A LINGUISTIC ERROR ANALYSIS OF SENIOR FOUR STUDENTS' COMPOSITION WRITING IN ENGLISH: THE CASE OF OYAM DISTRICT

BY

OYUKO GEORGE

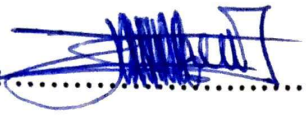
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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE TRAINING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE AND ENGLISH LINGUISTICS OF GULU UNIVERSITY

JANUARY 2025

DECLARATION

I, Oyuko George, do declare that the thesis titled *A Linguistic Error Analysis of Senior four Students' Composition Writing in English: The Case of Oyam District* is my own work and has never been submitted in part or in full for any degree award to any higher institution of learning, and that all references have been correctly acknowledged to the best of my knowledge.

Sign:.....

Date: 13/01/2025.....

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report titled *A Linguistic Analysis of Senior Four Students' Composition Writing in English: The Case of Oyam District*, has been carried out under my supervision and is now ready for submission.

Sign: 

Date: … 12 January 2025 ……

Mugumya Levis, PhD

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Lakana Adupa Ameny, and mother, Mrs. Roslia Acen Adupa (may God welcome them in paradise), as well as to my wife, brothers, daughter, and sons. I am grateful for their unwavering love, tolerance, encouragement, and support; without them, I could not have completed my master's program.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALM	-	Audio-Lingual Method
CAH	-	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
COVID-19	-	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EA	-	Error Analysis
EFL	-	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
I-CVI	-	Item-Level Content Validity Index
L1	-	First Language
L2	-	Second Language
NAPE	-	National Assessment of Progress in Education
NCDC	-	National Curriculum Development Centre
NP	-	Noun Phrase
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
SOPs	-	Standard Operating Procedures
UCE	-	Uganda Certificate of Education
UNEB	-	Uganda National Examinations Board

ABSTRACT

This study examined the linguistic errors that Senior Four students in Oyam District made in their English composition writing, specifically focusing on grammatical and vocabulary errors. It aimed to identify the nature of these errors, establish their causes, and explore the feedback strategies employed by teachers when marking students' scripts. The research sample comprised 77 students and four teachers selected through purposive and random sampling from four secondary schools. Data was gathered using a composition test and interview guide. A mixed-method approach, combining numerical and descriptive analysis, was employed to analyze the data within Pit Corder's (1967) error analysis framework. The results show that within the grammar category, tense, prepositions, pronouns, articles, and subject-verb agreement are the most frequently made mistakes by Senior Four students in Oyam District. Vocabulary errors included synonym-induced errors, spelling errors, homophone-induced errors, formal misselection errors, and collocation errors. Most errors were due to intralingual causes. Additionally, the study found that teachers predominantly used indirect correction strategies when providing feedback. Based on these findings, the study recommends that Senior Four students in Oyam District focus more on grammar and vocabulary when writing compositions. Teachers should also emphasize these areas in their instruction and feedback to improve students' writing proficiency.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study aimed to examine linguistic errors, specifically grammatical and vocabulary errors that students made, by analyzing composition writings in English by senior four students. Students require composition writing as a critical skill not only to pass exams but also to communicate effectively and survive beyond school. Understanding the common errors in students' writings can provide valuable insights for educators to tailor their teaching methods and improve language proficiency among learners. The study can help improve the general standard of English language instruction by highlighting these problem areas and making sure that students are better equipped to succeed academically and navigate real-world communication challenges.

The researcher collected sample compositions using both purposive and random sampling in order to accomplish this. Teachers gave the students a test and then marked their scripts to collect feedback on the learning strategies they had used. Later, the teachers were questioned to get their thoughts on the methods they use to provide feedback to their students. A mixed methods approach was used to analyze the collected data, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a thorough understanding of the errors and effectiveness of feedback strategies.

1.1 Background to the study

This section provides the study's background by presenting the topic's historical, conceptual, theoretical, and contextual aspects.

1.1.1 Historical background

Linguistic error analysis has a long history dating back to the early days of language instruction. An important area of applied linguistics to comprehend the language learning process is error analysis, especially for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. The history of language learning and teaching forms the foundation of the study of linguistic error analysis. Examining the ways in which errors have been viewed and researched over time is made easier with a firm understanding of the development of error analysis. This historical background traces the development of error analysis from early language teaching practices to contemporary approaches, emphasizing its significance in understanding the language acquisition process.

Language learning was heavily influenced by behaviorist theories in the early 20th century, especially during World War II in the 1940s. These theories saw language acquisition as a process of habit formation. During this time, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) gained prominence by emphasizing error avoidance and repetitive drills. Errors were seen as detrimental since they were caused by the learner's first language (L1). Through intensive practice, the goal was to develop automatic, error-free responses (Skinner, 1957).

Noam Chomsky's criticism of behaviorism, which emerged in the 1950s and 60s, contributed significantly to the paradigm shift brought about by cognitive theories. Humans possess an innate ability to learn language, according to Chomsky's theory of transformational-generative grammar, which placed emphasis on learners' innate linguistic competence (Chomsky, 1957). As a result of this change, mistakes were no longer seen as failures but rather as normal, necessary components of learning.

Error analysis was first formally studied in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Leading scholars in the field, including Stephen Pit Corder and Larry Selinker, have made substantial contributions

(Corder, 1967; Selinker, 1972). In his groundbreaking study "The Significance of Learners' Errors" (1967), Corder made the case that errors are an essential component of the learning process and can reveal information about the learner's interlanguage, a transitional linguistic system that develops as a student approaches complete fluency in the target language.

The understanding of errors was further advanced by Selinker's (1972) concept of interlanguage. He suggested that each learner has a distinct linguistic system that is shaped by their cognitive processes, their L1, and their target language (L2). Errors were viewed as systematic and indicative of this dynamic interlanguage, offering important insights into the learner's present language proficiency level.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, researchers developed various taxonomies to categorize and analyze errors. These taxonomies helped identify common patterns and sources of errors, such as overgeneralization, transfer from L1, and developmental stages in L2 acquisition. The focus expanded beyond grammatical errors to include lexical, phonological, and discourse errors, providing a thorough grasp of the language difficulties faced by learners (Richards, 1971; Corder, 1981; Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982).

The use of error analysis in composition writing became particularly significant as writing requires the integration of multiple linguistic components. Researchers like Richards (1974) began to examine errors in student compositions to identify recurring patterns and underlying causes. This focus on written language provided insights into the complexities of language production and highlighted the need for targeted pedagogical interventions. Error analysis has proven to be invaluable in ESL contexts, where learners often face unique challenges in mastering the target language. By analysing errors, educators can gain insights into the learners' interlanguage and design effective teaching strategies to address specific linguistic

difficulties. As a result of this strategy, more sophisticated and adaptable language teaching approaches have been created (Corder 1974; James, 1998).

The historical account traces the movement of English around the world, beginning with the pioneering voyages to the Americas, Asia, and the Antipodes. It was an expansion which continued with the nineteenth-century colonial developments in Africa and the South Pacific, and which took a significant further step when it was adopted in the mid twentieth-century as an official or semi-official language by many newly independent states (Crystal, 2002, p. 29). The arrival of the first Englishman Sir Henry Morton Stanley in 1874 and subsequently the Anglican and Catholic missionaries respectively, marked the influx of English in Uganda (Meierkord, 2016a; Isingoma & Meirekord, 2019, p. 294). In 1894 when the British government declared Buganda and later the entire Uganda a protectorate, there arose a need for local personnel to help the British in its administration. This necessitated the establishment of schools to train the needed personnel (Ssekamwa, 1997, as cited in Nakayiza, 2016). The missionaries soon established schools across Uganda where both English and the local languages of the communities were taught. Much as there was increase in the number of schools and the learners enrolled as well as the permeating use of English in official settings and other spheres, English was spoken by few Ugandans (Nakayiza, 2016).

Since then Uganda's education system particularly the language policy has undergone several reforms. Notable is the Uganda Government White Paper on Education (1992) which clearly specifies that the unifying language of broad-based national development and progress is English. Henceforth, the language policy specifies English as the medium of instruction from senior one… (the first year of secondary school) onwards (p. 19). At O-Level (senior 1-4), English is a compulsory subject taught for six periods a week, in 40-minute lessons. The value of English is underscored by Crystal (2003, p. 110) who observed that English language has

become the medium of access to knowledge since most of the human innovations in research, science, medicine, literature, and all other fields are written and documented in English.

Accordingly, the Integrated English Teaching Syllabus for the Uganda Certificate of Education (2008) recognizes the fact that English is Uganda's official language and that learners need English for communication and as a basis for further education (p. viii). Failing English at senior four hinders students from going to upper academic or professional levels. One of the aims of the Integrated English Teaching Syllabus for the Uganda Certificate of Education (2008) is to foster learners' creative ability more deliberately by guiding the learners to develop their ability to write correctly, creatively and effectively while practicing creative and functional writing through a variety of fields of discourse in writing: discursive/argument, explanatory, narrative, enumerative, directive, illustrative, etc (p. x, 17). English composition writing forms part of the English paper which the students sit at senior four which carry 40% of the marks for the paper.

Oyam District, located in Northern Uganda, was established in 2006 after being carved out of Apac District. It is part of the Lango sub-region and is home to the Lango ethnic group, who primarily speak Lango, a dialect of the Luo language. The district has a rich oral tradition and a strong cultural identity tied to its language, which influences education and communication. Historically, Oyam was affected by the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency, leading to displacement and disruption, including in education. Today, it is an agricultural hub and an important area for studying linguistic patterns and challenges, especially in English language learning among students (UBOS, 2014; Uganda Radio Network, 2020).

1.1.2 Conceptual background

The conceptual background of linguistic error analysis focuses on defining key terms and concepts that are central to understanding and conducting research in this field. It provides a framework for examining how errors are classified, interpreted, and addressed within the

context of language learning, particularly in ESL settings. This section outlines the fundamental concepts that underpin error analysis and their relevance to the study of senior four students' composition writings in English in Oyam District.

To start with Error Analysis, or EA for short, is a model for studying errors made by second language learners. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), EA is a method for locating, categorizing, and methodically deciphering the forms of a language that are unacceptable in production data from language learners, whether they are second or foreign languages. This methodical examination of errors eventually yields insightful information about the mental model of the learners and demonstrates their understanding of the target language's grammatical systems (p. 184-185).

Corder (1967) described error analysis as the methodical examination of deviations made by language learners from the norms of the target language. It seeks to recognize, classify, and comprehend the errors that language learners make when learning an L2. Corder emphasised that errors are not random, but systematic deviations that provide insights into the learners' current linguistic competence and their developing interlanguage system. Error analysis is the process of examining these errors in order to comprehend the fundamental mechanisms of language acquisition and to provide guidance for efficient teaching methods. This definition therefore, applies to the study at hand since its principles provide clear guidelines for carrying out error analysis.

The idea of error versus mistake, which Corder (1967) introduced, is important to the study of error analysis. He explains (p. 167) that a mistake occurs when the deviation results from ignorance. It is an indication of incompetence. When students do not perform to their competence, they make a mistake. Conflicting agendas, memory constraints, and a lack of automaticity all lead to mistakes (cf. Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 184; Brown, 2000). As stated by Schmidt and Richards (2002, p. 184), a mistake in an L2 learner's writing or

speech is the use of a linguistic item (e. g., a term, a component of grammar, a speech act, etc.) in a way that a native speaker or fluent speaker of the language would consider to be indicative of flawed or insufficient learning. Furthermore, Schmidt and Richards (2002, p. 184) specify that errors arise from incomplete knowledge, whereas mistakes happen when a learner writes or speaks and are brought on by inattention, haste, exhaustion, or other performance-related factors. Error analysis must be done in order to comprehend the learning strategies that L2 learners employ as well as to pinpoint the challenges they face (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 184)

Also crucial to this conceptual review are intralingual and interlingual causes of learner errors which is the focus of the second objective of this study. These errors often reflect direct transfer from the structures, vocabulary, or rules of the first language. They are common among early-stage learners who heavily rely on their existing language knowledge when trying to produce the new language. (Coder, 1967; Selinker, 1972). On the other hand, errors that arise from faulty or partial learning of the target language, rather than from language transfer are known as intralingual errors (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 267-268). These errors happen when students misapply rules, overgeneralize language patterns, or forget to make exceptions to the rules. Contrary to interlingual errors, intralingual errors result from a learner's growing proficiency in the target language rather than being influenced by their native language (Coder, 1967; Richards, 1971; Richard & Schmidt, 2002). By analysing these errors, educators can develop more effective instructional approaches that facilitate language acquisition and minimise persistent errors, ultimately supporting learners in achieving greater proficiency in the target language. And this is what the study at hand aimed to achieve.

Originating from the Latin word *componere,* which means "put together," the word composition describes the process of arranging and presenting ideas in a logical manner (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.). Writing classes, often referred to as composition classes,

focus on developing this skill, which is also applied to music creation (Vocabulary Dictionary online, n.d.). Ur (2009) asserts that writing serves the fundamental purpose of expressing ideas and communicating messages effectively to readers. Thus, while the content and ideas conveyed are paramount, attention must also be paid to formal aspects such as handwriting legibility, correct spelling, punctuation, grammatical accuracy, and appropriate vocabulary selection (p. 163).

This study examines three types of compositions: narrative, descriptive, and argumentative. According to Jordan (1997, p. 27), a narrative recounts events in chronological order, aiming to create a coherent story. Descriptive compositions vividly portray objects, people, places, emotions, or experiences. In contrast, argumentative essays seek to persuade readers to adopt the writer's perspective by presenting and supporting a specific viewpoint with evidence and reasoning.

The third objective of the study examines the strategies used by teachers to correct the learners' errors. Error correction according to Richard and Schmidt (2002, p.185) are strategies used by a teacher or more advanced learner to correct errors in a learner's speech. Error correction strategies in composition are methods used by educators to address and improve students' writing skills by identifying and correcting linguistic errors. These strategies are based on understanding learner errors as a reflection of their interlanguage—the transitional linguistic system developed while learning a second language (Ferris, 2003; Ellis, 2009). Common strategies include: direct feedback whereby **t**eachers explicitly correct errors by providing the correct form. This method is clear and immediate but may limit deeper cognitive processing by students (Richard & Schmidt, 2002; Ellis, 2009). Indirect feedback is a strategy where errors are highlighted without providing the correct form, encouraging students to self-correct (Richard & Schmidt, 2002; Ellis, 2009). This fosters critical thinking and active engagement with the language (Bitchener & Knoch 2010). Focused feedback targets specific error types,

such as verb tense or subject-verb agreement. This method is effective for mastering particular aspects of grammar. Unfocused feedback strategy addresses all types of errors within a composition. While comprehensive, it may overwhelm students and dilute the impact of individual corrections (Richard & Schmidt, 2002; Ferris 2003; Ellis, 2009).

In the context of senior four students' composition writings in Oyam District, understanding these key concepts is crucial for conducting a thorough error analysis. Composition writing, a complex skill that integrates grammar, vocabulary, and discourse, provides a rich source of data for analysing learners' language and identifying prevalent errors. By applying the concepts of error analysis, researchers can gain insights into the linguistic challenges faced by the students and develop effective strategies to enhance their writing proficiency.

1.1.3 Theoretical background

This study is predicated on the understanding that linguistic errors are a fundamental component of second language acquisition, offering critical insights into the interlanguage processes of learners. Errors, rather than being viewed as mere deviations from target norms, are systematic and reflective of the learners' evolving linguistic competence. These errors arise from complex interactions among cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural factors (Corder, 1967; Selinker, 1972).

The interplay among the study's constructs—errors, their causes, and corrective strategies—is elucidated as follows. Errors in composition writing manifest from learners' attempts to apply internalized linguistic rules, which are shaped by their interlanguage system. This transitional linguistic framework is dynamic and systematically variable. According to Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972) the causes of errors are attributed to factors such as negative transfer from the learners' first language (L1), overgeneralization of second language (L2) rules, and developmental processes inherent in language acquisition. Effective corrective strategies,

therefore, must address these underlying causes while aligning with the learners' interlanguage stage, facilitating the refinement of their linguistic systems to approximate target language norms.

The first more relevant theory to this study is Error Analysis (EA). EA theory propounded by Corder (1967) is a pivotal theoretical framework that investigates learner errors to uncover their underlying causes and implications for language acquisition. According to Corder (1967), errors are not incidental "mistakes" but rather represent systematic evidence of the cognitive processes involved in language learning. The central tenets of Error Analysis include the following: errors are seen as a critical window into the learners' interlanguage, revealing their hypotheses about the target language structure. These errors can be classified into intralingual errors (arising from within the target language), interlingual errors (resulting from L1 transfer), and developmental errors (linked to stages of acquisition). From a pedagogical perspective, the identification of error patterns equips educators to design targeted interventions to address learners' specific challenges effectively.

While EA provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. According to James (1998), its scope is often constrained to errors, potentially neglecting areas where learners exhibit successful language use. Critics also argue that the theory emphasizes surface-level symptoms of errors without adequately probing the underlying cognitive mechanisms. This is acknowledged by Corder (1974) himself. Furthermore, EA is criticized for its insufficient consideration of sociocultural and contextual influences on language learning and error production (James, 1998).

Despite these limitations, Error Analysis remains an essential tool for identifying and categorizing the linguistic errors made by Senior Four students in their English compositions. It enables the systematic uncovering of recurring patterns and their linguistic or cognitive underpinnings.

Another theory germane to the study is Interlanguage Theory is by Larry Selinker. Interlanguage Theory, proposed by Selinker (1972), offers a dynamic conceptualization of the transitional linguistic system that second language learners develop as they progress toward full proficiency. This system is influenced by both L1 and L2 and is characterized by systematic rules that may diverge from those of either language. Key assumptions of Interlanguage Theory are that: the interlanguage system evolves dynamically, with learners navigating stages of approximation, regression, and fossilization (where certain errors become ingrained). Errors stem from processes such as language transfer, overgeneralization, and the use of learning strategies, reflecting learners' active engagement with the target language. The theory underscores the pedagogical value of aligning feedback with the learners' developmental stage to foster more effective language acquisition.

Interlanguage Theory has faced criticism for its overemphasis on fossilization, which some argue implies a static endpoint in language learning that does not always occur (Ellis, 1994, Han, 2004). Additionally, Han (2004) observed that the broad scope of the theory can hinder precise predictions or explanations for specific errors. Furthermore, critics contend that the theory underrepresents external factors such as social, cultural, and instructional contexts in its analysis of language learning processes (Ellis, 1994).

In this study, Interlanguage Theory provides a valuable lens for exploring the causes of errors made by Senior Four students in their English compositions. By analyzing these errors through the interlanguage framework, the study seeks to illuminate the learner' linguistic progression and the influence of their L1 on their L2 acquisition.

Error Analysis and Interlanguage Theory complement each other in addressing the objectives of this study. Error Analysis offers a structured approach for identifying and categorizing errors, while Interlanguage Theory delves into the cognitive and linguistic mechanisms underlying these errors. Together, these frameworks facilitate a comprehensive exploration of

the nature and patterns of errors in students' composition writing, the developmental and transfer factors causing these errors, and the corrective strategies that are most effective in addressing them.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, this study contributes to a nuanced understanding of linguistic errors and informs pedagogical practices aimed at enhancing English composition writing among Senior Four students in Oyam District.

1.1.4 Contextual background

Uganda's education system, particularly its language policy, has undergone significant reforms over the years. Notable among these is the Uganda Government White Paper on Education (1992), which established English as the unifying language for national development and progress. According to the policy, instruction must be conducted in English starting in senior one, or the first year of secondary school (p. 19). At the O-Level (senior 1-4), English is a compulsory subject, taught for six periods a week in 40-minute lessons. This policy underscores the importance of English in educational institutions, public discourse, and social interactions (Crystal, 2003; Ibnian, 2011).

As outlined in Uganda's 1995 Constitution, English is recognized as the country's official language. Similarly, the Integrated English Teaching Syllabus for the Uganda Certificate of Education (NCDC, 2008) affirms this status, highlighting the language's central role in education. It emphasises the necessity for learners to master English for effective communication and as a foundation for further education (p. viii). The syllabus aims to enhance learners' creative abilities by guiding them to write correctly, creatively, and effectively across various fields of discourse, such as argumentation, explanation, narration, enumeration, direction, and illustration (p. x, 17). English composition writing is a significant component of the English subject at senior four, contributing 40% to the overall marks. Failing English at this level can impede students' progress to higher academic or professional stages.

The level of English language proficiency among Ugandan students is still a concern despite these efforts (Kafuuma, 2019). Ugandans who speak English as a second language (L2) are impacted by the multilingual environment of the nation. Up to 65 indigenous ethnic groups and 41 extant languages can be found in Uganda (Namyalo, Isingoma, & Meierkord, 2016). Isingoma (2014) observes that local languages influence the variety of English spoken in Uganda by a large number of people through linguistic transfer and analogy. This linguistic diversity presents unique challenges for students learning English as an L2.

Empirical research demonstrates how common linguistic errors are in student writing. Nabiryo (2011) found that learners in Rubaga Division, Kampala District, exhibited errors in spelling, vocabulary, coherence, and punctuation. Similarly, reports from the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) for the years 2015, 2016, and 2019 indicated that students' compositions showed a range of problems, including incorrect grammar, spelling, tense usage, vocabulary, and punctuation. The National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) report (2014) revealed that less than 30% of the 19,529 sampled senior two students could "write impressive compositions" (p. 19).

However, these reports generally outline the types of linguistic errors without delving into their causes. The lack of analytical accounts of these errors leaves a gap in understanding the specific challenges faced by learners. Moreover, the reports provide only general advice for addressing these issues, such as encouraging teachers to give students more practice exercises in narrative writing (UNEB report, 2019, p. 2), without offering targeted strategies for correcting particular types of errors. This study seeks to close the gap by conducting a detailed linguistic error analysis of senior four students' compositions in Oyam District.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite the emphasis on English language instruction in Uganda, particularly at Senior Four level, students continue to exhibit linguistic errors in their composition writings (Kasozi, 2012). Existing reports (UNEB, 2015, 2016, 2019; NAPE, 2014) and studies (Mugisha, 2009; Nabiryo, 2011; Kasozi, 2012; Nabirye, 2015) highlight the prevalence of errors in areas such as grammar, spelling, tenses, vocabulary, and punctuation, but there is a dearth of detailed analysis regarding the specific types of errors made by senior four students in their composition writings in English. Additionally, the causes of these errors are not thoroughly examined, and strategies for addressing specific types of errors are not clearly defined. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive linguistic error analysis that focuses on senior four students' composition writings in Oyam District, Uganda, to identify the specific types of errors, understand their underlying causes, and propose effective strategies for remediation. Through a mixed-methods approach this study analyses the grammatical and vocabulary errors students make in their composition, the causes of the errors and strategies used by teachers to address them.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The primary aim of the study was to analyse the linguistic errors made by senior four students in Oyam District in their composition writing in English looking at the nature of the errors, their causes and strategies used to treat them.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

This research study intended to achieve the following specific objectives:

(i) To identify the nature of the errors that senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

(ii) To establish the causes of the errors that senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

(iii) To find out the strategies used by teachers to address the errors senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

1.4 Research questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

(i) What errors do senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing?

(ii) What are the causes of the errors made by senior four students in Oyam District in their English composition writing?

(iii) What strategies are used by teachers in addressing the errors senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study was conducted in Oyam District in northern Uganda. It was carried out in three government and one private secondary schools.

Content wise, the study focused on analysing the linguistic errors, particularly the grammatical and vocabulary errors made by senior four students in their composition writing, the causes of such errors and the strategies used by teachers to address errors. The researcher focused on the descriptive, argumentative and narrative composition as the types of composition taught at O-Level due to time limitation and the fact that students start learning them from Senior One.

The time scope was March, 2022 to December, 2022 using the senior four students much as the school calendar issued by the government was interrupted by a lockdown due to Covid-19 pandemic.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study may expand knowledge on grammar and vocabulary as well as interlingual and intralingual errors in a multilingual African context, potentially refining theoretical frameworks for error analysis.

The findings may inform teaching practices, leading to more effective instruction and better learning outcomes for students in Oyam District.

The results may support policymakers in making informed decisions about language education, resource allocation, and teacher training programs.

The study may highlight areas where further research is needed, paving the way for subsequent studies on language learning and error analysis in similar contexts.

1.7 Justification of the study

This study is justified based on its significance in addressing the persistent challenges of English language acquisition, particularly in composition writing among Senior Four students in Uganda. Despite the emphasis on English as the medium of instruction and its importance for academic success and national development, students in Oyam District continue to exhibit linguistic errors in their writing, which hinder effective communication and academic achievement (UNEB Report, 2015, 2016, and 2019).

Previous studies have highlighted the prevalence of linguistic errors in English composition writing across various contexts in Uganda and beyond. Mayaka (2018) examined grammatical errors in English compositions among Form Three students in Bududa District, Uganda, identifying frequent issues such as tense misuse, subject-verb disagreement, and incorrect article usage. The study emphasized the need for targeted grammar instruction to address persistent challenges. Similarly, Simbeye (2016) demonstrated how interlanguage processes

contribute to errors among Zambian learners of English, aligning with Selinker's theory. Awor (2017) explored the influence of mother tongue on learners' performance in written English in Uganda, revealing gaps in pedagogical approaches that exacerbate these errors. Together, these studies underscore the importance of addressing both interlingual and intralingual factors to improve students' composition writing skills. These findings underscore the need for localized studies, particularly in Oyam District, to understand the nature and causes of errors specific to Senior Four students and to inform contextually relevant strategies for improvement.

This study has practical implications for improving English language teaching and learning in Uganda. By identifying common errors and their causes, the study will provide valuable insights for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers to design effective interventions. Similar to the findings of Namuchwa (2007) and Mayaka (2018), which highlighted the need for targeted grammar instruction and informed teacher training programs in their respective regions, this research can contribute to the professional development of teachers in Oyam District.

The study's use of Error Analysis (Corder, 1967) and Interlanguage (Selinker, 1972) frameworks aligns with the methodologies of Kafuuma (2019), Nabirye (2015), and Kasozi (2012), who applied these theories to analyze linguistic errors in other Ugandan contexts. By building on these foundational works, the study will expand the application of these theories to a new context, offering further evidence of their relevance and utility in understanding language acquisition challenges.

Focusing on Senior Four students in Oyam District, the study addresses a critical stage in Uganda's education system where English proficiency is essential for transitioning to higher education. This aligns with Nabiryo's (2011) findings that emphasized the role of error analysis in improving language instruction in rural schools.

This study is both timely and necessary, as it addresses gaps in understanding and improving English language acquisition among Ugandan students. By building on previous studies and applying well-established theoretical frameworks, it aims to provide actionable insights that will benefit teachers, students, and educational stakeholders in Oyam District and beyond.

1.8 Theoretical framework

This study is anchored in two foundational theories of second language acquisition: Error Analysis (Corder, 1967) and Interlanguage (Selinker, 1972). Together, these theories offer a comprehensive lens for understanding the nature, causes, and implications of linguistic errors in second language learning, particularly in the context of English composition writing among Senior Four students in Oyam District.

Error Analysis (EA) by Corder (1967) emerged as a significant shift from the earlier Contrastive Analysis (CA) approach (Lado, 1957), which primarily focused on predicting errors by comparing learners' first language (L1) and target language (L2). Instead, EA emphasises the analysis of actual learner errors, arguing that these errors are not mere signs of failure but valuable insights into the learning process (Corder, 1981).

One of the central tenets of EA is the distinction between *errors* and *mistakes*. Errors are systematic deviations that arise from incomplete language competence and reflect gaps in the learner's knowledge. In contrast, mistakes are performance-related lapses caused by factors such as fatigue or distraction. This distinction is critical in assessing the developmental stage of a learner's language acquisition.

Corder (1967) further posits that errors serve three primary functions: they are pedagogically significant as they guide teachers in designing corrective strategies; they have diagnostic value as they reveal the learner's understanding of L2 rules; and they are a learning tool, enabling learners to test hypotheses about the target language. Errors can arise from interlingual

influences, where L1 structures interfere with L2 learning, or from intralingual factors, such as overgeneralization or incomplete rule application within the L2 system (Corder, 1971).

According to Corder (1974), the process of carrying out Error Analysis (EA) involves a systematic approach to collecting, identifying, describing, explaining and evaluating errors in learners' language use.

1. Collection of learner language data

The first step involves gathering a sample of learner language, which serves as the basis for analysis. This data can be collected through written assignments, spoken discourse, or structured elicitation tasks. It is essential to ensure the sample is representative of the learner's typical language use, covering a range of contexts and tasks relevant to the research objectives.

2. Identification of errors

Once the data is collected, the errors must be identified by comparing the learner's output to the norms of the target language (L2). The key is to distinguish errors (systematic deviations) from mistakes (random slips or performance-related lapses). This step requires a clear understanding of the target language rules to accurately pinpoint deviations.

3. Description of errors

In this step, errors are categorized based on their linguistic nature. Corder (1967) suggests organizing them into levels such as: phonological errors (deviations in pronunciation), grammatical errors (issues in syntax, morphology, or sentence structure), lexical errors (incorrect word choice or usage), and semantic errors (misinterpretation or misuse of meaning). Errors can also be classified as interlingual (influenced by L1) or intralingual (resulting from incorrect generalization or rule application within L2).

4. Explanation of errors

This involves analysing the underlying causes of the identified errors. Corder (1976) emphasises understanding the cognitive processes that lead to errors, which can include interference (influence of L1 on L2 production), overgeneralization (application of L2 rules beyond their appropriate context), incomplete rule acquisition (partial understanding of L2 grammar or syntax), learning strategies (simplifications or approximations learners use to bridge gaps in their knowledge).

5. Evaluation of errors

While not always included in EA, evaluation focuses on determining the impact or severity of errors. Some errors may hinder communication more than others, and this prioritization helps in planning targeted interventions. Teachers and researchers can assess which errors are more critical to address based on their effect on intelligibility and learning progression.

6. Correction and pedagogical implications

The final step involves using the findings to inform teaching practices. Identifying patterns in learner errors allows teachers to tailor instruction to address specific challenges. Corrective feedback can be designed based on the type and source of errors, employing methods such as direct or indirect feedback, depending on the learners' needs.

These steps form a cyclical process, with insights from Error Analysis contributing to refining teaching strategies, which in turn influence further learner language development. Corder's (1976) approach remains a cornerstone in understanding second language acquisition and error correction.

However, Error Analysis is not without its limitations. One notable criticism is its narrow focus on errors, neglecting the analysis of correct forms, which are equally important in

understanding language competence (Corder, 1974). Additionally, Richards (1974) observed that categorizing errors can be ambiguous, particularly in distinguishing between interlingual and intralingual sources. Furthermore, EA, according to Selinker (1972) lacks predictive power, as it focuses solely on post-error analysis rather than anticipating potential challenges in L2 learning.

Interlanguage Theory (Selinker, 1972) complements EA by providing a broader framework to understand the transitional linguistic system that learners develop when acquiring a second language. Selinker describes this system as an independent and dynamic entity, distinct from both the learner's L1 and the target L2. This transitional language evolves as learners acquire new knowledge and refine their understanding of the target language rules.

A core concept in Interlanguage Theory is fossilization, which refers to the phenomenon where certain errors become entrenched in a learner's linguistic repertoire, resisting correction despite extensive exposure to accurate input. Fossilization underscores the inherent limitations in second language acquisition, particularly when learning occurs in non-immersive environments.

Selinker (1972) identifies five psycholinguistic processes that shape interlanguage development. These include language transfer, where L1 influences the learner's L2 output; transfer of training, where instructional methods contribute to specific error patterns; overgeneralization, where learners apply L2 rules beyond their appropriate contexts; and communication and learning strategies, which reflect the learners' efforts to navigate linguistic gaps.

Despite its strengths, Interlanguage Theory has its shortcomings. According to Tarone (2006) the theory places significant emphasis on errors, which can overshadow the learner's progress and the gradual approximation toward L2 norms. The concept of fossilization, while widely

recognized, remains inadequately explained, and its occurrence is not universal (Selinker, 1992). Additionally, the theory may be less applicable to advanced learners, whose interlanguage systems closely resemble those of native speakers (Ellis, 1994).

The integration of Error Analysis and Interlanguage Theory provides a robust theoretical foundation for this study. EA will facilitate the identification, classification, and explanation of the linguistic errors made by Senior Four students in their English composition writing. It will also help uncover patterns of interlingual and intralingual influences. Meanwhile, Interlanguage Theory offers insights into the dynamic processes underlying these errors, shedding light on how learners construct and refine their interlanguage systems over time.

By situating the study within these theoretical frameworks, it becomes possible to explore not only the nature and causes of linguistic errors but also the broader cognitive and linguistic mechanisms that influence second language acquisition. This dual perspective ensures a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by learners and informs evidence-based strategies to improve English language instruction in Oyam District.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The analysis of linguistic errors in English composition writing has attracted considerable scholarly attention, particularly in second language acquisition research. This chapter examines previous research on the linguistic error analysis of students' composition writing in English. It focuses on three key areas: the nature of grammatical and vocabulary errors learners make, the underlying causes of these errors, and the strategies employed by teachers to address and rectify these errors. By examining existing studies and theoretical perspectives, this review aims to provide a better understanding of the difficulties students encounter in mastering English composition and the effectiveness of various pedagogical approaches in improving their writing skill.

2.1 The nature of students' grammatical and vocabulary errors

Errors in writing reveal critical insights into learners' challenges with grammatical structures and vocabulary choices, which are foundational for effective written communication. This review examines the nature of grammatical and vocabulary errors in learner writing, drawing on existing literature and contextualizing it within the case of Senior Four students in Oyam District.

Grammatical errors, encompassing issues in tense usage, article placement, prepositions, pronouns, and subject-verb agreement, are widely documented in ESL research. Nabirye (2015) explored linguistic errors among Ugandan Senior Three students and identified tense and article misuse as the most prevalent issues, attributing them to inadequate mastery of English grammar. Similarly, Kafuuma (2019) noted persistent grammatical challenges among

Ugandan secondary school students, particularly in preposition and subject-verb agreement usage, which significantly impeded their writing proficiency. Darus and Subramaniam (2009) reported analogous findings among Malaysian secondary students, where grammatical errors were dominant and often stemmed from incomplete grammatical rule acquisition.

Article misuse, especially with the indefinite article, has been highlighted in various studies as a recurring issue. Bataineh (2005) investigated the errors of Jordanian undergraduates and observed frequent misuse of articles, reflecting a broader difficulty in grasping English's complex article system. In Uganda, Kasozi (2012) noted similar trends, with learners often omitting or misplacing articles due to interference from their native languages, which lack equivalent grammatical structures. These findings underscore the need for targeted instruction to address such errors in Ugandan contexts.

Tense errors, another common category, are particularly problematic for learners. Hazaymeh (1996) studied Jordanian secondary students' writing and found that verb tense misuse was a recurring issue, often linked to confusion between past and present tenses. Similarly, Kafuuma (2019) observed that Ugandan students struggled with consistent tense usage, frequently switching between tenses within the same composition. These errors compromise the coherence and readability of students' writing, making tense an essential focus area for instructional intervention.

Lexical errors, including formal mis-selection, spelling mistakes, synonymy-induced errors, homophone confusion, and collocation issues, are equally significant in learner writing. Hernandez (2011) emphasized that lexical errors, particularly in word choice and spelling, often stem from limited exposure to authentic language use. Llach (2015) corroborated this, noting that collocation errors were widespread among secondary students, reflecting insufficient vocabulary development and overreliance on literal translations from their native language. Nabirye (2015) further highlighted that synonymy-induced errors and homophone

confusion were particularly common among Ugandan students, indicating a gap in their lexical awareness and usage.

In Uganda, Mugisha (2009) analyzed language problems in secondary schools and noted that lexical errors often arise from inadequate vocabulary instruction and limited opportunities for practical language use. This aligns with findings from Owu-Ewie and Williams (2017), who observed that lexical issues, particularly spelling and word choice errors, were a significant challenge for Ghanaian senior high school students. The persistent occurrence of such errors underscores the need for comprehensive vocabulary instruction tailored to the linguistic context of learners in Oyam District.

The categorization of errors into grammatical and lexical domains provides a structured understanding of the challenges faced by learners in their writing. Studies such as those by Kasozi (2012), Nabirye (2015), and Kafuuma (2019) illustrate that these errors are deeply rooted in gaps in instructional strategies and learner exposure to the target language. These findings emphasize the relevance of investigating the specific error patterns among Senior Four students in Oyam District, contributing to a broader understanding of linguistic challenges in ESL contexts.

By focusing on the nature of errors—grammatical and lexical—this review establishes the foundation for exploring effective interventions that address these challenges. It highlights the critical role of error analysis in diagnosing learner difficulties and informing pedagogical strategies that enhance writing proficiency.

2.2 Causes of students' grammatical and vocabulary errors

Understanding the causes of linguistic errors in English composition writing is critical for addressing the persistent challenges faced by learners. Scholars such as Corder (1967), Selinker (1972), Richards (1974) and Brown (1980) identify two primary sources of these errors:

interlingual and intralingual factors. Together, these provide a robust basis for analyzing the difficulties encountered by Senior Four students in Oyam District in English composition writing. These error causes are deeply intertwined with the cognitive and linguistic processes inherent in second language acquisition, as conceptualized in foundational theories by Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972).

Interlingual errors originate from the influence of learners' first language (L1) on their target language (L2). This phenomenon, often referred to as language transfer, occurs when learners rely on the structures, vocabulary, or rules of their native language to construct sentences in the second language. Ridah (2012) highlights that interlingual errors are especially prevalent among learners whose L1 differs significantly in structure from English. For instance, in the context of Ugandan students, whose native languages lack definite and indefinite articles, the omission or incorrect usage of articles in English is a recurring issue. Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013) corroborate this, noting that L1 interference leads to syntactic and lexical deviations in Thai students' English compositions. Similarly, Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016) observed that Akan-speaking students in Ghana frequently transferred L1 syntactic patterns to English, resulting in grammatical errors.

Intralingual errors, on the other hand, arise from within the target language itself, stemming from the learner's incomplete understanding, overgeneralization, or misapplication of its rules. Abushihab (2014) identifies intralingual errors as a result of learners' tendency to apply L2 rules inappropriately, such as overgeneralizing the use of regular past tense endings ("goed" instead of "went"). Bahrpeyma and Ostad (2018) found that Iranian EFL learners made errors due to incomplete knowledge of English grammar, often confusing verb forms and tenses. This aligns with findings by Darus and Subramaniam (2009), who observed that Malaysian students' errors in prepositions and articles frequently stemmed from limited exposure to authentic language use and insufficient reinforcement of grammatical rules.

The cognitive processes underpinning these errors provide further insight into their occurrence. Interlingual errors often reflect the learner's effort to use known linguistic structures from L1 as a cognitive shortcut in L2 production. Barto et al. (2009) explain that bilingual sentence processing frequently involves L1 transfer, particularly during early stages of language acquisition. Conversely, intralingual errors highlight the challenges learners face in internalizing and applying complex rules of the target language. For instance, Kim (2001) observed that Korean EFL learners' errors in sentence structure often resulted from attempts to simplify English syntax, reflecting incomplete rule acquisition.

While the dichotomy between interlingual and intralingual errors provides a useful framework for understanding error causes, research suggests that these factors are often interrelated. Learners may combine L1-based strategies with incomplete L2 knowledge, compounding their errors. However, studies in this area, such as those by Chan (2004) and Hung (2000), often focus on one cause without considering this interaction, leaving a critical gap in the literature. Furthermore, the socio-educational context, including teacher proficiency and access to instructional resources, plays a significant role in shaping these errors, yet this dimension is frequently overlooked in existing studies.

In Uganda, Mugisha (2009) emphasized the interplay between interlingual and intralingual factors in learners' writing challenges. He noted that the absence of sufficient L2 immersion exacerbates reliance on L1 structures, while inadequate instructional strategies in grammar and vocabulary development compound intralingual errors. Kafuuma (2019) also highlighted that interlingual errors are more pronounced among learners with limited exposure to English, whereas intralingual errors predominate in contexts where instructional emphasis on grammar is insufficient.

Despite their contributions, these studies (Owu-Ewie & Williams, 2017; Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013; Chan, 2004) often treat interlingual and intralingual errors as distinct categories

without adequately examining their interaction. Furthermore, while they provide detailed analyses of error causes, some studies like Hung (2000) rarely addresses the pedagogical strategies necessary to mitigate these challenges. This oversight represents a critical gap in the literature, particularly in contexts like Uganda, where multilingualism complicates the dynamics of L2 learning.

2.3 Strategies used by teachers to address students' errors

Addressing errors in second language (L2) writing has been a critical area of focus in pedagogy, with various strategies being proposed and analyzed. This review examines the strategies of direct, indirect, focused, unfocused, and no feedback (Ferris, 2002, 2003; Truscott, 1996, 2007), highlighting their strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in the existing literature while concurrently underscoring their relevance to the current study.

Direct feedback, where teachers explicitly provide corrections, has been widely recognized for its immediate impact on improving writing accuracy (Ferris, 2002; Chandler, 2003). This strategy ensures that learners receive clear guidance, which is particularly useful for addressing complex grammatical errors such as verb tense or article usage. However, it has been criticized for potentially fostering dependency among students, as learners may not engage in the cognitive processes required for self-correction (Lee, 2004).

Despite its advantages, studies such as those by Ferris and Roberts (2001) and Ashwell (2000) largely focus on Western contexts, leaving a gap in understanding how direct feedback operates in multilingual settings like Uganda. This gap is critical, as the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students in Oyam District may influence how they perceive and respond to direct feedback. By investigating its applicability in this context, the current study aims to provide insights into whether this strategy can effectively address the specific needs of Ugandan learners.

In contrast, indirect feedback, which involves highlighting errors without providing corrections, encourages learners to engage in problem-solving and develop self-revision skills (Lalande, 1982). While this approach has been praised for promoting deeper cognitive processing, studies such as those by Sonmez and Griffiths (2015) and Ferris (2003) note that its effectiveness depends heavily on students' language proficiency and ability to interpret the feedback. In multilingual classrooms, where students may have varying levels of proficiency, the utility of indirect feedback remains underexplored. This study seeks to address this gap by examining whether indirect feedback can be adapted to meet the diverse needs of Senior Four students in Uganda.

Focused feedback, which targets specific error types, is often recommended for its ability to reduce cognitive overload and enhance learning of particular linguistic features (Ellis et al., 2008). However, the narrow focus of this approach may limit its effectiveness in addressing the range of errors commonly found in learners' compositions, as noted by Hendrickson (1980). Existing research, such as that by Ferris (1997), predominantly examines focused feedback in homogeneous classrooms, leaving a gap in understanding its application in multilingual and resource-constrained environments.

The current study is relevant here, as it investigates whether focused feedback can be effectively used to address recurrent error patterns in Ugandan students' writing, considering the linguistic diversity and educational challenges in the region. Additionally, it explores whether the balance between specificity and comprehensiveness can be achieved to maximize learning outcomes in such contexts.

Unfocused feedback, which addresses a wide range of errors within a single task, provides a holistic evaluation of learners' writing (Robb et al., 1986). While this approach has been linked to improve writing quality in advanced learners, it is often criticized for overwhelming less proficient students (Ferris, 1997). Studies like those by Ashwell (2000) and Lee (2004) focus

on its application in structured classroom settings, leaving a gap in understanding how teachers can effectively implement unfocused feedback in overcrowded and under-resourced Ugandan schools. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring how teachers in Oyam District manage the demands of unfocused feedback while addressing the diverse needs of their students.

The no-feedback strategy, where errors are left uncorrected, has been a subject of debate in L2 writing research. Proponents like Truscott (1996) argue that this approach allows students to focus on fluency rather than accuracy, which is essential for creative and expressive writing. However, critics such as Chandler (2003) and Kepner (1991) highlight that this strategy is inadequate for addressing persistent grammatical issues, particularly in contexts where proficiency in written English is a key academic requirement.

Existing studies primarily examine no-feedback strategies in experimental or low-stakes settings, often overlooking their practical implications in high-stakes environments like Ugandan secondary schools. By examining how this strategy influences students' writing development in Oyam District, this study contributes to understanding whether and when no feedback can be a viable approach in such settings.

The existing literature offers valuable insights into the strengths and limitations of various feedback strategies. However, significant gaps remain in their contextual application, particularly in multilingual and resource-constrained environments like Uganda. For instance, while Ferris (2003) and Lalande (1982) provide compelling evidence for the cognitive benefits of indirect feedback, they do not address how this strategy can be adapted for learners with limited resources and varying language backgrounds. Similarly, studies by Ellis et al. (2008) and Ashwell (2000) highlight the effectiveness of focused feedback but fail to consider its practicality in classrooms with large student-to-teacher ratios.

The current study is uniquely positioned to address these gaps by investigating how teachers in Oyam District navigate these challenges to implement feedback strategies effectively. By exploring direct, indirect, focused, unfocused, and no feedback approaches, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of their relevance and adaptability in this context. Moreover, it contributes to the broader literature by offering actionable recommendations for improving feedback practices in similar multilingual and under-resourced settings.

While the literature provides a robust foundation for understanding error correction strategies, its limited focus on contextual factors and teacher perspectives represents a critical gap. By addressing these issues, this study seeks to advance both theoretical and practical knowledge, offering valuable insights into how feedback strategies can be optimized to enhance learners' writing proficiency in Uganda and beyond.

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature reviewed highlights several key areas essential to understanding the challenges Senior Four students in Oyam District face in English composition writing, as well as the strategies employed by teachers to address these challenges. The first section, which focused on the nature of linguistic errors, underscored the diverse and persistent errors that students make, particularly in areas such as grammar and vocabulary. These errors stem from a complex interplay of cognitive processes and external influences, including interlingual and intralingual interference, as well as challenges unique to the Ugandan educational context. While the existing research provides valuable insights into these error types, it fails to fully address how these errors are influenced by local multilingualism, leaving a gap that this study seeks to fill.

The second section, addressing the causes of these errors, emphasised the importance of both interlingual and intralingual factors in shaping students' writing difficulties. Research suggests

that language transfer from students' first languages, as well as overgeneralization and simplification strategies in English, contribute significantly to error patterns. Despite the extensive studies on error causes, there remains a limited understanding of how these causes interact in specific regional contexts, such as in Uganda, where multilingualism plays a crucial role. This study aims to extend the understanding of error causes by considering the interaction of intralingual and interlingual influences within the Oyam District context.

The final section, which examined the strategies employed by teachers to address students' errors, provided a thorough review of various feedback mechanisms, such as direct, indirect, focused, and unfocused feedback. Studies have shown that effective feedback plays a critical role in improving student writing accuracy and fluency. However, there remains a lack of consensus regarding the most effective types of feedback, and many studies have not sufficiently explored the contextual factors that influence teachers' feedback choices, particularly in non-Western educational settings. This study seeks to contribute by investigating how teachers in Oyam District address errors in English composition writing, focusing on the strategies they employ and the challenges they face in providing effective feedback in a resource-constrained environment.

Overall, the literature highlights significant gaps in our understanding of linguistic error types, their causes, and the effectiveness of various teaching strategies in Uganda. This study seeks to fill these gaps by providing a localized analysis of error patterns, their causes, and the feedback strategies used in Oyam District, offering valuable insights into improving English composition teaching and learning in this context.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter offers a thorough explanation of the researcher's methodology, design, and data collection techniques. Along with outlining the data's sources, it also covers the study process, data analysis, sample size and technique, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research approach

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively address the research objectives. The qualitative approach played a pivotal role in analyzing linguistic errors in grammar and vocabulary identified in the marked composition scripts of Senior Four students. These errors were systematically examined and classified as interlingual or intralingual to uncover the underlying causes.

In parallel, the quantitative component complemented the analysis by employing tabulations, percentages, and frequencies to summarize and present patterns in the distribution of errors and the corrective feedback strategies applied by teachers. To further investigate these strategies, the study analyzed teachers' feedback on students' marked scripts and conducted interviews to gain additional insights into their practices and perspectives.

The qualitative descriptive approach provided a nuanced understanding of the nature and causes of linguistic errors and evaluated the effectiveness of various feedback strategies. This hybrid approach reflects Creswell's (2012) recommendation for integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to explore research questions from diverse perspectives.

3.2 Research design

The study adopted a descriptive research design aimed at systematically collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic errors, their causes, and the corrective feedback strategies employed by teachers. This design facilitated a detailed exploration of the research objectives. Linguistic errors in grammar and vocabulary were identified through an in-depth analysis of Senior Four students' marked composition scripts. Teachers' corrective feedback strategies were examined using two primary data sources: annotations on students' marked scripts and insights obtained from teacher interviews.

The qualitative descriptive approach served as the primary method of analysis, enabling a detailed examination of the grammatical and vocabulary errors and their classification into interlingual and intralingual causes. Quantitative techniques, including tabulations, percentages, and frequencies, were employed to summarize and illustrate the patterns and distribution of errors and feedback strategies. By integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, the descriptive research design provided a structured framework to systematically document and classify linguistic errors, uncover their underlying causes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective feedback strategies utilized by teachers. The design's emphasis on qualitative depth, complemented by quantitative summaries, ensured a detailed yet precise exploration of the study objectives.

3.3 Study area and population

Oyam District is found in Uganda's northern Region. Geographically, it lies between coordinates 2.2354° N latitude and 32.4823° E longitude. The district shares borders with the following districts: Nwoya District to the west, Gulu District to the north, Apac District to the south, and Kole District to the east. The administrative headquarters are situated in the town of

Oyam. Oyam District is approximately 335 kilometers (208 miles) north of Kampala, Uganda's capital city, accessible via the Kampala-Lira highway (Wikipedia Contributors, n.d.).

Oyam District is primarily a rural area recognized for its agricultural activities, with most of its residents involved in subsistence farming. The district has a diverse cultural heritage, with the Lango people being the primary ethnic group. This cultural richness, coupled with its agricultural economy, plays a significant role in shaping the socio-economic landscape of the district (UBOS, 2014; Uganda Radio Network, 2020).

Oyam District was selected for this study due to its unique educational challenges and opportunities. Despite the efforts to improve education in rural areas, students in Oyam often face significant obstacles such as limited access to educational resources, inadequate teaching facilities, and a shortage of qualified teachers (Uganda Radio Network, 2020). These factors can contribute to linguistic challenges in English composition writing. By focusing on Oyam District, this study seeks to clarify the unique challenges faced by students in a rural setting and explore effective strategies that educators can use to develop their English linguistic proficiency.

The study's population consisted of 77 students, including 35 boys and 42 girls, from four of the twelve (10 government-aided and 2 private) secondary schools in Oyam District. The selection of senior four students was informed by the belief that these students have had enough composition writing practice since senior one and therefore capable of writing compositions legibly. In addition to collecting 77 students' marked composition scripts from the students, the researcher interviewed 4 teachers (one teacher from each school) regarding the correction strategies they employed when marking students' English compositions. Table 3.1 provides a full overview of the number of sample composition scripts that were gathered from the designated schools.

Table 3.1: Study population and sample

		School Status	Study Population			Study Sample/Scripts		
Sn.	**School**		**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
1.	A	Government	115	92	207	24	19	43
2.	B	Government	32	18	50	7	4	11
3.	C	Government	--	60	60	--	13	13
4.	D	Private	20	29	49	4	6	10
	Total		**167**	**199**	**366**	**35**	**42**	**77**
	Percentage		**46**	**54**	**100**	**45**	**55**	**100**

3.4 Sampling technique

Purposive sampling was employed in the study because it helped in the selection of composition writings which were suitable for answering the research questions and objectives. From the 12 (10 government-aided and 2 private) schools in Oyam District, the researcher sampled 3 government and 1 private schools for the study. Calculator.net (n.d.) and Glenn (1992) formula for Determining Sample Size 1 (see Appendix A) were used to determine the number of participants sampled for the study from the 366 students in the sampled schools. Using both the Calculator.net tool and Glenn's (1992) formula ensured cross-validation of results, enhancing the accuracy and reliability of the sample size determination.

The researcher used the Cochran (1977) proportion formula to determine the number of boys and girls to be sampled from the four schools after calculating that the required sample size was 77 students:

$$\frac{Total\ number\ of\ boys\ or\ girls\ in\ all\ the\ sampled\ schools}{Total\ number\ of\ students\ in\ all\ the\ sampled\ schools}\ \text{x}\ sample\ size$$

Upon realizing the sample size for boys (35) and girls (42), the researcher further worked out the number of boys and girls to be sampled from each school using the proportion formula:

$$\frac{Total\ number\ of\ boys\ or\ girls\ in\ the\ \ school}{Total\ number\ of\ boys\ or\ girls\ in\ all\ the\ sampled\ schools}\ \text{x}\ sample\ size\ for\ boys\ or\ girls$$

The researcher then obtained the necessary student composition scripts for the study by using random sample procedure in each school. Simple random sampling was used to get the required number of scripts per school due to its impartiality and ability to provide all respondents with an equal chance of participation. The Senior Four composition teacher in each school was also interviewed on the strategies they used when correcting students' grammatical and vocabulary errors.

3.5 Data collection

The study mainly used primary data because they ensure results can be trusted and provide an accurate picture of the situation (Creswell, 2014). The researcher employed interviews and writing tests as two methods of data collection. In each school the researcher gave the test to the teacher who administered it to the students during the week as normal classroom task in order to get authentic data. The composition test contained 3 questions to be written in 1 hour 15 minutes using 500 – 600 words as required in UNEB final exams (Appendix B). The writing tasks were descriptive, narrative and argumentative in nature. The teachers were then requested to mark the composition scripts without knowing the identities of the students or the specific objectives of them marking the scripts in order to prevent any potential bias. Afterwards, the sampled composition scripts were then collected by the researcher and coded for analysis. In addition to analyzing the marked composition scripts, the researcher developed an interview guide (Appendix C) to gather further data. The Senior Four English composition teachers were interviewed to obtain their opinions on the types of corrective feedback they provide to their

students. In order to collect all of the teacher comments and to have a record for the data analysis, the researcher utilised his telephone to record the interview.

3.6 Quality control

3.6.1 Reliability

Hughes (2003, p. 36-52) defines reliability as the extent to which results obtained from a phenomenon's measurement are steady and consistent. To ensure data reliability, the study exclusively sampled English composition writings from senior four students, aligning the test with the senior four English syllabus. The reliability of the test was guaranteed by adopting questions from past UNEB papers, which were devised by trained and experienced examiners. These items undergo moderation prior to being administered to UCE candidates. Additionally, the test was reviewed and received feedback from senior English language teachers and the research supervisor.

3.6.2 Validity

Hughes (2003) stated that a test is considered valid if it accurately assesses what it is designed to measure (p. 26). Three teachers of English language with substantial experience teaching the subject in Uganda were asked by the researcher to evaluate the writing test items in order to ensure the validity of the instrument. Besides, the instruments were pre-tested before being utilized for actual data gathering to ensure valid data was obtained. To assess the accuracy of the test questions and their capacity to obtain the required data from respondents, the researcher pre-tested the test on ten non-participants from non-selected schools. Next, each test item's Item-Level Content Validity Index (I-CVI) was determined using the following formula: I-CVI = (Total number of experts / (Number of experts that regarded the item as relevant)) With an I-CVI of 0.84, a strong degree of content validity was found (Lawshe, 1975). The interview guide was modified by the researcher as needed to meet the study's goals.

3.7 Data analysis

Collected data was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Corder's (1967) Error Analysis was the framework within which the students' grammatical and vocabulary errors were analysed in this study because it offers a logical procedure the researcher can follow in analyzing the errors which are: collecting, identifying, describing, explaining and evaluating/correcting the language errors. Upon collecting the required representative sample scripts from the four sampled schools, the researcher coded them with numbers 1-77. The researcher then identified the errors present in the scripts by systematically going through each composition spotting and marking by underlining the errors related to grammar and vocabulary and recording them. At describing the error step, the researcher categorized the identified linguistic errors through counting and tallying their frequencies. At the classification level, the errors were tallied and categorized into the following groups according to their types and subtypes: grammar (e.g., tense errors, pronoun errors, subject-verb agreement, preposition, and article) and vocabulary (e.g., formal misselection, spelling, synonym errors, homophone-induced errors, and collocation errors) (Corder, 1973; Richards, 1974; James, 1998). This categorization facilitated a structured analysis. In explaining the errors step the researcher, after categorizing the errors, delved deeper into understanding why these errors might have occurred. The identified errors were classified based on their causes as intralingual or interlingual (Corder, 1967; Selinker, 1972; Richards, 1974; Brown, 1980). By interpreting the tabulated frequencies and percentages of these errors and their causes, the researcher offered plausible explanations for their occurrence. In the evaluation step the researcher also analysed the teachers' correction strategies through scrutnising each of the collected sample students' scripts marked by the teachers and categorising the feedback strategies used therein under direct, indirect, focused, unfocused and no feedback at all (Ferris, 2002, 2003; Truscott, 1996, 2007). The strategies were grouped accordingly and described. The interview data collected during the research were thoroughly managed and organized, making it easier to obtain

additional insights into the strategies teachers used to correct errors in students' writing. Secondly, the data were transcribed into text, systematically organized and coded for easy comparative analysis and interpretation. After that the data were clarified by describing and quoting the teachers' responses in order to respond to the research question. Triangulating the data from the students' marked composition scripts and interviews enabled the researcher to validate the findings and enhance the credibility of the analysis.

3.8 Limitations and mitigation measures

Insufficient funds posed a significant challenge during the data collection process, particularly in covering transportation costs, printing materials, and facilitating interviews. This limitation was mitigated by borrowing funds from friends and microfinance institutions. While this approach ensured that data collection could proceed, it may have limited the ability to expand the sample size or explore additional schools. Future research could consider seeking funding from academic grants or research institutions to overcome financial barriers.

The outbreak of COVID-19 and movement restrictions disrupted access to schools and respondents. This led to delays and challenges in engaging with participants. The researcher strictly adhered to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and ensured that respondents observed these protocols during data collection. Additionally, digital tools like phone interviews or email correspondence could have been explored to minimize physical contact, though their applicability in rural areas may be limited by infrastructure challenges and the study's demands.

The study was conducted in Oyam District, within the Lango sub-region of Uganda, which limits the applicability of findings to other regions with different linguistic or sociocultural contexts. This limitation was acknowledged, and the findings were presented as specific to the study context. Future studies could expand the geographical scope or employ stratified

sampling techniques to include a broader range of contexts, enhancing the generalizability of the results.

The multifaceted nature of second language learning and writing made it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the causes of errors and the effectiveness of corrective feedback strategies. The study focused on providing descriptive insights rather than generalizing across all teaching and learning contexts. The complexity of these processes was acknowledged as an inherent limitation, and recommendations were made for further research to explore the long-term impact of corrective feedback strategies.

The study focused on specific grammatical and vocabulary errors, as well as selected feedback strategies, leaving room for further exploration of additional error types and feedback mechanisms. By narrowing the scope, the study was able to provide a detailed analysis within its defined parameters. However, future research could expand the scope to include other error categories, such as discourse-level issues or sociocultural influences on error-making and correction.

3.9 Ethical considerations

During data collection, the researcher sought consent of the respondents and respected their opinion. The participants were guaranteed that the research was conducted solely for scholarly purposes and that the information they provided would remain private. The researcher also acknowledged the works of other authors used in the study and has tried as much as possible to maintain the highest level of objectivity.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive details of the study's findings, focusing on the linguistic error analysis of Senior Four students' composition writing in English within Oyam District. It encompasses the presentation, interpretation, analysis, and discussion of data to address the study's primary objectives. Specifically, the chapter examines the nature of grammar and vocabulary errors in students' composition writing, explores the underlying causes of these errors, and evaluates the corrective strategies employed by teachers. The data analysis and interpretation are systematically organized around the study's objectives, providing a structured approach to understanding the identified errors, their origins, and the interventions used to address them. These were:

(i) To identify the nature of the errors that senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

(ii) To establish the causes of the errors that senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

(iv) To find out the strategies used by teachers to address the errors senior four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing.

4.1 Nature of the errors made by Senior Four students in Oyam District in composition writing

This objective aimed to identify the nature of the various linguistic errors learners in the study committed in their composition writings. Building on the identification and description of

errors from foundational studies in error analysis (e.g., Corder, 1973; Richards, 1974; James, 1998), the researcher categorized the errors according to the data collected. Categorizing the errors was challenging at times because certain errors overlapped across different categories. While analyzing the students' scripts, grammatical errors were categorized into the following: tense errors, pronoun errors, prepositional errors, article errors and subject-verb agreement errors. The vocabulary errors were also classified into: formal mis-selection errors, spellings errors, synonym-induced errors, homophone-induced errors, and collocation errors. The following sections contain a comprehensive discussion of these errors, with examples and excerpts, along with a summary of the identified grammatical and vocabulary errors.

4.1.1 Grammar errors

Table 4.1 below presents a classification of grammatical errors identified in the senior four students' English compositions. The table provides insights into the types, sub-types and frequency of the errors encountered in the students' writing. Each participant's repeated error was only recorded once. This approach ensures that no bias is introduced into the analysis through the overrepresentation of certain error types or instances (Richards, 2015).

Analyzing the data in Table 4.1, several key observations can be made. Tense errors were the most common, with 505 instances (45.3% of all errors). There were 410 cases where the present tense was used instead of the required past form. Additionally, the progressive form was used instead of the infinitive or past form in 15 instances (1.4% of errors), and the past tense was used incorrectly instead of the required present form in 80 cases (7.2% of errors).

Preposition errors were identified as well in 227 counts (20.4%), highlighting challenges in selecting and using the correct prepositions. The wrong preposition was used in 137 instances (12.3% of errors), while unnecessary prepositions were present in 36 cases (3.2% of errors). Prepositions were also omitted where they were required in 54 instances (4.9% of errors).

Pronoun errors were also prevalent in the students' writing with 183 errors accounting for 16.4% of all the grammar errors. The wrong pronoun was used in 95 instances (8.5% of errors), indicating difficulties in selecting the appropriate pronouns for sentences. Unnecessary pronouns were used 35 times (3.1% of errors), suggesting instances where pronouns were included but were not needed. Furthermore, 53 cases (4.8% of errors) involved the omission of pronouns, indicating instances where pronouns were unintentionally left out.

Table 4.1: Grammatical errors made by senior four students in composition writing

Error type	**Error sub-type**	**No. of errors**	**Total errors**	**Percentage (%)**
Tenses	Present tense used where past tense was needed	410	505	45.3
	Past tense used where the present form was required	80		
	Progressive used instead of present or past form	15		
Prepositions	Wrong preposition used	137	227	20.4
	Unnecessary preposition used	36		
	Preposition omitted	54		
Pronouns	Wrong pronoun used	95	183	16.4
	Unnecessary pronoun used	35		
	Pronoun omitted	53		
Articles	Wrong article used	28	109	9.8
	Redundant article used	37		
	Missing article	44		
Subject-verb agreement	Disagreement of subject and verb	28	90	8.1
	Disagreement of subject and number	62		
Total error count		**1,114**	**1,114**	**100**

Article errors were also identified in the students' writing. 109 instances (9.8%) of the total grammar errors was realized. The incorrect use of articles was noted in 28 instances (2.5% of errors), indicating challenges in selecting the appropriate articles (such as "a" or "the") for sentences. Redundant article usage occurred 37 times (3.3% of errors), suggesting the inclusion of articles that were not necessary. Furthermore, there were 44 cases (3.9% of errors) where articles were omitted where they were required in the sentence.

Agreement errors were observed in the students' writing. 90 cases were recorded (8.1% of all the grammar error count). Subject and verb disagreement happened in 28 cases (2.5% of errors), suggesting that the subject and the verb did not agree on the subject's person or number.

Instances of subject-number disagreement were found 62 times (5.6% of errors), suggesting inconsistencies between the subject and the number (singular or plural) in a sentence.

4.1.2 Examples of recorded grammatical errors

This section highlights some of the grammatical errors that were noted during the study. Examples and sample excerpts are provided for each error category and error sub-type.

4.1.3 Tense errors

Three tense errors have been investigated in this study, namely, present tense used where the past form was required, progressive used instead of infinitive or past form, past tense used where the present form was required.

Table 4.2: Examples of tense errors

Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Tense	
a) Present tense used where past tense was needed	1 a. Madam Caroline has been my teacher since I join S1. 2b. My teachers and friends congratulated me and wishes me well. 3c. He use to stay with me when I am back from school.
b) Past tense used where the present form was required	1d. I told mummy not to worry because I would not misbehaved …. 2e. He was also a hardworking teacher who did not missed any lesson. 3f. John said that he enjoy reading.
c) Progressive used instead of present or past form	1g. I am thinking that I will be free tomorrow. 2h. I was walking to school every day when I was in primary school. 3i. My brother is always forgetting to do his homework before he goes to school.

Data from most of the sampled scripts revealed students' usage of the present tense where the preterite was needed. The erroneous use of tense, which imprecisely indicates the time of an action, was the root cause of errors found. In other words, even though participants recalled previous activities in their compositions, they employed present tense verb forms, which was inconsistent with the message they were trying to portray. In Table 4.2 above, sentence 1a, "Madam Caroline has been my teacher since I join S1" the learner has used the present tense form "join" instead of the required past tense "joined." The phrase "has been" indicates an ongoing situation that started in the past and continues to the present. This calls for the use of

the past tense in the subordinate clause, “since I joined S1,” to show that the action of joining occurred in the past and was completed at that point. The present tense “join” disrupts the grammatical coherence of the sentence because it does not align with the past time reference implied by “since.” According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), the present perfect tense (“has been”) refers to an event that started in the past and has relevance to the present moment. When using this structure, the past tense should be used in subordinate clauses that refer to events completed before the present, particularly when a specific past time point, like “since I joined S1,” is involved. Thus, the correct form of the sentence should be: “Madam Caroline has been my teacher since I joined S1.”

In In the analysis, the past tense was frequently used where the present form was needed. The present tense typically indicates that the state of affairs or event is contemporaneous with the time of speaking, emphasizing its current relevance or immediacy (Comrie, 1985, p. 36). The choice between the two present tense forms that most verbs have is usually dictated by agreement with the subject. Data from the sampled scripts displayed a number of infelicitous constructions. In Table 4.2 sentence 3f above, the sentence “John said that he enjoy reading” demonstrates a finite verb error, wherein the verb “enjoy” is incorrectly maintained in the present tense instead of shifting to the past tense. In English, reported speech typically requires backshifting of tense when the reporting verb is in the past tense. This principle is supported by Quirk et al. (1985) in who underscores the need for temporal alignment between the main and subordinate clauses in indirect speech. In this instance, the reporting verb “said” establishes a past temporal frame. Consequently, the finite verb “enjoy” in the subordinate clause should adopt the past tense form “enjoyed” to reflect this temporal shift. The corrected sentence would read, “John said that he enjoyed reading.” As Huddleston and Pullum (2002) explain, finite verbs are characterized by their marking for tense and agreement with the subject in person and number. Here, the present tense form “enjoy” is inappropriate within the syntactic structure of

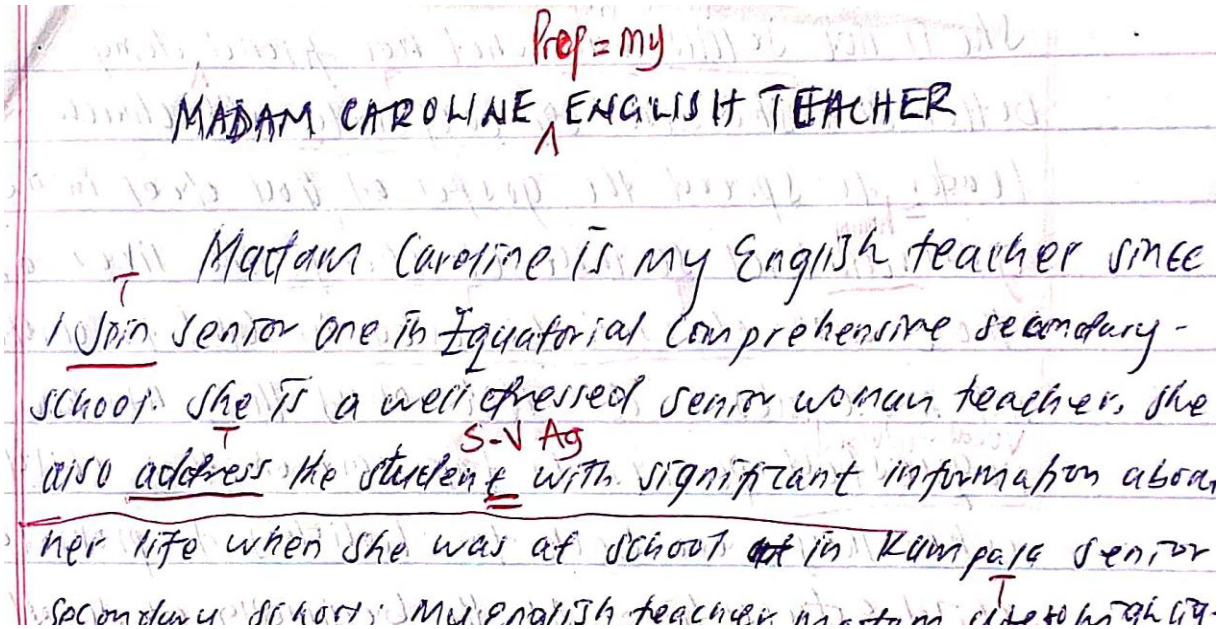
reported speech because it disrupts the expected concord between the temporal framework established by the main clause and the tense of the subordinate clause.

Instances where students used the progressive instead of present or past forms of the verb were recorded from the students' composition writings. The progressive is a verbal aspect that denotes an action as occurring over a longer time span in relation to an implicitly or expressly stated time of reference. The auxiliary *be* + a subsequent gerund-particle, which expresses progressive aspectuality in its fundamental form, designates the progressive (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 162–163; Comrie, 1985, p. 25). In this study, students used the progressive form erroneously in constructions which required either the present or past tense forms. The sentence "My brother is always forgetting to do his homework before he goes to school" demonstrates an error in the misuse of the progressive aspect. The phrase "is always forgetting" incorrectly employs the progressive tense, which typically denotes ongoing or temporary actions. However, in this context, the adverb "always" signals a habitual action—one that occurs regularly over time. Habitual actions are conventionally expressed in the simple present tense, making the correct phrasing, "My brother always forgets to do his homework before he goes to school."

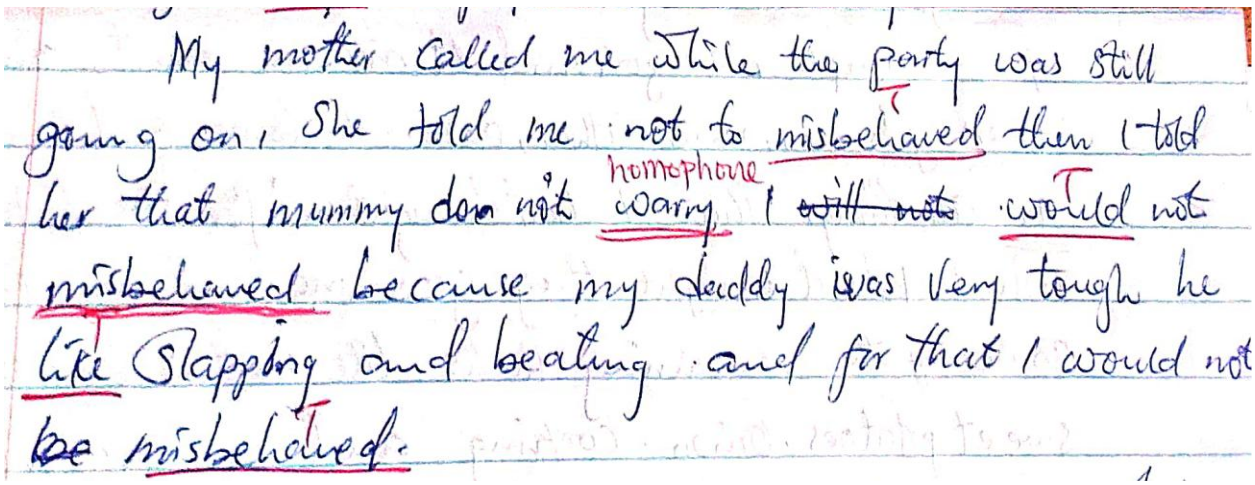
The progressive aspect ("is forgetting") is appropriate when describing actions happening at the moment of speaking (e.g., "He is forgetting his books right now") or temporary states (e.g., "He is forgetting things more often these days"). In contrast, the simple present tense is used to convey regular, habitual, or characteristic actions, such as "He always forgets his keys." Thus, the progressive tense creates a mismatch between the habitual nature of the action and the temporary or ongoing implication of the verb phrase. By revising the sentence to "My brother always forgets to do his homework before he goes to school," the habitual nature of the forgetfulness aligns correctly with the simple present tense. This correction reflects the grammatical principles established in Quirk et al. (1985) and Celce-Murcia and Larsen-

Freeman (1999), which highlight the distinctions between the simple present and the progressive aspects when describing habitual versus temporary actions In the study, most of the tense errors recorded (Table 4.2) above were prevalent amon.g participants in school A and B. This is an indicator that the students did not master the concept of tense and how to use appropriate tense in different situations. Below are excerpts from the sampled scripts.

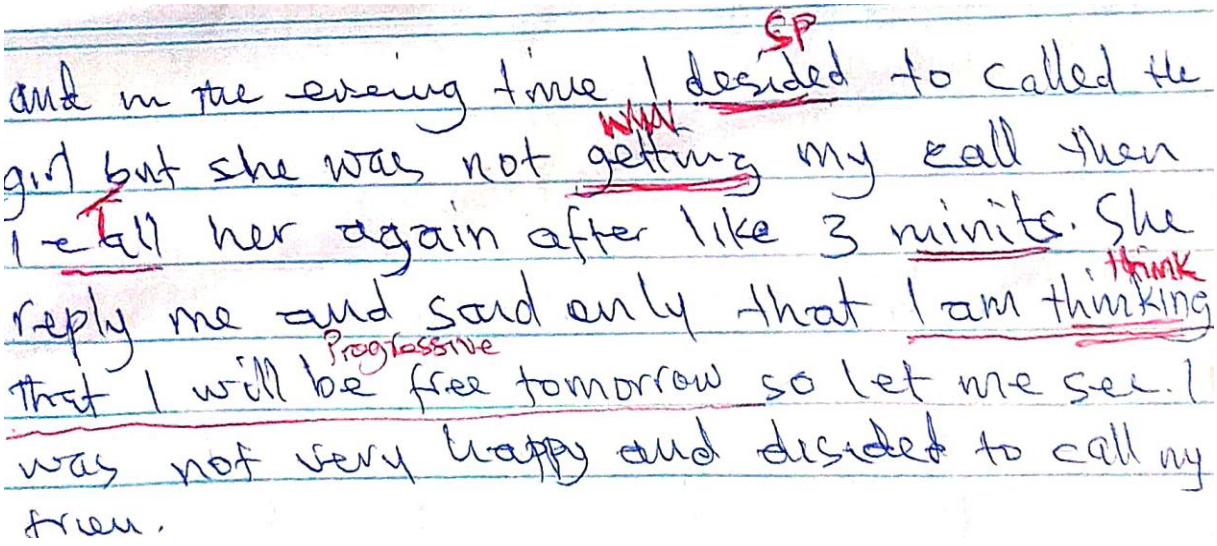
Sample 1: Present tense used where past tense was needed



Sample 2: Past tense used where the present form was required



Sample 3: Progressive used instead of present or past form



4.1.4 Preposition errors

A preposition error occurs when a preposition is used incorrectly in a sentence, leading to grammatical or semantic issues. Prepositions are words that express relationships between other words, indicating direction, location, time, manner, etc. They are essential for connecting nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other parts of the sentence (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 414; Nguyen & Le, 2022). Preposition errors discovered in the students' work were categorised into three groups based on Corder's (1974) classification of error types: incorrectly used prepositions, needlessly used prepositions, and omitted prepositions.

Table 4.3: Examples of preposition errors

Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Preposition a) Wrong preposition used	1a…doing bad things and make me know what happened <u>at</u> the past… 2b. I decided to sit <u>at</u> the middle of the main hall. 3c. My mother was so annoyed <u>to</u> me, but I begged her to forgive me.

b) Unnecessary preposition used	1d. Mathematics teachers were not in the school since <u>from</u> the beginning of the term. 2e. Then I accepted <u>to</u> his views. 3f. I will never forget about my grandmother for the good things she did <u>to</u> me.
c) Preposition omitted	1g. It is true that ^ is the people in the community who are responsible for the spread of cholera. 2h. After, he gave me an admission sheet which I was required to fill ^. 3i. He rang me ^ for the second time and he explained why he wanted me to be his girlfriend.

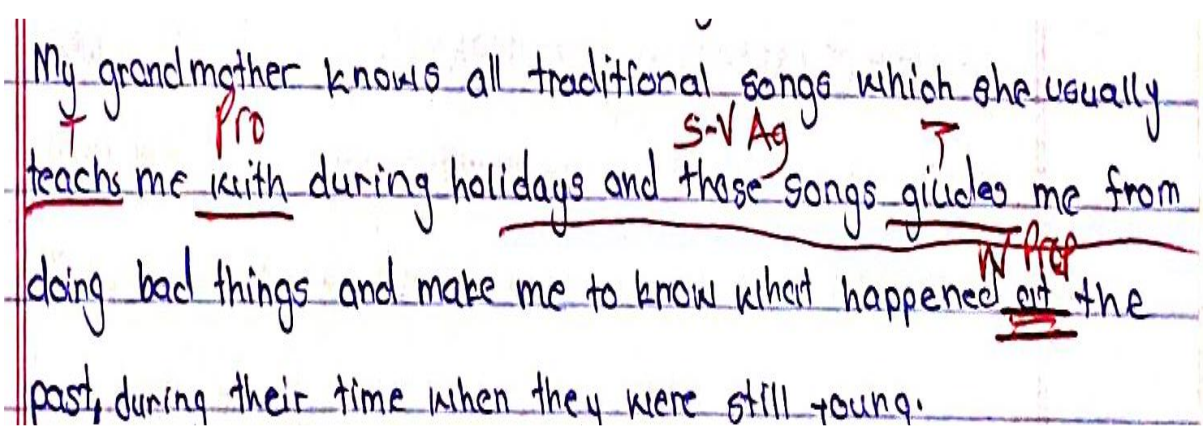
The incorrect choice of preposition led to incorrect preposition use. Table 4.3 illustrates examples of erroneous preposition usage found in the compositions of Senior Four students. To convey particular meanings, certain words need to be used with particular prepositions to form specific phrases. Looking at sentence 1a "…those songs…and make me to know what happened <u>at</u> the past…" in Table 4.3 below, the preposition "at" was incorrectly used. Temporally, the preposition "at", with the progress of time conceptualized as a one-dimensional line allows it to be used for exact times corresponding to points at certain distances along the line (e.g. at three o'clock), while "in" marks a time period conceived as a container within which an event is located "…those songs…and make me to know what happened <u>in</u> the past…" ("at a time included in the past") (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 654-657). It becomes evident that in order to convey exact messages in expressions, the choice of preposition is quite important and must be made carefully.

Table 4.3 above further highlights examples of unnecessary prepositions used. Sentence 2e, "Then I accepted <u>to</u> his views" illustrates a linguistic error involving the unnecessary use of

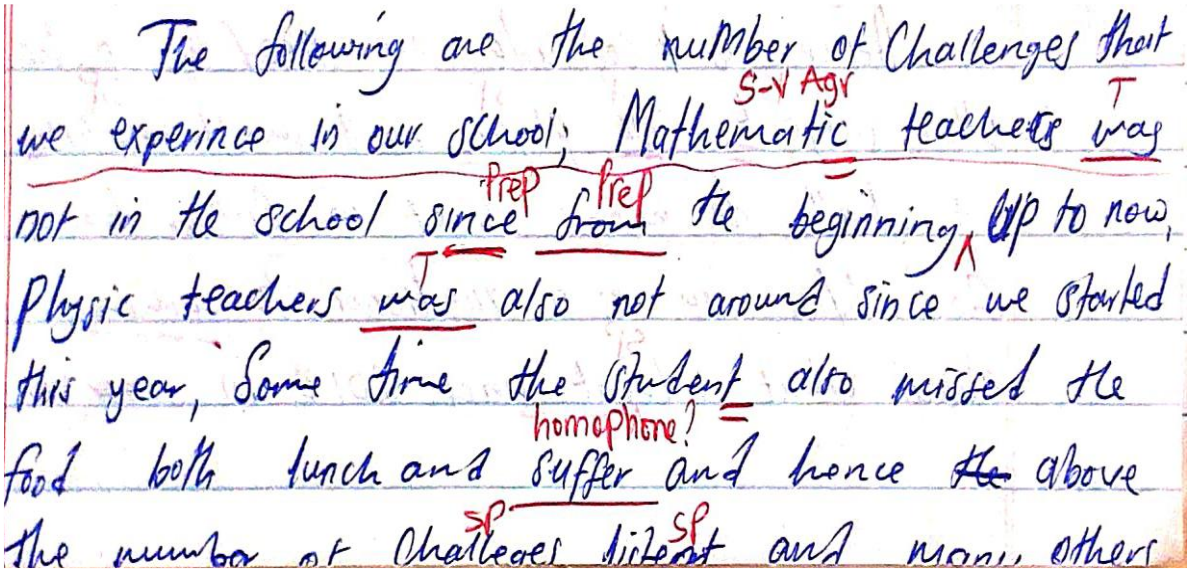
the preposition “to” with the verb “accept”. In Standard English, “accept” is a transitive verb that directly takes an object without requiring an intervening preposition (Quirk et al., 1985). Therefore, the grammatically correct construction would be “Then I accepted his views”, where the verb connects directly to its complement. The inclusion of the preposition “to” disrupts the syntactic structure of the sentence, creating redundancy and violating standard grammatical norms. This error underscores the importance of understanding verb-complement structures in English. As Huddleston and Pullum (2002) explain, verbs like “accept” inherently govern their objects without prepositional mediation, distinguishing them from verbs that require prepositions to complete their meaning.

Table 4.3 above exemplifies preposition omission error in sentence 3i. Ellis (1996, p. 710) refers to this as the “incomplete application of rules.” When students do not fully build a structure, they apply rules incompletely. Sentence 3i is incorrect because the learner simply wrote “fill” rather of the entire phrase “fill in.” In this corrected version, “After, he gave me an admission sheet which I was required to fill in,” “fill in” is used as a phrasal verb, indicating completing a form or document with necessary information. The preposition “in” is required after “fill” in this context. This study reports that preposition errors are among the most often made grammatical mistakes by students, demonstrating their inadequate understanding of them. It ranked second after verb errors. Below are samples of the recorded errors.

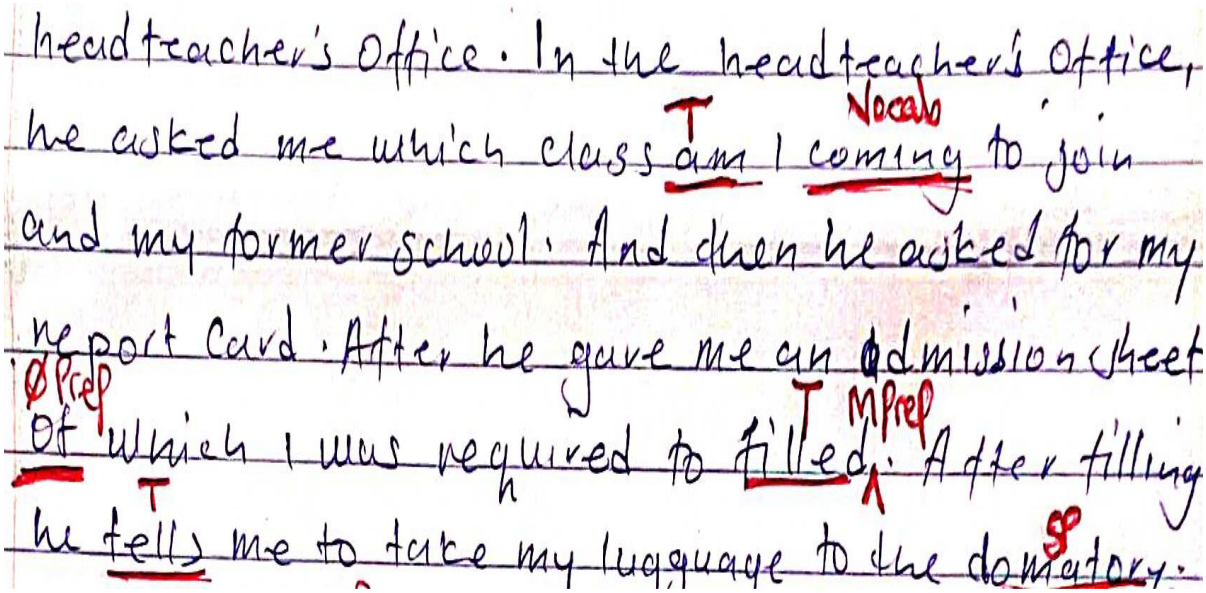
Sample 4: Wrong preposition used



Sample 5: Unnecessary preposition used



Sample 6: Preposition omitted



4.1.5 Pronoun errors

The current study investigated only three pronoun error sub-types, i.e. wrong pronoun usage, unnecessary pronoun use and pronoun omission. Pronoun errors occurred where the students failed to use the correct / required pronoun or used a pronoun where it is not required and in some instances they omitted pronouns where they were required, making the sentences incorrect. From the analysis, the students' scripts manifested quite a number of pronoun errors.

Table 4.4: Examples of pronoun errors

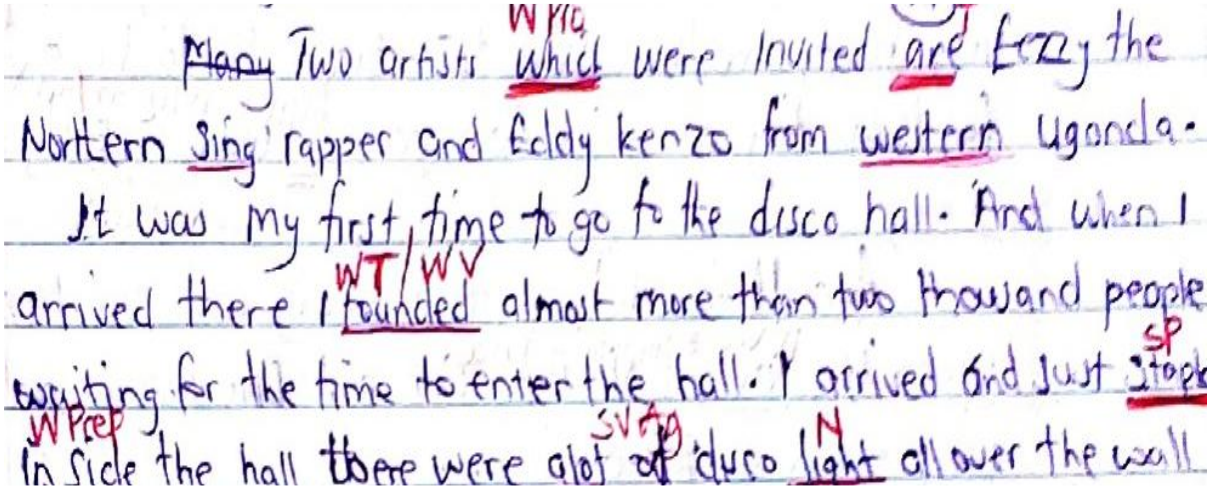
Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Pronoun	
a) Wrong pronoun used	1a. Two artists <u>which</u> were invited were Eezzy the Northern rapper and Eddy Kenzo from Central Uganda. 2b. We were told to write a story about two girls <u>whom</u> were best friends at school. 3c. Our cultural dance was more interesting than <u>them</u>.
b) Unnecessary pronoun used	1d. Mona and Jessy were best friends who <u>they</u> met each other at school. 2e. That teacher <u>he</u> was one of my best teachers. 3f. She is a confident woman who <u>she</u> can oppose what she does not agree with.
c) Pronoun omitted	1g. Steve looked for Jessy, but ^ was nowhere to be got. 2h. The organization gave him one million dollars and ^ came back home. 3i. I rushed to her gently on my feet and greeted ^…

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2012), a pronoun is incorrectly used when it fails to properly coreference its definite antecedent. For example, in sentence 1a, “Two artists which were invited were Eezzy, the Northern rapper, and Eddy Kenzo from Central Uganda” (Table 4.4 below), the relative pronoun “which” is inaccurately used. Since “which” is typically not used to refer to people, its use in this context makes the sentence grammatically incorrect. The appropriate pronoun would be “who”, aligning with the human antecedent “artists.”

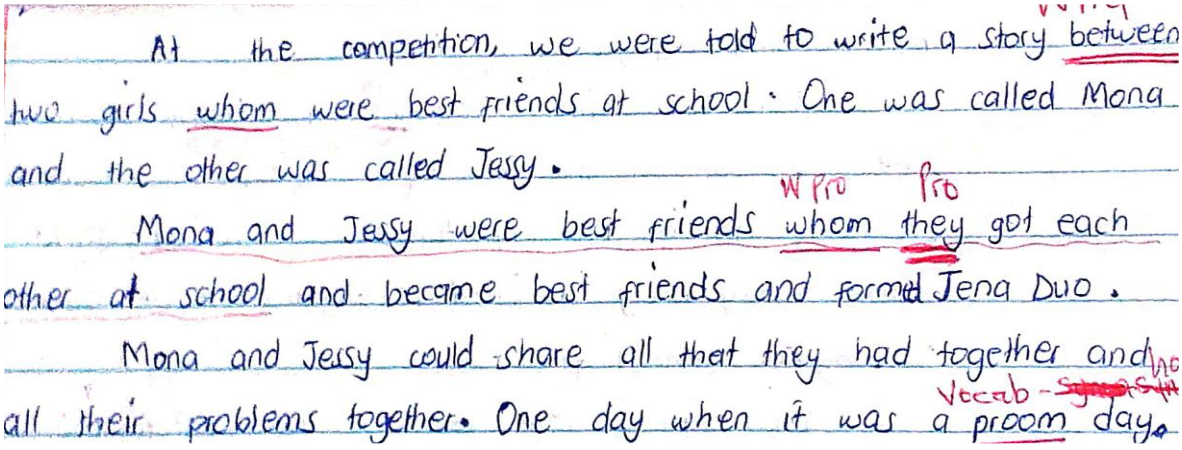
Table 4.4 presents examples of sentences where students inserted pronouns where none was required. In sentence 3f “She is a confident woman who she can oppose what she does not agree with” exemplifies unnecessary pronoun usage. In this case, the pronoun “she” is redundant because the relative clause “who can oppose what she does not agree with” already contains the necessary subject (“who”) for the verb “can oppose.” The inclusion of “she” creates a syntactic error and disrupts the grammatical structure, resulting in redundancy and lack of clarity. A more accurate version of the sentence would be: “She is a confident woman who can oppose what she does not agree with.”

When a pronoun is needed, students sometimes omit them. This is known as pronoun omission. Omission—in this case, the omission of a pronoun—was recognised by Corder (1974, p. 227) as one of the four primary categories of errors. In sentence 3i “I rushed to her and greeted ^.” the learner’s omission of the pronoun “her” in the second clause makes the sentence ungrammatical since the antecedent requires an anaphoric referencing to make it complete (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 426-464). Below are samples of the recorded errors:

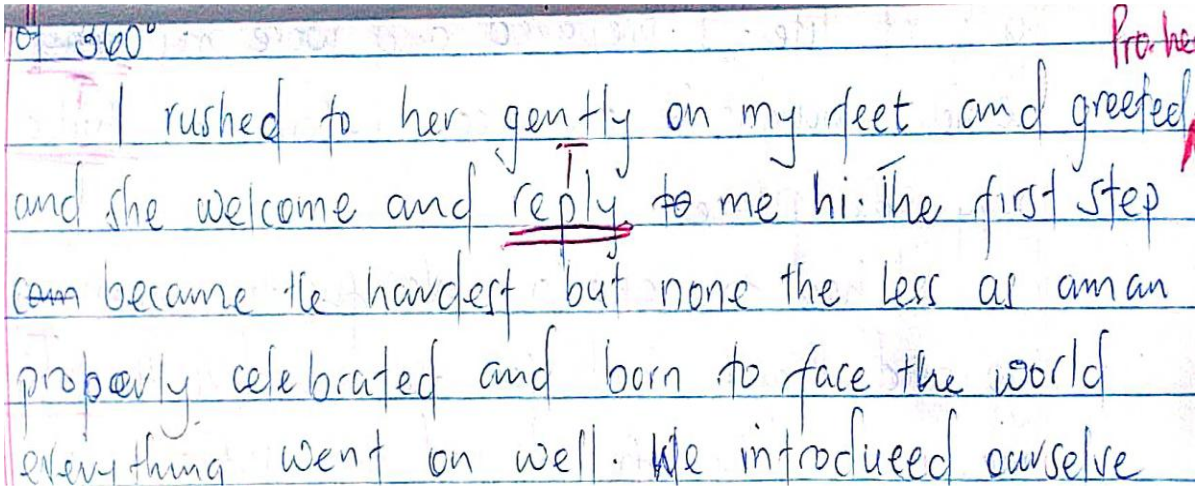
Sample 7: Wrong pronoun used



Sample 8: Unnecessary pronoun used



Sample 9: Pronoun omission



4.1.6 Article errors

According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), an article error occurs when the definite, indefinite, or zero article is used incorrectly in a sentence, impacting the specificity, generality, or quantity indicated by a noun. Based on Corder's (1974, p. 227) classification of error types, the findings of this study reveal that students experienced difficulty with three specific subtypes of article errors: incorrect use of articles, unnecessary insertion of articles, and omission of required articles.

Table 4.5: Examples of article errors

Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Article	
a) Wrong article used	1a. On the sad note the boy got an accident. 2b. …we first stopped and rested for a hour before … 3c. He is a honest man.
b) Redundant article	1d. He used to give students the good advice. 2e. He would be preaching the God's word. 3f. We were on the cloud nine to see our names in The New Vision newspaper.
c) Missing article	1g. So, ^ community has to be made aware of the outbreak of cholera. 2h. I proceeded and found ^ teachers resting under ^ mango tree. 3i. "A dish fit for ^ gods," she said.

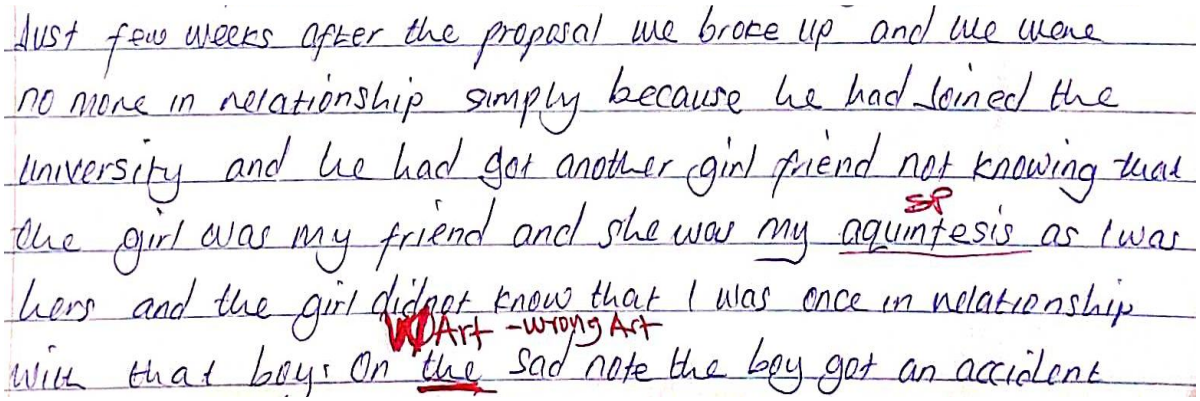
Instances where, for example, "a" was used instead of "the" or vice versa are categorized as errors of incorrect article usage. For instance, in Table 4.5, sentence 1a, "On the sad note the boy got an accident," illustrates incorrect article usage. The student incorrectly used the definite article "the" instead of the indefinite article "a." In this context, "a" is appropriate because it introduces the phrase "a sad note*"* as a non-specific or new piece of information, aligning with the indefinite article's function (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 372).

Redundant article insertion refers to the unnecessary use of articles where none is required. In English, this type of error typically involves the inappropriate omission of the "zero article," which is the correct form when certain nouns are used without an article. Table 4.5 presents examples of such errors. For instance, in sentence 2e, the student incorrectly inserted the article

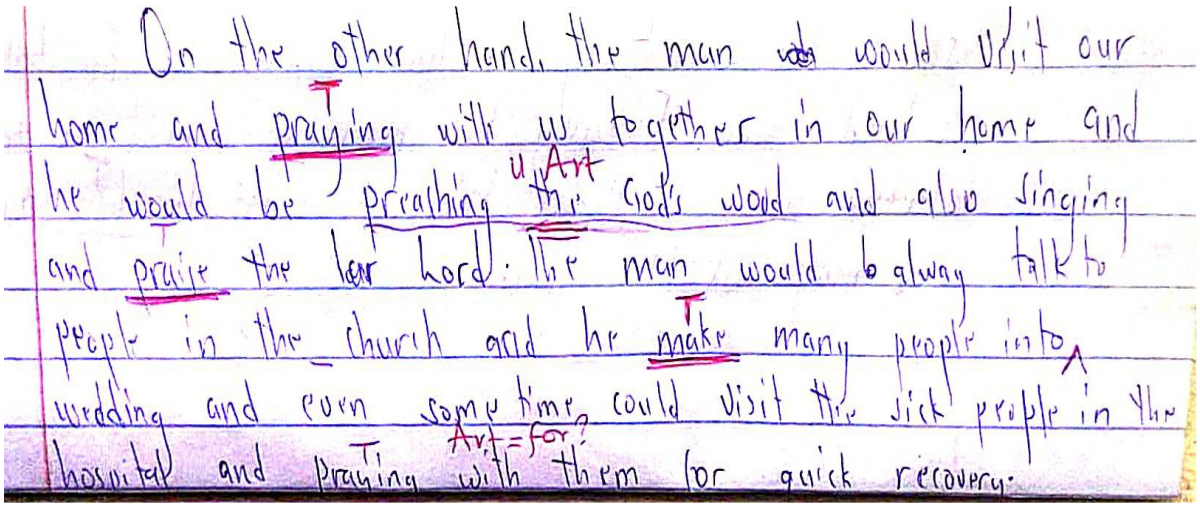
"the" by writing, "He would be preaching the God's word." The correct version of the sentence should omit the article entirely, as "God's word" does not require an article in this context.

"Missing article" describes cases where students have failed to include an article where it is necessary. Table 4.5 displays examples of article omission, such as in sentence 1g: "So, ^ community has to be made aware of the outbreak of cholera," where the definite article "the" is omitted, resulting in an incorrect sentence. In his classification of error types, Corder (1974, p. 227) highlights omission as one of the four main categories of errors, a finding that aligns with the present study's results. The following are examples of the students' texts.

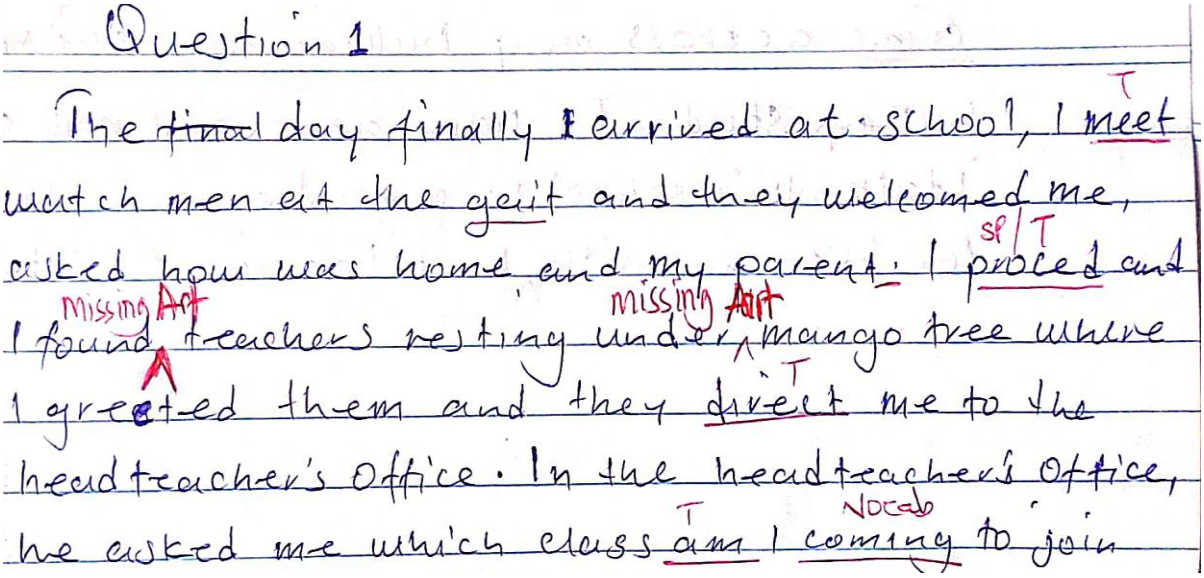
Sample 10: Wrong article used



Sample 11: Redundant article insertion



Sample 12: Missing article



4.1.7 Subject-verb agreement error

According to Murphy (2019), an agreement error, also known as a concord error, occurs when there is a mismatch between elements in a sentence that are expected to align in form or meaning. These include subject-verb agreement, where the verb form does not correspond to the subject's number (singular or plural), and pronoun-antecedent agreement, where a pronoun does not align with its antecedent (the noun it replaces) in number, gender, or person. The study at hand focused on two specific agreement error sub-types: subject-verb disagreement and pronoun-antecedent non-agreement. As indicated in the Table 4.6, the students' scripts revealed a notable occurrence of these errors.

Table 4.6: Examples of errors in subject-verb agreement

Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Subject-verb agreement a) Disagreement of subject and verb	1a. The list of items <u>are</u> on the table. 2b. Each of the boys <u>play</u> soccer after school. 3c. This always <u>happen</u> after two <u>week</u>.
b) Disagreement of subject and number	1d. She also <u>address</u> the <u>student</u> in the assembly.

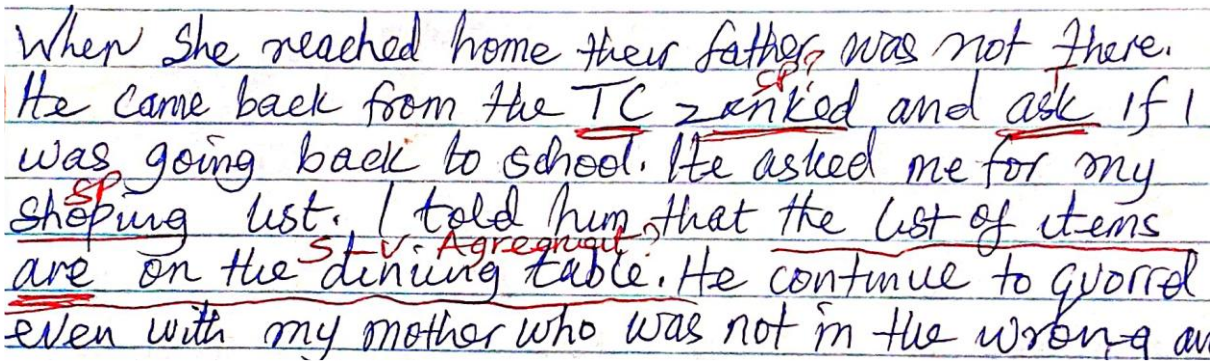
	2e…the flies carries germs from the dirty places and… 3f. His eyes was always on me.

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2012, p. 499), subject-verb agreement applies only to clauses where the verb is a present tense form (excluding modal auxiliaries) or a preterite form of the verb "be," as in "The dog was sleeping" versus "The dogs were sleeping." Lack of knowledge in this area of grammar could cause a writer to make mistakes while deciding how to align the subject and verb. Sentence 1a in table 4.6: "The list of items are on the table" contains a subject-verb agreement error, as the singular subject "The list" is incorrectly paired with the plural verb "are." The error arises from a failure to recognize that the prepositional phrase "of items" does not affect the agreement between the subject and the verb. In English syntax, the verb must agree with the number of the subject, not the noun within the prepositional phrase. Therefore, the correct verb form should be "is," resulting in the grammatically correct sentence: "The list of items is on the table."

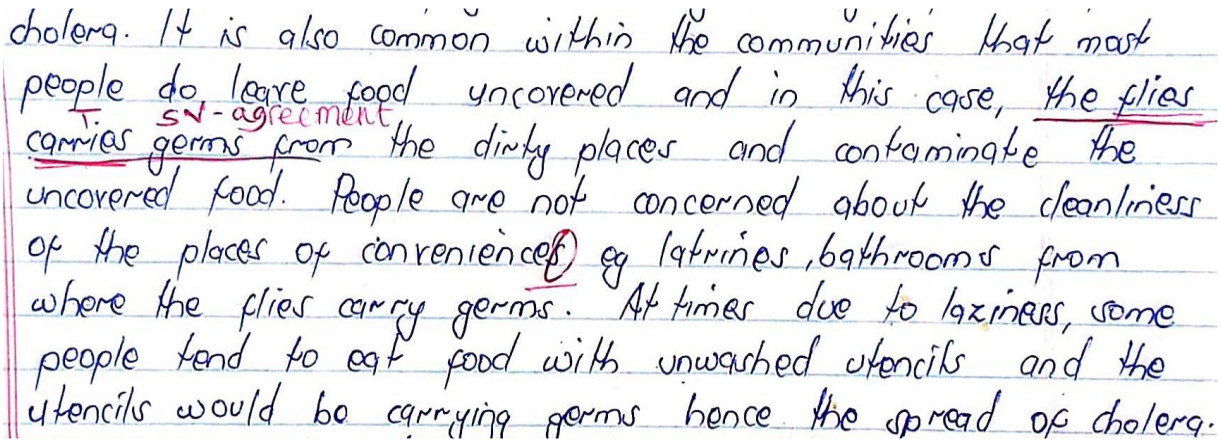
Disagreement of subject and number manifested where the students did not supply the right verb tense which matches the NP number. Subjects and verbs have to agree in number. If the subject is singular, the verb should be singular too and vice versa. In table 4.6, the sentence "The flies carries germs from the dirty places and..." exemplifies a subject-verb agreement error, specifically a mismatch in number between the subject and the verb. The subject "the flies" is plural, indicating that it refers to more than one fly. According to English grammatical rules, when the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural to ensure agreement. However, the verb "carries" is in the singular form, which is typically used with singular subjects (e.g., "the fly carries"). This creates a discrepancy between the plural subject and the singular verb, resulting in a grammatical error. The correct form of the verb should be "carry" to align with the plural subject, yielding "The flies carry germs from the dirty places and..." Such errors

often occur due to the misapplication of verb forms based on the subject's number, underscoring the importance of subject-verb agreement in English syntax. Excerpts from the students' scripts can be seen below.

Sample 12: Disagreement of subject and verb


When she reached home their father was not there. He came back from the TC ranked and ask if I was going back to school. He asked me for my shoping list. I told him that the list of items are on the dining table. He continue to quorrel even with my mother who was not in the wrong a

Sample 13: Disagreement of subject and number


cholera. It is also common within the communities that most people do leave food uncovered and in this case, the flies carries germs from the dirty places and contaminate the uncovered food. People are not concerned about the cleanliness of the places of conveniences eg latrines, bathrooms from where the flies carry germs. At times due to laziness, some people tend to eat food with unwashed utencils and the utencils would be carrying germs hence the spread of cholera.

4.1.8 Vocabulary errors

Hernandez (2011) defines vocabulary errors as errors at the word level, such as selecting the wrong word to convey the intended meaning. Llach (2015) demonstrated that inappropriate lexical choices can lead to misunderstandings of the message or, at the very least, increase the difficulty of interpreting the text (p. 109). From the data analysis, several errors were scrutinized from the students' composition scripts. The vocabulary errors produced by senior four students in their composition writings are categorised in Table 4.7 below. The table

outlines the different error types and sub-types, showing the number of occurrences, the total errors recorded, and the percentage distribution for each category.

Table 4.7: Vocabulary errors made by senior four students in their composition writing

Error type	**Error sub-type**	**No. of errors**	**Total errors**	**Percentage (%)**
Synonym-induced		109	109	28.3
Spelling	Omission Insertion Substitution	26 26 55	107	27.8
Homophone-induced		96	96	25
Formal misselection	Prefix Suffix	04 56	60	15.6
Collocation	One collocate incorrect Both collocates incorrect	10 02	12	3.1
Total		**384**	**384**	**100**

Synonym-induced errors were identified as one of the major error types. These errors occur when students use incorrect synonyms in their compositions. The table shows that the students made a total of 109 synonym-induced errors, which accounts for 28.3% of the total errors.

The second most prevalent error in this study was spelling errors which were 107 (27.8%) of the total vocabulary error count. Errors in spelling errors were further categorized into three sub-types: omission, insertion, and substitution. The table reveals that the students made 26 omission errors, 26 insertion errors, and 55 substitution errors.

Another prevalent error type observed in the students' compositions was homophone-induced errors. These errors occur when students misuse homophones—words that sound the same but

have distinct spellings or meanings—resulting in incorrect word choices that alter the intended meaning of their sentences. For instance, examples such as “there” instead of “their” or “bare” instead of “bear” demonstrate common instances of such mistakes. As shown in Table 4.7, the students made 96 homophone-induced errors, representing 25% of the total errors. This significant proportion underscores the role of homophones as a recurring source of errors in the data collected, suggesting students' challenges in distinguishing between these words during writing.

Formal mis-selection errors were identified as another error type in the students' compositions. These errors occur when students incorrectly select formal language elements, such as prefixes and suffixes. The table indicates that the students made 4 errors related to prefix mis-selection and 56 errors related to suffix mis-selection. Out of the total errors, 60 were categorized as formal mis-selection errors, which represent 15.6%.

Collocation errors, although less frequent, were still present in the students’ compositions. These errors occur when students use incorrect collocations. From the table 10 errors where one collocate was incorrect were made by the students and 2 errors where both collocates were incorrect. Collocation errors accounted for 3.1% of the total errors.

The findings emphasize the need for targeted instruction and practice in areas such as selecting appropriate synonyms, correctly using homophones, improving spelling accuracy, understanding the correct usage of formal language elements, and employing appropriate collocations.

4.1.9 Examples of recorded vocabulary errors

This section highlights examples of errors recorded in the study, discussing each type of error and sub-type with accompanying sample excerpts.

4.1.10 Synonym induced errors

A synonym-induced error occurs when a writer mistakenly uses a word that is a synonym but does not fit the context accurately, leading to a misinterpretation or awkward phrasing. For example, using “huge” instead of “enormous” in a specific context where “enormous” would be more appropriate (James, 2013; Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 533; Hadumod, 1999, p. 1164). From the data analysed, the sentences in table 4.8 below were documented. These errors seem to be due to students having limited vocabulary and lacking word nuances. Synonyms can have subtle differences in meaning or usage. If students do not fully understand these nuances, they may misuse synonyms or choose the wrong synonym for a specific context.

Table 4.8: Examples of synonym induced errors

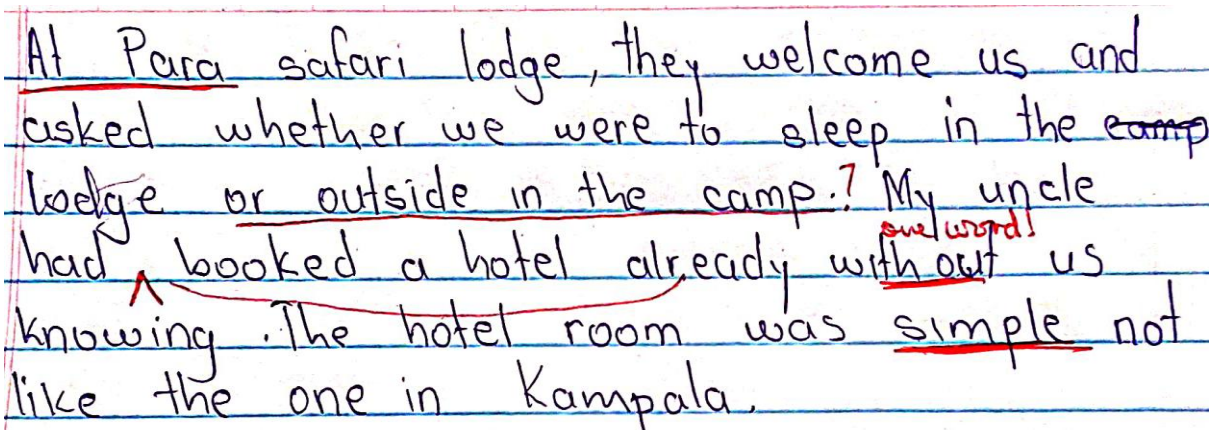
Error type	**Examples of identified errors**
Synonym induced	1. The hotel room was simple. 2. It is written in the bible that we should have respect for people who are bigger than us. 3. When the lockdown was released, many students were not ready to go back to school.

The sentence “The hotel room was simple” may illustrate a synonym-induced error if the learner intended to describe the room as “plain”, “basic”, or “minimalistic” but instead selected “simple”. While “simple” can mean uncomplicated or straightforward, its use in this context might not fully convey the intended description of a modest or minimally furnished space. This error likely arises from the overlapping semantic ranges of these terms, leading the learner to choose a word that, while related, does not precisely fit the context. Such errors highlight the challenges learners face in distinguishing subtle differences between synonyms in English. In sentence 2: “It is written in the bible that we should have respect for people who are bigger

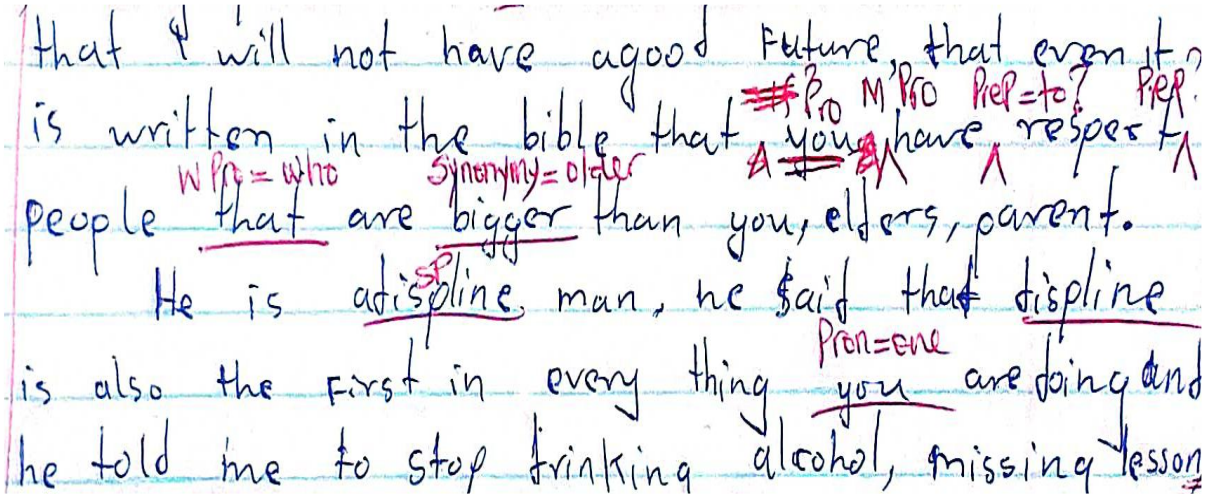
than us," the word "bigger" is used in a non-standard way to mean "older or more mature", reflecting the learner's attempt to convey respect for adults. While "big" can colloquially suggest maturity or adulthood, especially in certain cultural or informal contexts, it is not the most precise or contextually appropriate term in this sentence. The expected word choice would be "older", "senior", or "adults", which aligns better with the formal register typically associated with biblical references. This suggests the error stems from a lack of familiarity with the nuances of word usage in more formal contexts, rather than a complete misunderstanding of the word "big". It demonstrates how learners might rely on colloquial interpretations when attempting to express abstract concepts, such as respect or maturity, in written English.

In sentence 3, "When the lockdown was released, many students were not ready to go back to school", the word "released" is used to indicate that the lockdown was set free or discharged. However, in the context of a lockdown, the term "released" does not apply. Lockdowns are not physical entities that can be released; instead, they are measures implemented to restrict movement and social interactions. So, the word "lifted" is the correct one. "Lift" means to remove or end a restriction or ban, which fits the context of a lockdown. When a lockdown is lifted, it means that the restrictions have been eased, allowing people to resume their normal activities. Excerpts below were got from the students' scripts.

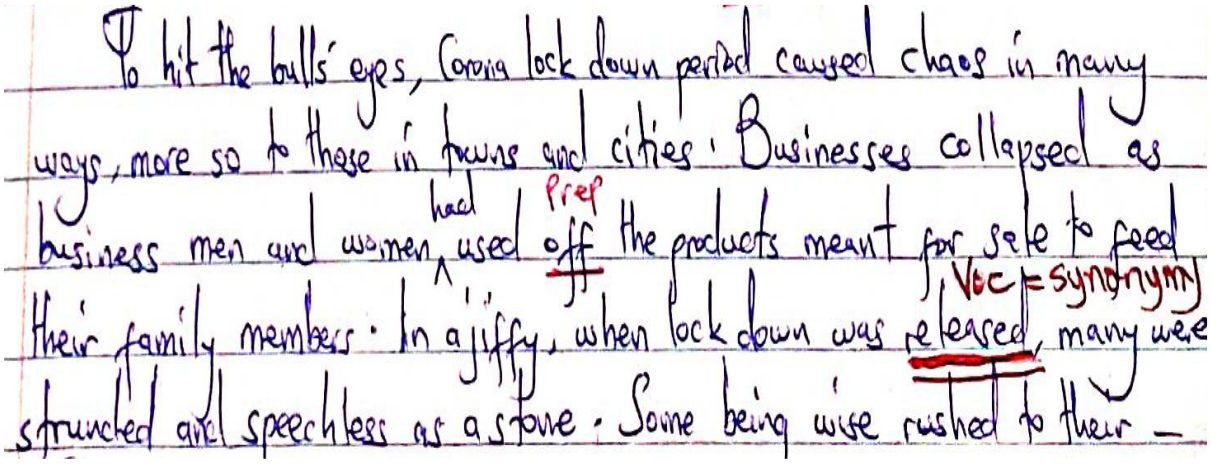
Sample 14: Synonym induced error (i)



Sample 15: Synonym induced error (ii)



Sample 16: Synonym induced error (iii)



4.1.11 Spelling errors

According to Peters (2004), a spelling error occurs when a word is written with incorrect letters, resulting in a misspelled word. Such errors can hinder comprehension and detract from the clarity and credibility of the written text, potentially making it appear less polished or formal. Aarts, Chalker, and Weiner (2014, p. 284) assert that, while spelling is largely standardized with a word typically having one recognized orthographic form, there are a few acceptable variants such as cipher/cypher and hallo/hello. Additionally, British and American spellings differ, as seen in *centre/center, colour/color, sceptical/skeptical, and travelling/traveling*

(Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 378). In this analysis, the spelling errors were classified under three categories: omission, insertion and substitution. A number of errors were recorded under each error sub-type from the students' scripts as exemplified in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Examples of spelling errors

Error type and error sub-type	**Examples of identified errors**
Spelling	
a) Omission	1a. I was suposed to show respect to elders. 2b. They sent gretings to my mum, dad and all my brothers and sisters. 3c. She is not jelous of her friends.
b) Insertion	1d. All the villagers came to see the first woman who gave birth to tripplets. 2e. Sports was also introduced during leissure time. 3f. Suddently, my mother passed on at night.
c) Substitution	1g. One of my uncles decided to buy for me a dosen of plates. 2h. He adviced me to concentrate on science subjects. 3i. Nelly councelled and guided everyone who knew her.

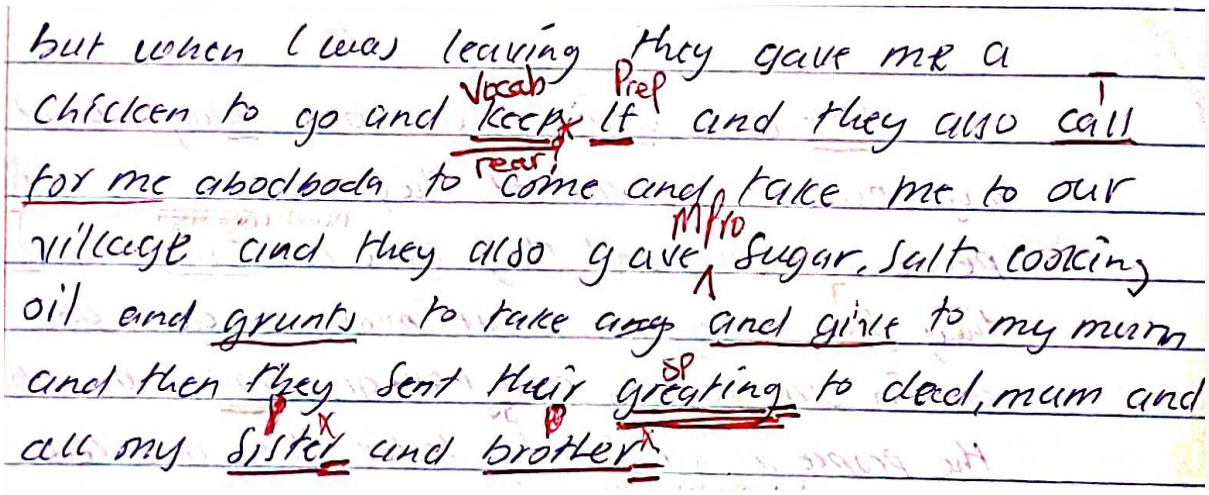
An omission spelling error occurs when a letter or group of letters is left out of a word, leading to an incorrect spelling. For example, writing "acommodate" instead of "accommodate" is an omission error because the second "c" is missing. In most cases, such omission changes the spelling and pronunciation of the word making it incorrect. In Table 4.9, the words "suposed" and "gretings" in sentences 1a and 2b are incorrect due to the omission of the letters "p" and "e," respectively.

An insertion spelling error is a type of spelling mistake that occurs when an extra letter or letters are added to a word that should not be there. It is a common error that can happen when

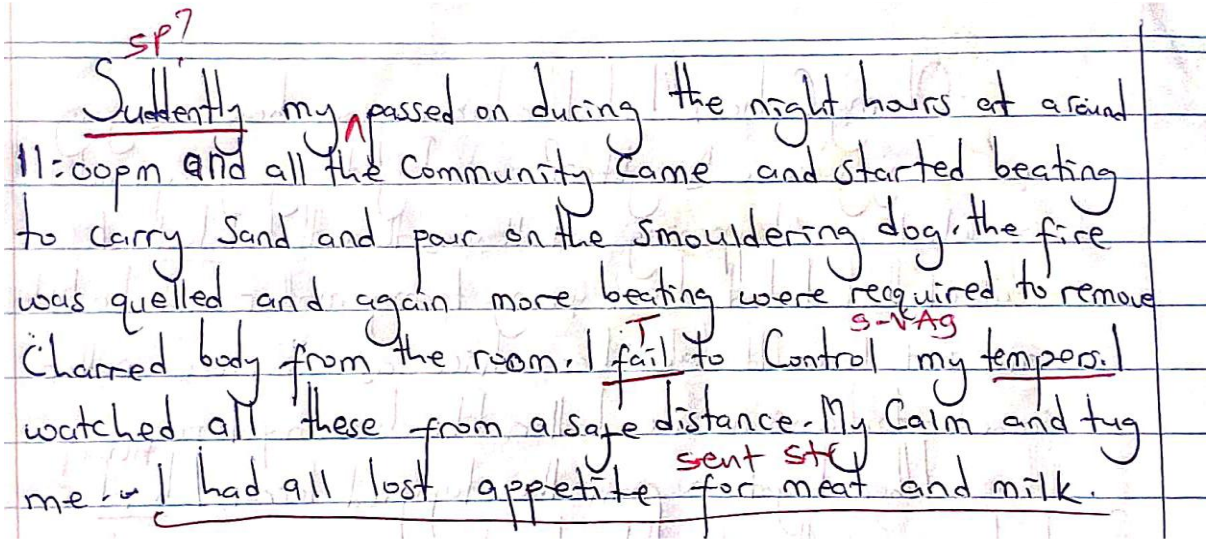
typing or writing quickly without careful proofreading. For example, in Table 4.9 the word "triplets" has been misspelled as "tripplets" due to the extra "p" being inserted. Similarly, in sentence 2e, "leisure" was misspelled as "leissure" with an additional "s" added. And in sentence 3f, "suddenly" is made incorrect with the insertion of "t" as "suddently." It is apparent in this study that learners make insertion errors due to lack of familiarity with the correct spelling. If someone is unsure about the correct spelling of a word, they may guess and add extra letters in an attempt to make it look right.

Substitution is a type of spelling mistake that occurs when one letter or group of letters is replaced with another letter or group of letters in a word. It is another common error that can occur during writing or typing. As observed in sentence 1g in Table 4.9, the word "dozen" was misspelled as "dosen" where the letter "z" is substituted with "s." Likewise, "advised" in sentence 2h was misspelled as "adviced" by having the letter "s" replaced with "c." "Counselled" was misspelled as "councelled" through substituting letter "s" with "c" in sentence 3i. From the data analysis, it seemed the learners' challenges were as a result of phonetic confusion, or simply not knowing the correct spelling of a word. Below are extracts from the students' composition.

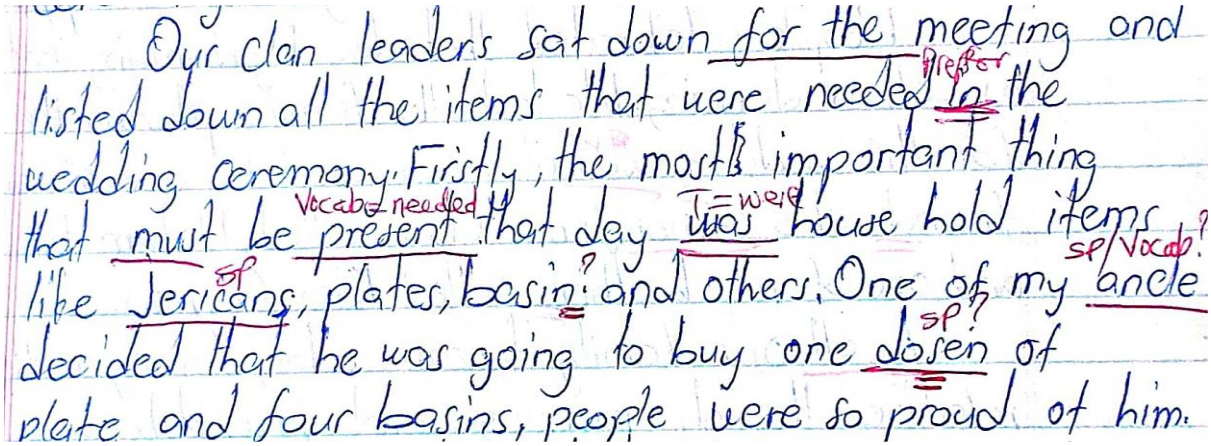
Sample 17: Omission error



Sample 18: Insertion error



Sample 19: Substitution error



4.1.12 Homophone-induced errors

A homophone-induced error, according to Crystal (2008), occurs when a word is replaced with its homophone—another word that sounds the same but has a different meaning and spelling. This can lead to confusion or alter the intended meaning of the sentence. For example, the English words *no* and *know* are both pronounced /nəʊ/ in some varieties of British English. Homophones are sometimes called *homonyms*. (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 241).

Table 4.10: Examples of homophone-induced errors

Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Homophone-induced	1. My mum finally took us their for Christmas celebration. 2. The plain landed at around midnight. 3. The cake was delicious, but the coffee was to hot.

In sentence 1, "My mum finally took us their for Christmas celebration." the homophone "their" is incorrectly used instead of "there". The word "their" is a possessive pronoun that indicates ownership, whereas "there" is an adverb that refers to a place or location. This error likely arises from the phonological similarity between the two words, causing the student to misselect the incorrect homophone. Linguistically, this demonstrates a lack of semantic differentiation between homophones, which is a common challenge for English learners (Yule, 2010). The correct sentence should read: "My mum finally took us there for Christmas celebration."

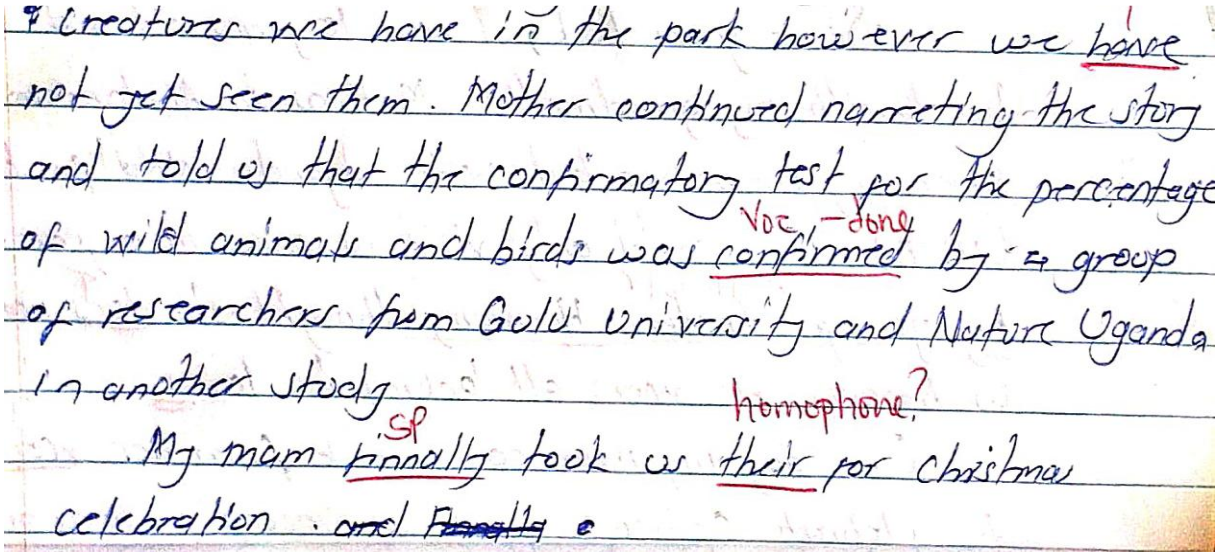
"The plain landed at around midnight." Here, the word "plain" has been misused instead of "plane". The noun "plain" refers to a flat geographical area or something simple, while "plane" refers to an aircraft. The error stems from the identical pronunciation of the two words, which can lead to semantic confusion when the writer does not consider the context of their usage. This is a clear example of how homophones can interfere with accurate spelling and meaning, reflecting challenges in lexical competence among ESL learners. The corrected sentence is: "The plane landed at around midnight."

In sentence 3: "The cake was delicious, but the coffee was to hot." In this example, the homophone "to" is mistakenly used instead of "too". While "to" is a preposition often used to indicate direction or purpose, "too" is an adverb that means "excessively" or "also." The error results from the phonological similarity of these words and the learner's failure to apply the

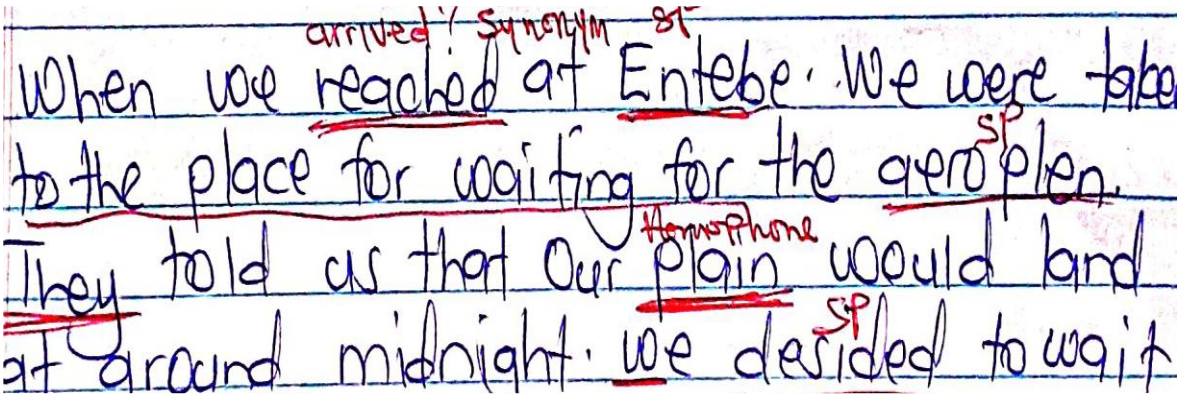
appropriate grammatical role based on context. This type of mistake highlights a gap in understanding functional word categories and their usage. The revised sentence should read: "The cake was delicious, but the coffee was too hot."

These errors underscore the difficulty learners face in distinguishing homophones in written English, even when they have a fairly good grasp of spoken English. Homophones challenge not only spelling but also the semantic and syntactic coherence of sentences, emphasizing the need for targeted practice in contextual usage (Swan, 2005; Yule, 2010). Excerpt samples from the students' scripts can be seen below.

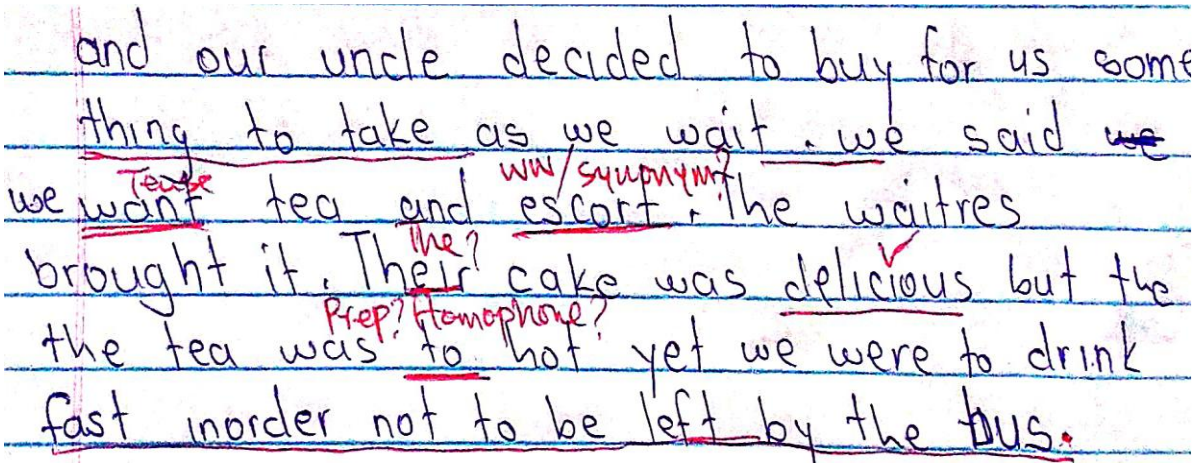
Sample 20: Homophone induced error (i)



Sample 20: Homophone induced error (ii)



Sample 20: Homophone induced error (iii)



4.1.13 Formal misselection errors

James (1998) identifies formal misselection as comprising two subcategories: misselection of a prefix and misselection of a suffix. Affixes, which are bound morphemes, typically cannot stand alone as words but attach to a base (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 1624-1625). This study specifically focused on errors related to prefix and suffix misselection. Based on the data analysis, the errors correspond to the two subcategories of formal misselection. Most recorded errors appear to result from inadequate knowledge of word-building processes and choices.

Error type and error sub-type	**Examples of identified errors**
Formal mis-selection ***a)*** Misselection of prefix	1a. I was very dispressed by his words. 2b. She was unpatient with the slow service at the restaurant. 3c. The manager decided to misapprove the proposal.
b) Misselection of suffix	1d. The teacher praised the student for his performant in the debate. 2e. So, the community has to be made aware of the dangerous of cholera. 3f. The influencial life style.

Table 4.11: Examples of formal misselection errors

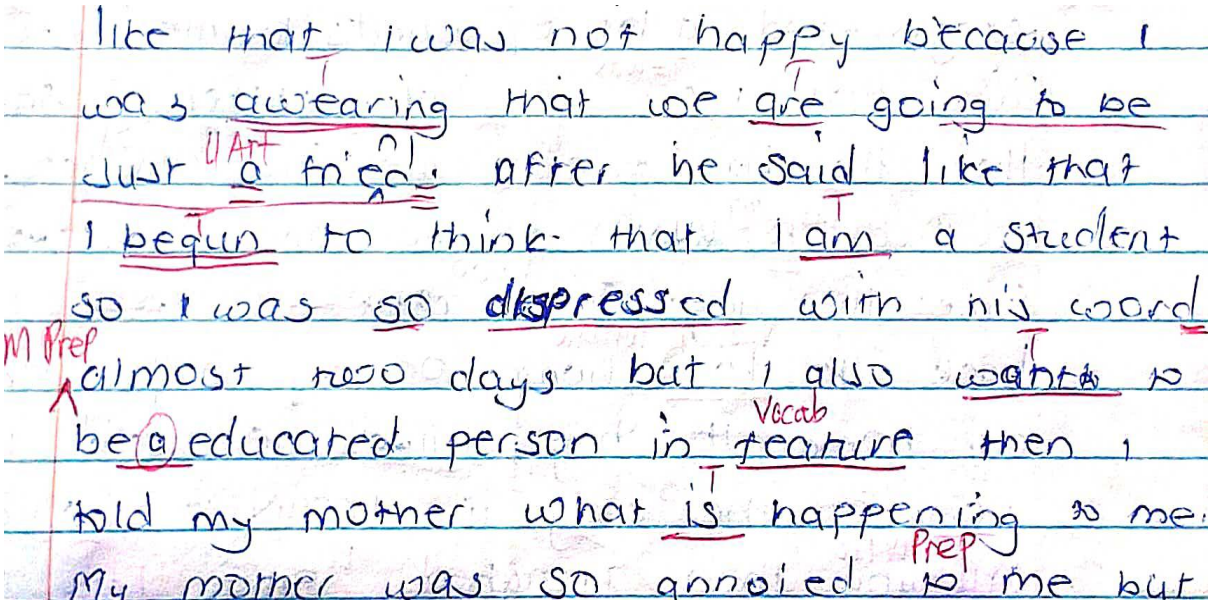
Error type and error sub-type	Examples of identified errors
Formal mis-selection	
c) Misselection of prefix	1a. I was very dispressed by his words. 2b. She was unpatient with the slow service at the restaurant. 3c. The manager decided to misapprove the proposal.
d) Misselection of suffix	1d. The teacher praised the student for his performant in the debate. 2e. So, the community has to be made aware of the dangerous of cholera. 3f. The influencial life style.

Misselection of prefix refers to circumstances where an inappropriate or a wrong affix is added before a word or base to form a new word (Aarts, Chalker, & Weiner, 2014, p. 321). Since a prefix is not a word and cannot make meaning on its own, once it is not affixed aptly to a base, the word either forms an incorrect meaning or becomes erroneous altogether. The learners' essays revealed some errors in this case. In table 4.11 above the learner affixed an inappropriate prefix "dis-" to the word "pressed" instead of "de-" making it incorrect as shown in sentence 1a.

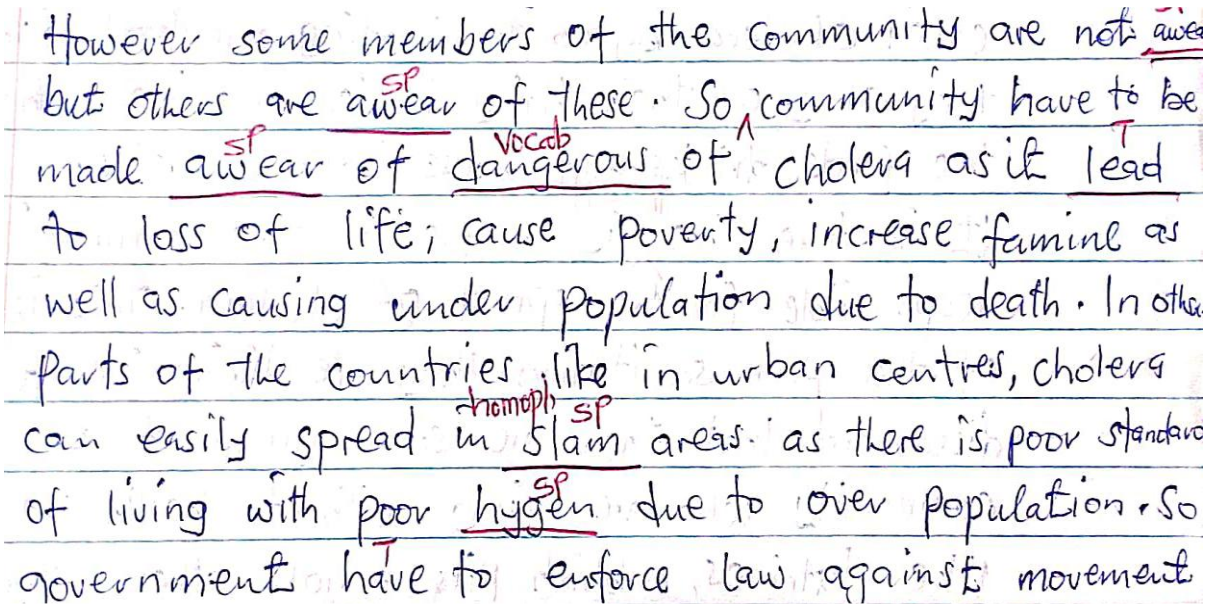
Misselection of suffix occurs when an inappropriate or a wrong suffix is added after a base or word to form a new word for the intended meaning or usage. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2012, p. 1667), one of the most important roles of suffixes is their ability to form nouns, verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech from bases belonging to different grammatical categories. Suffixes can convey grammatical information (inflectional suffixes) or modify word meaning (derivational/lexical suffixes). Inflectional suffixes, such as "-s" for

third person singular present, "-ed" for past tense, and "-ing" for progressive, typically do not change the word class (Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 1624-1625). In sentence 2d in table 4.11 above, the learner affixed an inappropriate suffix "-ous" instead of "-s", which makes the word unsuitable in that case. It seems that ESL learners in Oyam District face challenges in forming some words by adding suffixes. Below are sample examples from the scripts.

Sample 21: Formal mis-selection of prefix



Sample 22: Formal mis-selection of suffix



4.1.14 Collocation errors

Collocation refers to the constraints on word combinations, such as which prepositions are used with specific verbs or which verbs and nouns are paired. For example, in English, the verb "perform" is used with "operation" (e.g., "The doctor performed the operation") but not with "discussion" (Aarts, Chalker, & Weiner, 2014, pp. 71-72). A collocation error occurs when words are used together in a way that is not typical or natural in a given language or context. In this study only two collocation sub-errors were looked at: one collocate incorrect and both collocates incorrect. A few collocation errors were identified in this study, likely due to the challenges students face in constructing them in L2.

Table 4.12: Examples of collocation errors

Error type and error sub-type	**Examples of identified errors**
Collocation	
a) One collocate incorrect	1a. He was also a God worshipping man. 2b. The visitors wanted to leave back to their home in America. 3c. He gave me a high gift on my birthday.
b) Both collocates incorrect	1d. She gave a heavy cry after hearing the news. 2e. The boy adjusted next to me and started asking me for love.

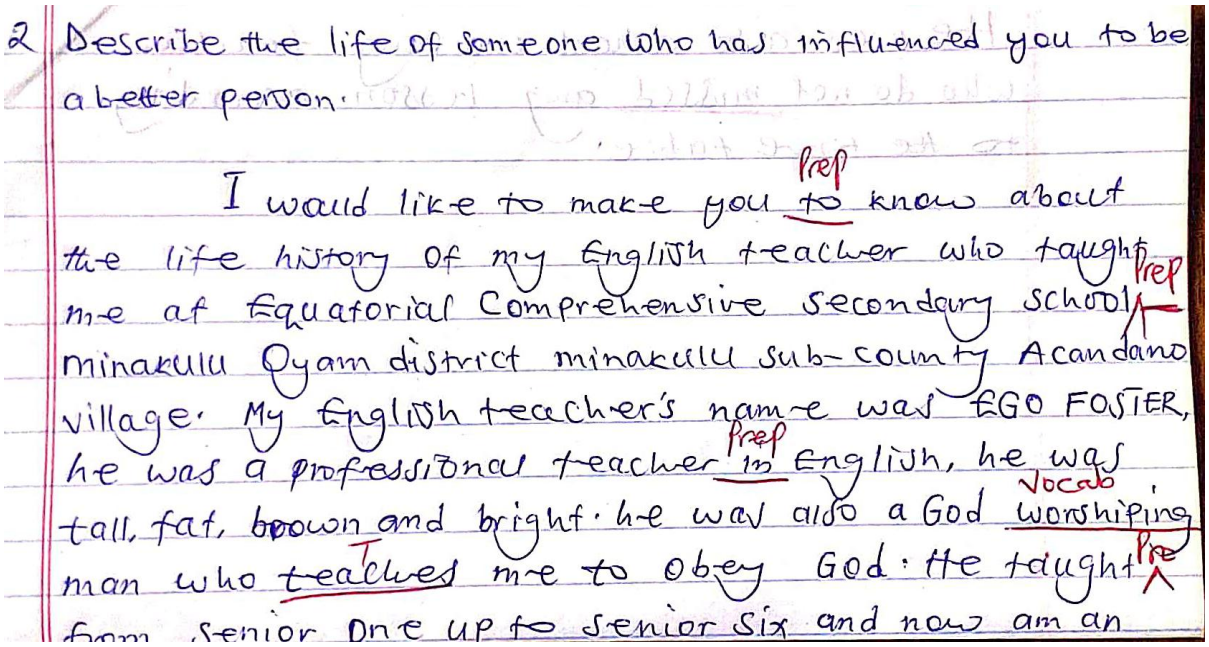
A phenomenon where one collocate is incorrect has been realized as one of the sub-errors students made in their composition. Words must collocate in order to clearly convey what is meant. In sentence 1a "He was also a God worshipping man" the phrase suggests that the man is actively engaged in worshipping God. It implies that he regularly performs acts of worship or devotion towards God while "He is a God-fearing man" indicates that the man has a deep

respect, reverence, or awe for God and strives to live a righteous life according to his faith. God worshipping" is less commonly used and may not accurately convey the intended meaning. Sentence 2b “The visitors wanted to leave back to their home in America.” Here, the collocate “leave back to their home” is not a natural or commonly used collocation. The collocate “go back to their home” is the correct and widely used phrase to indicate returning to one's home. The sentence “He gave me a high gift on my birthday” exemplifies a collocation error, where the adjective “high” is incorrectly paired with the noun “gift.” In English, “high” typically collocates with concepts like height (high building) or intensity (high hopes), but not with “gift.” The intended meaning likely pertains to the value or significance of the gift, for which the correct collocation would be “a valuable gift” or “a generous gift.” The misselection of “high” could stem from the learner’s reliance on direct translation from their first language or a misunderstanding of the appropriate adjective for describing the gift. Such errors highlight the importance of teaching learners not only individual vocabulary items but also their conventional pairings to achieve native-like fluency (Lewis, 2000).answer.

Data from the students, scripts exhibited some constructions where both collocates are incorrect. The incorrect collocations make the sentences sound unnatural or incorrect in the given language. In sentence 1d in Table 13 above: “She gave a heavy cry after hearing the news” contains a collocation error due to the incorrect pairing of the adjective “heavy” with the noun “cry.” In English, “heavy” is typically collocated with physical weight (a heavy load) or metaphorical burdens (a heavy heart*)*, but not with “cry.” The intended expression likely refers to the intensity or emotional weight of the cry, for which the correct collocation would be “a loud cry” or “a heartfelt cry.” This error may arise from literal translation from the learner's first language or confusion about the appropriate descriptive term. Such errors demonstrate the need for explicit instruction on the natural combinations of words in English to ensure more accurate and contextually appropriate usage (Lewis, 2000). Sentence 2e, looking at “The boy adjusted next to me and started asking me for love” and “The boy moved

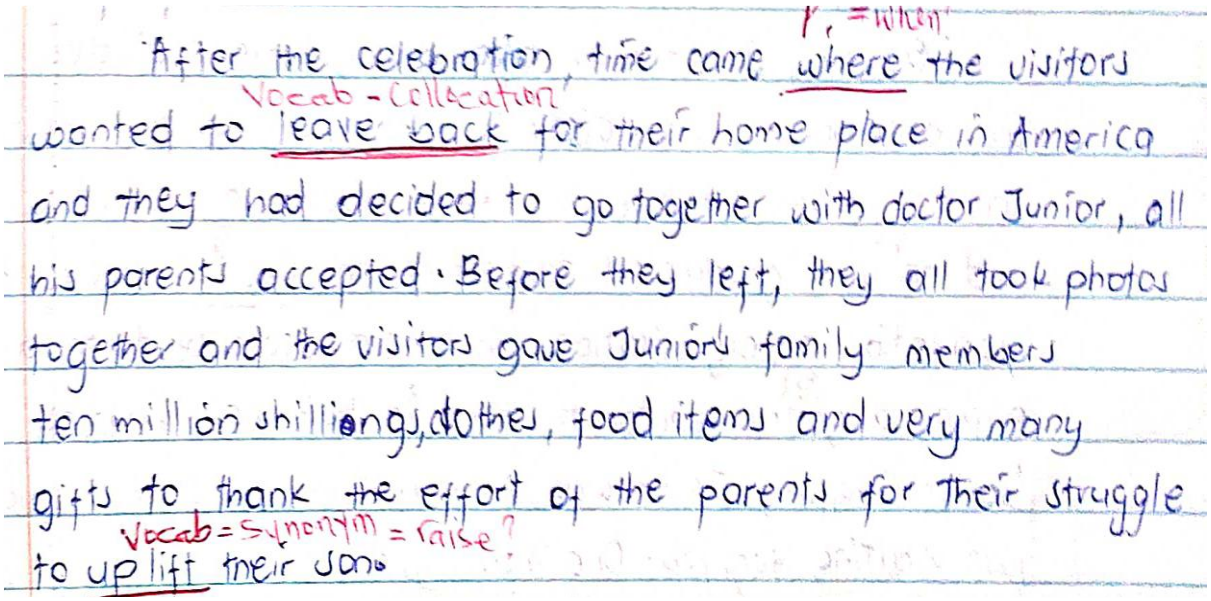
near to me and started asking me for love," while both phrases involve the boy positioning himself in relation to the speaker, "adjusted next" focuses more on making subtle modifications or adjustments in his position, while "moved near" emphasizes the intentional act of physically moving closer to the speaker, and it is the intended meaning here. See extracts below from the analysed scripts.

Sample 23: One collocate incorrect


2 Describe the life of someone who has influenced you to be a better person.

I would like to make you to know about the life history of my English teacher who taught me at Equatorial Comprehensive secondary school minakulu Oyam district minakulu sub-county Acandano village. My English teacher's name was EGO FOSTER, he was a professional teacher in English, he was tall, fat, broown and bright. he wav also a God worshiping man who teaches me to obey God. He taught from senior One up to senior Six and now am an

Sample 24: Both collocates incorrect (i)


After the celebration time came where the visitors wanted to leave back for their home place in America and they had decided to go together with doctor Junior, all his parents accepted. Before they left, they all took photos together and the visitors gave Juniors family members ten million shillings, clothes, food items and very many gifts to thank the effort of the parents for their struggle to uplift their sons.

Sample 24: Both collocates incorrect (ii)

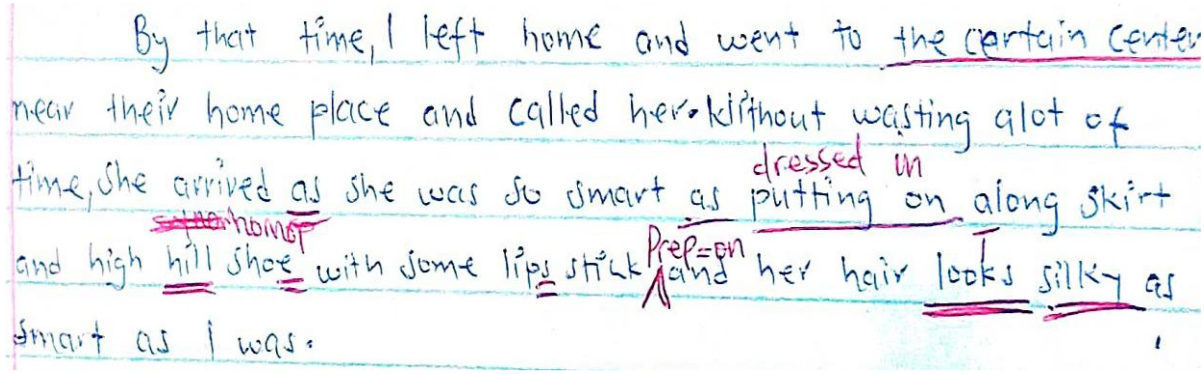


Table 4.13: Summary of grammatical and vocabulary errors recorded

Grammar errors			**Vocabulary errors**		
Error type	**No. of errors**	**Percentage (%)**	**Error type**	**No. of errors**	**Percentage (%)**
Tense	505	45.3	Synonym-induced	109	28.3
Preposition	227	20.4	Spelling	107	28
Pronoun	183	16.4	Homophone-induced	96	25
Article	109	9.8	Formal misselection	60	15.6
Subject-verb agreement	90	8.1	Collocation	12	3.1
Total	**1114**	**100**		**384**	**100**

The data from senior four students' composition writings reveal common grammatical errors across various error types and sub-types. Tense and preposition errors are the most prevalent, indicating challenges in selecting the appropriate verb forms and prepositions for sentences. The analysis above is in concordance with earlier studies by Tin (2000), Mungungu (2010), Sonmez and Griffiths (2015), Owu-Ewie & Williams (2017) and Mayaka (2018) that tense errors are the most frequently committed grammatical errors among second language learners of English. Conversely, in studies by Chan (2004) and Abushihab (2014) tense errors were

ranked last. This phenomenon can arise as a result of many factors including learning environment and the learners' L1, among others. Additionally, the study further revealed that among the prepositional errors, wrong use of preposition was the most frequently committed error. This agrees with findings by Mungungu (2010) and Saturnina (2015) in a study of prepositional errors of college students of University of the Philippines. The overall results of this study indicate that students struggled more with grammatical aspects of English than lexical ones, a finding similar to those of Owu-Ewie and Williams (2017) and Karani (2007), who claimed that grammatical errors are the most common errors high school students make when producing recount texts. In the grammatical category, tense and preposition appeared to be the most difficult aspect for these learners to master.

4.2 Causes of the errors made by Senior Four students in Oyam District in their English composition writing

The objective was to establish the causes of the errors learners of senior four in Oyam District make in their composition writing. In response, the researcher analysed and classified the identified grammatical errors (in the usage of tense, pronoun, preposition, article and subject-verb agreement) as well as vocabulary errors (i.e. formal mis-selection, spelling, synonymy induced, homophone induced, and collocation) from the students' marked composition scripts and categorized the errors under intralingual and interlingual causes.

According to Richards & Schmidt (2002, p. 267-268) and Brown (2002, p. 224), interlingual error in error analysis is an error which results from language transfer, that is, which is caused by the learner's native language. An intralingual error is one which results from faulty or partial learning of the target language, rather than from language transfer. Intralingual errors may be caused by the influence of one target language item upon another. The error causes are here discussed with examples in the subsequent sections.

4.2.1 Causes of students' grammar errors

This section provides the findings on the two main causes of errors in the grammar category: intralingual errors (errors caused by the learners' internal understanding of the language) and interlingual errors (errors influenced by learners' native language or other languages they know) as realized from the analysis of the errors got from the students' scripts. The data is further subdivided into specific error types, including tense, pronoun, preposition, articles, and agreement. For each error type of error Table 4.14 below indicates the number of errors and the percentage of errors within each error cause as well as the total and percentage.

Table 4.14: Causes of students' grammar errors

Error type	**Intralingual errors**		**Interlingual errors**		**Total**	**Total percentage (%)**
	No. of errors	**Percentage (%)**	**No. of errors**	**Percentage (%)**		
Tense	504	46.452	01	3.448	505	44.332
Preposition	222	20.461	05	17.241	227	20.377
Pronoun	162	14.931	21	72.414	183	16.427
Articles	107	9.862	02	6.897	109	9.785
Subject verb agreement	90	8.295	0	0	90	8.079
Total	**1085**	**100**	**29**	**100**	**1114**	**100**

As seen from Table 4.14, tense errors account for 504 instances (46.452%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners struggle with the correct usage of verb tenses in different contexts. In this study it include issues with past, present, and progressive tenses. There is one instance (3.448%) of interlingual tense error. This suggests that learners

occasionally make tense mistakes influenced by the grammar rules of their native language or other languages they are familiar with.

Preposition errors account for 222 instances (20.461%) of intralingual errors. These errors involve incorrect usage or placement of prepositions, which can significantly impact the meaning and coherence of sentences. There are 5 instances (17.241%) of interlingual preposition errors, which is the highest in the grammar category. This suggests that learners may struggle with prepositions due to differences between their native language and the target language. Learners in this study used wrong preposition in some instances, omitted preposition in some cases and inserted prepositions in sentences when not needed.

Pronoun errors make up 162 instances (14.931%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners misuse or incorrectly refer to pronouns, leading to confusion or inconsistency in their writing or speech. There are 21 instances (72.414%) of interlingual pronoun errors. This indicates that learners occasionally transfer pronoun usage patterns from their native language to the target language. In this study, learners used wrong pronouns, inserted pronouns where they were not required, and omitted them in some instances where they were necessary.

Article errors make up 107 instances (9.862%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners struggle to use the definite and indefinite articles correctly, resulting in inconsistencies in article-noun agreement and disruptions to overall sentence structure. Here learners used wrong articles, omitted articles in sentences and used them where they are not required making the sentence incorrect. Two instances (6.897%) of interlingual article errors were noted. This indicates that learners may sometimes transfer article usage patterns from their native language to the target language.

Agreement errors account for 90 instances (8.295%) of intralingual errors. These errors involve issues with subject-verb agreement, where the verb form does not align with the grammatical

number of the subject (singular or plural), and errors related to subject-pronoun agreement, where a pronoun fails to correctly reflect the number, gender, or person of its antecedent. Such errors result in grammatically incorrect sentences. There are no instances (0%) of interlingual agreement errors observed. This suggests that in this dataset learners did not make agreement errors influenced by their native language.

Table 4.15: Examples of students' intralingual grammar errors

Error cause	**Examples of identified error**
Intralingual	1. It was a dancing competition which I manage to win. 2. Two artists which were invited were Eezzy the Northern rapper and Eddy Kenzo from Central Uganda. 3. Cholera is a disease which can spread through one person to another. 4. He is a honest man.

Table 4.15 above exemplifies the intralingual errors recorded from the sampled scripts. In sentence 1, "It was a dancing competition which I manage to win," the verb "manage" does not align with the auxiliary verb "was," which is in the past tense. The past tense of "manage," namely "managed," is required to maintain consistency in tense. This manifests the learners' inadequate knowledge of the target language. Besides, most participants' scripts displayed poor understanding of grammar rules and sentence structure which resulted in errors such as subject-verb agreement errors, incorrect verb tense usage, and sentence fragments. In sentence 2: "Two artists which were invited were Eezzy the Northern rapper and Eddy Kenzo from Central Uganda," the intralingual error lies in the incorrect use of the relative pronoun "which" instead of "who" or "that" to refer to people. The word "which" can be used to introduce both restrictive and non-restrictive clauses. Restrictive clauses provide essential information about the noun they modify and are not set off by commas. Non-restrictive clauses, on the other hand,

add extra, non-essential information and are set off by commas. In this context, it is the presence or absence of commas—not the use of "which" itself—that distinguishes a restrictive clause from a non-restrictive clause. However, when referring to people, "who" or "that" should be used instead of "which". The correct version of the sentence would be: "Two artists who were invited were Eezzy the Northern rapper and Eddy Kenzo from Central Uganda". The cause of this intralingual error could be a lack of understanding of the appropriate use of relative pronouns in English grammar, particularly when referring to people.

Sentence 3: "Cholera is a disease which can spread through one person to another." Here, the learner has used an inappropriate preposition. This usage of "through" is not idiomatic and not commonly used in English when discussing the transmission of diseases. "From" is correct as it indicates the origin or starting point of the spread, suggesting that the disease is transmitted starting with one person and then moving to another. This error might be due to the fact that L2 teachers do not draw students' attention to this distinction in their teaching; perhaps they are not aware of it. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that many students lacked a solid understanding of the meanings and functions of various prepositions in English. They confused prepositions with similar meanings or used them interchangeably. Sentence 4 is yet another example of intralingual error recorded. The learner used an inappropriate indefinite article "a" instead of "an". The use of "an" is appropriate before words that begin with a vowel sound in English, not necessarily a vowel letter. English vowel sounds differ from vowel letters, as they are determined by pronunciation rather than spelling. For instance, "an" is used in "an hour" because the word starts with a vowel sound despite beginning with a consonant letter. Conversely, "a" is used in "a university" because the word starts with a consonant sound /juː/, even though it begins with the vowel letter "u." Since "honest" starts with the vowel sound /ɒnɪst/, we use "an" before it. The student here lacks grammatical competence in applying articles, which might be a result of failure to master the rules of using the indefinite articles

before words beginning with vowel and consonant sounds. In other instances, participants' scripts revealed misunderstanding or oversight in using the indefinite article.

Table 4.16: Examples of students' interlingual grammar errors

Error cause	**Examples of identified errors**
Interlingual	1. She have three children. 2. Those songs make me remember what happened at the past. 3. I forgot with my pen.

In sentence 1 "She have three children", the interlingual error is with the verb "have". In Luo, particularly in the Lango dialect from which most of the study respondents were drawn, verb forms do not vary based on the subject or number. Consequently, "have" is uniformly used for all subjects. The interlingual error in the sentence "She have three children" likely stems from the influence of the students' native language on their English grammar. The structure of sentences and verb conjugation in Lango differs from that of English. In Lango, the verb forms often rarely change based on the subject's person or number. This is different from English, where the verb "have" conjugates according to the subject ("she has"/ "they have). As a result, a Lango speaker when transferring features from their native language to English, might inadvertently retain the verb form "have," failing to adjust it to agree with the subject "she," as required in English grammar. This may result in the interlingual error seen in the sentence.

Sentence 2, "Those songs make me remember what happened at the past" when spoken by Lango speakers instead of "Those songs make me remember what happened in the past," is influenced by the mother tongue grammar. The Lango preposition Ì encompasses meanings such as "on, at, in, about, to, from" (Noonan, 1992, p. 170-172). This is because Lango has a very small set of true prepositions most of which have a characteristic set of object pronoun

affixes, with the plain form used with noun objects (Noonan, 1992, p. 170). In this study quite a number of respondents directly transfered prepositions from their mother tongue, Lango, into English, leading to such errors.

Similarly, sentence 3, "I forgot with my pen" is an example of a transfer error influenced by the learner's native language, in this case, Lango. In Lango, expressions like **wìà òwìl kèdè àlàmà** (literally glossed as "I forgot with my pen") are grammatically correct. **kèdè** functions as a connector that can imply accompaniment or association, akin to the English preposition "with" (Noonan, 1992, p. 180-181). However, English does not typically use "with" in this context. In English, the verb "forget" does not require a preposition to link it to the object being forgotten. The correct sentence would be "I forgot my pen." The learner's direct translation of the Lango structure into English results in the unnecessary addition of "with," showcasing how syntactic patterns in the first language can influence second-language errors. This illustrates the importance of understanding preposition usage in English to avoid such transfer-induced errors.

4.2.2 Causes of students' vocabulary errors

This section provides information on two primary causes of errors in the vocabulary category: intralingual errors (errors stemming from the learners' internal understanding of the language) and interlingual errors (errors influenced by the learners' native language or other languages they know). The data is further subdivided into specific error types, including synonym-induced errors, spelling errors, homophone-induced errors, formal misselection errors, and collocation errors for a clearer presentation. For each error type, the number of errors and their percentage within each category, as well as their total percentage, have been analyzed and considered for better context.

Table 4.17: Causes of students' vocabulary errors

Error type	Intralingual errors		Interlingual errors		Total	Total percentage
	No. of errors	Percentage (%)	No. of errors	Percentage (%)		
Synonym-induced	106	29.526	03	12	109	28.385
Spelling	87	24.234	20	80	107	27.865
Homophone-induced	96	26.741	00	0	96	25
Formal misselection	58	16.156	02	8	60	15.625
Collocation	12	3.343	00	0	12	3.125
Total	**359**	**100**	**25**	**100**	**384**	**100**

Synonym-induced errors account for 106 instances (29.526%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners use incorrect synonyms that may seem similar but have different meanings in the context. There are 3 instances (12%) of interlingual synonym-induced errors. The study suggests that learners may occasionally transfer vocabulary choices from their native language to the target language.

Spelling errors make up 87 instances (24.234%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners misspell words in their writing or speech. There were 20 instances (80%) of interlingual spelling errors. This indicates that learners may struggle with spelling due to differences between their native language and the English language orthography.

Homophone-induced errors account for 96 instances (26.741%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners use the wrong homophone—words that sound the same but have different meanings—in their writing or speech. There are no instances (0%) of interlingual

homophone-induced errors noted. This suggests that learners do not make homophone mistakes influenced by their native language in this dataset.

Formal misselection errors make up 58 instances (16.156%) of intralingual errors. These errors involve using inappropriate affixation (prefix and suffix) in building vocabulary in formal context. There are 2 instances (8%) of interlingual formal misselection errors. This indicates that learners may sometimes transfer vocabulary choices from their native language repertoire to the target language, leading to formal lexical errors.

Collocation errors account for 12 instances (3.343%) of intralingual errors. These errors occur when learners use words together inappropriately, affecting the naturalness and fluency of their language use. There are no instances (0%) of interlingual collocation errors recorded. This suggests that learners in this study did not make collocation errors influenced by their native language.

Table 4.18: Examples of students' intralingual vocabulary errors

Error cause	**Identification of errors**
Intralingual	1. tripplets 2. I quickly moved to her and looted her bag. 3. Cholera can be contracted through affected food.

In example 1 the word "triplets" is misspelt as "tripplets" by inserting the letter "p," which is not required. This could be as a result of overgeneralizing from the spelling of other words like "tripple" (a horse's gait in which both left and then both right legs move together) or due to the learner's lack of knowledge or wrong application of the target language rules by inserting another letter "p" in the right word "triple" (consisting of or involving three items or people)

in attempting to form a new word "triplets" (cf. Huddleston & Pullum, 2012, p. 1575). In sentence 2, "I quickly moved to her and looted her bag", the use of the verb "loot" is incorrect. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010, p. 881) definition of "loot" is to steal things from shops/stores or buildings after a riot, fire, etc., which is not the case here. The synonymous words would be either "snatched" or "grabbed", which is to take something quickly and often rudely or roughly (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2015, p. 1408). Most of the sampled scripts contained sentences with inaccurate vocabulary choices that deviated from the writer's original intention. Furthermore, students' statements exhibited a lack of adequate vocabulary for use in different contexts. Sentence 3, "Cholera can be contracted through affected food" shows formal misselection of prefix error "af-" in the word "affected" instead of "in-" as in infected. "Cholera can be contracted through infected food." explicitly states that the food contains cholera-causing agents, while the first sentence leaves room for interpretation as to how the food became affected without directly mentioning the presence of the cholera bacteria. For precise communication, it is better to use "infected food" when referring to the transmission of cholera. The intralingual error here is due to the student's lack of vocabulary related to diseases and food safety. And a good number of the sampled students' scripts revealed their inadequate knowledge of affixation as a word building process as well as some instances of carelessness.

Table 4.19: Examples of students' interlingual vocabulary errors

Error cause	**Identification of errors**
Interlingual	1. warege 2. … then she accepted me to go. 3. He was given a dosen of exercise books.

In example 1, the word “warege” refers to a potent gin traditionally brewed from cassava in the Lango sub-region, where this study was conducted. Instead of using the East African English term “waragi”, which commonly denotes a similar type of alcoholic drink, the learner incorporated the Lango term “warege”. This demonstrates the influence of the learner’s native language on their English writing, as the use of “warege” reflects a transfer of cultural and linguistic knowledge into the target language. Sentence 2, “… then she accepted me to go” further reflects the influence from the learner’s L1. In Lango both the verb “accept” and “allow” as well as “agree” is **yè**. So, “she accepted me” or “she allowed me” are subsumed under **òyèyɔ** (Noonan, 1992). This lack of specific vocabulary in the learner’s native language can easily lead a learner to either us a wrong word or fail completely to get the word to use. Sentence 3, "He was given a dosen of exercise books" can serve as an example of an interlingual vocabulary error from a Lango speaker. The error arises from the learner's transfer of vocabulary and pronunciation patterns from Lango to English. In Lango, the sound for the letter “z” does not exist, as the Lango consonant inventory lacks this particular sound (Noonan, 1992). Consequently, the learner uses “dosen” /dʌdʒen/ instead of the correct English form “dozen” due to the absence of the /z/ sound in Lango. This mispronunciation and misapplication of vocabulary reflect the influence of the learner's native language, demonstrating a common issue in interlingual errors where the features of the first language impact the second language.

4.2.3 Summary of intralingual and interlingual causes of students’ grammar and vocabulary errors

Table 4.20 below presents the summary of the intralingual and interlingual causes of the students’ grammar and vocabulary errors showing the number of errors and percentages as well as the totals.

Table 4.20: Summary of intralingual and interlingual causes of students' grammar and vocabulary errors

Error cause	Grammar		Vocabulary		All errors	
	No. of errors	Percentage (%)	No. of errors	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
Intralingual	1085	97.4	373	97.1	1458	97.3
Interlingual	29	2.6	11	2.9	40	2.7
Total	**1114**	**100**	**384**	**100**	**1498**	**100**

Table 4.20 above reveals that intralingual errors were much more prevalent than interlingual errors. The learners made a total of 1,498 errors, out of which 97.3% (1,458 errors) are attributed to intralingual causes, and only 2.7% (40 errors) are attributed to interlingual causes. This stark difference in occurrence indicates that learners are more likely to make errors related to their internal understanding and knowledge of the English language rather than errors stemming from interference from their native language. The majority of intralingual errors (97.4%) are related to grammar, with 1,085 instances recorded. This suggests that learners struggle significantly with the proper usage of grammatical structures in the English.

Approximately 97.1% of intralingual errors (373 instances) are related to vocabulary usage. This implies that learners face challenges in acquiring and using the correct words or expressions to convey their intended meanings accurately.

Interlingual errors account for 2.7% of the total errors, with 40 instances reported. Grammatical errors were 26 (2.3%). This indicates that learners occasionally make errors influenced by the grammar rules of their native language or other languages they are familiar with. Interlingual errors in vocabulary make up 2.9% of the total errors, with 11 instances recorded. These errors occur when learners choose and use words according to their native language influence but not appropriate in the context of the target language, English.

As seen in Table 4.20, the analysis of intralingual and interlingual errors reveals the dominance of intralingual errors, particularly in grammar and vocabulary. The result revealed that 97.3% of the total errors were intralanguage whereas only 2.7% were interlanguage. The analysis of the students' compositions revealed that errors resulting from interference within the target language (English) outnumbered those caused by interference from the mother tongue. The findings of the study at hand is in concordance with studies by Kim (2001), Chan (2004) and Bataineh (2005), who found that the main cause of learners' errors were intralingual. Conversely, previous studies by Hazaymeh (1996), Sarafraz (2011), and Ridah (2012) discovered that interlingual interference was the main cause of learners' writing errors. To them intralingual errors were not protuberant. They reported incompatibility between the native systems of the learners' language and English as being the main source of the errors, which is also the case with the current study, though at only 2.7%.

4.3 Strategies used by teachers to address the linguistic errors Senior Four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing

This research objective aimed to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the types and strategies of corrective feedback used by teachers when assessing students' English composition scripts. The objective was to gain insights into the distribution of feedback strategies and their potential impact on students' learning and composition writing improvement. To achieve this, the analysis considered the corrective feedback classifications by Ellis (2009) and Ferris & Roberts (2001): direct, indirect, focused, unfocused, and no feedback, which are commonly recognized as standard correction strategies in the field of language teaching. The data was generated by analyzing the teachers' correction strategies on students' composition scripts, which were administered and marked by the teachers. Another set of data was obtained from interviews with Senior Four English composition teachers from the four sampled schools regarding the correction strategies they use when addressing errors in

students' compositions. The data has been combined and presented in the following sections. Table 4.21 indicates the types of correction strategies used by teachers on the students' composition scripts when providing feedback. It shows the number and percentage of composition scripts receiving each particular feedback strategy.

Table 4.21: Corrective feedback types/strategies used by teachers when marking students' composition

Feedback type/strategy	**No. of composition scripts**	**Percentage (%)**
Indirect	41	53.2
Direct	08	10.3
Focused	00	00
Unfocused	00	00
No feedback	28	36.4
Total	**77**	**100**

From Table 4.21 above, among the feedback types, indirect feedback emerges as the most prevalent strategy, constituting 53.2% of the compositions evaluated. This approach involves guiding students towards recognizing and rectifying errors themselves, rather than directly correcting them. The high instances of indirect feedback indicate substantial utilization of this strategy.

The interview data further revealed that 3 (75%) of the teachers said they usually use indirect, non-coded feedback when marking their students' composition scripts. They believed that by highlighting the errors, the learners could then look at them and, hence, make corrections. One teacher remarked that, "When errors are highlighted for the learners, they can easily correct them. Two other teachers said, "It is good to help the learner by pointing out the errors they need to correct," and "My learners are few, and I can underline all the errors in their

compositions." However, only one teacher, representing 25%, who did not use indirect feedback, attributed it to being tiresome. “It’s not easy to point out all the errors in the compositions of all the students,” he explained.

The above findings from both the analysed scripts and interviews indicate that majority of the teachers in the study preferred using indirect (non-coded) feedback when correcting their students’ composition errors. This is consistent with the research findings by Lee (2004), Chandler (2003) and Ferris (2003), who advocated the use of indirect-coded feedback especially with novice writers. Similarly, Leki (1991) also concluded that students prefer indirect feedback on college writing rather than corrections.

In contrast, direct feedback, where teachers directly correct errors in the compositions, is utilized less frequently, encompassing only 10.3% of the scripts. This suggests that teachers may prioritize fostering students' self-correction abilities through indirect feedback over direct correction. This approach is less extensively employed compared to indirect feedback.

From the interview, 2 teachers (50%) attested to providing direct feedback to their learners. They believed it is important to point out specific errors to the learners in order to draw their attention to the errors and hence they would correct them. This is supported by Alfi (2004), who found out that the more explicit the degree of feedback is, the more accurate the learners’ written performance would be. On the other hand, two (50%) teachers opined that indicating particular errors in a learner’s script does not help much as the learner will always have to use different linguistic items in different writing situations. They were also of the view that the feedback strategy is not possible to use. “I cannot indicate all the errors in a learner’s work. Otherwise with the large class I teach, it will take me ages to mark their scripts,” remarked one of the teachers.

Strikingly, in this study, no instances of focused or unfocused feedback were recorded among the evaluated compositions. Focused feedback entails targeting specific aspects of the composition for correction or improvement. From the analysed scripts, there was no incident of this strategy used. The absence of focused feedback suggests potential areas for improvement in providing more tailored and specific feedback to students, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms in aiding students' writing development.

Of the teachers interviewed, 50% reported that they occasionally use the focused feedback strategy when marking students' composition. They believe that the teacher cannot correct all the learner's errors. "These students at times make so many errors that I can't correct all of them". The second teacher said, "It is good to correct only the major errors. The learners can correct others like missing commas, full stops, etc." Conversely, the other 2 teachers (50%) who did not use focused feedback strategy believed that all errors made by learners do matter. "All the errors the students make in their composition affect their writing. You cannot say some are serious and others not. So, it is good to just guide the learners to correct their errors". Another teacher said, "It cannot be done in my class with over 100 students".

Another strategy that was not used at all in the scripts analysed is the unfocused (comprehensive) feedback strategy. Three teachers (75%) of those interviewed did not use unfocused feedback strategy. One of the teachers said, "It is not possible to correct all the learner's errors." The second teacher observed that, "it can be tiresome since our classes are large," and the third teacher retorted, "I can't manage it."

Only one of the four teachers interviewed, representing 25%, confirmed using the strategy for correcting learner errors, saying, "When I give my learners a letter writing assignment, I always correct all the errors they make in their scripts." That means teachers in the study use the unfocused feedback strategy only when marking particular types of compositions, in this case functional composition.

The findings on the focused and unfocused corrective feedback strategies align with those of Rouhin and Smaiei (2010), who conducted a study with three experimental groups and a control group that did not receive any feedback. The results revealed no significant difference among the three experimental groups.

Another noteworthy finding of this study is the relatively high proportion of compositions (36.4%) receiving no feedback whatsoever (Table 14.21). This absence of feedback could stem from various factors, such as time constraints on the part of the teacher or a lack of thorough assessment.

Contrariwise, all the teachers interviewed in the study (100%) said they provide their students with some sort of feedback on their composition writings. Despite this, some of the analysed scripts had ticks (√) used by the teachers, which ticks in some cases appeared even where there are errors. This points out to the fact some teachers do not give error correction the attention it deserves. Besides, some teachers seem not to be aware of error correction strategies and the importance of proper feedback to the learners in order to promote their writing skills. This underscores a missed opportunity for error correction and the significance of ensuring that all students receive constructive feedback to support their learning and improvement in writing skills.

Additional findings from the interview revealed that 25%, i.e. one, of the teachers reported that he sometimes follows up his students after giving them feedback on their compositions and three teachers, representing 75%, accepted that they seldomly make follow up of their students. The rare follow up was attributed the big number of students in the class and the limited time to follow up all of them. One teacher remarked, “I only follow up those students who get very low scores, like below 20 out of 40”. This means that the follow up is done to a few learners making the impact of error correction feedback not cover all the learners.

In summary, while indirect feedback emerges as the predominant corrective feedback strategy used by teachers, there is need for enhancing the specificity and comprehensiveness of feedback provided to students. Addressing the absence of focused and unfocused feedback and ensuring that all compositions receive constructive feedback are crucial considerations for optimizing the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms in facilitating students' writing proficiency and skill development.

The findings above appear to confirm the preference of indirect error feedback over the direct error feedback (Ferris, 2003; Frantzen, 1995; Lanande, 1982) through increased engagement and attention to problems. Furthermore, the results of the present study tentatively support the idea of the usefulness of error feedback on students' writings (Fathman & Walley, 1990; Ferris, 1995; Ferris, 1997; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lee, 2004) provided that it is indirect. However, the current study further revealed a significant use of direct feedback strategy (10.3).

The predominance of indirect feedback may indicate a preference for fostering students' self-correction abilities. However, the absence of focused feedback raises concerns about addressing specific writing issues, while the lack of unfocused feedback suggests missed opportunities to provide general guidance. Combining a balanced mix of direct and indirect feedback types could help students gain a better understanding of their strengths and areas requiring improvement, thereby enhancing their overall composition writing skills and learning experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This research aimed at studying senior four students' composition writings in English with the goal of analysing the linguistic errors, particularly the grammatical and vocabulary errors, made by the students, the causes of the errors and the strategies used by teachers to treat the errors. This chapter presents the summary of key findings, conclusions as well as recommendations of the study and further areas for future research; these are based on the objectives of the study.

5.1 Summary

The first objective of the study was to identify the nature of the errors that Senior Four students in Oyam District make in their English composition writing. The study focused on five grammar errors: tense, preposition, pronoun, article and agreement, and vocabulary errors: synonym-induced, spelling, homophone-induced, formal misselection and collocation. The findings of the study reveal that Senior Four students in Oyam District make many linguistic errors in their composition writings. 1498 errors were recorded altogether: 1114 (74.3%) grammar errors and 384 (25.6%) vocabulary errors. In the grammar errors category, tense was 45.3%, preposition 20.4%, pronoun 16.4%, article 9.8% and agreement 8.1%. In the vocabulary error category synonym-induced errors was 28.2%, spelling 27.8%, homophone-induced 25%, formal misselection 15.6% and collocation 3.1%, respectively. In this study, the students made more grammatical errors than vocabulary errors.

The second research objective sought to establish the causes of the errors made by senior four students in their English composition writing. The study focused on two primary error causes

which were identified, namely intralingual and interlingual. Based on the findings of the current study, out of the total errors recorded from the analysis, 97.3% were intralingual while (2.7%) were interlingual. Intralingual grammar errors accounted for 97.45%, while vocabulary errors made up 96.4%. In contrast, interlingual grammar errors constituted 2.6%, and vocabulary errors 2.9%. Generally, most of the errors analysed were as a result of intralingual causes.

The third research objective evaluated the strategies used by teachers to address the errors made by Senior Four students in their English composition writing in Oyam District. The findings reveal the utilization of corrective feedback strategies by teachers when evaluating students' composition scripts. Quantitative data presented in Table 4.21, along with qualitative insights from teacher interviews, reveal that indirect feedback is the most commonly used strategy, applied in 53.2% of the compositions. In contrast, direct feedback appears in only 10.3% of compositions. Notably, focused and unfocused feedback types were absent in the evaluated compositions.

Teacher interviews provide qualitative insights into the reasoning behind these feedback strategies. The majority of teachers favor the indirect feedback, citing its efficacy in prompting students to identify and rectify errors independently. Some teachers opt for direct feedback to pinpoint specific errors, though challenges arise, particularly in large classes. While some employ focused feedback for major errors, others find it impractical due to the volume of errors or class size. Similarly, unfocused feedback is seldom used, mainly due to perceived ineffectiveness or impracticality. Additionally, a significant proportion of compositions receive no feedback, attributed to time constraints or oversight. Variations in follow-up practices after feedback implementation are observed, often constrained by limited resources. Despite these challenges, teachers generally believe in the efficacy of corrective feedback in improving students' writing skills. These findings underscore the importance of employing varied and targeted feedback strategies. While indirect feedback fosters students' self-correction abilities,

the absence of focused and unfocused feedback suggests opportunities for more tailored and comprehensive approaches.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the students' composition scripts, marked by the teachers, and interviews with the teachers, this chapter presents the conclusions of the major findings in relation to the three study themes derived from both the scripts and the interviews.

5.2.1 The nature of students' errors

In conclusion, the study sheds light on the pervasive linguistic error challenges faced by senior four students in Oyam District regarding their English composition writings. Both grammatical and vocabulary errors were identified as significant obstacles to effective communication in written English. Tense errors, prepositional errors, pronoun errors, article errors, and subject-verb agreement errors were the primary grammatical issues observed, indicating a fundamental struggle with basic grammar concepts among the students.

Furthermore, vocabulary errors such as synonym-induced errors, spelling inaccuracies, homophone misuses, formal mis-selection errors, and collocation inconsistencies were prevalent in the students' compositions. These errors highlight deficiencies in vocabulary knowledge, lexical nuances, and word usage, which can hinder clarity and precision in written expression.

The findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to enhance English language proficiency among senior four students in Oyam District. Such interventions should encompass focused instruction and ample practice in both grammar and vocabulary aspects of writing.

5.2.2 Causes of students' errors

The findings from this study reveal that students' language learning, particularly in writing English compositions, is significantly influenced by both intralingual and interlingual errors. The data indicate a higher frequency of intralingual errors, especially in grammar and vocabulary, which reflect learners' internalization of English language structures. However, the interlingual errors, although less frequent, should not be dismissed as they also exert a notable influence on students' ability to effectively communicate. These errors suggest that the learners' native language continues to impact their English proficiency, leading to challenges in both linguistic accuracy and clarity of expression. Thus, while intralingual issues dominate, interlingual interference remains a critical factor affecting their overall language acquisition.

5.2.3 Strategies used by teachers to address students' errors

The analysis of corrective feedback types and strategies used by teachers reveals a heavy reliance on indirect feedback and a scarcity of direct feedback. The absence of focused and unfocused feedback highlights the need for a more targeted approach to address specific writing issues and provide comprehensive guidance. By incorporating a balanced mix of direct and indirect feedback, teachers can support students in comprehending their strengths and weaknesses, thereby promoting their overall writing skills and learning progress. Overall, the study underscores the critical role of feedback in enhancing students' composition writing skills and highlights avenues for further refining feedback practices in educational settings.

5.2.4 Conclusion

The present study found that the most frequent grammatical errors made by students in Oyam District were in the categories of tense, preposition, pronoun and article. On the other hand, errors in agreement were found to be the least frequent in the students' composition writings. Regarding the types of errors found in the vocabulary category, the researcher discovered that

synonym-induced, spelling, homophone induced and formal misselection errors were the most prevalent in the students' written scripts while collocation errors were the least. In this research, both intralingual and interlingual interferences were seen as the causes of the grammatical and vocabulary errors committed. However, intralingual interference (interference within the target language) was found to be the most dominant cause of errors in students' written work. This means that senior four students in Oyam District lack concrete grammatical and vocabulary knowledge of the target language. The study also revealed that teachers in Oyam District relied heavily on indirect feedback and scarcely used the direct feedback strategy while correcting students' composition errors. No instance of focused or unfocused error correction strategies was observed. The absence of focused and unfocused feedback highlights the need for a more targeted approach to address specific writing issues and provide comprehensive guidance.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the linguistic error analysis of Senior Four students' composition writings in English from Oyam District, and considering the conclusions drawn, it is important to offer recommendations aimed at improving students' grammatical and vocabulary errors. These recommendations will also address the underlying causes of the errors and suggest strategies for effectively addressing them.

Most of the grammatical errors found in the study were from the lack of knowledge of the target language, which may indicate that students have not received sufficient input in their writing instruction. Therefore, English language teachers ought to use various innovative teaching methods and techniques in the class to help students fully understand the English language system.

Teachers should help students expand their vocabulary by assigning extensive reading on various topics and providing immediate oral and written feedback to enhance writing

performance. Additionally, students should practice writing essays in different genres to improve their skills.

A better understanding of L2 error occurrence and sources will enable teachers to identify learners' difficulties more effectively, leading to the selection of more suitable course-books. Consequently, future studies on error analysis are recommended, as examining errors provides valuable insights that can be used to enhance L2 learning and teaching.

Addressing these error types requires tailored instructional strategies that focus on grammar rules, vocabulary acquisition, and creating an immersive language learning environment.

In order for second language writing classroom practitioners to give their students efficacious feedback on their written language, it is recommended that teachers familiarise themselves with, and use, the different error correction strategies they may find useful to be cognizant of key considerations in providing written error feedback. Knowing students' types of errors and their level of language proficiency as well as their preferences in receiving feedback can help the teacher to utilize effective methods for offering feedback.

5.5 Areas for further research

A comprehensive analysis of the grammatical and vocabulary errors in students' functional writings

Comparative error analysis study of writings of students in rural and urban/city schools

Analysis of error correction feedback strategies used by teachers in schools with good performance vis-a-vis schools that perform poorly in composition writing at UCE

A study of learner perception of and response to teachers' error exposition and correction strategies

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Table for determining sample size for a finite population

Sample Size for ±3%, ±5%, ±7%, and ±10% Precision Levels where Confidence Level is 95% and P=.5.

Size of population	Sample Size (n) for Precision (e) of:			
	±3%	±5%	±7%	±10%
500	a	222	145	83
600	a	240	152	86
700	a	255	158	88
800	a	267	163	89
900	a	277	166	90
1,000	a	286	169	91
2,000	714	333	185	95
3,000	811	353	191	97
4,000	870	364	194	98
5,000	909	370	196	98
6,000	938	375	197	98
7,000	959	378	198	99
8,000	976	381	199	99
9,000	989	383	200	99
10,000	1,000	385	200	99
15,000	1,034	390	201	99
20,000	1,053	392	204	100
25,000	1,064	394	204	100
50,000	1,087	397	204	100
100,000	1,099	398	204	100
>100,000	1,111	400	204	100
a = Assumption of normal population is poor (Yamane, 1967). The entire population should be sampled.				

Note: The table present sample sizes that would be necessary for given combinations of precision, confidence levels, and variability. Please note that these sample sizes reflect the number of *obtained* responses and not necessarily the number of surveys mailed or interviews planned (this number is often increased to compensate for nonresponse).

Source (Glenn, 2009)

Appendix B: Students' composition questions

Tick the box (√)

Gender:

Male ☐

Female ☐

School: ……..

Index Number: …….

Choose **one** of the following topics and write a composition of **500 – 600** words.

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes.

1. Write a story beginning: "The day finally arrived …."
2. Describe the life of someone who has influenced you to be a better person.
3. "It is people in the community who are responsible for the spread of cholera in Uganda".

   What is your opinion?

END

Appendix C: Teachers' interview guide

Dear respondent,

This study aims at analyzing the linguistic features of students' composition writings in English.

You are kindly requested to reply on the following questions regarding your feedback strategy toward your students' English composition writing. Your responses are highly appreciated and will be used confidentially for study purposes only to improve the teaching of the writing skill in schools in Oyam District.

School: …….

1. What is your gender? (Male/Female)
2. What is your highest professional qualification?

   (A' Level, Diploma, Bachelor Degree, Master Degree, Doctoral Degree)
3. How many years have you been teaching English composition writing?

   (1 – 5 years, 5 – 10 years, 11 – 15 years, 16 – 20 years, 21 – 25 years, 26 – 30 years, 31 – 35 years)
4. Do you provide your students with some sort of feedback on their written assignments?

   (Yes/No)

   If not, why?
5. What feedback strategy/ type do you usually give to your students when marking their composition scripts and why?

Feedback strategy/type	Why?
Direct (coded) feedback where errors are indicated with particular codes (sp. - spelling, prep.- preposition)...etc.	

Indirect (non-coded) feedback where errors are merely indicated to the students.	
Focused (selective) feedback where only major errors are corrected.	
Unfocussed (comprehensive) direct feedback where all the errors are corrected.	

6. Do your students make corrections of the errors you indicate in your feedback on their composition writing? (yes/no)

   If not, why?

7. Do your students improve on their writing after taking your corrective feedback on their previous composition scripts? (yes/no)

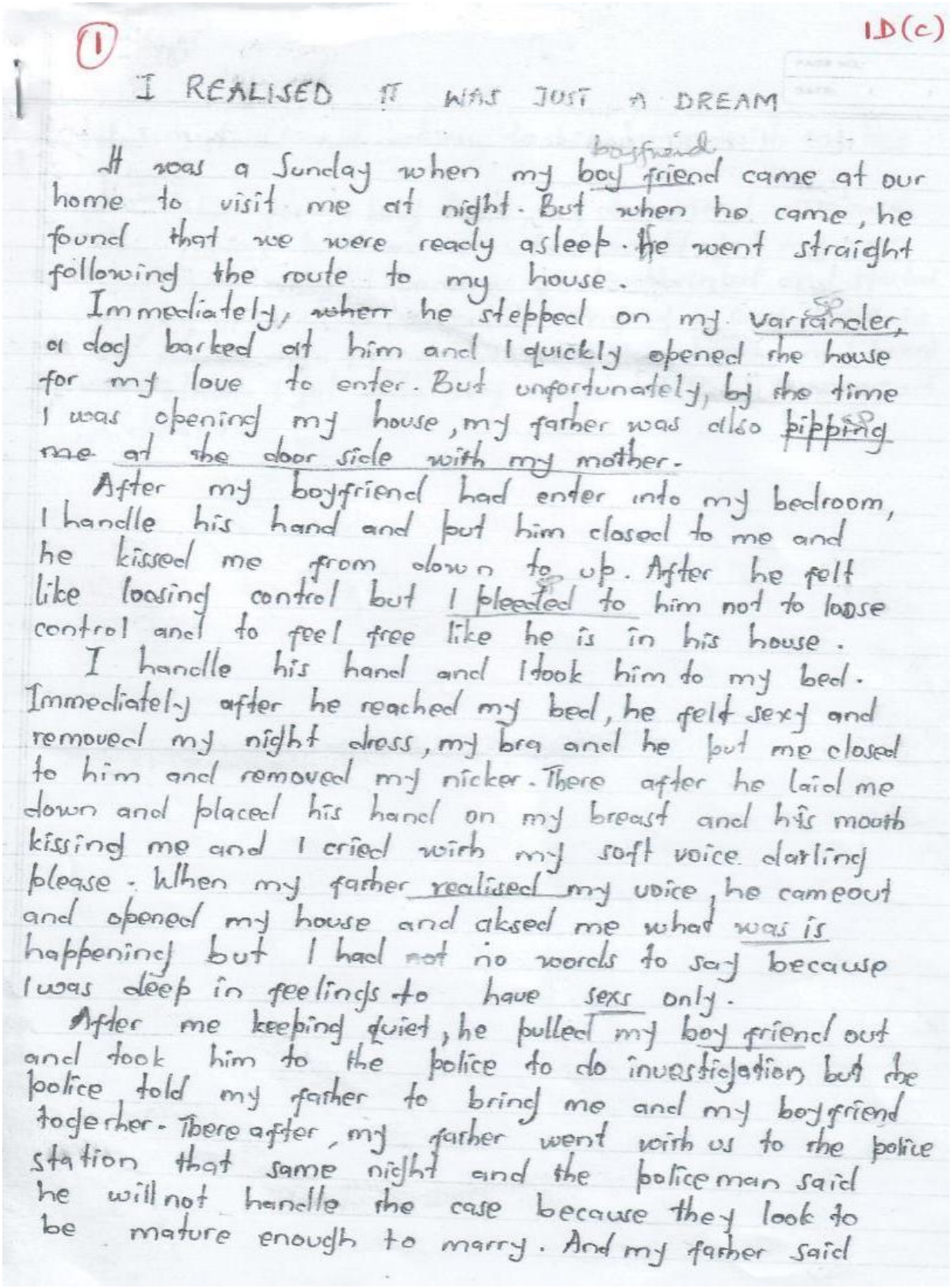
   If not, why?

8. Please give any additional comments you might have regarding your feedback strategies when correcting students' English composition writing.

   Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D: Samples of teachers' error feedback strategies

Sample 1: Indirect (coded)



(1) 1.D(c)

I REALISED IT WAS JUST A DREAM

It was a Sunday when my boy friend (boyfriend) came at our home to visit me at night. But when he came, he found that we were ready asleep. He went straight following the route to my house.

Immediately, when he stepped on my varranda(r), a dog barked at him and I quickly opened the house for my love to enter. But unfortunately, by the time I was opening my house, my father was also (k)ipping me at the door side with my mother.

After my boyfriend had enter into my bedroom, I handle his hand and put him closed to me and he kissed me from down to up. After he felt like loosing control but I pleaded to him not to loose control and to feel free like he is in his house.

I handle his hand and I took him to my bed. Immediately after he reached my bed, he felt sexy and removed my night dress, my bra and he put me closed to him and removed my nicker. There after he laid me down and placed his hand on my breast and his mouth kissing me and I cried with my soft voice darling please. When my father realised my voice, he came out and opened my house and asked me what was is happening but I had not no words to say because I was deep in feelings to have sexs only.

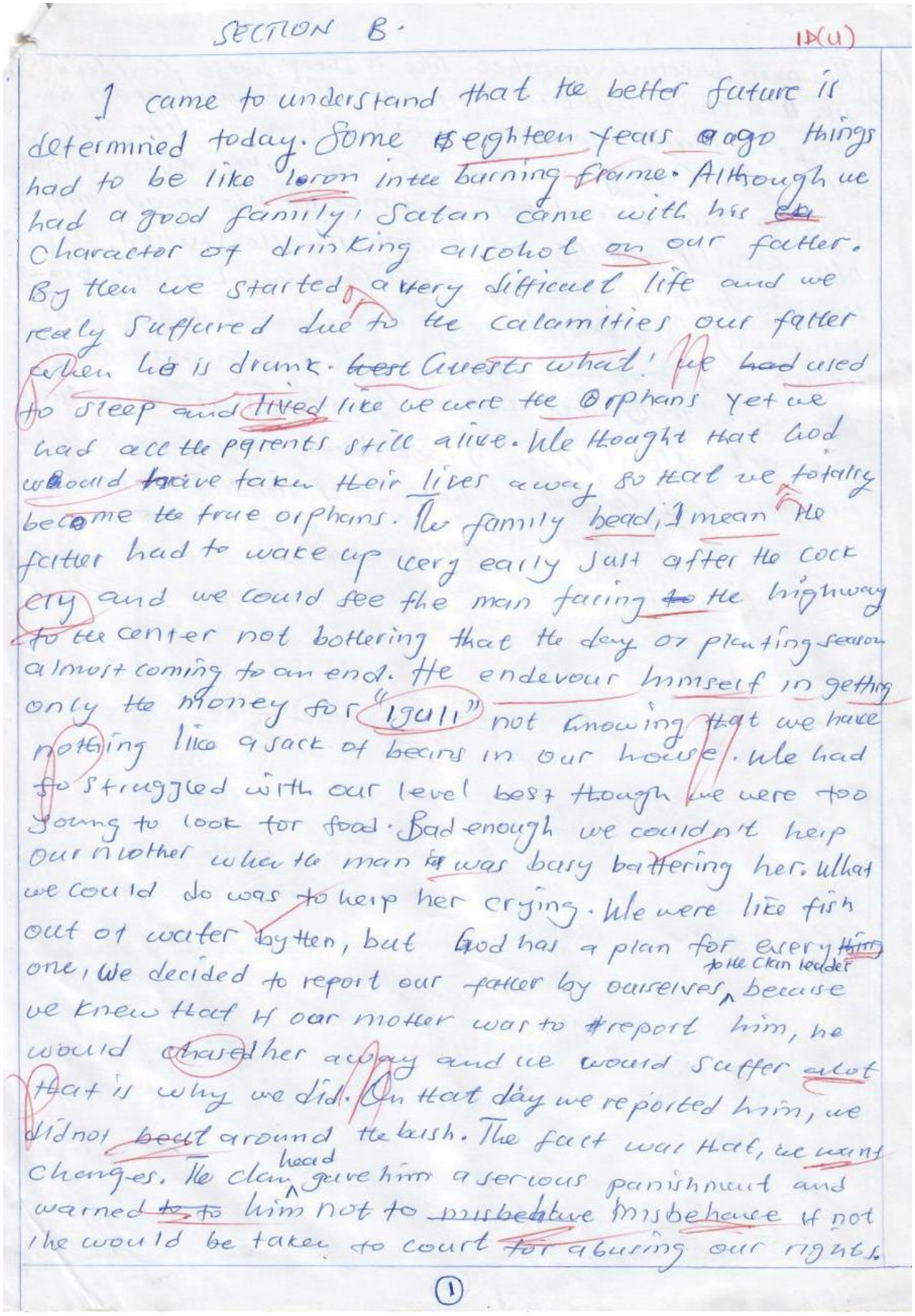
After me keeping quiet, he pulled my boy friend out and took him to the police to do investigation but the police told my father to bring me and my boyfriend together. There after, my father went with us to the police station that same night and the policeman said he will not handle the case because they look to be mature enough to marry. And my father said

that I should not return to his home with my boy friend.

Not for a long time, my boyfriend also said I am useless to him now. So I should get my own way. There-after, I became so disappointed and started crying ee.....ee.... while singing a song there is no excuse my friend because you break my heart.

When I got into my senses, I realised it was just a dream.

Sample 2: Indirect (uncoded)



SECTION B. 1D(ii)

I came to understand that the better future is determined today. Some ~~#~~ eighteen years ~~@~~ ago things had to be like 'oron into burning ~~frame~~. Although we had a good family, Satan came with his ~~the~~ character of drinking alcohol on our father. By then we started a very difficult life and we realy suffered due to the calamities our father when he is drunk. ~~best~~ Guests what! We ~~had~~ used to sleep and ~~lived~~ like we were the ~~@~~ orphans yet we had all the parents still alive. We thought that God ~~w~~ould ~~have~~ taken their lives away so that we totally be~~@~~come the true orphans. The family head, I mean the father had to wake up very early just after the cock cry and we could see the man facing ~~to~~ the highway to the center not bothering that the day or planting season almost coming to an end. He endevour himself in getting only the money for "Igull" not knowing that we have nothing like a sack of beans in our house. We had to struggled with our level best though we were too young to look for food. Bad enough we couldn't help our mother when the man ~~he~~ was busy battering her. What we could do was ~~to~~ help her crying. We were like fish out of water by then, but God has a plan for ~~him~~ every one, We decided to report our father by ourselves, because to the clan leader we knew that if our mother war to #report him, he would ~~chased~~ her away and we would suffer alot that is why we did. On that day we reported him, we didnot ~~beat~~ around the bush. The fact war that, we want Changes. The clan head gave him a serious punishment and warned ~~to~~ ~~to~~ him not to ~~misbehave~~ misbehave if not he would be taken to court ~~for a~~ during our rights.

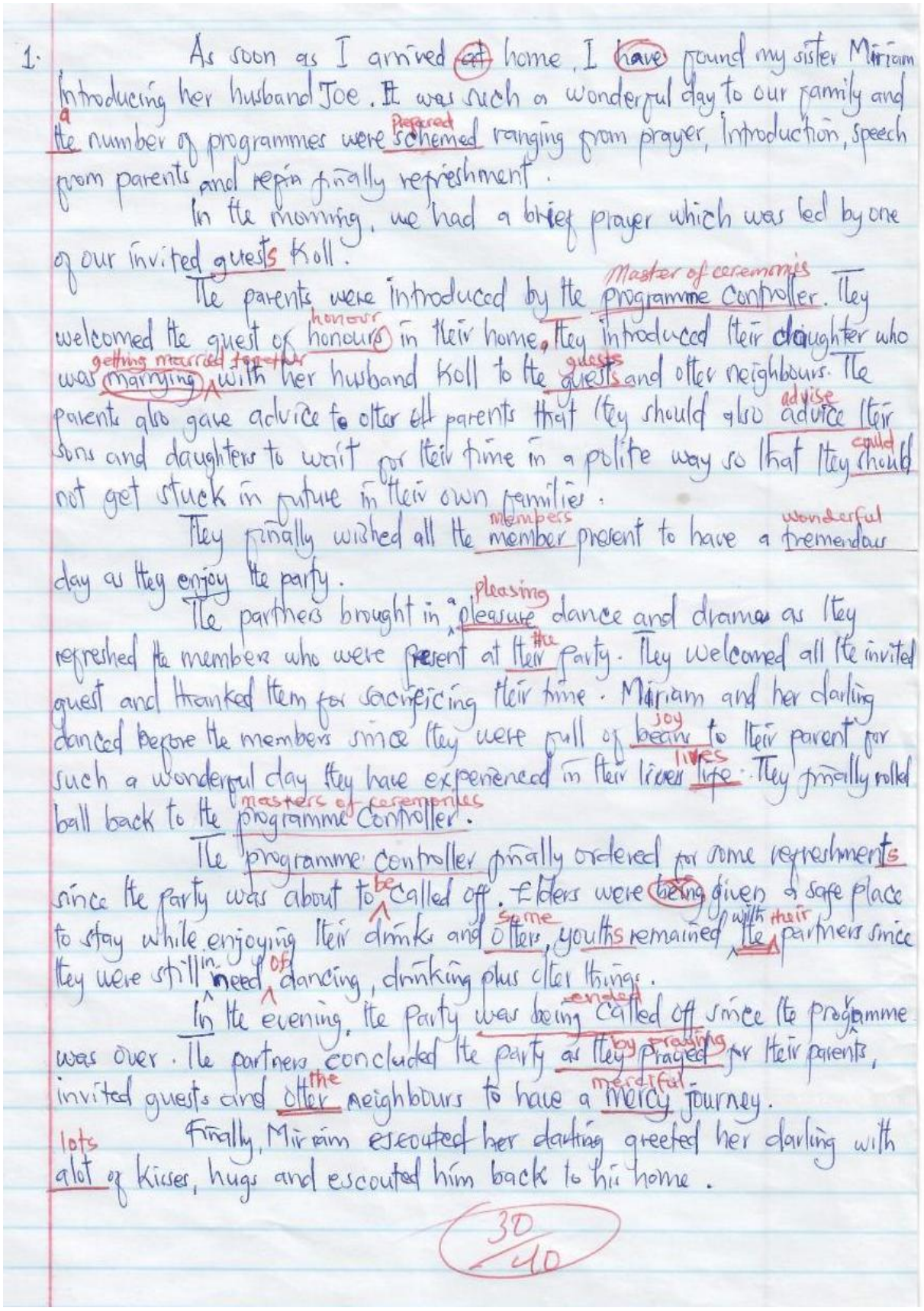
(1)

The man became bambice like a sheep so fearful like a chick without its mother. The man began to pray, he started working hard and life realy changed. Can you imagin. our father even started paying our school fees in time. life We could compare our family with one of museveni. We studied, as the first born, I sat my PLE (primary Leaving Examination) and passed very well. I went to O' level after, I went for A level and am now admited to work in Otwal Health Centre III as a medical personel. Now when I look back at what had happened, I couldn't believe I had escaped.

V. good story

By 13

Sample 3: Direct



1. As soon as I arrived ~~at~~ home, I have found my sister Miriam introducing her husband Joe. It was such a wonderful day to our family and the a number of programmes were prepared schemed ranging from prayer, introduction, speech from parents and rep finally refreshment.

In the morning, we had a brief prayer which was led by one of our invited guests Koll.

The parents were introduced by the programme controller Master of ceremonies. They welcomed the guest of honour honours in their home. They introduced their daughter who was marrying getting married together with her husband Koll to the guests and other neighbours. The parents also gave advice to other all parents that they should also advise advice their sons and daughters to wait for their time in a polite way so that they could should not get stuck in future in their own families.

They finally wished all the member members present to have a tremendous wonderful day as they enjoy the party.

The parthers brought in a pleasure pleasing dance and drama as they refreshed the members who were present at their the party. They welcomed all the invited guest and thanked them for sacrificing their time. Miriam and her darling danced before the members since they were full of beam joy to their parent for such a wonderful day they have experienced in their livers lives life. They finally rolled ball back to the programme Controller masters of ceremonies.

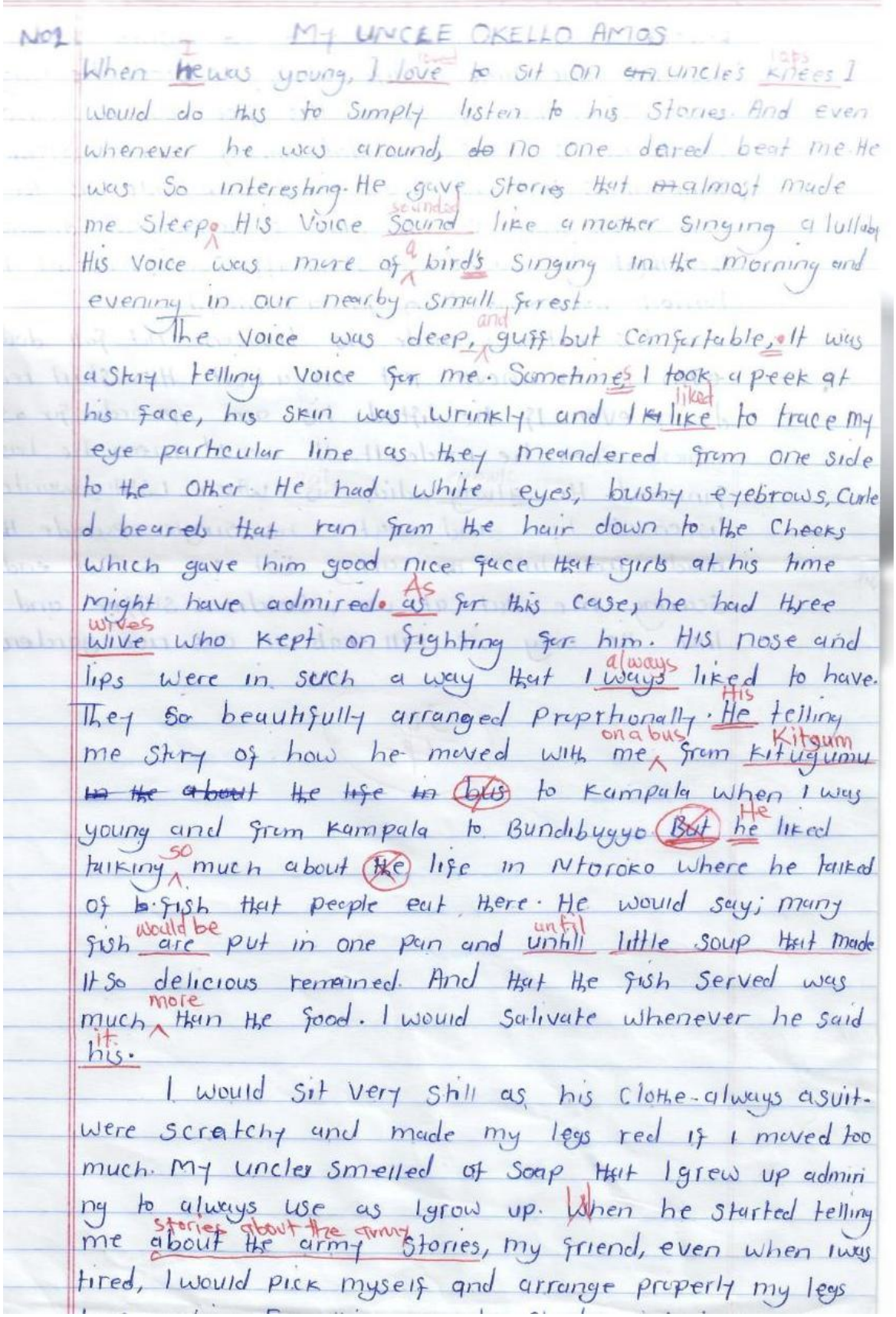
The programme controller finally ordered for some refreshments since the party was about to be called off. Elders were being given a safe place to stay while enjoying their drinks and other same youths remained the with their partners since they were still in need of dancing, drinking plus other things.

In the evening, the party was being called off since the programme was over. The partners concluded the party as they by praising prayed for their parents, invited guests and other the neighbours to have a merciful mercy journey.

Finally, Miriam escouted her darling greeted her darling with alot lots of kisses, hugs and escouted him back to his home.

30/40

Sample 4: Direct



No1

MY UNCLE OKELLO AMOS

When he was young, I love to sit on uncle's knees I would do this to simply listen to his stories. And even whenever he was around, no one dared beat me. He was so interesting. He gave stories that almost made me sleep. His voice sounds like a mother singing a lullaby His voice was more of birds singing in the morning and evening in our nearby small forest.

The voice was deep, and guff but comfortable. It was a story telling voice for me. Sometimes I took a peek at his face, his skin was wrinkly and I like to trace my eye particular line as they meandered from one side to the other. He had white eyes, bushy eyebrows, curled beards that run from the hair down to the cheeks which gave him good nice face that girls at his time might have admired. As for his case, he had three wives who kept on fighting for him. His nose and lips were in such a way that I always liked to have. They so beautifully arranged proportionally. His telling me story of how he moved with me on a bus from Kitugumu to Kampala when I was young and from Kampala to Bundibugyo but he liked talking so much about life in Ntoroko where he talked of fish that people eat there. He would say; many fish would be put in one pan and until little soup that made it so delicious remained. And that the fish served was much more than the food. I would salivate whenever he said it. his.

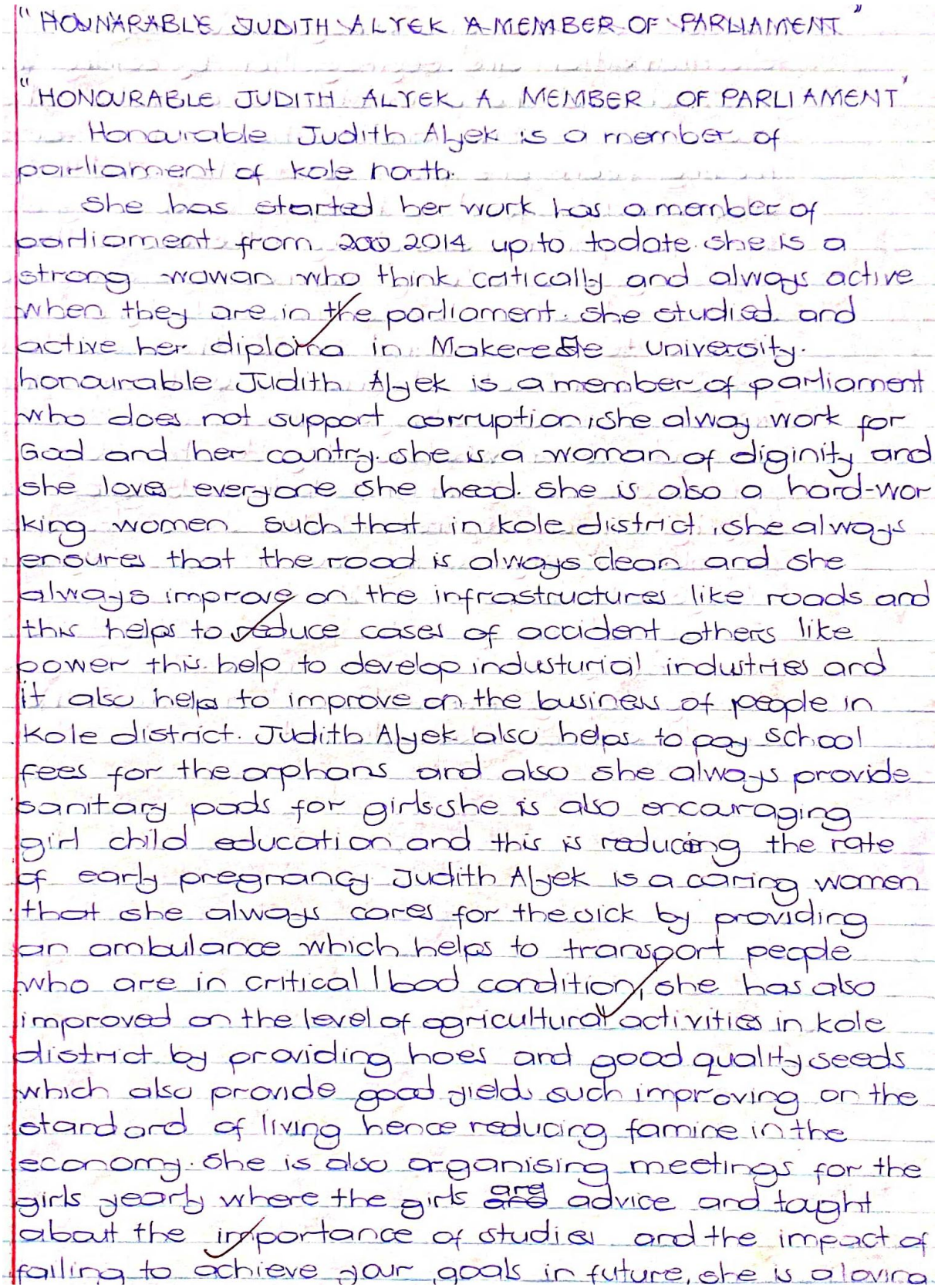
I would sit very still as his clothe-always a suit-were scratchy and made my legs red if I moved too much. My uncle smelled of soap that I grew up admiring to always use as I grow up. When he started telling me stories about the army stories, my friend, even when I was tired, I would pick myself and arrange properly my legs

parade match for me. I laughed and wished I become a Soldier one time in life. When he stood, his he height was ~~a~~ such like that of Ofuno. His face bamed and he cleared his voice as he commanded himself while marched matching. His light arm swing his front and back side as the other one kept stuck on the side of the chest downwards the thigh. He would say "Jehuka!!! Sunga Mbele!" he would turned back and sing sang for a moment.

His buttocks made his trousers not fall down even if he never put on a belt. His shirt remained in even if he lifted his arm upwards for a salute which when he made it, it would mean he has finished. He always alway did this his when I still wanted to listen to him and watch his single parade that made me like the army but he would end up scaring me that at war, Soldiers suffer and die like the way we kill rab in our rice gardens.

34/40

Sample 5: No feedback



"HONNARABLE JUDITH ALYEK A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT"

"HONOURABLE JUDITH ALYEK A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT"

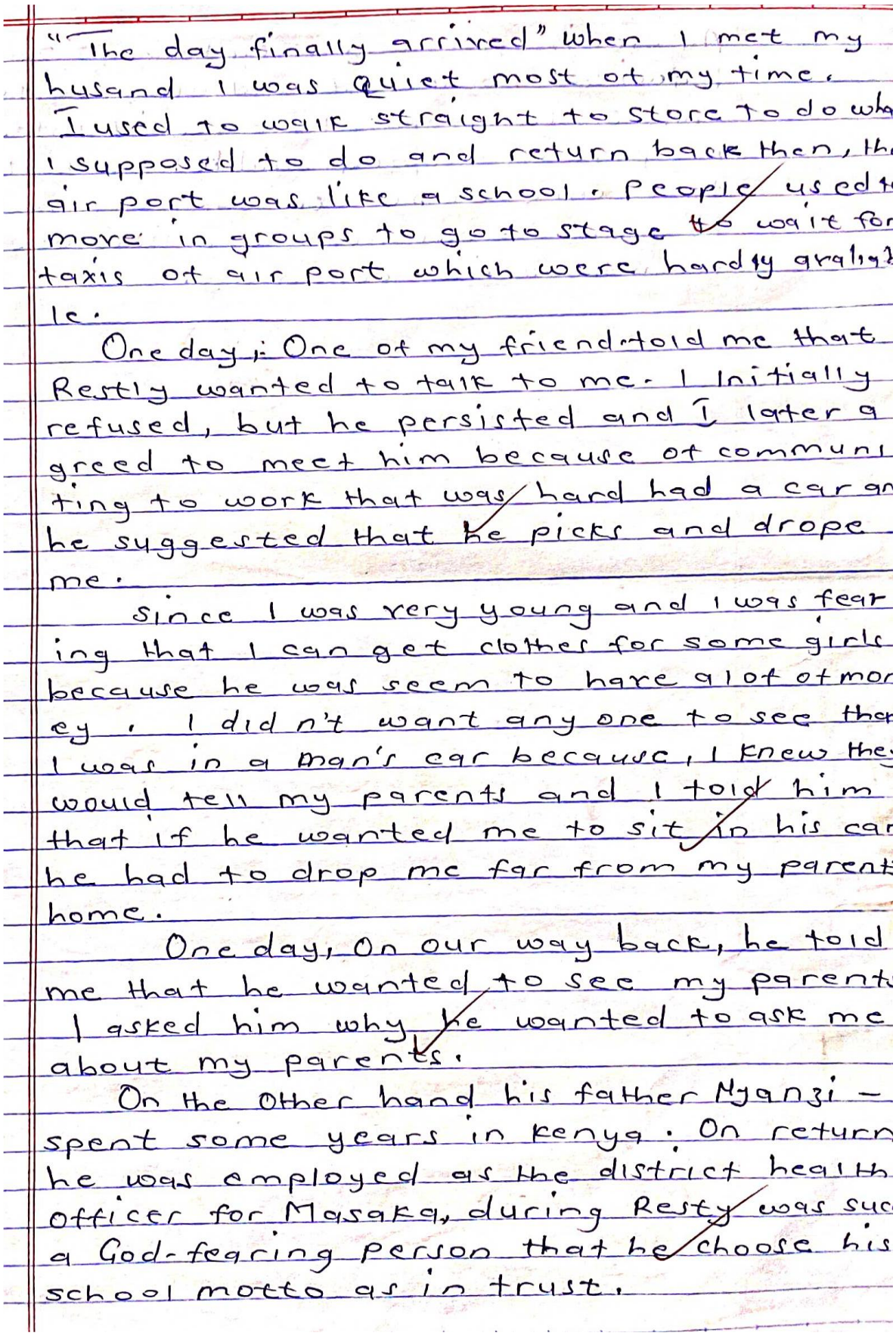
Honourable Judith Alyek is a member of parliament of kole natth.

She has started her work has a member of parliament from 200 2014 up to todate she is a strong wowan who think critically and always active when they are in the parliament. she studied and active her diploma in Makerere University. honourable Judith Alyek is a member of parliament who does not support corruption she alway work for God and her country. she is a woman of diginity and she loves everyone she head. she is also a hard-working women such that in kole district she always enoures that the road is always clean and she always improve on the infrastructures like roads and this helps to reduce cases of accident others like power this help to develop industurial industries and it also helps to improve on the busines of people in kole district. Judith Alyek also helps to pay school fees for the orphans and also she always provide sanitary pads for girls she is also encouraging girl child education and this is reducing the rate of early pregnancy Judith Alyek is a caring women that she always cares for the sick by providing an ambulance which helps to transport people who are in critical bad condition, she has also improved on the level of agricultural activities in kole district by providing hoes and good quality seeds which also provide good yields such improving on the standard of living hence reducing famine in the economy. She is also organising meetings for the girls yearly where the girls are advice and taught about the importance of studies and the impact of failing to achieve your goals in future, she is always

women such that she always discourage discrimination and segregation by caring for both the rich and the poor. she also provides wheel chairs to the lame and this helped them for easy moving from one place to another. Judith Alyek also provides food to her people especially during time for famine and draught this shows that she is a caring and aloving woman. She also improved on the education level of the people by providing deskes, text books and others this helps to ease education in kole district. she is also a faithful women where she always advice people to pray and put God first in whatever they do. she also contribute money which helps in building of churches, buying church requirements like chairs, drums, etc. she is also a eary caring women especially she always attend fenerals like burrial and also contributed money to the family of the decise to help them in buying other requirements. Judith Alyek is a caring, loving, ~~puntual~~ punctual women that every one likes her in kole district

32/40

Sample 6: No feedback



"The day finally arrived" when I met my husand I was quiet most of my time. I used to walk straight to store to do wh I supposed to do and return back then, th air port was like a school. People used t more in groups to go to stage to wait for taxis of air port which were hardly graling le.

One day, One of my friend told me that Resty wanted to talk to me. I initially refused, but he persisted and I later a greed to meet him because of communi ting to work that was hard had a car an he suggested that he picks and drope me.

Since I was very young and I was fear ing that I can get clothes for some girls because he was seem to have a lot of mon ey. I did n't want any one to see tha I was in a man's car because, I knew the would tell my parents and I told him that if he wanted me to sit in his car he had to drop me far from my parent home.

One day, On our way back, he told me that he wanted to see my parent I asked him why he wanted to ask me about my parents.

On the other hand his father Nyanzi - spent some years in Kenya. On return he was employed as the district health officer for Masaka, during Resty was suc a God-fearing person that he choose his school motto as in trust.

A case in point was October, 7, 2018 whe
I decided to agreed and accepted to his pl
and On 12 october to make it interesting
my parents accepted and he have to love and
take care of me On ~~our home~~ he 18/10/201
he come to our home and that was the tim
for introduction ceremony.

27/40

Appendix E: Introductory letter

GULU UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

P.O. BOX 166, GULU UGANDA
TEL:+256 0471-432922

2nd February 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN`

This is to introduce to you Oyuko George Reg.No: 18/U/2819/MEL a student pursuing a programme of study leading to the award of Master of Arts in Literature and English Linguistics of Gulu University.

He is undertaking research on the topic: *A Linguistic Error Analysis of Senior Four Students' Composition Writings in English: the Case of Oyam District*, which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award.

Any assistance given to him in relation to his research work will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

GULU 02 FEB 2022 FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

Dr. Bebwa Isingoma
Dean Faculty Education and Humanities