. This study intends to investigate and reveals the source and nature of grammatical and graphological errors in the written essays in English Language of SSS3 students of Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja FCT. A total number of two hundred "200" scripts were collected marked and errors were recorded. One hundred copies were randomly sampled and analyzed, the findings revealed that some forms of errors that occurred in the students essays were as a result of mother tongue interference that is the first language of the students, while some erroneous forms were as a result of gross negligence from the Students. Grammatical and Graphological errors negatively affect the students overall ability to communicate in spoken and in written English thereby, militate on their performance both in local tests, examinations and national examinations such as SSCE, NECO NABTEB and JAMB. Error Analysis as a linguistics theory or technique was adopted as theoretical frame work in this study. Error Analysis is a technique for identifying classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by the learners of the second language in other words. Error Analysis is concern with errors that learners commit while trying to speak or write in the target language. Analysis of the essays revealed that the Students have difficulties with four types of concord examined: Subject – verb, concord of person, Subject – complement, object complement and pronoun antecedent. I was discovered too that the Students have challenges with the spelling of some words, Omission of words; some words were indiscriminately omitted from sentence error in punctuation marks and the wrong use of tenses. This study recommends that in order to solve the problem of grammatical and graphological errors among Students in GSS Karshi, the teaching of language. Should be intensified and modernized. Learning should be suitable to the level of students and should geared enhancing a particular skill in students also only proper trained and certificated teachers should be allowed to teach English language in addition, teachers should not be allowed to just teach English; but be given areas of their strength to teach in order to enhance proficiency finally, the authorities saddled with the responsibility of checking the affairs of teaching and learning should pay regular visit to see that teaching and learning take proper shape.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page - - - - - - - - - - i

Declaration - - - - - - - - - - iii

Certification - - - - - - - - - - iv

Dedication - - - - - - - - - - v

Acknowledgements - - - - - - - - - vi

Table of Contents: - - - - - - - - - vii

Abstract - - - - - - - - - - v

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study - - - - - - - - 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem - - - - - - - - 1

1.3 Research Questions - - - - - - - - - 2

1.4 Aim and Objectives - - - - - - - - - 3

1.5 Significance of the Study - - - - - - - - 3

1.6 Scope of the study - - - - - - - - - 4

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Preamble - - - - - - - - - - 5

2.1 Conceptual Review - - - - - - - - - 5

2.1.1 Concept of Grammar - - - - - - - - - 5

2.2 Grammatical Hierarchy - - - - - - - - 11

2.2.1 The Morpheme - - - - - - - - - 11

2.2.2 The Word - - - - - - - - - - 12

2.2.3 The Phrase - - - - - - - - - - 12

2.2.4 The Clause - - - - - - - - - - 13

2.2.5 The Sentence - - - - - - - - - - 16

2.2.6 The Concept of Second Language Learning - - - - - 18

2.6 Error Analysis - - - - - - - - - 62

2.7 Deviation - - - - - - - - - 63

2.8 Treatment of Errors and Error Correction - - - - - 64

2.9 Theories of Grammar - - - - - - - - - 65

2.10 Empirical Review - - - - - - - - - 67

2.11 Theoretical Framework - - - - - - - - 72

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble - - - - - - - - - 76

3.1 Primary Method of Data Collection - - - - - - 76

3.2 Secondary Method of Data Collection - - - - - -76

3.3 Method of Data analysis - - - - - - - 77

3.4 Subjects of Study - - - - - - - - 77

3.5 Techniques of data presentation and analysis - - -- - - 77

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Preamble - - - - - - - - - 79

4.1 Presentation of Data and Analysis - - - - - - 79

4.2 Spelling Errors - - - - - - - - 86

4.3 Punctuation Errors - - - - - - - - 87

4.4 Tense errors - - - - - - - - 88

4.5 Omission Errors - - - - - - - - 89

4.6 Findings and Discussion - - - - - - - 89

4.7 Implications of the study - - - - - - - 89

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0	Preamble - - - - - - - - -	91
5.1	Summary - - - - - - - - -	91
5.2	Recommendations - - - - - - - -	93
	Work cited - - - - - - - - -	94
	Appendix	

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Back ground to the study

For couple of years, poor preference and mass failure of students in English language in Government secondary school Karshi, Abuja, has been a source of concern to me, particularly in SSCE, NECO, JAMB and NABTEB.

It is obvious that many learners in the second language (L2) environment are bound to misuse misinterpret, abandon and even neglect some rules of the language they are learning.

Consequently, there are several errors that are common with second language learners such as grammatical errors, graph logical errors, phonological errors sementic error, syntactic errors among others. Most of these errors tend to originate from the incorporation of elements from the learners first language or mother tongue (L2) into English language.

English language is a foreign language though; it has come to stay in Nigeria. Some African languages are tonal languages that lack certain elements such as determiners and articles that are found in English language. Therefore, their direct transfer of their rules, features or structures automatically generate an array or series of errors from the rules of the target language, i.e English language

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research is geared towards indentifying solutions to the diverse grammatical and graphological errors found in the written essays of English learners in government secondary school Karshi, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

Various writers, teachers and examiners have pondered over the rate of poor performance and mass failure of students at the secondary school level in English language. Adeyanju (4), states that …however, many students at secondary and tertiary levels, as well as others in various professions have not mastered the English language structure usage, mechanics and therefore communicate ineffectively.

The wrong application of rules in students essays is a common feature in the written and spoken English of many senior secondary school students in Government Secondary School Karshi, Abuja. Grammatical and graphological errors affect the students' overall ability to communicate, write and thereby, militate on their performance in public examinations ie external examinations SSCE, NECO and NABTEB. There is this general contention that the students failure to correctly use rules is due to insufficient knowledge of their functions. This implies that the students knowledge of these grammatical and graphology categories are limited or it is not properly handled at this level. It might be based on the forms of their indigenous languages and the Nigerian English.

This affects the production of correct sentences as those produced in their local languages are not applicable to English. Therefore, the wrong use of rules leads to lack of fluency in their expressions in essays and causes distortion and wrong interpretation of messages in any written and spoken discourse. This study therefore, dwells on the grammatical and grapholocial errors in the students' essays.

1.3 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

i. What is the level or extent to which grammatical and graphological errors featured in the written essays of students in Government Secondary School, Karshi?

ii. What are the causes of these grammatical and graphological errors?

iii. What are the effects or implications of grammatical and graphological errors in essays of SS3 students in Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja?

iv. How can the grammatical and graphological errors be minimized?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study is aimed at revealing the source and nature of grammatical and graphological errors in the written essays of SSS3 students of Government Secondary School Karshi, Abuja Federal Capital Territory. Therefore, the objectives of study are to:

i. State the levels and reveal the extent to which grammatical and graphological errors feature in the written essays of students in Government Secondary School Karshi, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

ii. Investigate and expose the possible causes of these grammatical and graphological errors.

iii. To discuss the effects or implications of grammatical and graphological errors in essays of SSS3 students in Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja, FCT.

iv. To discuss how the grammatical and graphological errors can be minimized.

1.5 Significant of the Study

This research will add value and contribute positively to the development of education in Nigreria, particularly in the area of teaching and learning English as a second language.

The study shall be very important to linguistic as a field of studies especially to teachers and instructors at the junior and senior secondary schools levels for the fact that it will reveal, expose, identify and proffer solutions to the diverse errors.

It will also assist other researchers who wish to conduct further research work in the areas of errors. It will open a new chapter for the teachers and authorities to plan and diversify methodology of teaching and learning English as a second language.

1.6 Scope of the study

As earlier stated, the study is aimed at analyzing grammatical and graphological errors in the written essays of SSS3 students of Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja so as to identify the errors and suggest possible ways of ameliorating these errors**.** It is therefore pertinent to limit the scope of the study to a manageable proportion for better results. Hence, this work covers grammatical and graphological errors in the written essays of the SSS3 students in Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Preamble

This chapter consists of the review of related literatures in the area of this study. It reveals the concept of grammar as the set of structural rules of a language and exposes such grammatical model and the transformational generative approach. The chapter equally reviews the concept of graphology in linguistics, errors, the concept of second language learning, English as a second language in Nigeria, and error analysis as a linguistic theory.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Grammar

Grammar is a set of rules guiding the usage of a particular language. To a native speaker of a language, these rules are almost innate and they may not necessarily have to learn them but acquire them at childhood. However, to a second language learner, learning and using the rules mostly becomes problematic. Grammar thus also refers to the process of learning the rules governing the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any given natural language.

The term grammar, being the description of the rules governing the use of a language, refers to a person's use and knowledge of a language. As an aspect of linguistics, grammar refers to the set of structural rules that governs the composition and study of linguistic items such as words, phrases, clauses and sentences in a language. When talking about the concept of grammar, one is concerned with the application of grammar, that is, the grammar as used by speakers. O'grady *et al* (9) are of the view that grammar refers to a subconscious linguistic system of a particular type, consisting of several components such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. They argue that a grammar makes possible the production and comprehension of a potentially unlimited number of utterances.

Koll and Funk (5) describe grammar in three different ways; one of which is the formal description of the rules of a language. They argue that the definition refers to the branch of linguistic science concerned with the formal description of language in an objective way which identifies the form and structure as well as the syntax of sentences. In other words,

according to them, grammar is purely descriptive; it describes the composition and structures of linguistic units in a language. Tomori (1) in his text, examines four different meanings of grammar, in his opinion, he concludes that grammar is defined as the art of speaking and writing correctly. It can be inferred from his definition that it is the proper observance of the rules of a language identified from its description that makes a user speak and write correctly.

Also, Leech *et al* (3) assert that one way of describing grammar is as a set of rules which allows us to put words together in certain ways, but not in other ways. They further go further to say that at some level, speakers of a language must know these rule otherwise they would not be able to put words together in a meaningful way. In this light, Koll and Funk (5) further describe grammar as the social implications of usage, sometimes called 'linguistic etiquette' which covers the dos and don'ts of usage, rather than grammar. They argue that John Locke declared that the purpose of teaching grammar was "to teach en to speak, but to speak correctly and according to the exact rules of the tongue" this correctness can only be learnt through a proper description of the rules and structures of a language.

In his own way, Butterfield (142) describes grammar as a generic way of referring to any aspect of English that people object to. This usually covers the aspect of English which are not covered by the description of the rules of the language i.e. the 'don'ts' of a language and sometimes the aspects that are relatively unfamiliar to the users of the language. Thus, grammar is used to reveal the quality of the knowledge of a language possessed by a speaker as inferred from the nature of the speaker's utterances. In other words, a speaker's utterances are expected to reveal whether his grammar is good or bad, which can be ascertain from the rules of the language prescribed or described.

Therefore, the study of grammar can be descriptive and prescriptive. Prescriptive grammar is concerned with prescribing the rules of grammar, how they should be used and

otherwise. It is associated with traditional grammar which emphasizes insistence on correctness, linguistic purism, literary excellence, priority of the written language over the spoken language. These features contrast with what obtains in modern grammatical studies that emphasize descriptive accuracy, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, explicitness and priority of the spoken form over the written form. Leech *et al* (5) argue that linguists who write grammars are concerned with describing how the language works rather than dictating or prescribing how it should be used. They conclude that prescriptive rules are clearly not grammatical rules in the same sense as descriptive rules, so it might be appropriate for the rules of grammatical appropriateness.

Koll and Funk (5) also argue that the words of John Locke mentioned above, explains the concept that is today called prescriptive grammar. However, they also say a more modern approach to language education is guided by the works of linguists who look at the way the language is actually used. Therefore, an accurate descriptive grammar describes the way people speak in everyday situations. Such a description recognizes a wide variety of grammatical forms. Lowth in Tomori (6) puts that the principle design of the grammar of any language is to teach us to express ourselves with propriety in that language and to enable us judge every phrase and form of construction whether it be right or not. The plain way of doing this is to lay down rules, and to illustrate them by examples. This is in a bid to highlight the importance of the prescription of grammar over its description. However, from the study of grammar it is noted that prescriptive grammar is rather 'old' and traditional as opposed to modern theories of grammar which are descriptive in nature. These modern trends include structural grammar, phrase structure grammar, transformational generative grammar as well as systemic functional grammar.

English grammar can be described as the analysis and the study of the systems and structure of the English language. It includes the structure of the English words, phrases, clauses and sentences. Koll and Funk (6) opine that the same kind of objectivity needed to study the grammar of an unknown language was applied to English grammar by a group of linguists who came to be known as structuralists. They introduced structural grammar which is based on structuralism. They go further to say the systemic nature of structuralism includes an analysis of the sound system (phonology), then the systemic combination of sounds into meaningful units and words (morphology) and finally, the systemic combination of words into meaningful phrase structures and sentence patterns. O'grady (9) concludes that because no language can exist without a grammar and no one can use a language without knowledge of its grammar, the study of grammatical systems has come to be the focus of contemporary linguistic analysis.

Radford (1) puts that grammar is traditionally subdivided into two different but interrelated areas of study which are morphology and syntax. He says morphology is the study of how words are formed out of smaller units (traditionally called morpheme), while syntax is concerned with the ways in which words can be combined together to form phrases and sentences. It is this area of grammar that is relevant to this study.

The rules of language which are embodied in grammar include morphological rules, syntax, and phonology (Wikipedia, 2017). On the other hand, Oludare (6-7) corroborates that grammar is a body of prescriptive statements about usages that are considered acceptable and those that are considered unacceptable in a particular language stated that grammar is subdivided in the aspect of morphology and syntax.

In the light of his research, Ojo (20) holds that morphology studies the structures of words and rules governing their formation while syntax is the study of grammatical structure of

sentences as built up of words. By implication, syntax is concerned with the stringing of words together in particular patterns to form meaningful sentences there by ensuring grammaticality and, by implication, correctness and acceptability.

According to Noam Chomsky (1965) in his text titled “Aspects of the Theory of Syntax” grammar is subdivided into diachronic grammar, synchronic grammar, universal grammar, descriptive grammar, contrastive grammar, and pedagogical grammar. According to Chomsky, the stratification of the concept is for easy handling of the concept since grammar is a difficult concept. To the scholar, diachronic grammar is concerned with the study of historical development of the grammar of a language from a period to another while synchronic grammar deals with grammar of language at a particular point in time. By implication therefore, the grammar of English can be studied from old English to present day English.

In words of Halliday M.A.K and Hassan in “Text and context” (80), universal grammar does with the general rule guiding all natural language without specificity neither to a particular language nor to a particular era or epoch of the language. On his part, Chomsky (1988) holds that universal grammar is

> ... a deductive science concerned with the immutable and general principles of spoken or written language, principles that form part of common human nature and that direct human reason in its intellectual operation (3).

By this universal grammar becomes a set of linguistic features of human language. Thus, the rule of a particular language at this level applies to other human languages. On the other hand, descriptive grammar deals with specific language. In other words, it does not see languages as having universal rules. It specifies grammatical rules for each language. Elson and Pickett, (20) explained that:

> …the descriptive grammar of English alone, for example, cannot reveal the learning problems of another language (like French) speaker or learner. We know that in any grammatical description of a language, its syntax, phonology and semantics are necessarily involved.

It becomes pertinent thus, to note that with descriptive grammar only a particular language is considered at a time.

Meanwhile, contrastive grammar is the comparison of two relevant scientific grammars Banjo (21). The aim of a contrastive grammar as the name implies is to find out in a systematic way points of similarly and difference between the two languages to be brought into contract in the learner. The procedure of contrastive grammar according to Banjo can be described thus:

> We begin with an analysis of the foreign language and compare it structure by structure with the native language. For each structure, we need to know if there is a structure in the native language that (is having the same meaning and is similarly distributed in the system of that language) (21).

In another instance, contrastive grammar is "related to descriptive grammar in the sense that the former is borne out of two descriptive grammars of two different languages like English and Yoruba" (Gwete, 81). This can be seen in the instance that we contrast the two descriptive grammars of English and Yoruba, we would then get a contrastive grammar of the two languages. This type of grammar is useful, not as a teaching grammar but as an informative grammar. Many scholars presume pedagogical grammar as an offshoot of contrastive grammar (Gwete, 81). According to Gwete, while scientific grammars like descriptive and contrastive grammar provide paradigm within which a linguistic can conduct his research, a pedagogical grammar on the other hand has a variety of forms and uses (21). One of such forms is used to teach the speaker of another

language. Another may be used to teach school children certain facts about their own language. Yet another will provide teachers with detailed exposition of the rules proposed by a particular group of linguists. The research at hand relies largely on contrastive grammar as it targets at comparing the grammar in essays among students of government secondary school Karshi to the grammar of Standard English language.

2.2 Gramatical Hierachy

2.2.1The morpheme

The morpheme is the smallest meaningful grammatical unit of language. Some are words on their own, but others are segment of words which are added to such free words to increase or modify their meanings. They help us to increase or modify their meanings. They help us to say exactly what we mean. For instance, ‘he is kind’ is different from ‘he is unkind’ because of the addition of the unit ‘un’ to the word ‘kind’.

The symbol [ ] is used to indicate morphemes. Thus ‘boys’ can be divided into two morphemes. [boy] + [-s]: ‘sleeping’ into [sleep] + [-ing]; and talked into [talk] + [-ed] the [-s] indicates that the world is plural and [-ing] shows that the verb is in the progressive form, while [-ed] indicates the past tense some free morphemes include [man][good] [great] [good] [teach], [musa] [chair]. Bound morphemes include [-ed] (as in ‘teacher’); [-er] (as in grater); [-s] (as in ‘plays’) [-ed] (as in ‘talked’)and [-ly] (as in quickly) each morpheme has meaning of its own and grammatical function to perform in the sentence in which it occurs.

To summarize, there are five grammatical units in English – the sentence, the clause, the phrase, the word and the morpheme. The sentence is the largest and consists of one or more clauses; the clause consists of one or more words; and the word consist of one or more morphemes. The morpheme is the smallest of the grammatical units.

2.2.2 The word

A phrase may consist of one or more words. The following are examples of one-word phrases:

Came/ran/he/i/musa/saw/quickly/conquered/ but some phrases consist of more than one word: ‘in the morning’ consist of three words; ‘with the basket’ has three and ‘the woman with the basket on her head’ has eight words.

The word may be simple (e.g., boy, is, they, come, jump, good, tea, quick) or it may be complex (e.g., teapot, larger, quickly, ex-teacher, singing, bread-winner, taxi-driver, boys, beautifully, gentleman, gentleman-liness). Some of them can be broken up further into smaller meaningful grammatical units. For example ‘boys may be divided into ‘boy’ and ‘-s’ The ‘-s’ indicates plural. ‘teapot’ can be broken up into ‘tea and pot’, each of which can stand on its own. Both the units that can stand on their own (e.g boy, they, come, book, quick, tea, pot) and those that cannot (eg, -s, -er, -ing, -ey, ex-, pre-, -ness) are meaningful and grammatical. They are called morphemes.

2.2.3 The phrase

A clause may consist of one or more phrases. Let us look at few examples. We shall use the single bar (/) to indicate the boundary:

In the morning/ with the basket/many people/john’s borrowed shirt/ my sister’s beautiful dress/very quickly/the stolen property/the food/on thetable/he/ate/it/he/conquered/i/waited/paitiently/i/believed/firmly/the bell/rang/the students/ran/out of the class/

As we see from these examples, none of the phrases has a subject and a predicate. What distinguish the clause from the phrase is that the clause has a subject and a predicate, but the phrase does not have both. The clause must have a finite verb; the phrase does not have to. There are four common methods of forming phrases.

Gerundive phrases are phrases which are introduced by berbal nouns, or gerunds because they end in – ing, eg going, eating, seeing. Here are examples:

1. I saw the boy going to the library.
2. Eating breakfast late is what I don’t like.
3. Seeing the giant, he r an away.

Preposition phrases are phrases which are introduced by prepositions such as at, from, on, by, with as in the following example:-

4. From the school to the farm is a distance of five kilometers.
5. The cars is on the bridge.
6. With fifty naira in his pocket, he should not starve.

Infinitival phrases are phrases which are introduced with the word 'to'

7. He was told to go home
8. They allowed him to marry their daughter.
9. To become a millionaire has always been his dream

Adverbial phrases are introduced by adverbs such as late, later, early, etc. example are:

10. The three men arrived early in the evening.
11. I will see you latter in the day.
12. More often than not, he misses the bus.

2.2.4 The clause

The clause has a subject and a predicate. The subject is group of words about which something is said, the Predicate is that part of the sentence which says something about the subject. For instance, in sentence

(1) 'Musa' is the subject, and 'ate the food' is the predicate. Similarly, in (3) "The woman with the basket "is the subject and 'ran across the road' is the predicate. Sentence (5) can be divided into two parts, namely, (a) 'When we came(b) the boys were sleeping each of these has a subject and a predicate. In (a) 'we' is the subject and 'came' is the predicate; in (b) 'the boys' is the subject and 'were sleeping' is the predicate.

each one of them is therefore a clause. You can see that

a sentence May consist of one clause or more. While

(1) - (3) are one — clause sentences; (4) - (9)

consist of more than one clause each. Now let us see if

we can break them up into their constituent clauses. We shall use two bars (//) to indicate clauses.

4. Musa saw food on the table// and (he) ate it.

5. When we came //the boys were sleeping.
6. He came// he saw// and he conquered.
7. I waited patiently// believed firmly/ and it came past at last
8. When the bell rang// the students ran out of the class
9. Danladi did not do well In the examination// because he had spent more than half of the year in hospital

The following units ate clauses in the sense that each one has a subject and predicate; each also expresses a single idea. Some of them can stand on their own (independent clauses); others cannot (dependent clauses).

Independent clauses

we saw them//they've been playing// we were doing Our homework //since yesterday// He came// I believed // he saw// it came at last// Danladi did not do well in the examination//

Dependent Clauses

that came last week// since school resumed// since the teacher has not come// when the headmaster came//

where she lives// because he had spent more than half the year in hospital// as soon as the bell ran//

Types of clauses

There are different types of clauses.

Soon clauses and adverbial clauses. They perform the functions of adjective, mounts, and adverts, respectively. Let us consider them more closely.

Adjectival Clauses

Adjectival clauses do exactly what adjectives do in sentences. They qualify nouns.

Study the following sentences.

10. That is the beautiful house.
11. That is the house which Adze built.

In the first sentence, the word 'beautiful' tells us More about the house. So, the word 'beautiful' is an adjective and it qualifies the noun 'house'. So also, in the second sentence, the clause 'which Adze built' is telling us more about the house. This clause does exactly

what the word ‘beautiful’ was doing. It is an adjectival clause; it qualifies the noun ‘house’. Remember this: **any clause which tells us more about noun (or which qualifies a noun) is an adjectival clause.** It is also called a relative clause.

The following words are used to introduce adjective clauses:- which, that, who, whose, and where. Here are further examples:

12. That is the boy that stole the goat.
13. The man who beat the dog to death has been arrested.
14. The lady whose wrist watch was taken has bought Another.
15. The old millionaire, on whom we relied for he disappointed us.
16. I want to visit the office where the agreement ending the war was signed.

each Of the clauses qualifies a noun. They qualify the boy, the man, the lady, the old millionaire and the office respectively. So, remember this: an adjectival Clause must qualify (or tell us more about) a noun.

Noun clauses

A noun clause performs the work of a noun. It can be replaced with a pronoun. Study the following examples:-

17. Adeyemi surprised me.
18. That Pat could score the goal surprised me.

In the first sentence, Adeyemi is a noun. It forms the subject of the sentence and can be replaced with the pronoun ‘he’. Similarly, in the second sentence, “That Pat could score the goal’ occupies the same position as ‘Adeyemi’ does in the first sentence. This clause does the work of a noun and can be replaced with the pronoun ‘it’. Inis the subject of the sentence. Itis therefore a noun clause. It functions as the subject of the verb ‘surprised.’

So, remember, any clause which takes the place of a

noun is a noun clause.

Noun clauses normally perform the functions of ordinary nouns in a sentence. Thus, a noun clause can serve as the subject of a sentence, as the object of a verb, as acompliment of the subject, as a compliment of the object, as the compliment of a preposition.

We now demonstrate cach of these functions.

Noun Clause as the subject of a sentence

This has been demonstrated in examples (17) and (18).

In example (17), the subject of the sentence is ‘Adeyemi’.

In example (18), the subject is a clause, “That Pat could score the goal.’ Here are a few more examples:-

19. Where the warrior was buried is not known tilltoday.
20. What they were planning is very good.Noun Clause as object of the verb Study the following examples:
21. We received the pen.
22. He received what I sent him.

In number (21), the object of the verb received is ‘the pen.’ This is noun. In number 22, ‘what I sent him’ is a noun clause. Just as the pen functions as the object of the verb received, so does what I sent him function-as the object of the same verb ‘received’ . Here are two more examples:

23. Nobody knows where the warrior was buried.
24. You should eat what you are given.

Noun clauses as complement

Consider the following:

25. Music is my hobby.
26. Music is what we require.

In sentence 25 and 26 ‘my hobby ‘and what we require serve as complement to the same subject ‘music’ study these other examples:

27. What he told me was that she is honest.
28. The main issue is how we shall get money.

Identify the subject of the main clause in 27 and 28 and explain the function of the noun clause in italics.

2.2.5 The sentence

You are familiar with the sentence. It is a unit containing at least one independent clause. For example:

1. Musa ate the food.
2. The man ate the meat raw.
3. The woman with the basket ran across the road.

Some sentence can be longer and more complex than 1,2 and 3.

4. Musa saw the food on the table and ate it
5. When we came the boy were sleeping.

6. He saw, and he conquered.
7. I waited patiently// believed firmly/ and it came past at last
8. When the bell rang// the students ran out of the class
9. Danladi did not do well In the examination// because he had spent more than half of the year in hospital.

Syntax is simply the study of phrases, clauses and sentences in a language. According to Chomsky (11), it is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages. The syntactic investigation of a given language has its goal as the construction of a grammar that can be viewed as a device of some sort for producing the sentences of the language it is concerned with. Yule (100) defines syntax as the study of the structure and ordering of components within a sentence. Therefore, it can be deduced that the sentence and its constituents are the primary concern of syntax as such; a syntactic analysis is usually confined to the sentence level of every language. Koll and Funk (371) view syntax as the structure of sentences, and the relationship of the parts of the sentences. From these definitions, it is noted that syntactic units as the constituents of sentences are the primary concern of every syntactic analysis in the study of a language.

In the opinion of Radford (14) within traditional grammar, the syntax of a language is described in terms of taxonomy (i.e. the classificatory list) of the range of different types of syntactic structures found in the language. He further argues that the central assumption underpinning syntactic analysis in traditional grammar is that phrases and sentences are built up of a series of constituents (i.e. syntactic units) each of which belong to a specific grammatical category and serves a specific grammatical function. Given this assumption, the task of any grammatical analysis of the syntactic structure of any type of sentence is to identify each of the constituents in the sentence, what category it belongs to and the function it serves. That is to say the primary concern of this study is syntactic in

nature. Syntax is believed to be a complex aspect of the English grammar because of the complexities of its structures. This explains why Aitchison (17) argues that syntactic change, that is, change in form and order of words is sometimes described as an elusive process compared to sound change. She explains that its apparent puzzling nature is partly due to its variety.

2.2.6 The Concept of Second Language Learning

Language learning and language acquisition are concepts that are used interchangeably in most cases but which have some technical differences Corder (167). Corder believed that language acquisition is a process where a language is naturally introduced to the cognitive of an individual. By this language acquisition becomes a natural phenomenon which takes place in a natural environment. On the other hand, language is introduced into the cognitive of an individual in a formal setting and in formal ways.

According to Wikipeadia (2017) second language acquisition (L2), second language Learning (L2), or language two acquisitions is one and the same concept. To the web, it is the process by which people learn a second language (L2). It is perceived as a scientific process. For Krashen (17), the primary factor driving second language acquisition (SLA) appears to be the language input that learners receive. Learners become more advanced the longer they are immersed in the language they are learning, and the more time they spend doing free voluntary reading.

Agreeing with the earlier assumption of difference between language learning and language acquisition, Krashen holds that the input hypothesis makes a distinction between language acquisition and language learning. He claims in his own view that acquisition is a subconscious process, whereas learning is a conscious one. In the view Sole (94), the learning process, is consciously learning and inputting the language being learned.

Researches on how exactly learners acquire a new language spans a number of different areas. Focus is directed toward providing proof of whether basic linguistic skills are innate, acquired, or a combination of the two attributes. This question has led to the emergence of different schools of language acquisition/learning; the cognitive approaches to SLA deal with the processes in the brain that underpin language acquisition, the socio-cultural approach rejects the notion that SLA is purely psychological phenomenon and attempt to explain it on the basis of social context, and the linguists' approach to SLA consider language separately from other kinds of knowledge and attempt to use findings from the wider study of linguistics to explain second language acquisition and learning.

Whatever school or approach one chooses to align with, it is important to note that language learning and language acquisition is a combination of both psychological and social factors. At any point in language learning, there is bound to be errors or deviation which may emanate from psychological factors or socio-cultural factors.

Learning a first or second language always entails, or is attended by errors. Errors and mistakes are usually thought of as a problem. However, authorities in the field have now this area of agreement: errors are a useful or necessary part of language learning. They are the indicators of the stage or progress of one's language learning. Hence, errors must not be regarded as evils that hinder progress of learning. They in fact reveal the strategies and styles that learners devise and use to learn in their struggle to master the language system of the target language. Masorong (20) asserts that mistakes are inevitable since learners try different ways to master the language as a means for a more effective communication. Thus, errors provide valuable insight into the language learning process not just to the learners of the target language, but also to ELT practitioner. It is errors that serve as the basis for a more effective program for the treatment of the errors committed.

Learners who are learning the language always have to deal with errors. Language errors committed by language learners are considered to be an ordinary thing. Although most people consider it as a failure, the behaviourists who viewed language errors as a sign of bad formation which would become a habit eventually did not tolerate the commission of errors. To them, constant language errors would form a habit that is difficult to correct or outgrow later. Different views on how language errors should be treated sprouted and had made a place in issues of language teaching and learning. The fundamental issue is: to correct or not to correct. And there is the problem of how this shall be done, which depends on a number of considerations. In fact, some quarters believe that the teacher's job is to help the learners improve their English, and sometimes this is done by not correcting. Over-emphasis on correctness can be counterproductive. Paying too much attention to correctness does not seem to be speaking a language at all (Edge, 19).

Error analysis is based on developmentalism (learning develops in stages as learners interact with the environment). Amato (96) explains that error analysis looks at the errors made by learners while they are learning positively and consider the errors as necessary to the development of language, be it first or second language.

2.4 The Concept of Error

Every user of a language encounters one problem or the other in the course of using that language. These problems occur as a result of incomplete mastery of that particular language. Users of a second language try to overcome these problems which indicate some level of incompetence in the language. Lay men normally dismiss this incompetence as slips or mistakes, but for linguists such as Headbloom cited in Ubahakwe, "errors are not the same as mistakes" (28). He goes on to say that "mistakes are not systematic but occur as a result of some phonological or

sociological conditions" (28). Thus, we can say that some mistakes do not indicate one's level of competence. Such random mistakes can be taken as slips such as spoonerisms and slips of tongue or pen. When mistakes are consistent and non-random, they are counted as errors, at any level of language. The concept of language errors is a fuzzy one, pursuing an adequate definition of errors is like chasing a slippery eel. Just as its outline appears to emerge, it disappears into another conceptual category. Linguists have not fully agreed on the criterion for defining errors. Research into the field of errors is based now on the nature of errors. A sociologist, Labov, in trying to highlight the difficulties in stating what an error is, has this to say:

> If someone uses a sentence structure that is not generated by the grammar, there is nothing to prevent us from setting it aside as a mistake or a dialect difference (200).

The term 'error', according to Hornby is "a thing done wrongly, a mistake". The term is related to the verb 'to err' which in Latin originally meant "to wander from" (390). Thus, an error is taken to mean a deviation from a norm. One therefore, wonders what this norm actually is. Some people will refer to particular expressions as errors because they do not belong to the prestige dialect but this should not be so. This is because modern linguists emphasize what speakers can say rather than what speakers should say, that is, grammar should account for what is possible rather than what is the preferred standard of language. Investigations of errors should be on violation of grammatical rules, that is, deviations from what is possible in a language or a variety of that language rather than from formal registers.

Most linguists do not bother defining errors because of their controversial nature; rather, they go ahead to discuss sources of errors and their types. Some

definitions of errors include the one by Richards which says that in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner, the use of a linguistic term in a way which a fluent or native speaker of a language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning is an error (127).

He also defines errors as "faults made by speakers during the production of sounds, words and sentences' (127). In the same vein, Headbloom (in Ubahakwe (ed.)), defines it as "a systematic deviation from the target language by a non-native speaker"

From the above definitions, it could be established that errors are deviations from standard use of a language or possibilities in a language whether in writing or in speech.

2.2.8 Types of Errors

Having established the meaning of errors, we will now look at different types of errors. Many linguists have classified errors under different sub- headings. We will look at their different opinions on error types.

2.2.9 Opinions of Non-Nigerian Linguists on Error Types

Some non-Nigerian linguists have done several classifications of errors. They include Corder (1967) and (1981), Selinker (1972), Dulay and Burt (1974), Olson (1974), Richards (1971), Ochs Elinors (1985) and Luelsdorf (1991).

In reviewing the work done by Corder and Selinker, we rely on the analysis of Mcdonough and Headbloom (1979). Corder classifies errors as pre-systematic, systematic and postsystematic errors. Pre-systematic errors are made while the learner is still trying to form concepts of the language. On the other hand, systematic errors are made when the learner has understood a concept about the language, that is, he has formed a hypothesis which is actually wrong, for example, overgeneralization –

having learnt the past tense morpheme "-ed", he used it to form past tense of all verbs even when it is not necessary, for example, "He comed", "He goed, among others". The post-systematic errors occur when a learner has learnt a lot about a language but have the course to temporarily forget some. These appear in the form of slips and mistakes, for example, using the wrong indefinite article "a/an". Corder's classification is rather broad and does not specify small points. It considers stages of the language learning process but does not consider the language user.

Another linguist, Larry Selinker (in Headbloom and Mcdonough) concentrates on Corder's systematic errors and classifies them into the following groups – language transfer, transfer of training, second language communication strategy and overgeneralization. Language transfer refers to a situation where the learner transfers aspects of his first language into the target language. Transfer of training refers to a situation where errors occur as a result of aspects of his training, that is, methods or procedures of training. Second language learning strategy on the other hand, involves simply the target language manoeuvred to suit the learner and thus errors emanate.

Second language communication strategy refers to when the errors are as a result of communication in the target language with native speakers. Overgeneralization refers to errors which occur as a result of overgeneralization of target language rules. Larry Selinker's classification is actually an elaboration on Corder's systematic errors. He broadens Corder's classification and makes it more comprehensive.

Elinor (7) (in Slobin) classifies errors in terms of norms violated. He talks of socially – variable norms and categorical norms. Socially variable norms, he discusses in terms of social contexts. Thus, he discusses socially variable errors such as reducing the consonant cluster in a syllable such as /st/ to /s/ - /fæst/ to /fæs/ or /nt/ to

/n/ as in /w nt/ to /w n/, and classifies it under socially – variable errors as it may be judged as unacceptable in formal situation, but in casual situations they will go unnoticed. But an error such as placing the definite article after the noun it modifies in English as in *"Boys the cried a lot" is classified as a categorical error because it will be judged as unacceptable across settings and speakers.

Luelsdorf (20) classifies errors under five headings – transposition errors as in pupil – pilpu; displacement as in every- verye, alm – arlm; addition as in right-righte, ice cream – ice creame; omission as in highest – hiest, remembering – rembering, substitution as in thinks – sinks, altogether altogesser.

Richards classifies errors into two groups. The first classification goes thus.

- According to vocabulary – lexical errors;
- According to pronunciation – phonological errors;
- According to grammar – syntactic errors;
- According to misunderstanding of a speaker intention – interpretative/semantic errors;
- According to production of wrong communicative effects – pragmatic errors (127).

The second classification is based on second language learners' performance:

- Interlingual error (interference) - *Is the book of my friend.

- Intralingual errors (overgeneralization) –

* "I wonder where are you going".

* "He comed yesterday".

- Developmental errors – those reflecting natural stages of development. These are also equated to intralingual errors.

- Errors of avoidance – those result from failure to use certain target language structure because they are thought to be too difficult, or where they are likely to make errors.

- Errors of over – production (redundancy reduction) –

* "I studied English for two years".

- Induced errors – those resulting from transfer of training for example, teacher's presentation of material, "as if" = "like" - * "She cries as if the baby cries" for "She cries like a baby" (127 – 8).

Corder (36) criticizes classification of errors by most teachers under omission, addition, selection and wrong ordering errors. He describes it as inadequate and elementary. He goes on to talk of other teachers who go a step further to describe the linguistic levels in which these errors are committed – graphological, phonological, grammatical and lexico-semantic.

For instance, in saying that an error is phonological or as an omission error, he suggests a better classification in terms of systems such as tense, gender, number, mood, and case. For example, *"I am writing here since three o'clock". He describes this error as a selection of wrong tense, non-perfective in place of perfective tense.

2.2.10 Opinions of Nigerian Linguists

Nigerian linguists have done quite some work on types of errors. These include Ohale (1992), Otu (1994), Ogbulogo (1997), Headbloom (1979), Omojuwa (1979), and Obi-Okoye (1989).

Ohale (in Otagburuagu et al) classifies errors into three major groups – phono-graphological, semantic and syntactic. She describes phono-graphogical errors as errors which have a phonological base. Such errors have misrepresentation in speech, for example, *"The government offers lones to farmers" instead of "The government

offers loans to farmers", "alife" instead of "alive", "sites" instead of "suits". He describes semantic errors as a situation whereby speakers of a language may use words and sentences due to ignorance of the possible meanings of words, for example, *"My uncle has two upstairs in the village", instead of "My uncle has a two-storied building in the village". *"He is packing his load", instead of "He is packing his luggage". He also groups syntactic errors into prepositional errors, overgeneralization, concord errors and mother tongue interference errors (150-2).

Otu (in Nwachukwu et al) groups errors into two main groups – interference errors and ignorance of or improper mastery of the usage rules of the second language. He says that one is more efficient (in terms of performance) in ones first language than in any other language one learns in the process of growing up (83). He groups improper mastery of the usage rules of the second language into the rules of number, rules of concord, use of prepositions and conjunctions. Although Otu's classification may be easy to appreciate, his classification seems to be in terms of areas of difficulty for students rather than types of errors.

Headbloom (in Ubahakwe (ed.) discusses error types in relation to the individual learner. He considers age as a necessary criterion for error classification. He identifies differences between child and adult learning errors. According to him, when an adult encounters problems during his second language learning process and has difficulties in communication, he automatically falls back on his mother tongue and, in effect, produces Interlingua errors. A child on the other hand needs a less complex code for self expression and as such will be able to express himself within the limits of his second language. Thus, the child as a second language learner would produce errors which involve difficult aspects of the new language, that is, developmental errors.

Omojuwa [in Ubahakwe (ed.)] classifies errors under two categories – linguistic and psycholinguistic errors. He categorizes linguistic errors into tense, agreement, spelling and infinitive errors. He further sub-divides the psycholinguistic errors into three categories – errors which the learner can detect by himself and correct, if given the opportunity; random unsystematic errors which are those due to emotional upset, fatigue and slips; and the other category involves errors which the learner cannot identify and cannot correct even when someone identifies them for him. Omojuwa's classification is quite sound but it is actually a guide to a teacher of a second language, rather than types of errors. Having seen the various classifications of errors, we wonder which one to adopt or to use. They are all credible and reasonable according to which perspective they are viewed from. For the purpose of this investigation, errors have been categorized based on Nigerian situation. English is a second language in Nigeria, so we need to consider a second language situation and then classify errors for our purpose into:

- Graphological errors;
- Syntactic errors; and
- Semantic errors.

Graphological errors refer to errors of writing, such as wrong spelling and punctuation. Syntactic errors refer to errors of "grammar", such as wrong tense, agreement, use of wrong verbs or adverbs and preposition in a sentence. Semantic errors refer to a situation where a speaker may use a word to convey messages, which do not bear any relationship to the linguistic content of the word. It is necessary to note that these three classes of errors may occur as a result of interference from the learner's first language.

Concord

Scholars have expressed different views on the term concord. Johannson (6) quoting Woods (125) says it is the subject and the verb agreement that holds in grammar. To Johannson, the verb is considered to be the heart of the sentence. He therefore mentions that it has to take the same grammatical form as its controller, the subject. Quirk et al (755) defines the agreement between the subject and the verb as the relationship between two grammatical units such that one of them displays a particular feature that accords with a displayed feature in the other. One of the main problems faced in grammar is keeping the agreement between the subject and the verb consistent in a sentence. All nouns and pronouns have number and they have to agree with the verb. As Vannestal (73) asserts that the subject and the verb are the two most important items in a sentence. According to Eteh (36), concord refers to a complete agreement between a subject and a verb. The idea of concord in the grammar of English suggests that for English sentence to be correct and meaningful; its constituent's part (i.e. subject, verb, and object, adverbial) must be in perfect agreement. Therefore, every verb must agree in number with its subject. If the subject/object is singular, the verb should be singular. Long (606) argued that 'for a sentence to make sense, subjects and verbs have to agree with each other…' She goes further to assert that issues about subject-verb agreement are relevant basic skills which every student must strive to acquire.

Svartvik and Sager (541) describe agreement as two or more grammatical elements agreeing with another. Agreement demands that a subject in the singular is followed by a finite verb in the singular and that a subject in the plural is followed by a finite verb in the plural. The subject and the verb have to agree in number; if the subject is singular, the third person 's' has to be attached to the verb and if the subject is plural the third person 's' has to be omitted.

As said above, there must be an agreement between the subject and the verb in sentences of English language. Both must be singular or both must be plural. So also the use of first person singular inflection if the subject is a singular proper noun, a singular common noun, a mass noun or a third person singular pronoun is paramount. For proper or common plural nouns, for first person singular pronouns or for plural pronouns, no inflection is used in the present tense.

Leech and Svartvik (541) further listed categories of concord requirement to be as follows:

i. Number: whether a constituent is in a singular form or in a plural form.

ii. Person: whether a constituent is in first, second, or third person form.

iii. Gender: whether a constituent is masculine or feminine.

The various definitions of concord have been buttressed by Freeborn(43) who opines that 'grammar provides the rules for putting words into the right order so that our meaning is clear' the researcher finds Freeborn's definition of grammar interesting and relevant to this study in that for English to be taught and learnt properly the basic grammatical rules should not be violated; and since concord is an aspect of English grammar, it behoves teachers, students and other users of language to adhere to the rules governing it in order to achieve effective communication.

General Rule

Concord (also termed 'agreement') can be defined as the relationship between two grammatical units such that one of them displays a particular feature (e.g. Plurality) that accords with a displayed (or semantically implicit) feature in the other. The most important

type of concord in English is concord of third person number between subject and verb. The rule is:

A singular subject requires a singular verb:

My daughter *watches* television after supper. (singular subject + singular verb)

A plural subject requires a plural verb:

My daughters *watch* television after supper. (plural subject + plural verb)

When the subject is realized by a noun phrase, the phrase counts as singular if its head is singular:

The change in male attitudes *is* most obvious in industry.

The changes in male attitude *are* most obvious in industry.

Finite and nonfinite clauses generally count as singular:

To treat them as hostages *is* criminal.

Smoking cigarettes *is* dangerous to health.

How you got there *doesn't* concern me.

Prepositional phrases and adverbs functioning as subject also count as singular:

In the evenings *is* best for me.

Slowly *does* it.

An apparent exception for clauses is the nominal relative clause. Nominal relative clauses are on the continuum from clause to noun phrase. For the purpose of concord, their number depends on the interpretation of the number of the *wh*-element. With the determiners

what and whatever, the concord depends on the number of the determined noun. Contrast (3) and (4) below:

i. What were supposed to be new proposals *were* in fact modifications of earlier ones.

ii. What was once a palace *is* now a pile of rubble.

iii. Whatever book a *Times* reviewer praises *sells* well.

iv. What ideas he has *are* his wife's.

A verb counts as singular if the first verb in a finite verb phrase has a singular form:

My son *has* no intention of spending a vacation with me.

My sons *have* no intention of spending a vacation with me.

A letter *has* been sent to every applicant.

Two letters *have* been sent to every applicant.

2.5.2 Application of General Rule Restricted in Several General Respects

The first is for the verb **be** the verb shows a distinction of number only in the third person present. Hence, the verb generally does not show concord in the past:

My daughter *watched* television after supper.

My daughters *watched* television after supper.

The verb **be** displays concord in the third person past:

My daughter *was* watching television in my bedroom.

My daughters *were* watching television in my bedroom.

Secondly number concord is displayed only in the indicative. Non-finite verbs, imperatives, and subjunctives make no number distinctions:

My daughter *may* watch television after supper.

My daughters *may* watch television after supper.

Note that (a) it is possible to generalize the rule of concord to 'A subject which is not clearly semantically plural requires a singular verb'; that is, to treat singular as the unmarked form, to be used in neutral circumstances, where no positive indication of plurality is present. This will explain in addition to clausal subjects, the tendency in informal speech for is/ was to follow the pseudo-subject there in existential sentences such as *There's hundreds of people on the waiting list.* Similarly, interrogative who and what as subjects normally take a singular verb even when the speaker has no reason to believe that more than one person or entity is involved: *who is making all that noise?* However, a plural verb may be used if other words in the sentence indicate that a plural subject is expected in the answer (*who has not received their passes*?).

On the other hand, the principle of proximity effects a change from singular to plural more often than the reverse, perhaps because the plural is the form that is morphologically unmarked. (b) Apparent exceptions to the concord rule arise with singular nouns ending with the –s of the plural inflection (*measles, billiards, mathematics* etc), or conversely plural nouns lacking inflection (*cattle, people, clergy* etc):

Measles *is* sometimes serious.

Our people *are* complaining.

(c) Plural phrases (including coordinate phrases) count as singular if they are used as names, titles quotations, etc):

Crime and punishment is perhaps the best constructed of Dostoyevsky's novel, but *The Brothers Karamazov* is undoubtedly his masterpiece.

'The cedars' has a huge garden.

Senior citizens' means, in common parlance, people over sixty.

Such noun phrases can be regarded as appositive structures with an implied singular head*; the book 'Crime and Punishment', the expression 'senior citizens'.* The titles of some works that are collections of stories, etc, may be counted as either singular or plural:

The Canterbury Tales exists in many manuscripts.

The Canterbury Tales exist in many manuscripts.

(d) On the treatment of *data, media, criteria, and phenomena* as singular nouns.

(e) Zero plural nouns do not display number. Hence, when they are subject and the verb is a modal or simple past, number, differences manifest themselves only covertly through pronoun reference.

The sheep jumped over the fence, *didn't it?*

The sheep jumped over the fence, *didn't they?*

2.5.3 Principles of Grammatical Concord, Notional Concord, and Proximity Concord

The rule that the verb matches its subject in number may be called the principle of Grammatical Concord. Difficulties over concord arise through occasional conflict between this two other principles: the principle of notional concord and the principle of proximity.

Notional concord is agreement of verb with subject according to the notion of number rather than with the actual presence of the grammatical marker for that notion. Notional concord to Ashipu (80) is the relationship between the subject and the verb of a sentence according to the idea of number. However, the grammatical item which indicates the number idea needs not to be present. In other words, the subject of the sentence, plural does not have the plural's'. This by implication makes it look like singular subject. For example, collective nouns such as *government* are often treated as notionally plural:

The government *have* broken all their promises. {British English}

In this example, the plural notion is signalled not only by plural verb *have,* but also by the pronoun *their*.

The principle of proximity, also termed 'attraction', denotes agreement of the verb with a closely preceding noun phrase that functions as subject:

No one except his own supporters *agree* with him.

The preceding plural noun *supporters* has influenced the choice of the plural verb *agree,* although the subject *No one except his own supporters* is grammatically singular, since the head *no one* is singular. On the other hand, the proximity principle is here reinforced by concord ('only his own supporters agree with him'), making the sentence somewhat more acceptable than if the proximity principle alone applied. The choice of the verb may also be influenced by preceding coordinated noun phrases, even if they are singular:

A good *knowledge* of English, Russian, and French *are* required for this position.

Conflict between grammatical concord and attraction through proximity tends to increase with the distance between the noun phrases head of the subject and the verb, for

example when the post modifier is lengthy or when an adverbial or a parenthesis intervenes between the subject and the verb.

Proximity concord occurs mainly in unplanned discourse. In writing it will be corrected to grammatical concord if it is noticed.

The three principles and their interaction will be illustrated below in three areas where concord causes some problems: where the subject contains (a) a collective noun head; (b) coordination; and (c) an indefinite expression.

English speakers are often uncertain about the rules of concord. Prescriptive teaching has insisted rather rigidly on grammatical concord, with the result that people often experience a conflict between this rule and the rule of notional concord, which tends to prevail over it. When the proximity principle is followed in defiance of the other principles, the result is likely to be condemned as an error.

Note that (a) the principle of notional concord accounts for the common use of a singular with subjects that are plural noun phrase of quantity or measure. The entity expressed by the noun phrase is viewed as a single unit:

Ten dollars *is* all I have left. [‘That amount is ….’]

Fifteen years *represents* a long period of his life. [‘That period is ….’]

Two miles *is* as far as they can walk. [‘That area is….’]

Two thirds of the area *is* under water. [‘That number of people means….’]

Sixty people means a huge party. [‘That number of people means….’]

(b) We also find a type of number concord at the phrase level in that certain determiners agree in number with their noun heads *that idea, those ideas*. There are apparent exceptions with measure noun phrase:

that five dollars (also: *those* five dollars) *every* few miles

this last two weeks(also: *these* last two weeks) *each* ten ounces

another two *days* *another* five per cent

a happy three *months*

A few and *a good many* function as units:

a good many friends a *few* days

(c) Grammatical concord is usually obeyed for *more than* and *many a*, though it may conflict with notional concord:

More than a thousand inhabitants *have* signed the petition. (1)

More than one member *has* protested against the proposal. (2)

Many a member *has* protested against the proposal. (3)

Although the subject is notionally plural in (2) and (3), the singular is preferred because *member* is analyzed as head of the noun phrase. Contrast:

More members than one *have* protested against the proposal.

Many members *have* protested against the proposal.

2.5.4 Collective Nouns and Notional Concord

Singular collective nouns may be notionally plural. The verb may be either singular or plural:

The audience *were* enjoying every minute of it. (1)

The public *are* tired of demonstrations. (2)

England *have* won the cup. (3)

Our planning committee *have* considered your request. (4)

The choice between singular or plural verbs depends in {British English} on whether the group is being considered as a single undivided body, or as a collection of individuals. Thus, in {British English} plural is more likely in (1) than singular, because attention is directed at the individual reactions of members of the audience.

On the other hand, the singular is more likely in these sentences:

The audience *was* enormous. (1a)

The public *consists* of you and me. (2a)

The crowd *has* been dispersed. (5)

In contrast to (1a), *The audience were enormous* might be interpreted to refer to an audience of enormous people. On the whole, the plural is more popular in speech, whereas in the more inhibited medium of writing the singular is probably preferred. It is generally safer in {British English} to use the singular verb where there is doubt, in obedience to grammatical concord.

{American English} generally treats singular collective nouns as singular. Terms for the government and for sports teams are nearly always treated as singular in {American English} but other terms may (less commonly than in {British English}) take plural verbs:

The administration *has* announced its plans for stimulating the economy.

America *has* won the cup.

The public *has* a right to know. (Also in American English: The public *have* a right to know.)

But, as in British English, plural pronouns are often used in American English to refer to singular collective nouns:

The committee *has* not yet decided how *they* should react to the Governor's letter.

Note that (a) if the collective noun subject occurs in the plural, the verb is plural in both {British English and American English}: *The various committees are now meeting to discuss your proposal*.

(b) When a noun referring to a collection of people has plural concord, the pronoun for which it is antecedent tend to be *who/whom/they/them* rather than *which/it*. Compare:

a family *who quarrel* amongst *themselves*

a family *which dates* back to the Norman Conquest

(e*) Couple* in the sense of two persons normally has a plural verb even in {American English}: *They couple are happily married.* When it denotes a unit, the singular verb is used: *Each couple was asked to complete a form.*

2.5.5 Coordinated subject

2.5.5.1 Coordination with *and*

When a subject consists of two or more noun phrases (or clauses) coordinated by and, a distinction has to be made between coordination and coordinative apposition.

Coordination comprises cases that correspond to fuller coordinate forms. A plural verb is used even if each conjoins is singular:

Tom and Alice *are* now ready. ('Tom is now ready and Alice is now ready.')

What I say and what I think *are* my own affair. ('What I say is my own affair and what I think is my own affair'.)

A plural verb is similarly required in asyndetic coordination (without a coordinator):

His camera, his radio, his money *were* confiscated by the customs officials.

Conjoins expressing a mutual relationship, even though they can only indirectly be treated as reductions of clauses in this way, also take a plural verb:

Your problem and mine *are* similar. ('Your problem is similar to mine and mine is similar to yours.')

What I say and do *are* two different things. ('What I say is one thing and what I do is another thing.')

Note that (a) If a singular noun phrase is followed by *etc* and similar abbreviatory expressions (*and so on, and so forth*), a plural verb is normal:

The size etc *are* less important for our purposes.

(b) Proposed *each* or *every* has a distributive effect and requires a singular verb:

Every adult and every child *was* holding a flag.

Each senator and congress man *was* allocated two seats.

Contrast:

Each of them *has* signed a petition. They *have* each signed the petition.

(c) The coordination markers respective and respectively occur in coordination, but not in coordinative apposition.

(d) The principle of notional concord explains:

The hammer and sickle *was* flying from the flagpole.

Danish bacon and eggs *makes* a good solid English breakfast.

The bat and ball *sells* good beer.

Despite the coordination, the subject names a single flag, a single meal, and a single pub respectively. Contrast:

Danish bacon and eggs *sell* very well in London.

(e) Arithmetical sums may be used with a singular or plural verb:

Two and two *is* four.

Two and two *are* four.

So also Ten times five is (or are) fifty; two fives make (or makes) ten. But two fives are ten; ten minus two is eight; ten into fifty is five.

2.5.5.2 Coordination within a Singular Subject

A singular non count noun head may be premodified by phrases coordinated by *and*. As subject, the resulting noun phrase may imply two (or more) separate sentences, and may then be legitimately followed by a plural verb:

American and Dutch beer *are* (both) much lighter than British beer.

('American beer is … and Dutch beer is…')

White and brown sugar *are* (equally) acceptable for this recipe.

But a singular verb is often used in this context, and is required when the phrases are post-modifying:

Beer from America and Holland *is* much lighter than British beer.

When the subject is a nominal relative clause, coordination reduction allows some variation in number interpretation:

What I say and do *are* my own affair. ('What I say is … and what I do….')

What I say and do *is* my own affair. ('That which I say and do….')

A generic noun phrase with a singular count head requires a plural verb when the head is premodified and the premodification contains coordination by *and*:

The short-term and (the) long-term loan *are* handled very differently by the bank.

A first-language and (a) second-language learner *share* some strategies in their acquisition of the language.

These noun phrases are notionally plural ('short-term and long-term loans'; 'first-language and second-language learners').

2.5.5.3 Coordinative Apposition

With the less common coordinative apposition, no reduction is implied, since each of the coordinated units has the same reference. Hence, a singular verb is required if each noun phrase is singular:

> This temple of ugliness and memorial to Victorian bad taste *was* erected in the main street of the city.

The two opening noun phrases here both refer to one entity (a statue). The following example, however, could have either a singular or plural verb, depending on the meaning:

> His aged servant and the subsequent editor of his collected papers *was* with him at his dead bed.

> His aged servant and the subsequent editor of his collected papers *were* with him at his dead bed.

Singular *was,* is used if the servant and the editor are the same person, and plural *were* if they are two different people.

Some latitude is allowed in the interpretation of abstract nouns:

> Your fairness and impartiality *has* been much appreciated.

> Your fairness and impartiality *have* been much appreciated.

> Her calmness and confidence *is* astonishing.

> Her calmness and confidence *are* astonishing.

> Law and order *has* been established.

> Law and order *have* been established.

Invoking the principle of notional concord, we may use either singular or plural, depending on whether qualities are seen as separate or as a complex unity.

Note that (a) The correlatives *both …and* … mark coordination in subject noun phrases: *Both her calmness and confidence are astonishing*. With subject complements they mark coordinative apposition: *She is both secretary and treasurer*. Contrast:

Both my wife and my secretary *were* there. (two persons)

She *was* both my wife and my secretary. (one person)

(b)Noun phrases are usually apposed without a coordinator. If they are subject, a singular verb is required if the noun phrases themselves are singular:

This temple of ugliness, a memorial to Victorian bad taste, *was* erected in the main street of the city.

(c)A repeated determiner bases the choice to plural:

Your fairness and your impartiality *have* been much appreciated.

2.5.5.4 Quasi-Coordination

Subject noun phrases may be linked by quasi-coordinators i.e. prepositions (such as along, with, rather than, and as well as) that are semantically similar to coordinators. Grammatical concord requires a singular verb if the first noun phrase is singular:

The captain, as well as the other players, *was* tired.

One speaker after another *was* complaining about the lack of adequate sanitation.

Occasionally the principle of notional concord (sometimes combined with the proximity principle) prompts the plural, especially in loosely expressed speech:

One man with his wife both looking very anxious, *were* pleading with a guard to let them through.

The President, together with his advisors, *are* preparing a statement on crisis.

If an adverbial is attached to a second noun phrase linked to the first noun phrase by and, the construction is considered parenthetic and grammatical concord similarly requires the verb to agree in number with the first noun phrase:

A writer, and sometimes an artist, *is* invited to address the society.

The ambassador- and perhaps his wife too- *is* likely to be present.

The same grammatical rule applies when the second phrase is negative, whether or not linked by *and*, though here the principle of notional concord reinforces the use of the singular:

The Prime minister, (and) not the monarch, *decides* government policy.

2.5.5.5 Coordination with or and nor

The rules are different for subject phrases or clauses which are coordinated with (*either*…) *or*:

Either the mayor or her deputy *is* bound to come. (1a)

Either the mayor or her deputy * *are* bound to come. (1b)

What I say or what I think *is* no business of yours. (2a)

What I say or what I think **are* no business of yours. (2b)

Either the strikers or the bosses **has* misunderstood the claim. (3a)

Either the strikers or the bosses have misunderstood the claim. (3b)

Either your brake or your eyesight *is* at fault. (4a)

Either your brake or your eyesight ?*are* at fault. (4b)

Either your eyesight or your brake *are* at fault. (5a)

Either your eyesight or your brake ?*is* at fault. (5b)

All these involve non appositional coordination. Grammatical is clear when each member of the coordination has the same number: when they are both singular [as in (1a) and (2a)], the verb is singular; when they are both plural [as in (3b)], the verb is plural. A dilemma arises when one member is singular and the other plural [as in (4) and (5)]. Notionally, or is disjunctive, so that each member is separately related to the verb rather than the two members being considered one unit, as when the coordinator is additive and. Since the dilemma is not clearly resolvable by the principles of grammatical concord or notional concord, recourse is generally had to the principle of proximity: whichever phrase comes last determines the number of the verb, as in (4) and (5).

Where the disjunctive force is weak and or approaches the meaning of and, the plural verb is sometimes found with singular subject phrases, especially in the informal usage;

Jogging or swimming *is* supposed to be good for the heart.

Jogging or swimming*?are* supposed to be good for the heart.

When *or* is used for coordinative apposition, grammatical concord requires the number of the verb to agree with the first appositive if the two appositives differ in number:

The hero, or main protagonist, *is* Major Coleman.

The hawks, or bellicose officials, *are* in the ascendancy.

Gobbledygook, or the circumlocutions of bureaucratic language, *is* intentionally difficult to understand.

The circumlocutions of bureaucratic language, or gobbledygook, *are* intentionally difficult to understand.

The rules for the negative correlatives *neither… nor* are the same as for *either… or* in formal usage. In less formal usage, they are treated more like and for concord. Thus, (6) is more natural in speech than (7):

Neither he nor his wife *have* arrived. (6)

Neither he nor his wife *has* arrived. (7)

This preference is probably connected with the use of the plural verb with *neither* as a determiner or pronoun, but it may also reflect notional concord in that logically 'neither X nor Y' can be interpreted as a union of negatives: 'both (not-X) and (not-Y)'.

If the number alternatives for the verb are both felt to be awkward, speakers may avoid making a choice by post posing the second noun phrase or sometimes by substituting a modal auxiliary:

Either your brakes *are* at fault or your eyesight *is.*

He hasn't arrived, *nor has* his wife.

Either your brakes or your eyesight *may* be at fault.

Note that (a)The coordinating correlatives *not … but and not only/just/merely…but(also/even)* behave like *or* with respect to number concord:

Not only he but his wife *has* arrived.

Not (only) one but all of us *were* invited.

Not just the students but even their teacher *is* enjoying the film.

Where the noun phrases differ in number, the principle of proximity determines the concord.

(b)The mixed expressions *one or two* and *between one and two* follow the principle of proximity in having plural concord:

One or two reasons *were* suggested.

Similarly *one and* plus a fraction or percentage has plural concord, since the notion of applies not to at least two but to more than one:

One and a half years have *passed* since we last met.

The selection of the plural is reinforced also by the principle of proximity. But note:

A year and a half *has* passed.

The conjoint phrase is treated like ‘a period of a year and a half’. Though the singular verb may be reinforced by the immediately preceding *a half.*

2.5.6 Indefinite Expressions as Subject

Another area of ambivalence for subject-verb number concord is that of indefinite expressions of amount or quantity, especially with the determiners and with the pronouns *no, none, all, some, any,* and fractions such as *half*. They have both count and non count uses.

With non count nouns (present or implied), the verb is singular:

So far no money *has* been spent on repairs.

None (of the money) *has* been spent on repairs.

Some cement *has* arrived.

Some (of the cement) *has* arrived.

With plural count nouns (present or implied) the verb is plural:

No people of that name *live* here.

Some books *have* been placed on the shelves.

Some }
Hardly any }(of the books) *have* been placed on the shelves.
All }
Half }

None (of the books) *has* been placed on the shelves.

None (of the books) *have* been place on the shelves.

Prescriptive grammars have tended to insist on the singular verb, but notional concord invites a plural verb, which tends to be more frequently used and is generally accepted even in formal usage. With *either* and *neither* the singular is generally used:

The two guests have arrived, and either *is* welcome.

The two guests have arrived, but neither *is* welcome.

But a plural verb sometimes occurs in informal usage when *either or* (particularly) *neither* is followed by a prepositional phrase with a plural complement, both because of notional concord and because of the proximity rule:

Either of them are welcome.

Neither of them *are* welcome. ['Both are (not) welcome.'] <informal>

The plural is even more favoured in such constructions with *none:*

None of them *have* been placed on the shelves.

The proximity principle may lead to plural concord even with indefinites such as *each, every, everybody, anybody, and nobody* (or indefinite phrases such as *everyone, any one*), which are otherwise unambivalently singular:

Nobody, not even the teachers *was* listening.

Nobody, not even the teachers *were* listening

Every member of the vast crowd of 50 000 people *was* pleased to see him.

Every member of the vast crowd of 50 000 people? *were* pleased to see him.

Although these sentences might well be uttered in casual speech or inadvertently written down, most people will probably regard them ungrammatical, because they flatly contradict grammatical concord.

Other, more acceptable, instances arise with expressions involving kind and number. The number choice in the verb is usually influenced by notional concord:

These {sort/kind/type} of parties *are* dangerous. <informal> (1)

Those {sort/kind/type} of parties *are* dangerous. <informal> (1)

A (large) number of people have applied for the job. (2)

The majority *are* muslims. (3)

Lots of the stuff *is* going to waste. <informal> (4)

(1)Illustrates an idiomatic anomaly: there is discrepancy in number between the noun and the determiner *those,* as well as with the verb. Rephrasing can avoid the anomaly:

Those kinds of parties *are* dangerous.

That kind of party *is* dangerous.

Parties of that kind *are* dangerous.

(2)and (3) show seemingly singular phrases being treated as plural: notionally they are equivalent to *many and most*. Use of the singular in these sentences would be considered pedantic in (2) and unacceptable in (3) because of the plural complement (the pedantic but unacceptable *The majority agrees with me).* The opposite phenomenon, attraction to the singular, is observed in (4) where *lots of* is treated as if equivalent to singular *plenty of* and *much of*: but the singular is also influenced by the proximity of singular *stuff.* Contrast:

Lots of people *are* coming to our party.

Notional concord ('many people') is reinforced by proximity of plural *people.*

Note that (a) Determiners other than those or these are found in plural concord with the nouns in (1), e.g.: *some, any*. Like *a (large) number of* in (2) are locutions such as *a lot of, a (whole) set of, a spate of, plenty of:* analogous to the *(or a) majority* in (3) is *the (or a) minority*, and to *lots* in (4) are many other informal quantifiers, such as *loads of, heaps of.*

(b) The proximity principle may be extended to mean the concord is determined by whatever immediately precedes the verb, the position of the subject (which normally determines concord). The principle can then explain a singular verb in cases of inversion or of an adverbial quasi-subject: *Where is the scissors*?: *Here's John and Mary*: *there's several bags missing*. As what precedes the subject here does not mark for plural, the singular verb follows by attraction. The occasional use of the singular verb in instances such as *Is the scissors on the table?* And *Has my glasses ('spectacles') been found?* May be explained by a combination of two factors: these summation plurals are notionally singular, though

morphologically and syntactically plural; since the verb precedes the subject, the influence of the subject on number is somewhat reduced. Compare the greater unacceptability of *my glasses has been found*. All these are colloquial examples: in formal English plural forms of the verb would be substituted.

(c) If a relative clause follows a noun phrase containing *one of* plus a plural noun phrase, there is often a choice as to whether the verb in the relative clause should agree in number with one or the plural noun phrase:

He's one of those students who never *get(s)* a piece of work done on time.

The choice of singular or plural can depend on whether attention is directed to the generality or to uniqueness.

2.5.7 Concord of person

In addition to third person number concord with the subject, the verb in the present tense may have person concord with the subject – first and third person concord with BE and only third person concord with other verbs:

I *am* your friend. [1st PERSON SINGULAR CONCORD]

He *is* your friend. [3rd PERSON SINGULAR CONCORD]

He *knows* you. [3rd PERSON SINGULAR CONCORD]

Are is the unmarked form for the person of BE with persons other than 1st and 3rd singular; in all other verbs the base form is used in the present for persons other than the 3rd singular. Only the past of BE has further distinction:

I *was* your friend. [1st and 3rd person singular concord]

I *was* your friend. [1st and 3rd person singular concord]

The unmarked past form of BE-*were*- is used with the 2nd person singular and all the plural persons. Like number concord, person concord applies only to the indicative; the subjunctive has one form for all persons.

A coordinative subject with *and* as coordinator, requires a plural verb. Person concord does not apply, since there are no person distinctions in the plural (*You and I know the answer; she and I are in charge*). If the coordinator is *or*, *either… or*, or *neither… nor*, in accordance with the principle of proximity the last noun phrase determines the person of the subject;

Neither you, nor I, nor anyone else *knows* the answer.

Either my wife or I *am going*.

Because of the awkwardness of this choice, a speaker may avoid it by using a modal auxiliary which is invariable for person (e.g. *either my wife or I will be going*) or by post posing the last noun phrase (e.g. *Either my wife is going or I am*).

Note that (a) in archaic English, there is also concord of 2nd person singular pronouns and verbs in the present and past: *Thou, Lord, hast redeemed us; Thou didst hear my prayer*.

(b) In relative clauses and cleft sentences, a relative pronoun subject is usually followed by a verb in agreement with its antecedent; *It is I whom am to blame*. *It is Kay who is in command*. *It is they who are complaining.* But 3rd person concord prevails in informal English where the objective case pronoun *me* is used: *It's me who's to blame*. Similarly, 3rd person singular may

be used in informal English in these constructions when the pronoun *you* has singular reference: *It's you who's to blame.*

In the archaic *Our Father, which art in heaven*, agreement is with the 2nd person status of the vocative *Our Father, thou which art in heaven.* Contrast a modern version *Our Father, who is in Heaven* ('he who is in heaven').

2.5.8 Subject–Complement and Object-Complement Concord

Between subject and subject complement and between direct object and object complement, there is usually concord of number (but not of person):

My child is an angel. I consider my child an angel.

My children are angels. I consider my children angels.

This type of concord arises naturally from the semantic role of the two complements. There are, however exceptions:

My only hope for the future is for my children. [also *are*] (1)

More nurses *is* the next item on the agenda. [also *are*] (3)

Their principal crop *is* potatoes. (3)

That man *is* nuts. <slang> ['insane'] (4)

Good manners are a rarity these days. [also *is*] (5)

The younger children *are* a problem. (6)

The next few bars *are* pure Tchaikovsky. [also *is*] (7)

Dogs *are* good company. (8)

The complement in (1) seems condensed, with perhaps an implied preposition: *My only hope for the future is in my children.* The subject of (2) may similarly be analyzed as condensed (something like 'the question of more nurses') or may perhaps be treated as a title. In (3) the subject complement is a generic noun phrase, which might equally be singular: *Their principal crop is the potato.* Sentences (4-8) contain a subject complement which, although nominal in form, has a characterizing function closer to that of an adjective. There is often no singular/plural contrast; for example, we do not have **The houses are bricks*, only *The houses are brick*.

Note that (a) the complements in (1), (2), and (3) are identifying, as is shown by the potentiality for subject-complement reversal: *My children are my only hope for the future: The next item on the agenda is more nurses: Potatoes are their principal crop.*

(b) Pseudo-cleft constructions with a fronted object *what* may have a plural subject complement.

What we need most *is* books.

But *what* is ambivalent in number, often interpreted as equivalent to either 'the thing that' or 'the things that', so that we also find a plural verb in concord with the subject *what*-clause:

What we need most *are* books.

Some prescriptive teaching requires the singular both for the verb within the *what* clause and for the verb that is in concord with the clause:

What *is* needed most *is* books.

We also find a singular verb when the what-clause is subject complement, but there are objections to this infringement of the concord rule:

Books *is* what we need most.

Books *is* what we needed most.

(c) If the subject is singular there is no subject-complement concord with the idiom *be all ears, be all elbows, be all fingers and thumbs*. For example: *I'm all ears* ('I'm listening with all my attention.')

2.5.9 Distributive Number

The distributive plural is used in a plural noun phrase to refer to a set of entities matched individually with individual entities in another set:

Have you all brought *your cameras*? ('Each has a camera.')

Hand in *your papers* next Monday. ('each has to hand in one paper.')

While distributive plural is the norm, the distributive singular may also be used to focus on individual instances. We therefore often have a number choice:

The students raised their *hand(s).*

Some children have understanding *fathers.*

Some children have *an* understanding *father*.

We all *have* good appetite.

We all *have* a good appetite.

Pronouns agree with their *antecedent(s).*

Their *noses need* to be wiped.

Their *nose needs* to be wiped.

The exercise was not good for their *back(s).*

The singular is sometimes obligatory or preferable with idioms and metaphors:

We are *keeping an open mind*. (*open minds*)

They *vented their spleen on him*. (**their spleens*)

They can't *put their finger* on what's wrong. (**their fingers*)

The distributive singular is sometimes used to avoid ambiguity:

Students were asked to name their favourite *sport*.

The singular makes it clear that only one sport was to be named. Similarly:

Children must be accompanied by *a parent.*

2.5.10 Pronoun Reference

Agreement between a pronoun antecedent should probably be considered co-reference rather than grammatical concord, but it is appropriate to treat the phenomenon here.

Concord of number, person, and gender is necessary between subjects on the one hand, and object or complement on the other hand, if the second element is a reflexive pronoun:

He injured *himself* in both legs.

She bought *herself* a raincoat

I haven't been *myself* for weeks. ('I haven't felt well')

The same concord relation holds when the reflexive pronoun occurs in other functions (eg as prepositional complement), or when the emphatic genitive *his own*, etc is used:

She's making a sweater for *herself.*

I wrote to them about *myself.*

They're ruining *their own* chances.

Note that (a) in British English, collective noun subject permit, as one might expect, plural concord: *The navy congratulated themselves on, if not a victory, at least an avoidance of defeat.* In both British English and American English, plurals reflexives often follow the indefinite pronouns: *Everybody behaved themselves*; some however avoid the construction.

(b) The concord relation may be with an element other than the subject, notably an object:

I wrote to *my brother about himself.* I drove *them in their car.*

This type of concord may extend beyond clause boundaries. Thus the relative pronouns *who, whom,* and *which* agree with their antecedent in the super ordinate clause in gender, the first two being personal, and the last non personal:

Here's the hammer *which* I borrowed yesterday.

That's the man *who(m*) I saw talking to your parents.

Whose is used with either personal or non personal antecedents:

The man *whose* wallet he stole. The house *whose* rafters were burned.

There is a feeling however, that *whose* is more appropriate to personal antecedents, presumably because of its morphological relationship to *who* and *whom*, and speakers feel uneasy about its use with non personal antecedents.

Personal and possessive pronoun in the 1st and 3rd persons agree with their antecedents in number. Those in the 3rd person singular (*he, she, it*) also agree with their antecedent in gender:

Tom hurt *his* foot. (1)

Beatrice knows that, *she* is late. (2)

The books were too heavy, so I left *them*. (3)

The violation of concord in the case of non reflexive pronouns does not lead (as it does in the case of reflexive pronouns) to an unacceptable sentence, but to a different interpretation. One may compare (1) and (4):

Tom hurt *her* foot. (4)

In (4) the pronoun must refer to someone else, someone mentioned or known from the situational context. Of course, in both (1) and (2) the pronoun may also refer to someone other than the subject.

Note that in phrases denoting body parts and close personal belongings, possessive pronoun refer to the subject where some languages prefer the indefinite article:

John shook *his* head. She dirtied *her* shoes.

A similar situation can be witnessed in 1 if the reference is to the subject.

The pronoun *they* is commonly used as a 3rd person singular pronoun that is neutral between masculine and feminine. It is a convenient means of avoiding the dilemma of whether to use the *he or she* form. At one time restricted to common usage, it is now increasingly accepted even in formal usage, especially in American English. (On sexual bias in pronoun usage).

Rather than use *he* in unmarked sense or the clumsy *he or she,* many prefer to seek gender impartiality by using a plural form where possible in reference to the indefinite pronouns *everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, anyone, anybody, no one, no body:*

Everyone thinks *they* have the answer. (1)

Has *anybody* brought *their* camera? (2)

No one could have blamed *themselves* for that. (3)

A similar use of the plural occurs with coordinate subjects referring to both sexes, as in (4), with a singular noun phrase subject having a personal noun of indeterminate gender as head, as in (5):

Either he or she is going to have to change *their* attitude. (4)

Every student has to hand in *their* paper today. (5)

In formal English, the tendency has been to use *he* as unmarked form when the gender is not determined. The formal equivalent of (1), though increasingly ignored now:

Everyone thinks he *has* the answer. (1a)

A more cumbersome alternative is the conjoining of both masculine and feminine pronouns:

Every student has to hand in *his or her* paper today. (5a)

This device is particularly clumsy if the pronouns have to be repeated:

If a student does not hand in *his or her* paper today, *he or she* will not be allowed to continue the course. (5b)

One way of avoiding the dilemma is to make the subject plural:

All students have to hand in *their* paper today. (5c)

Similar methods can usually be employed for the indefinite pronouns too:

All of them think they *have* the answer. (1b)

Have *any of you* brought *your* camera? (2a)

For (4) the only alternative in formal English is to rephrase the sentence:

Either *he* is going to have to change *his* attitude or *she hers*. (4a)

The indefinite pronoun *one* is followed in formal usage by the same pronoun for subsequent references.

One should choose *his* friend carefully. (6a)

In accordance with the tendency to avoid the use of masculine pronoun to subsume both male and female references we may expect that American English will increasingly replace indefinite *one* with indefinite *we, you,* or, *they,* as appropriate:

We should choose *our* friends carefully. (6b)

It has been noted earlier that, singular collective nouns have plural subject-verb concord in cases where the speaker thinks of the group as made up of separate individuals. The same principle extends to pronoun concord:

The government *are* cutting *their* losses. <BrE> (7)

The government *is* cutting *its* looses. (8)

Although there is no number contrast in relative pronouns, the number distinction can be reflected in the choice of personal *who* (i.e. the group thought of as a set of individuals) as opposed to non-personal *which* (i.e. the group as in indivisible abstraction). Thus, corresponding to (7) and (8), we may have:

the government, *who are* cutting their losses. <BrE> (7a)

the government, *which is* cutting *its* losses. (8a)

Hybrid forms are rare and seen odd:

the government,*who* is cutting its/their losses.

the government, *which are* cutting its/their losses.

Note that (a) informally, with indefinite pronoun subjects, they is commonly used in subsequent tag questions: *Everybody is leaving, aren't they?, Nobody is leaving, are they?*

(b) For introductory *it, that* and *this.* Examples:

Somebody opened the door. *It* was David.

Hello! *This* is Susan. Is *that* Geoffrey? <on phone>

In summary, it is suggested that the following generalizations apply to the system of subject-verb concord in English.

1. The principle of Grammatical Concord tends to be followed in formal usage and has the sanction teaching and editorial tradition.
2. The principle of Notional Concord is most natural to colloquial English.
3. The principle of proximity despite its minor decisive role in cases where the other two provide no guidance, is generally felt to lack validity on its own, and has more of an auxiliary role in supporting notional concord in colloquial speech.

Grammatical and notional Concord generally works in harmony together. It is only occasionally that these principles are in conflict.

2.6 Error Analysis

Allen and Corder define error as the superficially deviant or the inappropriate use of a language in terms of the target grammar. This definition assumes that user of a target language has a source language but is still unable to make perfect use of the target language he uses. This does not exempt the possibility of errors in the native language by a native speaker. However, in this case it may be owing to a bad knowledge of the language which may be as a result of a bad learning process which may reflect in the speaker's use of the language. Corder (163) views error as an imperfect competence in the target language. Errors are different from lapses or mistakes which are produced mostly by native speakers and can be corrected by the speaker when attention is drawn to it. Lapses call for on the spur corrections rather than remedial work which errors call for.

Bussmann (3) asserts that errors are classified according to modality,(that is, the level of proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, listening), linguistic levels (that, is pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, style), form (e.g. omission, insertion, substitution), type (systematic errors/errors in competence, errors in performance), causes (e.g. interference, interlanguage as well as norm versus system).

Error analysis as a concept in linguistics was established in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder and his colleagues (Corder 161). It was introduced as an alternative to contrastive analysis/linguistics (the comparative study of two languages), an approach influenced by behaviourism through which applied linguists tried to use formal distinctions between a learner's first language and second language to predict errors. Error analysis argues that many learners' errors are produced by learners making faulty inferences about the grammar of the language involved. As an approach in linguistics, error analysis is aimed at identifying errors learners make and to figure out possible causes and remedy to such errors. According to this theory, errors can be classified according to basic types: omissive, additive, substitutive or related to word order. They can also be classified by how apparent they are, whether overt errors or covert errors. Overt errors are noticed even out of context while covert errors are only noticed in context. They can also be classified according to the level of language whether phonological errors, vocabulary or lexical errors, syntactic errors, semantic errors and pragmatic errors. The level identified in this study is syntactic because it involves English concords which are syntactic components of the English language.

There are three steps in error analysis. They are recognition, description and explanation. Recognition is the stage of establishing what the error is. Description can only begin when recognition has taken place, it is essentially a comparative process in which the data are described against a detailed framework. The explanation of error is a manifestation

of the knowledge of the cause of the error and possible solutions proffered. In other words, the statement of the way in which the learner has deviated from and how it can be corrected. That takes the study to the explanation of the theory that shall be adopted for the study.

2.7 Deviation

Deviation is a situation where a norm or principle is not followed. Linguistic deviation or deviation in language occurs when the rules of a language is not followed. According to Leech (57) Linguistic deviation can be seen as a creative use of language which differs from the norms of literary convention or everyday speech. While deviation of this sort may be seen as stylistic as put by Leech, it can only be a stylistic deviation among speakers of the language that have shown certain level of proficiency. For those who have the view of deviation as style, the concept becomes synonymous to foreground. To this end, Cook (74) believes that the style can be manipulation of phonology, graphology, lexis, grammar, and semantics.

Crystal (134) argues that deviation refers to a sentence, or another unit, which violates the rule and appears grammatically, phonologically or even semantically ill-formed. In essence, deviation to crystal is a linguistic error. In such a sense linguistic deviation means a disruption of the normal process of communication that leaves a gap in ones comprehension of the text. In other sense deviation distorts meaning in every speech even though it can be a style in literature.

According to Leech (42) there are lexical deviation, graphological deviation, grammatical deviation, phonological deviation and morphological deviation. Crystal (315) holds that lexical deviation involves formation of words which are non-existence in a particular language. This may be seen among language learners who sometimes form verbs from nouns arbitrarily. Graphological deviations are also common among language learners. This includes errors in spelling, capitalization, hyphenation, italization and paragraphing. In

grammar, learners of English language are usually found wanting. Sometimes the rules are either not known or not followed.

Generally, deviation among language learners is an indication of their incompetence in the target language. Among the number of deviations, the research shall concentrate on grammatical and graphological deviations among students of government secondary school Karshi.

2.8 Treatment of Errors and Error Correction

To Ulla (296-305), every effort to learn something is attended by lapses, slips or errors. Without committing errors, learning is incomplete and language learning is no exception. Some people are open to errors and even willing to accept them. Some may even not notice them while learning the target language. However, according to Diaz-Rico and Weed (1996) as cited in Ulla (296-305), many teachers typically expend much energy noting, correcting, and designing lessons to address errors when students are learning a second language. To them, often, no allowance is made for the learner's age, level of fluency, educational background, or risk-taking behaviour. These, however, are significant factors to consider in determining how a teacher should regard language errors.

In the early stages of language learning, according to Diaz-Rico and Weed (96) and Ulla (296-305) fluency is more important than accuracy. A teacher who is uncomfortable with less than perfect speech only adds unnecessary anxiety to the developing proficiency of the ELD student. Thus, the teacher, instead of monitoring and correcting, should converse and model the appropriate language. Error correction is not necessary. The teacher focuses on the student's message and provides correction only when the message or meaning is not clear.

2.9 Theories of Grammar

Linguists in their number have developed certain rules guiding the application of grammar to language. According to Michael Halliday, (1984) essence of theories of grammar is the need for "functional analysis, since language had evolved in the process of carrying out certain critical functions as human beings interacted with their … eco-social environment". Ojo (2011) listed out the number of theories of grammar to include Traditional Grammar (TG), Structural Grammar (SG), Tagmemic Grammar (TG), Stratification Grammar (SG), Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG), Case Grammar (CG), Government and Binding Grammar (GBG), and Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). Ojo holds that tranditional grammar is a term used to refer to the set of attitudes, procedures and prescriptions that were characteristic of the pre-linguistic period of language study. In other words, the model is rule – based. It formulates rules that are meant to guide the users of a language in making appropriate choices of lexical items in context.

Structural grammar arose as reactions to the excesses of the traditional grammar Bolinger, (517). According to Bolinger, the inspiration that gave rise to this model emerged from Bloomfield. However, Ojo (2011) believed that the model is linked to the Prague School founded in 1926 by Vilen Mathesius, a professor of English at Caroline University[11]. The linguist stated that the "structuralist gave great attention to phonology, a fair amount to morphology, very little to syntax and practically none to me aiming [12]. The models sees these elements of language as dependent on one another with phonology being the most important while others begin to be less important. This model therefore becomes almost impossible to apply to findings in syntax.

The Tagmemic Grammar arose from structural grammar doctrines such as mixing of levels. The major proponent was Kenneth Less Pike, Ojo (14). The theory uses two main descriptive devices in its analysis of behavior. The first makes the distinction between 'etic' and 'emic' which Pike extends from phonology (taking the ending of phonetics and

phonemics to name his terms) (Ojo, 14). According to him an ‘emic’ unit is a form within a closed system; while ‘etic’ unit is a material manifestation that can be identified by any characteristic that strikes the eye. The second descriptive device is the Tagmemic hierarchy which accounts for the orderly arrangement of elements in a sentence.

Meanwhile, Bolinger (531) believed that there is a certain resemblance between stratificational grammar and systemic grammar. He believed that both of them use networks and realization rules. Both are static system which means they do not find it necessary to derive one large structure from another. These models and others have been greatly criticized by the transformational generative grammar model. Noam Chomsky in his syntactic structures (1957) believed that there should be distinction between the performances of a native speaker of language as against his competence. With this the TGG model does not generalize language but treats them in isolations and according to the competence and performance of a speaker in individual sentence.

For case grammar, David (2008) corroborated that it started as a result of break in doctrine among transformational generative grammarians. He stated that it emerged as a result of noticed failure in the TGG to distinguish the semantic roles of native speakers in relation to their verbs from the position that the native speakers occupy in syntactic configuration. On the other hand, Chomsky (1981[82]) proposed another theory called Government and Binding grammar which is not a radical break from any grammar theory not his Transformational Generative Grammar. Instead of deriving, the GBG assumes a collective feature having doctrines of all the theories.

Notwithstanding the number of shortcomings noticed among the theories of grammar which led to the formation of new ones, all the theories are important and relevant to the research at different points. Particularly, much concentration will be on the doctrines of

transformational generative grammar as a result of its explicit attention given to morphology and graphology.

2.10 Empirical Review

Atinga (2015) in his Effects of Concord Errors in the Essays of Students in Selected Secondary Schools in Kaduna Metropolis gathered one hundred and twenty scripts ranging from tests and assignments from Government Secondary School Kawo, Government College Kurmi Mashi (boys), Rimi College Tafawa Balewa (boys), Government Secondary School Narayi (mixed), Queen Amina College (girls) and Government Secondary School Sabo Tarsha. Atinga identified and analysed thirty concord errors using the structural paradigms of SVCOA. He highlighted students' good and bad usage of concord. The study however revealed that students have difficulties in subject verb concord, tense concord, pronoun antecedent, subject object concord, complementation, prepositions, etc. specifically as they narrate or report events in sequence and time. It is also evident that students try to avoid making complex or compound complex sentences even in the simple sentences, they have faulty concord. He however recommends methods and approaches that could be adopted by teachers and learners and learners to ameliorate the prevalence of such concord error. One of the methods is to expose students to a lot of writing drill.

Moreover, Lawal (2016), in the work titled "An Analysis of Errors of Concord in Essays of two hundred levels students of Mass Communication, Nasarawa State University, Keffi" studies different levels of errors in the students' essays. The study however discovered about five different concord errors, which were; subject-verb concord error, concord of person error, subject-complement error, distributive number concord error and pronoun-antecedent concord error. However, among these types of concord identified, errors from four of the concords were discovered in the students' essays. No instance of errors was found in the distributive number concord.

Based on the study, Lawal established the following to be the causes of the errors seen in the students' essays.

1. Most instances of the errors demonstrate incomplete mastery of the English language as a language of instruction in the country.
2. Concord errors occur as a result of students' non-commitment to language study. If the students were so committed to the study of English language, the rules that enhanced easy learning and understanding of concord would have been learnt properly.
3. The concord errors that occurred in the students essays were as a result of interference from their first language (L1).
4. The errors identified in the students' essays can be traceable to their teachers. First, it may be that the students were not taught about concord from primary school and all through their secondary education or it was poorly handled by the teachers. It is pathetic to indicate that some teachers of English in most Nigerian primary and secondary schools are not trained language teachers. They teach because they feel they can speak English fluently so they can also teach it.
5. From the analysis, it is obvious that 'poor grammar obstructs communication and therefore meaning' (Aloy-Suis et al: 294). Indeed, when one considers students' violation of the rule of concord within tenses, there is no doubt that the sentence can present different shades of meaning as a result of wrong usage of concord.

Another study on error analysis was carried out Onukwor (2010) to investigate grapho-syntactic errors in the language of advertising in Nigeria. The study aimed at finding out the nature, types, and causes of these errors of writing, which included spelling, punctuation, agreement, omissions and wrong tense usage that occur in the advertisements in the electronic and print media in Nigeria. The data for her study were inscriptions on hoardings,

posters, newspapers, magazines and motor vehicles. Also used in the study were public announcements on television. The data were collected from the major cities of Anambra State i.e. Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi, which represent the major commercial centres that harbour more abundantly sources of these data. Onukwor selected different national newspapers and magazines on daily bases for a period of three weeks and used them for the study. The findings revealed, among other things, that grapho-syntactic errors were mostly due to the incomplete mastery of the English language which is the language of the media in Nigeria; that the level of education of advertisers correlated with the quantity and nature of the errors; that some of these errors were caused by interference from the first language of the advertisers; that some of these forms were regarded as aspects of Nigerian English; that some advertisers intentionally used erroneous but popular forms to draw attention of the potential clients. The researcher therefore recommended that, teaching of spelling and calligraphy well in, especially, the early formal education, encouragement of the use of the dictionary, and proper teaching and learning of grammar should be encouraged for the reduction of these errors.

In another development, Ulla (2013) worked on the topic "Error Analysis of Compositions of Selected Probationary Faculty Members of Father Saturnino Urios University". The purpose of his study was to determine, identify, classify, describe and analyze the language errors found in the compositions of the faculty respondents of FSUU. He embarked on the study with the hope of using the information and insights gained as basis for the action plan-a Language Training Program to be included in the 5-day classroom management training conducted yearly at the start of the academic year by the University.

To achieve his goals, he applied descriptive method through the use of the three-step procedure adopted from Corder (1971). The rubrics used were from the taxonomy of errors

developed by Burt, Kiparsky and Krashen (1972). Between the global or local errors in the compositions of the respondents, he posited that the local errors are more common which registered an overall frequency of 118. Global errors had only a total frequency of 16. Of the local syntactical errors in the local category, preposition was the area that recorded the highest occurrence followed by verb at the local lexical level. Local morphological errors were not a problem since only a few errors, mostly having to do with the subject-verb concord were discovered.

Global errors that were found in the corpora of texts were mostly serious. They needed major revision because they hindered communication of the intended meaning. Of this category, global syntactical errors involving pronouns formed the largest group of errors followed by word order and prepositions. This was followed by global lexical errors which include noun and verb. The least number of errors was global morphological subdivision with plural markers forming the smallest group.

Other types of errors that were found in the compositions of the respondents according to Ulla were mechanical errors which were mostly misuse of punctuation marks, capitalization and misspelling and other language errors involving conjunctions and word choice. For global mechanical errors, punctuation marks got the highest number of errors, followed by capitalization, and conjunction. In the case of local mechanical errors, punctuation marks had the highest number, followed by misspelling and word choice, conjunction, and capitalization.

Most of the local errors discovered in their compositions are believed to be “slips” “lapses” or “careless errors”. Another reason is that most of the participants were not language teachers and their knowledge of the basics of language was limited.

These facts reveal that the probationary faculty members really need a refresher course on the basics of the language so that they could enhance their language ability.

Finally, the most significant product of the study was the hammering out of a language enhancement training for the probationary faculty members to address the problem in the study.

Another interesting research on error analysis was by Ojetunde (2013). In the paper entitled "Lexical-Grammatical Errors in Nigerian English: Implications for Nigerian Teacher and Learners of English" she recognizes the status and importance of the English language in Nigeria. Ojetunde specifically reiterated the place of English as a medium of instruction at all levels of the nation's educational system and the role it performs in learners' communicative repertoire. The study therefore examined the issue of the Nigerian English to determine and explain the extent of its differences at grammatical and lexical levels from the Standard English and how these deviations have affected the English language pedagogy and academic performance of Nigerian students. She drew data for the study from three secondary schools in Epe division of Lagos state. The researcher used sixty (60) students; 20 from each school. The data were therefore collected through close observation of the students' interactions with their mates, by their teachers over a period of four weeks paying particular attention to their grammatical and lexical errors. According to Ojetunde, two hundred and twenty seven (227) errors were identified and analyzed, out of which 184 (81.06%) were grammatical while 43 (18.94%) were lexical.

Consequently, the researcher concluded that to achieve performance oriented English teaching and learning in ESL classroom and a high degree of proficiency in English; teachers of English at all levels of education, particularly secondary school level need to teach the standard variety of English. It is thus believed, could minimize mass failure in English being observed year after year in Nigeria senior secondary school examination.

From the foregoing, it is evident that error is a global phenomenon. Any language one is proficient in its usage, errors would definitely occur. Though error is seen as a global phenomenon, the causes of error in the use of English Language vary from institution to institution, society to society depending on their levels of exposure to the language. This present studies the same concept as previous scholars, its subject (students under study) vary from those that have been studied. It therefore hopes to draw conclusion in line with the findings of the study. It is however not a replication of previous studies as it focuses on different institution order than those previously studied.

2.11 Theoretical framework

The research shall have error analysis as its theoretical stance. The choice of the theory is in cognizance of its improvement upon an earlier theory known as contrastive analysis. According to Thomas Adeyanju, (2015) the proponents of error analysis saw that;

There were several indications that C.A [contrastive analysis] could not predict all interference errors and that some errors were not related to the learner's mother tongue as constructivist posited. Some errors were developmental, […] overgeneralization, also termed intralingua errors (1).

This indicates that contrastive analysis seems to be insufficient in accounting for the array of errors found among second language learners. As a result of this, in the early 1960s some experts argued that the study of the learner's actual errors should shed a greater light on the sources of his/her problems in language learning and thus came up with the theory of Error Analysis Adeyanju, (2015).

Error analysis as a linguistic theory holds that learner's errors in second language can not be attributed to the learner's native language or mother tongue. According to Crystal in Bature and Sani (2001) holds that error analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and

systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language (236).

By large, Error Analysis involves a tripartite process of identification of the errors among second language learners, classifying the errors into categories according to their area of occurrence, and corrective measures to them. It is as a result of its all – inclusive nature of identification, classification and interpretation of error that many researchers refers to the theory as a "posteriosi hypothesis" Selinker, (2012).

Error Analysis is concerned with the errors that students commit while trying to produce utterances or sentences in a target language. The appearance of this error in a target language utterance by a second language learner presents a form of language which Larry Selinker (2012) refers to as inter language, transitional competence or idiosyncratic dialect [12]. Brown (1965) observed that this form of dialect and the errors arise from lack of linguistic competence in the target language. They are noticeable deviation from adult grammar, lexis and discourse patterns of a native language reflecting the inter language competence of the learner. According to Corder (1967) errors may originate from little or no effort on the part of the learner or inadequate explanation of the target language form and through insufficient practice activities. They may also arise as a result of interference from the source language or mother language. Errors therefore, have to do with insufficient or complete lack of the knowledge or partial mastering of the target language system which involves syntax, phonology, morphology and semantics.

The importance of error analysis to a language learner is enormous. It provides the learner with a means of testing his/her hypothesis about the nature of the language he/she is learning. The errors that students make are evidence that they are extending previous knowledge to form new utterances and sentences. Errors serve to evaluate and provide feedback on the

quality technique and materials. It enables a teacher, on the other hand, with a means of finding out the deviation between the standard norm and students' interlanguage.

In assisting learners in language acquisition, error analysts distinguish between errors which are systematic and those that are not and often seek to classify or develop a typology of errors. It is at this stage of classification in error analysis that Adeyanju (2015) observed the presence of emissive, additive, or substitutive errors (1). Another typology of error observed among learners of second language is overt errors, global errors and domain errors Adeyanju, (2015). According to Bature and Sani (2001) error in error analysis are classified into linguistic vocabulary, or form errors [236-7]. In all, it is in agreement among scholars that error analysis involves identification of error, classification of errors, and interpretation of errors with the sole aim of reaching eloquence in a target language.

From the beginning, error analysis was set with methodological problems. In particular, the areas of typologies of errors were highly problematic. From linguistic data alone, it is often impossible to reliably determine what kind of error a learner is making. Again, according to Adeyanju (2015), E.A. can deal effectively only with learner production (speaking and writing) and not with learner reception (listening and reading). Furthermore, it cannot account for learner use of communicative strategies such as avoidance, in which learners simply do not use a form with which they are uncomfortable (2).

The acclaimed all inclusiveness of error analysis in this case becomes elusive, however, the choice of the theory is its strength in dealing with errors emanating from writing since the research is concern with written essays.

According to Atinga (20), error analysis fails to account for error avoidance strategies of the second language learner. Sometimes, absence of error is no cause for rejoicing because it might be that the student is avoiding those structures that he is not quite familiar with. The absence of errors therefore, does not necessarily reflect native-like competence since the

learner may be avoiding the very research at hand is likely to bear with this shortcoming of the error analysis theory as notwithstanding its negative elements, these theory remains most refined and inclusive theory of grammar with these best potential of analyzing errors in writing among students.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter discusses the following: methods of data collection, procedure to be used for data analysis and subjects of study.

3.1 Primary Method of Data Collection

The primary method of data collection was employed in the collection of the primary data for this study. The primary data were two hundred (200) essays of Senior Secondary School Students of Government Secondary School, Karshi-Abuja. The essays cut across descriptive, narrative and expository essays constitute the sources of the primary data. One hundred copies of the students' essays provide the researcher with workable copies for the analysis. The graphological and grammatical errors were identified and highlighted for easy recognition to enable a meaningful description and explanation of the errors using error analysis. Photocopies of the essays with the errors are attached to the study as appendix for reference purpose.

3.2 Secondary Method of Data Collection

The secondary method focuses on the collection of secondary materials or data for the study. These secondary data covers scholarly ideas, opinions and suggestions on the key terms and concepts of the research. These data are used to further explain the research topic and also to situate the study in an established field of study in linguistics. The data are extensively used in the review of related literature and for the explanation of the theoretical model that is used for the study.

Sources of the secondary data include: text books, journals, encyclopaedia, empirical studies, dictionaries, and other printed as well as non-printed materials from the internet and the libraries.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

A purposive sampling analysis approach is used in this study. Alhasan (53) defines purposive sampling as a method in which the 'researcher carefully selects the sample to

reflect the purpose of the investigation'. Indeed, several grammatical issues were identified in the selected students' essays, but the concern of this study is to investigate the students' use of graphological and grammatical errors. The data were recognized and categorized based on types of errors identified. The categories were described using error analysis and the structural grammar. The process of the analysis involved identification of the errors, categorization of the errors, analysis of the errors and then corrections.

3.4 Subjects of Study

The subjects of this study are selected Senior Secondary School Students of Government Secondary School, Karshi-Abuja. They are made up of both male and female from different ethnic background.

3.5 Techniques of Data Presentation and Analysis

The theory that underpins this research is error analysis .Researcher adopted error analysis for the fact that it has the capability to deal with and take care of all the errors that students will commit in second language learning environment .As a linguistic, theory error analysis is adequate and capable enough to identity, group, analyze and offer solutions to all problems that the second language learners will encounter in the course of learning the second language.

It has been mentioned in some parts of this research work .That error analysis has been adopted entirely in this research work for the fact that it has solutions to all problems of the second language learners .the theories holds that to deal perfectly with all the errors encountered by the second language learners ,the following techniques should be adopted. First of all the researcher needs to identify the errors from the learners of the second language after which the categorization of the errors should follow, that is grouping of the errors.

Secondly explanation or analysis of the errors should feature .Lastly the researcher should offer solution to all the problems recorded.

The researcher actually adopted and followed the procedure provided by the theory of error analysis, after collecting and marking the 200 scripts. The researcher randomly picked 100 scripts as sample for the analysis. He identified all the errors in the written essays of the SSS3 students of Government Secondary School, Karshi. although other errors were also identified, but the main concern of this research is grammatical and graphological errors. The errors identified were arranged and grouped into five categories below;

Concord errors

Spelling errors

Punctuation marks errors

Tense errors

Omission erros

Full details of each category is stated in chapter four (4) of this research work. After stating the various categories of the errors the researcher has fully analyzed and explained each in details according to the principle of the theory (Error analysis).

Beyond that the researcher offered correction to each error committed by the learners.

Error Analysis

Error analysis as a concept in linguistics was established in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder and his colleagues (Corder 161). It was introduced as an alternative to contrastive analysis/linguistics (the comparative study of two languages), an approach influenced by behaviourism through which applied linguists tried to use formal distinctions between a learners first language and second language to predict errors. Error analysis argues that many

learners errors are produced by learners making faulty inferences about the grammar of the language involved. As an approach in linguistics, error analysis is aimed at identifying errors learners make and to figure out possible causes and remedy to such errors. According to this theory, errors can be classified according to basic types: omissive, additive, substitutive or related to word order. They can also be classified by how apparent they are, whether overt errors or covert errors. Overt errors are noticed even out of context while covert errors are only noticed in context. They can also be classified according to the level of language whether phonological errors, vocabulary or lexical errors, syntactic errors, semantic errors and pragmatic errors. The level identified in this study is syntactic because it involves English concords which are syntactic components of the English language.

There are three steps in error analysis. They are recognition, description and explanation. Recognition is the stage of establishing what the error is. Description can only begin when recognition has taken place, it is essentially a comparative process in which the data are described against a detailed framework. The explanation of error is a manifestation of the knowledge of the cause of the error and possible solutions proffered. In other words, the statement of the way in which the learner has deviated from and how it can be corrected. The takes the study to the explanation of the theory that shall be adopted for the study.

Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis was born as a result of a rather simple assumption. Aware of the same errors appearing so regularly and methodically in the works of increasing number of students, language teachers gradually came to assume that they could predict what mistakes the majority of learners would make. From such mistakes, the assumption went on; teachers

would be better equipped to foresee difficulties and, consequently, would become wiser in directing learning and teaching efforts.

Constrictive Analalysis (CA) became mainstream in the 1960s. According to Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) in (Yoon, 2002), this was a time when structural linguistics and behavioural psychology were rather dominant in the study of language learning. CA proponents came to advocate that L2 instructional materials could be prepared more efficiently by comparing two languages and, in the process, predict learners behaviours and difficulties. Some researchers even believed that when similarities and differences between an L1 and L2 were taken into account, pedagogy could be more effective and useful. Such arguments gave birth to the basic ideas of Contrastive Analysis.

Hypothesis (CAH), upon which CA is based. Lado's *Linguistics Across Cultures (1957,p.2)* is the landmark work which paved the way for CAH. According to this hypothesis, L1 transfer affects second language acquisition. Lado contends that "those elements that are similar to the [learner's] native language will be simple for him, and those areas that are different will be difficult. However, as the 1970s dawned, CA was being discredited on so many levels that the bubble began to burst. Contrastive analysis was no longer claiming as much pedagogic attention as it once did before.

According to Abbas (1995), CA's basic weakness, for which it is often criticized, lies in its overwhelming emphasis on one type of error, i.e "interference". Many researchers feel that such emphasis has distorted CA's ability to predict correctly a host of other important errors which second language learners are prone to commit. Klien (1986) provides a good example of this scenario. Following the grammatical structure of their native language, Turkish students learning German often put the verb into the final position. On the other hand, Spanish and Italian learners do the same, although verbs are not in final positions in their own languages. It is quite clear that interference of a learner's L1 is not the only factor at play

here. As a reaction to this type of criticism, Error Analysis (EA) was often suggested as an alternative; however, both CA and EA have their own merits and drawbacks. Johnson (2001, p. 73) observes that "Both these theories.

[CA and EA] have had their moment at the center of the applied linguistics stage and, although neither continues to hold that position, neither has yet made its final exit" (as cited in Shizuka 2003).

What Johnson is suggesting is that there are still many applied linguists who firmly believe in the predictive power CA. In fact, one cannot deny that CA may have some potential in certain fields. For example, a contrastive analysis study, conducted by Abbas (1995), revealed that in the case of adverbial positions, learners of both English and Arabic have access to more than one place to accommodate the adverbial concerned in the sentence. In view of this sort of position freedom, teachers are able to predict that Arabs, for example, will not have much difficulty will adverbials.

However, one should not turn in blind eye to the fact that CA's popularity has declined as the years have gone by. Although Sheen (1996, p.14) is all for exploiting contrastive analysis in teaching and learning a foreign language, he also confesses that recently there doesn't seem to be muchinterest in the pedagogical applications of CA. he regrettably reports, "judging from an examination of currently available text books, CA input therein continues to be conspicuous by its absence. Furthermore, a survey of articles appearing in well-known journals manifests no renewed interest in the relevance of CA input for language teaching, notable exceptions being Abbas (1995) and James (1994).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Preamble

This section presents the analysis of the data collected by the researcher. The data were primarily (written) errors of spelling, and syntax in essays of senior secondary school three of Government Secondary School Karshi, Abuja as a reflection of similar errors in similar items in other parts of Nigeria. The language in which the investigation is based is the English language. The errors identified are grouped into five categories – concord, spelling, punctuation, tense, and omissions.

4.1 Presentation of Data and Analysis

This part of the research presents the analysis of the data gathered by the researcher. The data composed of written grammatical and graphological errors in the essays of Senior Secondary School Students of Government Secondary School, Karshi. So, the major concern of this study is the identification and analysis of graphological and grammatical errors. These errors are grouped here, into the following five categories for easier assessment.

Concord - CD

Spelling - SP

Punctuation - PN

Tense - TS

Omissions - OM

4.1.1 Concord Errors

The errors of concord identified are grouped into five types; subject-verb concord, concord of persons, subject complement and object complement, distributive number concord and pronoun antecedent concord.

4.1.1 Subject-Verb Concord

The subject of a verb is usually a noun, a pronoun or a noun phrase. In all acceptable sentences, the subject agrees with its verb in number. This means that when the subject, noun

phrase, noun or pronoun of a sentence is singular, the verb must be singular provided the tense of the verb is present. Below are some of the subject-verb concord errors identified and analyzed:

1. … the woman **get** blamed …/ gets
2. It **bring** significant story…/ brings
3. … it **do** not restrict education…/does
4. …the first person that **come** out…/ comes
5. An educated woman **socialize** her home…/ socializes
6. … with this few **point**…/these, points
7. …which in turn **promote**…/promotes
8. If we **educates** a girl child…/educate
9. … she always **make** sure…/makes
10. As women **becomes** more…/ become
11. …if she **lack** manners…/ lacks
12. … child is not educated, it **affect** many people…/affects
13. …that **help hair's** growth…/ helps, hair
14. …preparing the soup **start** from…/starts
15. …it **require** a lot of…/ requires
16. It also **treat** and **prevent**…/ treats, prevents
17. … these **explains** greatly…/ explain
18. It **digest** easily …/digests
19. I **likes** it because …/ like
20. It **contain** a good quality…/ contains
21. … this **make** me feel…/ makes
22. … people who **prepares** food…/ prepare

23. … anything we do **pose** a huge…/poses

24. … carbohydrate that **contain** little fats…/contains

25. …an infant **grow** up to a baby…/grows

26. … late registration **attract**…/ attracts

27. …that **put** me through…/ puts

28. … if you **fails** to register…/ fail

The errors numbered 1 to 28 are examples of subject-verb agreement. These are errors because none of the subjects agree with the verbs involved. The verbs therefore are in disagreement with their subjects.

For example, a singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb. In the case of the data presented above, the reverse is the case. Instances of such errors can be seen in (1),(2),(3) to (28). In (1), '**woman'** a singular subject is made to take a plural verb 'get' instead of a singular verb 'gets' to agree with the subject. The same thing occurs in (2) where '**it'** a singular subject takes a plural verb 'bring' in the stead of 'brings'. In (3), singular subject '**it'** takes plural verb 'do' instead of singular verb 'does'.

From the errors shown and discussed, it shows clearly that not only that the students do not understand the plural formation rules but that they do not have a good grasp of concord rules. So plural subjects are juxtaposed with singular verbs and singular subjects with plural verbs. It is apt to argue that students find it difficult to identify the subject, especially when it is an abstract noun and when the impersonal pronoun 'it' acts as a subject in sentences they construct.

4.1.2 Concord of Person

In this group, the verb in present tense has to agree with the 1st and 3rd person subject. Number concord therefore is most apparent between a singular or plural subject and its verb in the third person of the singular present tense. Also the verb ***BE*** involves concord for the first person and 3rd person singular. Uniquely among English verbs, it has different forms for singular and plural in the past. Number concord requiring that two related units should both be singular or both be plural can involve complements and objects. Equally, both number and person concord are involved in the use of pronouns and possessives. The errors identified under this from the data gathered are presented below;

29 … because I am your **friends** …/ friend

30 … anybody that **offend** me is my **enemies**…/ offends, enemy

31. … neither my mother nor my elder sister **cook** like me. / cooks

32. …it might **takes** some **day**. / take, days

33. …people who **prepares** food. / prepare

34. …my sisters **seems** interested in the party. / seem

35. …all of them **was** worried that…/ were

36. … I **were** busy dancing. / was

37. I consider them spoilt **child**. / children

38. I teased **my selves** …/ myself

About ten errors are discovered on the concord of person in the essays under study. The errors seen in 28 to 38 are all errors of concord of person. In (39), there is no agreement between 'I' and 'friends'.' I' points out to one person whereas 'friends' that refers back to 'I'

points to more than one person. The agreement would have been enhanced if the sentence is constructed as; 'I am your friend.'

Similarly in (30) and (31) there are evident wrong uses of person. (30) is correct with the addition of inflectional suffix 's' to the verb 'offend' changing it to singular so that it can agree with the indefinite pronoun 'anybody' and the removal of 'ies' from the noun enemy to agree with 'anybody'. So also in (31), the verb 'cook' as used there fails to agree in number with the subject 'my elder sister'. This is due to the fact that the students do not have good mastery of the indefinite pronoun 'neither'. It would therefore be correct if it reads; … neither my mother nor my elder sister cooks like me. In (32), there is no agreement owing to the fact that the modal auxiliary verb 'might' as used expresses future tense. It is therefore wrong to combine future and present tense in an expression. Also 'some' does not agree with 'day' as used there. 'some' indicates plural whereas 'day' does not state any specific number. It will be correct if it reads … it might take some days. In this case, 'take' agrees with the modal auxiliary verb 'might' to show future tense and 'days' agrees with some that preceded it thereby agreeing in number and tense.

Also in (33), (34), (35), (36), (37) and (38) all the verbs used failed to agree in number with their subjects. In (33) we have '… people who prepares food' instead of '…people who prepare food'. In (34), '…my sisters seems interested in the party' which would have been '… my sisters seem interested in the party.' The verb 'was' fails to agree with 'them' as seen in (35). The students lack adequate understanding of the use and forms of the English verb 'BE'. Since the verb is preceded by the pronoun 'them' that indicates pronoun, it will be correct if 'were' is used. 'I were busy dancing' seen in (36) shows lack of understanding of the forms of the verb 'be' said above. This also shows that students are not quite conversant with rules that govern plural formation and rules that govern English

grammar. The sentence therefore will be grammatical or correct if it reads; 'I was busy dancing' and not 'were'. The same error is replicated in (37) and (38), 'a spoilt child' is used to refer back to the pronoun 'them' instead of 'spoilt children' and in (38), 'myselves' is used to refer back to 'I' instead of 'myself' respectively.

However it is evident from the foregoing that the errors in view occurred because of lack of adequate knowledge of the rules of concord in English language. It can also be due to negative transfer from the writer's L1 on the English language. Since both languages do not share the same structural patterns.

4.1.3 Subject-complement and object-complement

The subject-complement is the adjective, noun or pronoun that follows a linking verb and describes or renames the subject of the sentence. So also the object-complement is the noun, pronoun or adjective that comes after a direct object and describes or locates it. Subject complement and object-complement concord exists between subject complement in clauses of type SVC (subject, verb, complement). Below are the examples of errors identified:

39. My mother was a good **cooks**…/ cook

40. All my sisters are **lover** of party…/ lovers

Only two instances of errors were identified under this section. Examples (39) and (40) demonstrate the problem of error of subject-complement and object-complement in students' essays. In (39), "my mother was a good cooks…", the complement fails to agree with the subject which is singular. Therefore, to have plural as complement of a singular subject is wrong. For agreement to be enhanced in (39) it should read thus; my mother was a good cook…. Similarly, in (40) the complement 'lover of party', the noun 'lover' being in

singular form fails to agree with the plural subject ‘all my sisters’. Therefore, to enhance agreement, it should read; all my sisters are lovers of party….

These few instances of subject-complement and object-complement errors are identified in the students’ essays. Hence, does not show that they have good mastery of the concord in question, the reason may be that the students’ essay topics did not warrant much use of the concord in question. That we have some instances of error under this, is quite a clear evidence of shallow or no knowledge of how concord is arrived at in English language by the students under study.

4.1.4 Pronoun-Antecedent Concord

Personal and possessive pronouns in the 1st and 3rd persons agree with their antecedents in number. Those in the 3rd person singular (he, she, it) also agree with their antecedents in gender. Concord of number, person, and gender is necessary between subjects on one hand, and object or complement on the other hand, if the second element is reflexive pronoun. Below are some errors identified under the pronoun-antecedent concord:

41. My sister invited her friends to **his** party…/her

42. They invited **them** family…/ their

43. He invited … and they promised to honour **her** invitation./ his

45. The food I love to cook most is rice, **she** is easy to prepare. / it

The data gathered (41) to (45) shows the students’ level of understanding in the use of pronoun-antecedent concord. In (41), my sister invited her friends to ‘his’ party. The antecedent ‘his’ does not agree with the pronoun ‘her’ in gender. Instead of ‘her’ to agree with the pronoun in gender, ‘his’ is used. Similarly, in (42) instead of the pronoun ‘their’,

them is used demonstrating that the students do not know the pronoun appropriate to be used. In (43), 'he invited… to honour 'her' invitation', the pronoun 'her' used fails to agree with the 'he' used earlier in gender. This therefore reveals that the students do not still know much of the differences between genders. So they used the genders indiscriminately. Another instance of misuse of pronoun-antecedent is seen in (44) where instead of referring back to the 'he' in subject position; a different object is introduced thereby giving a different meaning to the sentence. The anomaly noticed above is as a result of poor knowledge of how pronoun relates with its antecedents. Finally in (45) 'the food I love to cook most is rice, she is easy to prepare'. The rice is meter and one would expect the students to use 'it' but instead 'she' feminine is used thereby failing to agree with the noun 'rice'.

4.2 Spelling Errors

According to Eyisi (323) as cited in Onukwor (ixi), "the failure to represent pronunciation accurately and consistently is to a large extent responsible for persistent spelling difficulties among Nigerian learners of English whose mother tongues are usually spelt as they are pronounced". The frequency of spelling errors clearly indicates that they were due to incomplete mastery of the English language. While looking at these error samples, the researcher noticed that they occurred because the words were spelt as they were pronounced.

Some of the spelling errors discovered included:

46. Due to **ranis**… ------- **rain**…
47. … **obserb** break. ------- **observe** …
48. The class **assemble**… ---------- **assembly**…
49. … and **muslem** … --------- **Muslim** …
50. There was **laboure** … ------ **labour**.
51. **At exartly** … ---------- **exactly** …

52. … as teachers **maned** … ----- **manned** …

53. ... the school **confessionaries** ------- **confessionary**

54. Some **staffs** --------**staff**

55. … were **sea** -------- **seen**

56. … the **assemblying** ground ----- **assembly**

57. … the bell **wrang** for break ---------- **rang**

58. … Supervised by **formasters.** --------- **form masters** or **form-masters**

59. … were **outsile** … ---------- **outside**

60. … To God be the **glorious**. ---------- **glory**

61. … the bell was rang for **closoure.** ------- **closure**

62. No **catualty** … ---------- **casualty**

63. … class **row** call. ---------- **roll**

64. … teachers discussing … ---------- **discussing**

65. **Ealier …**---------- **earlier**

66. … not **condon** … ---------- **condone**

67. … Final **clossing.** ---------- **closing**

68. The Christians **where** in the hall… --------- **were**

4.3 Punctuation Errors

The rules guiding punctuation were flouted in some of the error samples observed by the researcher. Punctuation errors were less frequent than spelling errors. They also indicated the incomplete mastery of the English language rules, though some of these punctuation errors occurred out of carelessness on the part of the teachers. Examples

69. The classes continued**,** as … ---------- the classes continued as …

70. … as planned**,** ---------- as planned**.**

71. The **day** activities … ---------- the **day's** activities…

72. At 8:00 am … ---------- at 8:00 am**,**

73. **…** in all the classes however ---------- in all the classes**.** However**,**

74. The day began with the cleaning of the compound**,** -- … compound**.**

75. … Sweeping of the classes by the students**,** ---- … by the students**.**

76. … At about 7: 40 am**. At** … ---------- at about 7: 40 am at …

77. Thanks be to God for successful day ---------- … for successful day**.**

78. During break students went … ----- during break, students went …

79. There after the students … ---------- thereafter, the students…

80. … **teacher's** as well went to… ------- **teachers**

4.4 Tense Errors

Some tense errors were discovered at the course of analyzing the data. Tense errors indicated the influence of the first language, that is, mother tongue interference. The language users in some cases used only one tense to represent many forms. This can be traced to first language transfer as most Nigerian languages have one tense form for three different tense forms, that is, the same form serves as "the base form", "the third person singular present tense", and "the present participle". In some Nigerian languages, the same form stands for both present and past tenses. However, the difference between the two tenses is indicated by tone. In the same way, the practice is transferred to the English language. Examples:

81. The rain **disturb** the … ---------- the rain **disturbed** the …

82. The classes **continue** as … -------- the classes **continued** as …

83. … was **pull** out of class … -------- was **pulled** out of class …

84. … when the bell was **rang** … ------- when the bell was **rung** …

85. … was **observe** … ---------- was **observed** …

86. … the bell **rangs …** ---------- the bell **rang**…

87. This exercise **terminates** at … ---------- **terminated**

88. … the students **return** … ---------- …**returned…**

4.5 Omission Errors

Omission errors refer to the omission of some words or letters in a sentence. Most of the omitted words are mainly prepositions, conjunctions and, in few cases, verbs. Examples:

89. Thereafter, **-** returned to their classes. … **the students**…

90. …Through 7:58 am **–** the students retired to their … ---- **after**

91. At this **-** a twenty … -------- **point,**

92. … Under the supervision teachers and the prefects **- . ---- on duty.**

The students observed morning prayers in **–** class rooms. --- **respective**

4.6 Findings and Discussion

From the study, the researcher was able to establish the following:

i. Most cases of grapho-syntactic errors occur due to incomplete mastery of the English language, which is the language of instruction in Nigeria.

ii. Grapho-syntactic errors occur as a result of low level of formal education of some of the teachers that teach English language in the school. In fact, the level of education of some teachers correlates with the quantity and nature of the errors their students commit.

iii. Some grapho-syntactic errors, which occurred in the essays, were as a result of interference from the first language (L1) of the students. The researcher discovered that there were numerous transfers of the first language rules to the second language (L2).

iv. Some erroneous forms were as a result of gross negligence from the students.

4.7 Implications of the Findings

It has been noted that grapho-syntactic errors raise problems of pedagogy and quality of the English language teaching and learning. To this end, this study will be of great benefit to the ESL learners, teachers, ESL curriculum planners, textbook designers and all who have passionate interest in the use of the English language.

Having explored the causes of Grapho-syntactic errors, it will guide the learners to avoid repeating them and will benefit teachers of English. Having exposed the sources and nature of graph-syntactic errors, teachers of English will be more implicit in teaching spellings and calligraphy well in the early formal education. They should encourage the use of dictionary, early in school life. Also, there is need for proper teaching of English grammar using whatever appropriate method that has been found by experts to be most appropriate in ESL. Conversely, since the research has shown sufficient evidence of the negative effects on spelling and syntax, it is pertinent for all teachers of English at all levels to be familiar with error and contrastive analysis and the application of their findings in the classroom so as to reduce the incidence of grapho-syntactic errors by the products of our educational system.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

5.0 Preamble

This final chapter of the research work presents the summary of the work and draws conclusion from the findings of the research and then gives possible recommendation.

5.1 Summary

The study focuses on graphological and syntactic errors in essays of senior secondary students (SSS3) of Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja. It has been noted that grapho-syntactic errors raise problems of pedagogy and quality of the English language teaching and learning. To this end, this study is of great benefit to the ESL learners, teachers, ESL curriculum planners, textbook designers and all who have passionate interest in the use of the English language. Having explored the causes of Grapho-syntactic errors, it will guide the learners to avoid repeating them and will benefit teachers of English. Having exposed the sources and nature of graph-syntactic errors, teachers of English will be more implicit in teaching spellings and calligraphy well in the early formal education. They should encourage the use of dictionary, early in school life. Also, there is need for proper teaching of English grammar using whatever appropriate method that has been found by experts to be most appropriate in ESL. Conversely, since the research has shown sufficient evidence of the negative effects on spelling and syntax, it is pertinent for all teachers of English at all levels to be familiar with error and contrastive analysis and the application of their findings in the classroom so as to reduce the incidence of grapho-syntactic errors by the products of our educational system.

The study equally reveals concord error as one of the errors identified and discussed in the study. Concord demands that a subject in singular is followed by a finite verb in the singular and that a subject in the plural is followed by finite verb in the plural. The subject

and the verb have to agree in number; if the subject is singular, the third person ‘s’ has to be attached to the verb and if the subject is plural the third person ‘s’ has to be omitted. To the contrary, in the essays gathered, agreement is not enhanced between subject and its verb. In the same vein, in the essays gathered, spelling errors, tense and punctuation errors abound. It is against this backdrop that this study analyzes grapho-syntactic errors in the students’ essays.

Analysis of the essays revealed that the students have difficulties with four types of concord examined: subject-verb, concord of person, subject-complement and object-complement and pronoun antecedent concord. It was discovered too that the students have challenges with the spelling of some words, omission of words; some words are indiscriminately omitted from sentence and the wrong use of tenses.

From the study, it was established that most instances of the errors demonstrate incomplete mastery of the English language as a language of instruction in the country. Also, that both teachers and students should be blamed for the errors because if they both demonstrate commitment to study and work, the errors would have been reduced to the barest minimum. Therefore all hands must be on deck to improving students’ performance in English language not only in area that bothers this study but in the problematic topics. Hence, parents, teachers, curriculum planners, text designers and the government (federal, state and local) must show concern. The study, therefore would like to reiterate the point that teachers of ESL must be well trained and should be given regular in-service training to keep them abreast with the current developments in the discipline. More so, grammar has become an essential communication tool; therefore the pattern practice of teaching grammar, should give way to practical discussion on how students can use grammar to communicate essential information. In this regard, the study would like to argue unequivocally that teachers of ESL should endeavour to read constantly in order to enhance their understanding of issues

pertaining to the teaching of the language. It has also been observed that whenever it comes to teaching of grammar and its rules, teachers merely 'brush off the surface' of the subject for the students.

Finally, as a word of admonition to students, they must cultivate the culture of reading good grammar books, which have discussed some challenging issues in grammatical concord and English grammar in general.

5.2 Recommendations

This study recommends that in order to solve the problems of grammatical and graphological errors amongst ESL teachers and students in Nigeria, the teaching of the language should be intensified and modernized. For example, the various activities and methods which ESL teachers employ during teaching and learning should be suitable to the level of students and should be geared towards enhancing a particular grammatical skill in students. Also, only properly trained and certified teachers should be allowed to teach the language. In addition, teachers should not be allowed to just teach, but be given areas of their strength to teach in the in order to enhance proficiency. Finally, technology abounds with numerous and readily available courses so such courses should be carefully sought and recommended to students.

Works Cited

Aitchison, Jean. *Language Change: Progress or Decay? 3rd ed.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Alhasan, S. *Modern Approach to Research in Educational Administration for Research Students*.

Revised edition. Cape Coast: Nyakod Printing Press, 2007.

Aloysius D, Gadzekpo A, Ahadzie S. *Extra-Linguistic Factors in the Use of Language in the Ghanaian Press*. Accra: Black Mask Publishers, 1997.

Annela, H. *Changes in subject verb agreement with collective nouns in British English from 18th century to the present day collective nouns*. University of Tampere, 2008.

Aremo, Bolaji. *An Introduction to English Sentences*. Ibadan: Scribo Publications Ltd, 2004.

Ashipu, K.B.C. *Use of English for Nigerian Tertiary Institutions.* Calabar: Fannup Books Limited, 2006.

Azar, B. *Understanding and Using English Grammar, Subject Verb Agreement,* 3rd edition, Pearson Education, 2002.

Banjo, Ayo. *Overview of English Language in Nigeria*. Ibadan: University Press, 1996.

Bussmann, Hadumod. *Dictionary of Language and Linguistics.* London: Routledge, 1996.

Celce-Murcia M, and Lersen-Freeman D. *The Grammar Book; An ESL Teacher's Course*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle, 1999

Corder, Stephen, *Error Analysis and Interlanguage.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Corder, Pit. *Error Analysis and Interlanguage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

_____ *Encyclopaedia Americana*. Vol.11. (International Edition) Chicago: Grolier Incorporated, 1981.

_____ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Vol. 1. Lincoln: William Benton Publishers, 1981.

Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics Fourth Edition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.

Cullup, Michael. *Correct Grammar*. England: Clarion, 2003.

Dulay H, Burt M. *You can learn without goofing In*: JC Richards(Ed.): Error Analysis. London: Longman Group Ltd. 1974.

Duskora, Libuse. *"On Sources of Error in Foreign Language learning" in Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Related Aspects*. Robinett, Betty, Wallace and Schchter Jacquelyn (eds), The University of Michigan Press, 1986.

Eteh, I.A *Use of English for Schools and Colleges*. Kano: Maltage Prints and Publishing, 2004.

Eyisi, Joy. *Common Errors in the Use of English*. Onitsha: Africana First Publishers Limited, 2004.

_____ *Gollier's Encyclopaedia*. Vol.1. New York: R. R. Bowker Company Limited, 1969.

Freeborn, D. *A Course Book in English Grammar*. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd. 1987.

Headbloom A.G. S. Mcdonough. *Teaching English as a second language.* London: Longman Group Limited, 1979.

Hornby, A. S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. New 7th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Hurford, James. *Grammar: A Student's Guide.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Johansson, Stig. *Understanding English Grammar* - part 1: An Overview. Oslo, 1986.

Kolln, Martha and Funk, Robert.*Understanding Engish Grammar*. London: Pearson Education, Inc., 2009.

Kirkpatrick, Betty. *Correct Grammar, Correct English.* Scotland: Waverley Books, 2010.

Krishnaswamy, N. et al. *Modern Linguistics: An Introduction.* Oxford; oxford university press, 2005.

Kroeger, Paul. *Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Labov, W. *Sociolinguistic Patterns.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

Langan, J. *Exploring Writing, Sentences and Paragraphs, Subject Verb Agreement*. Atlantic Community College, 2008

Leech, Geoffrey and Svartvik, Jan. *A Communicative Grammar of English*. London: Pearson Education Ltd, 2002.

Leech, Geoffrey, *et al. English Grammar for Today: A New Introduction.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Long, C E. *College Writing Resources: With Readings*. New York: Pearson Education, 2007.

Muir, James. *A Modern Approach to English Grammar*. London: BT. Batsford, 1972.

Murcia and Larson. *Grammar Book, Problems in Subject Verb Agreement*. London: Newbury house, 1983.

Ojetunde, Cecilia, Folashade. *Lexical-Grammatical Errors in Nigerian English: Implications for Nigerian Teachers and Learners of English*. In European Scientific Journal, June, 2013 p. 252-268.

Oniemayin, Funmi, Fansho Medayedu and Omolara Daniel. eds. *Basic English Language Skills*. Ilorin: Nathadex Publishers, 2003.

Onunkwor, Benedette Ngozi. *Grapho-syntactic Errors in the Language of Advertising in Nigeria.* Unpublished M.A.Dissertation, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2010.

Otagburuagu, Emeka et al. eds. *Comprehensive English For Higher Education*. Enugu: Acena Publishers, 1992.

Patrizia, Tabossi*. Semantic Effects on Syntactic Ambiguity Resolution" in Attention and Performance* xv, ed. By C. Umilta.MIT Press, 1994.

Payne, Thomas. *Understanding English Grammar: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Quirk, R. Greenbaum. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language. Subject Verb Agreement.* London, Longman, 1985.

Radford, Andrew. *Syntax: A Minimalist Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Richards, Jack. *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition Strategies*. Dublin: Longman Group U.K Limited, 1971.

Schachter, Jacquelyn. "*An Error" in Error Analysis: Language Learning*. Vol. 24, pp.205-214.

Schmitt, Nobert*. An Introduction to Applied Linguistics 2nd edition.* London: Hodder Education, 2010.

Selinker et al. *Second Language Acquisition. An Introduction Course*: Lawrence Eribaum Associates, 1994.

Slobin, D.I. ed. *The Teaching of English Studies: Readings for Colleges and Universities.* Ibadan: university press, 1979.

Sung-Ho. *Some Cases of Disagreement in English: When Genitive Grammar Meets Genitive Lexicon*. Department of English Education, Hanyang University, China.

Syal P. and jindal D.V. An introduction to linguistics: language, grammar and semantics. New Delhi: Asoke k. Ghosh,

Tomori, Olu. *Morphology and Syntax of Present-day English: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books, 2004.

Ubahakwe, Ebo. *Varieties and functions of English in Nigeria.* Ibadan: African university press, 1971.

Ubahakwe, Ebo. ed. The Teaching of English Studies: Readings for Colleges and Universities. Ibadan: University Press, 1979.

Weiner, Patience. *A Context-Based Grammar.* Singapore: The McGrraw-Hill Companies Inc, 1996.

Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia <http://en.wikipediaorg/wiki/Error: Web. 15th October, 2008.

Williams, James. *The Teacher's Grammar Book.* London: Routledge, 2005.

Yankson K E. *Better English through Concord for West African Students*. Accra: Commercial Associates Ltd, 1994.