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ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE WRITTEN ENGLISH OF ND
STUDENTS OF INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND
TECHNOLOGY (IMT), ENUGU

by

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to those few that knew the value of Linguistics in education and who stood for the truth to vanquish arbitrariness.
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He who fails to remark where the rain started beating him will not even recollect where it stopped. In line with the above adage, I must not fail to acknowledge some of those who encouraged me in this academic voyage.

I am one of those who erroneously believed that further studies after first degree is meant for very few academically gifted research scholars. That was why I didn’t think about further studies, until five years after my graduation. My first plunge was in 1997 when I gained admission for Master’s degree in applied linguistics. I was then assigned to Prof. B. O. Oluikpe who saw me through in my course work. Prof. Oluikpe’s retirement from the services of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, (UNN) was a good reason for me to go back and relax with my first degree.

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of Transformational Generative Grammar (TG) in Linguistic theory with its characteristic attitude to learners’ linguistic errors has exerted a significant influence on the teaching of English as a second language. When mirrored against TG principles, errors become informative, diagnostic and ultimately facilitative. The aim of this study is to investigate and analyze the errors made by ND students of the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu. The researcher developed some discrete test items in Multiple Choice Test model which she used to determine the level of language pitfalls suffered by the ND students in their written language namely - adjective, adverb, preposition as well as concord. The researcher was also guided by some questions such as; to what extent does the students’ knowledge of the above named parts of speech, including the concord, affect their written English. It is observed that only an average of 30% of the students was knowledgeable in the rules of written English. To help alleviate the problems, the researcher made a number of recommendations among which are: better funding of education, motivation of teachers and emphasis on teaching and learning of English. Students should also be encouraged to read widely all texts written in English and practice writing English texts as much as possible. A sample population of 400 students was drawn from different schools, using stratified random sampling. The result of the investigation indicated that a greater percentage of the respondents performed below the mean percent of 50%. In other words, a high percentage of our respondents are error-prone.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Authorities in language like Chomsky, Bloomfield, Wilkins, are the giants in linguistics that must be referred to whenever language learning and teaching is the subject. These scholars have some areas of interests but differ in some aspects. They view language as a code and that is why they are proponents of formalism. They differ slightly in their tools of language analysis. Bloomfieldians propose structuralism while the Chomskyans are the transformationalist. The structuralists recommend CA (contrastive analysis) as an instrument for language teaching while the transformationalist offers EA (error analysis).

Many language researchers, especially linguists, have carried out a lot of research on error analysis. This work is just a contribution to the already existing volumes of work carried out by some eminent scholars. Among other things, the causes and the frequencies of these errors have been investigated. Error analysis has been conducted to identify strategies which scholars/researchers use in language learning to track the causes of learner’s errors, to obtain information on common
Second Language Acquisition (SLA) or Second Language Learning L2 is the process by which people learn a second language in addition to their native language, L1. It refers to what the learner does and not what the teacher does. Acquisition and learning can be distinguished further by referring to the former as a subconscious and the latter as conscious process.

Furthermore, the formalist approach has the view of language as a “static”, closed system – a code consisting of elements and their relationships with one another”, (Anasiudu, 2001:35).

The structuralist’s view is that language is a code with identifiable characteristics such that any description of language should be based on observable data of that particular language, instead of using the theoretical and structural mould of another. The structuralists also view meaning as inconceivable since it is considered as abstract because it is mentally – configured (Okoli, 2008:1). Wilkins (1972:164) asserts that inquiring into
the meaning of what has been said is “to imply a mental structure of some kind which the behaviourist finds objectionable and unnecessary”.

According to Wilkins (1972:161), there is no difference between the way one learns a language and the way one learns to do anything else, therefore, learning a language can be characterized as habit. Hence Okoli (2008:1) opines that, “learning a new language involves a transfer of habits already acquired from mother-tongue (MT). Where the habits are the same, learning becomes easy, but if the habits conflict, the by-products is interference. Behaviourism was based on the view that all learning, including language-learning, occur through a process of imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation (Norbert, 2002:118).

The idea of L1 interference in L2 of a learner culminated in the proposal of the tools of Contrastive Analysis (CA). The essence was to predict areas of similarities and difficulties in the learning process. The CA predicted that there were no problems in L1 learner of L2 in areas of similarities, while the reverse would constitute a problem. CA was committed to drilling students out of errors.
In application however, CA could not predict errors that L2 learners were observed to make, and it predicted some errors that did not occur, (Norbert, 2002:119). As a result of this, CA as a tool became unpopular among some language learners of L2.

According to Richard (1974) in Norbert (2002:123) several error analysis in the 1970s classified L2 learners’ errors and found out that many errors could not be attributed to L1 influence. Norbert (2002:123) states that, the finding that not all L2 errors can be traced to L1 led some researchers not only to reject traditional contrastive analysis, but to claim that L2 learners did not rely on L1 as a source of hypothesis about L2.

Error of usage, according to Lawal (2004), is attributed to the complexity of the English Language itself. The level at which people commit error in terms of language usage vary from one person to another depending on the linguistic background of the speaker or user of the language.

Transformationalists, another school of thought that share the same theoretical framework with the structuralists, have a different view on the concept of language. In 1957, Chomsky championed another cause in second language
learning (L2). His ideas are expressed in the Transformational Generative Grammar (TG) which asserts that language is a code which relates meaning to substance. It is their belief that, there cannot be proper description of language without reference to meaning. Wilkins (1972:168) aligning himself with Chomskyan’s view, postulates that, “man possesses an inborn capacity which permits him to acquire a language as a normal maturational process”.

This potential is a device known as – Language Acquisition Device – (LAD) capable of formulating rules about language to which it is exposed. The implication of the above is that language is rule governed and to learn a language, one has to learn a system of rules. In the application of such rules, “errors are bound to occur – a phenomenon which the transformationalists see as facilitative rather than inhibitive.” Structuralists hold a contrary view in this respect.

Corder and his colleagues in the 1970s, played a significant role in the development of EA as a tool in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It consists of a comparison between the errors made in Target Language (TL) and within that TL itself. In contrastive analysis CA, errors are frowned at.
They are flaws that should be eradicated. But the tools of Error Analysis EA “views error as important in and of themselves”, (Corder 1967).

EA is potent in systematically analyzing errors made by language learners and using them to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching. Error Analysis (EA) emphasized “the significance of errors in learner’s inter-language system” (Brown, 1994:204). The term inter-language introduced by Selinker (1972), refers to the systematic knowledge of an L2 which is independent of both the learner’s L1 and the TL.

According to Corder (1967), EA has two objects: theoretical and applied. The theoretical object is to understand what and how a learner learns when he studies an L2. The applied object is to enable the learner to learn more efficiently by using the knowledge of his language for pedagogical purposes. At the same time, the investigation of errors can serve two purposes - diagnostic (to highlight the problem) and prognostic (to make plans to solve a problem), (Darus, 2009:487). Corder (1967) maintains that it is diagnostic because it can tell us about a learner’s grasp of a language at any given point during the learning
process. It is also prognostic because it can tell the teacher to modify learning materials to meet the learners’ problems.

Crystal (2003:165) notes that, “errors are assumed to reflect, in a systematic way, the level of competence achieved by a learner; they are contrasted with mistakes which are performance limitations that a learner would be able to correct”. Error analysts distinguish between errors, which are systematic and mistakes, which are not. Errors can be classified according to basic type: omissive, additive, substitutive or related to word order. They can be classified by how apparent they are: overt errors such as ‘I angry’ are obvious even out of context, whereas, covert errors are evident only in context.

Closely related to this is the classification according to domain, the breath of context which the analyst must examine, and the breath of the utterance which must be changed in order to fix the error. Errors may also be classified according to the level of language: phonological errors, vocabulary or lexical errors, syntactic errors and so on. They may be assessed according to the degree to which they interfere with communication: global errors make an utterance difficult to
understand, while local errors do not. E.g. “I angry” is local since the meaning is apparent.

Learners are encouraged by the Chomskyan group of researchers not to panic when they commit error in the process of L2 acquisition. An important issue in the process is that there should be feedback on errors. Nobody learns a language without goofing (Yankson, 2000). Goofs (errors) should not be considered as linguistic sin to be condemned and punished. Rather, learner’s errors help in understanding the process of second language acquisition. Olasehinde (2002) also argues that it is inevitable that learners make errors. Errors and misuse of language by the students could be attributed to bad teaching and resources, ignorance, lack of practice and carelessness. To correct the errors of usage in students’ writing, and speech, the teacher needs to know what rules have been broken (Broughton et al, 2003). Opera (2001) wraps up by arguing that “errors are difficult to completely do away with.”

The Concept of Error Analysis

Error Analysis (EA), according to Crystal (2003:165), “is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically
interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics”. In learning a foreign language, the learner violates some rules of the Target Language (TL) which may be as a result of ignorance or other related factors. Mistakes on its own are not systematic and may result from any physical or psychological interference such as: fatigue, fear, stress, memory lapse, etc.

Limitations of Error Analysis

According to Subramaniam, (2009) “EA provides only a partial picture of learner language,”. His assertion follows from the fact that EA does not consider avoidance strategy in SLA, since it is concerned more with what learners do. The fact remains that there are learners who tactically avoid areas of difficulties in their course of learning a second/foreign language. Brown (1994) and Ellis (1996) observe in relation to EA, “learners who avoided the sentence structures which they found difficult due to the differences between their native language and TL may be viewed to have no difficulty”.

Also, if learners monitor their linguistic performance with a view to getting rid of errors, unhealthy speech and incoherent texts are bound to be produced and such strategy could kill communication (Okoli, 2008:14).

**Relevance of EA**

Errors are visible proof that learning is taking place. It can provide significant insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. According to Corder (1967), studying students’ errors of usage has immediate practical application for language teachers.

EA as an instrument x-rays errors as providing feedback. They tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of their teaching. According to Ancker, (2000) making mistakes or errors is a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of the cognitive process. And “many of the learner’s errors happen due to the strategies that they use in language acquisition, especially their L2” (Richard, 1971). Wireesh (1991) insists that EA is valuable and used to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners.
1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

English Language acquisition is replete with problems in both teaching and learning the language as a second language. There are problems encountered by this class of L2 learners which are quite different from the ones encountered by native speakers who are learning the language.

English occupies the status of an L2 in the Nigerian education system. Some children born into certain families are taught English language from the time they begin to learn how to talk. The learning goes from the home, through the kindergarten to tertiary institution yet, learning English is a difficult task to many Nigerians, especially some ND students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu. This situation has been attributed to many factors.

According to Brown (2000), in order to master the English language, learners have to be adequately exposed to all the four basic skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. It has been observed that writing, probably because of the many rules involved is more difficult for Nigerian learners of English Language. Generally, students shy away from writing which has resulted in poor performance in the students’ written English
despite learning English for several years. The National Diploma (ND) students of the Institute of Management and Technology Enugu still commit errors in many areas of the English usage especially in spelling, concord and tense.

In Nigeria, the English is not only the national language, but also the official language and lingua franca of the country. The implication is that every Nigerian should be proficient in the use of English. Both oral and written examinations or interviews are conducted in English before one is admitted into any standard school or before one is employed. The observation of the researcher is that many Nigerians fail to do well in written English. Mass failure in English language in school certificate examinations attest to this.

Even the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu where the English language is compulsorily taught as a General Course, many students still do not pass the examinations in the course. Much of their writing is bedeviled by the above named errors. This massive failure in written English by ND students of IMT Enugu has been a source of concern to the researcher.
The efficacy of English Language in Nigeria is observed in the effort made by even Nigerian illiterate men and women to communicate in English Language. This is why the researcher decides to investigate the poor performance in written English of these ND students. James (1988) opines that, “errors in writing such as tenses, prepositions and weak vocabulary are the most common and frequent type of errors that are committed by learners”.

One of the major tasks facing any ND student is writing application letter to firms to be engaged to do their compulsory one year industrial training before going back to school for the Higher National Diploma (HND). It is embarrassing that many National Diploma students end up writing letters of application that are flawed by errors of different kinds. Since grammar, according to Darus and Subramanian (2009:486) is seen only as “a means to an end”, some learners tend to de-emphasize its importance and in the process; they make many more errors. The learners usually face difficulties in learning the grammatical aspects of the Target Language (TL), such as subject – verb agreement, the use of preposition, articles and the correct use of tenses.
Despite all these challenges in learning a target language, it is understood that learning a foreign language FL is a gradual process, during which mistakes are to be expected at all stages of learning. Teachers have to recognize that learning ability varies from person to person. All language learning is based on continual exposure, hypothesizing and even with correct hypothesis, testing and reinforcing the ideas behind them, (Bartholomew, 1980:87).

This work is carried out to highlight the value of EA as a potent tool in teaching ESL. It also aims to rekindle interest in the area of learner errors which should be viewed as facilitative rather than inhibitive. EA is a useful tool for describing and explaining errors made by speakers of other languages (Darus and Subramaniam 2009:487). With the investigation of the ND students’ written multiple choice test questions, English teachers in IMT, Enugu will recognize the importance of errors as one of the challenging areas in teaching English.
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To aid the researcher in this work, a number of questions have been generated which successful answers or otherwise of them will form a landmark in assessing this work.

a. To what extent does the students’ knowledge of adverbs affect their written English?
b. How does students’ knowledge of adjectives influence their written English?
c. To what extent does the students’ knowledge of preposition affect their written English?
d. Does the students’ knowledge of concord affect their written English?

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

a. To identify the kinds of errors made by OND students of IMT, Enugu in their written English.
b. To analyze the errors identified in the written English of ND students of IMT, Enugu.
c. To calculate the frequency count of each category of error.
d. To provide possible explanation to the errors identified.
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Traditionally, the goal of language teaching among other reasons is to graduate learners who have sound knowledge of the grammatical rules. It is the thinking of language teachers that a learner who is well grounded in the rules of the grammar will acquire the grammatical competence necessary for communication in the Target Language (TL).

Unfortunately, the attitude of learners towards the rule of grammar is one of exasperation. This feeling is not peculiar to Nigerian learners as evidenced in the frustration of this Japanese learner: “when I learned English in high school, I learned only grammar. Japanese teacher taught me a lot of grammar; I was getting hate English at that time...” (Farooq, 1981:1).

We find in the fury of this Japanese learner not only manifest errors but also his attitude towards grammar. The same kinds of errors and attitude towards the rule and study of grammar obtain in Nigeria and IMT, Enugu in particular especially among technically oriented students. Most students in their second year feel that there is no need wasting their time learning the rules of the grammar when they
believe they can communicate in English. The grammaticality of the language in use is played down on. This attitude has a direct effect on the student’s written English, particularly their spelling and use of other grammatical categories.

The essence of this work is to highlight the need to re-orientate our students towards paying more attention to the rule of grammar. It is assumed that a learner who begins by learning the grammar of a language is like a builder who started his building on a solid foundation. The knowledge of the grammaticality of a language by a learner enhances the application of the knowledge in practical terms – functionality.

The significance of this work will also be observed by the teacher who will spend less time and energy in assessing and grading a paper written in good English Language.

The government, education planners and other stakeholders will see the need to go back to the drawing board and give grammar its rightful place in the teaching of English language.

Finally, this work will identify the problems of students in the correct use of adverb, adjective, preposition and concord.
1.6 **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Writing, a major skill of language occupies a central position in language learning. This research work discusses the level of grammatical competence of our students especially the second year students of National Diploma programme of Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu. The target of this work is to identify, classify and analyze some errors committed by ND II students of IMT in their written English Language assignments.

1.7 **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

A major limitation to this work is the course outline that lacks some salient aspects as it concerns teaching and learning of English in tertiary institution, especially in IMT, Enugu where it is taught as a general course. Little or no time is assigned to written English. Also, the negative attitude of the students towards the rule of grammar which encompasses spelling, grammatical categories, mechanics, etc will affect the subject matter. The last but not the least among the limitations to this work is space. Errors observed in the students’ written essays are so diverse and complex to be fully and exhaustibly tackled in this paper.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The volumes of materials read have led the researcher into dividing this chapter into two sub-headings according to their coloration. There are some materials that focused on the theories upon which Error Analysis is anchored. Others focus on empirical works.

2.1 THEORETICAL STUDIES

Errors are characteristic features of all human endeavour, typifying the imperfection of man and even the world man lives in, (Okoli, 2008:10). As a result of man’s inadequacies, Transformational Grammar (TG) has developed the tool of error analysis to deal with this linguistic manifestation. Continuing, Okoli argues that linguistic errors are common features of language learning process, especially in a second language situation, where the learner’s L1 differs from the target language in its structure.

Error Analysis has been conducted by many researchers to find out the causes and frequencies of these errors. According to Richard et al (1996:127), “error analysis has been conducted
to identify strategies which the learners use in language learning, to track the causes of learners’ errors, to obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching material.”

Michaelides (1990:30) concludes in his study that “the systematic analysis of students’ errors can be of great value to all those concerned” - the teacher, the student, and the researcher. It can offer the teacher a clear and reliable picture of their students’ knowledge of the target language.

Error Analysis, according to Crystal (2003:165) “is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable form produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics”. He further notes that “errors are assumed to reflect, in a systematic way, the level of competence achieved by a learner; they are contrasted with mistakes, which are performance limitations that a learner would be able to correct”.

Hubbard et al (1996:135-141) on the other hand, gave practical advice and provided clear examples of how to identify and analyze learners’ errors. The initial step required the
selection of a corpus language followed by the identification of errors by making a distinction between a mistake (i.e. caused by lack of attention, carelessness or some aspect of performance) and an error. The errors are, then classified as overt and covert errors (Brown 1994:208). The next step after giving a grammatical analysis of each error, demands an explanation of different types of errors that correspond to different processes. Selinker (1974:35) reported five such processes central to second language learning: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralization.

Corder (1971:30) established a useful distinction of three types of ‘fault’. In his distinction, the grammatically incorrect form he called ‘error’. Error of usage according to Lawal (2004) is attributed to the complexity of the English Language itself. The level at which people commit error in terms of language usage depends on the linguistic background of the speaker or user of the language.

According to Yankson (2000), nobody learns a language without goofing. According to him, goofs should not be
considered as linguistic sin to be condemned and punished. Rather, learners’ errors help in understanding the processes of second language acquisition. Olasentunde (2002) also argues that it is inevitable that learners make errors. He also cited Chomsky (1998) that errors are unavoidable and a necessary part of the learning. It shows that learning is taking place. Also, Corder (2000) proposed that not only do language learners necessarily produce errors when communicating in a foreign language, but these errors, if studied systematically can provide significant insight into how language are actually learned. He also agrees that, studying students’ errors of usage has immediate practical application for language teachers. In his view, errors provide feedback; they tell teachers something about the effectiveness of their teaching.

Thomas (2001) also maintains that error analysis can be used to determine what a learner still needs to be taught. It provides the necessary information about what is lacking in his competence. She also makes distinction between errors and lapses. According to her, lapses are mistakes produced by native speakers which can be corrected by them. They call for on the spot correction rather than remedial works.
Olasetunde (2002) also states that errors and misuse of language by learners could be attributed to bad teaching and resources. The other reasons he gave for occurrence of error include ignorance, lack of practice and carelessness. To correct the errors of usage in students’ writing and speech, the teacher needs to know what rules have been broken (Broughton et al 2003). Opara (2001) opines that errors are inaccuracies which occur as a result of language misuse. According to Orisawayi (1999), languages are frequently misused by the students due to their carelessness. He argued further that errors have a peculiar sneaky behaviour, such that no matter the number of times a piece of work is read through, one cannot rule out the possibility of some mistakes stealthily surviving the revision and proof reading sessions.

Based on the foregoing, Opara (2001) stresses that errors are difficult to completely do away with. He also considers linguistic interference as a factor which is largely responsible for language misuse and other related errors.

Alyewumi et al (2004) aver that an error is characterized by systematic deviance, while Richards (2000) maintains that error analysis presupposes that some learning has taken place
in the form of an input. He also cited French (1989) who opined that “errors are oddities that are not evidence of carelessness or unwillingness but of growing pains and a desire to learn not punishable offences because they are accidents”. Candling (2001) considers error analysis as “the monitoring and analysis of learner’s language”. He also refers to error as a deviation. Dulay and Burt (1997) uphold the view that errors are “those instances of deviation from the norms. Jain (2002) also supports the notion that “sentences containing errors would be characterized by the systematic deviance”.

Corder (2003) identifies two conflicting attitudes: the first represents the feeling that errors are undesirable and hence, should be avoided, but the second attitude is representative of the feeling that errors are inevitable in an imperfect world. Stevens (2004) subscribes to the view that errors are normal and inevitable features of learning. He added that errors are essential condition of learning. Wilkins (1996) also considers learners’ errors to be of particular importance because the making of errors is a device the learners use in order to learn. According to him, error analysis is a valuable aid to identifying and explaining difficulties facing learners. He goes on to say
that error analysis serves as a reliable feedback to the design of remedial curricular.

Candling (2001) adds that the second language learner’s errors are potentially important to the understanding of the processes of second language acquisition. According to Aiyewumin et al (2004) the major sources of error are L1 interference, L2 idiosyncrasies, inappropriate learning and application of rules. French (1985) concedes that rules badly learnt and wrongly applied induce error, but he rejects the idea of L1 being the root cause of errors. Very importantly, Richards (2000) regards errors as the outcome of interference between two language system by means of social, psychological, and linguistic interaction.

Error analysis has been conducted by many researchers to find out the causes and frequencies of these errors. According to Richards et al (1996:127), error analysis has been conducted to identify strategies which the learners use in language learning, to track the causes of learners’ errors, to obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching materials. In the same track, Michealides (1990:30) concludes in his study that the
systematic analysis of students’ errors can be of great value to all those concerned, i.e., the teacher, the student and the researcher. It can offer the teacher a clear and reliable picture of his students’ knowledge of the target language. When the students attempt to correct errors, they are encouraged to use their power of reasoning to reformulate new hypothesis in accordance with the facts and nature of the target language.

Error analysis, according to Crystal (2003:165), “is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics”. He further notes that “errors are assumed to reflect in a systematic way, the level of competence achieved by a learner; they are contrasted with mistakes, which are performance limitations that a learner would be able to correct”.

Error analysis is considered a “self-monitoring” strategy by Oxford (1990:161) who believes that it does not “centre as much on using the language as it does on students conscious decision to monitor – that is notice and correct – their errors in any of the language skills”. She further warns against
emphasizing learner’s errors otherwise they will become obviously over-conscious about their performance.

Error analysis according to Okoli (2009) “concerns itself with the second language learners’ errors in trying to produce the target language”. An error, according to Headbloom (1979) is, “a systematic deviation from the target language by a non-native speaker”. It is a breach of the target language by non-native speakers.

It is a breach of the language code, which is made up of a set of rules for generating well-formed sentences. A violation of these set of rules may result in an error. The error analyst is interested in the errors that are systematic and recurrent. Errors may occur as a result of ignorance or misapplication of the language rules by the L2 learner. On the other hand, a mistake is a slip as a result of tiredness, stress, nervousness, fear, memory lapse or preoccupation with a subject. Mistakes are haphazard and unsystematic. A lapse is a slip of the tongue or pen. The error analyst ignores mistakes or lapses. They are sometimes regarded as performance errors because they do not reflect the learners’ competence. The learner can easily correct them.
Corder (1974) has classified errors into three sub-categories namely: pre-systematic error is the error made by the learner while he is groping about, trying to understand the language. Systematic errors are those produced when the learner has formed some hypothesis about the language which are however wrong in some ways. Post-systematic errors are such deviant language forms that occur where previously systematic errors have been corrected.

According to James (1988) errors in writing such as tenses, prepositions and weak vocabulary are the most common and frequent type of errors that are committed by learners. Since grammar is seen only as a means to an end, some learners seem to de-emphasized its importance and in the process, they make many more errors. The learners usually face difficulties in learning the grammatical aspects of the Target Language (TL), such as in subject verb agreement, the use of prepositions, articles and the use of correct tenses.

Such errors can be seen clearly in the learner’s written performance (Safiah, 1978). The problems that the students are bound to encounter would be weak vocabulary, inappropriate use of grammar in sentences etc. Thus,
rekindling interest in the area of learner errors can be considered a timely move. Teachers who can analyze and test errors effectively are better equipped to help their students become more aware of their errors.

The use of Error Analysis (EA) and appropriate corrective techniques can aid effective learning and teaching of English. It is understood that learning a Foreign Language (FL) is a gradual process, during which mistakes are to be expected in all stages of learning. Mistakes will not disappear simply because they have been pointed out to the learner, contrary to what some language learners and teachers believe in, (Ferris, 2002). In fact, making mistakes is a natural process of learning, and must be considered as part of cognition. As a result, errors must be viewed positively.

Teachers have to recognize that learning ability varies from person to person. In addition, “all language learning is based on continual exposure, hypothesizing and even with the correct hypothesis, testing and reinforcing the ideas behind them” (Batholomae, 1980:97). Therefore, EA is a veritable tool for describing and explaining errors made by speakers of other languages. By investigating students’ written works, it will
provide a means to help Nigerian English teachers to recognize the importance of errors as one of the challenging areas in teaching English.

According to Corder (1967) errors are visible proof that learning is taking place. He has emphasized that errors, if studied systematically can provide significant insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. He also agrees that studying students’ errors of usage has immediate practical application for language teachers.

Richards (1971) argues that many of the learners’ errors happen due to strategies that they use in language acquisition, especially their L2. The problem includes the reciprocal interference of the target language items; i.e. negative effect of their prior knowledge or their L1 on the absorption of L2. In this situation, EA would allow teachers to figure out what areas to be focused on and what kind of attention is needed in an L2 classroom.

Weireesh (1991) also considers learners’ errors to be of particular importance because the making of errors is a device the learners’ use in order to learn. According to him, EA is a valuable aid to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners.
He goes on to say that EA serves as a reliable feedback to design a remedial teaching method. Olasehinde (2002) concurs and adds that “errors are avoidable and a necessary part of the learning curve.”

Mitchel and Myles (2004) claim that errors if studied could reveal a developing system of the students’ L2 language and this system is dynamic and open to changes and resetting of parameters. This view is supported by Stark (2001:19) in his study, where he opined that teachers need to view students’ errors positively and should not regard them as the learners’ failure to grasp the rules and structures but view the errors as process of learning. He subscribes to the view that errors are normal and inevitable features of learning. He added that errors are essential condition of learning.

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Quite a good number of researchers have done research on Error Analysis. This section highlights the works of these local and international researchers.

Willcot (1972:73) conducted error analysis study to ascertain some of the problems that native speakers of Arabic
had with the syntax of written English. Willcot’s findings showed that definiteness errors were the most frequent. They were 55% more problem than verb problems, 75% more than noun problem etc. In another study, Scott and Tucker (1974:186) examined the errors generated by 22 Arab students enrolled in the first semester of a low-intermediate intensive English course at the American University of Burnt with the purpose of describing the approximative system, and identifying the source, type and frequency of the generated errors. Their results revealed that verbs, prepositions, articles and relative clauses were the students’ most frequent errors.

In yet another study of Tucker (1974:186), revealed that verbs, preposition, articles and relative clauses were the students’ most frequent errors. In the area of verb for instance, they calculated that 19% of the finite verbs used in the students’ writings were erroneous. Auxiliaries and copula were also very frequently erroneous.

Okoli (1977) examined written essays of junior secondary schools’ English in Nnewi Local Government Area of Anambra State. Her major concern was to identify the grammatical errors which these students commit. Her investigation revealed
that the commonest errors were those of grammar and expression. In another study by Umeayo (1977) on verbal forms, he observed that errors of tense were committed by Nsukka High School students in Nsukka.

Abbot (1980:127) investigated errors that Arab students made in the area of restrictive relative clauses. The study revealed that 57% of the attempted relative clauses were erroneous. The types of errors committed were repetition of relative pronoun, subject, repetition of pronoun, redundant prepositions.

In another related study, Kharma (1981:339) examined errors generated by his Arab students in the use of the English definite articles. His result revealed that the majority of the errors occurred in the use of “the” instead of “no articles” and vice versa. Some of the errors were attributed to Arabic language interference, others to wrong learning strategies, or overgeneralization, etc.

Al-Johani (1982:259-260) in his discussion of the difference between English and Arabic with regard to the definite articles, claims that the shared characteristics between the two languages make the concept of the definite articles and
their uses in both languages very easy and should not cause any serious problems. However, this is not true, since there are many differences in how the articles in both languages are coded and used.

Many Error Analyses were the ones conducted after researchers have noticed that the students generate a large number of errors in syntax; El-Sayed (1982:73) revealed that the subjects of his study generated 1140 errors: 640 errors were in verbs and verbals, 159 in pronouns, 143 in articles, and the rest were nouns, prepositions and adjectives.

Abu-Jarad (1983) tested the use of English tenses in the English Language performance of 30 Palestinian students and found out that tense shift was a major problem facing the students. Verb formation and copula redundancy were among the serious errors that needed immediate intervention by the teachers. In another study, Abu-Jarad (1986) analyzed the relative clauses and verb tense of 32 Palestinian university students. The analysis of the verb phrases in the subject’s inter-language indicated that the subjects’ shift of tense was a result of using English tense morphology to express an aspectual system similar to that of the Palestinian Arabic. The
subjects of this study also inappropriately selected the English relative pronouns when they wrote English, or they inserted a resumptive pronoun whenever the predicate of the sentence was an adjective, noun or prepositional phrase.

Radwan (1988) examined the types of grammatical and lexical errors in the numerical group. The result of his study showed that the errors made in the use of articles had the highest percentage. This was followed by relative clause errors, genitive, number, word class errors and then other miscellaneous errors. On the other hand, Dessouky (1990:195) found that similar errors occur in all levels of these subjects, but the difference was in the frequency of their occurrence.

The hierarchy of errors generated by Dessouky (1990:195), students were: spelling, verb tense and prepositions. Likewise, Farhat (1994:47) found the same types of errors generated by his Sudanese students but with different order and frequency of occurrence: article errors constituted 35.9%, tense errors 30.9%, concord errors 24%, pronominal errors 5.1%, copula omission errors 1.5%, adverb positioning errors 1.1% and adjective positioning errors 0.6%. 
Belhaaji (1997:120) investigated the errors his students generated in the translation papers. The result of the study showed that the grammatical errors generated by the students were arranged according to their frequency as follows: verb form tense errors, relative clause, adjective, prepositions, nouns, and article errors and also miscellaneous. The importance of Belhaaji’s research is that it describes a cross-level investigation of errors to examine the acquisition of English grammar across the students of Ordinary National Diploma. It also aims at pinpointing some English Language segments that ought to be of immediate concern to teachers in the department of language studies of the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu.

According to Chigbundu (1998) and Anyiam (1999) cited in Obodozie (2004:17), mechanical errors occur most frequently. Anyiam on the other hand, asserted that the complexity of the English Language is one factor that equally contributes to most of the errors discovered.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter briefly explores the area of study, methods of data collection, population and sampling procedures, research instrument and its administration and finally, method of data analysis. The details of the information are carefully examined in the following sub-themes.

3.1 AREA OF STUDY

The area covered in this study revolves around some linguistic pitfalls identified in the written English of ND students of Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu. Such unacceptable forms are usually produced by someone learning a foreign language, and are technically described as errors. In language teaching and learning, a technique has been designed to identify, classify and interpret the errors in what is called error analysis. A systematic analysis of students’ errors is highly effective to all concerned. To the language teacher, it presents a clearer and more satisfactory picture of the learner’s knowledge and progress in the target language development. On the student’s part, his attempt at error correction strengthens his
power of reasoning and formulation of new hypotheses that largely agree with the linguistic realities of the target language.

3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION

The total population of this study comprises twelve thousand, five hundred (12,500) final year ND students of the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu. This group of students is drawn from the schools of Communication Arts, Engineering, Technology, Business and Financial Studies. These schools are made up of academic departments which admit students into various disciplines where they are compelled to use English for various academic purposes. Accordingly, the divergent language needs of our Polytechnic students are sufficiently met in the General Studies English curricular programme designed by the National Board for Technical Education for both ND and HND programmes.

However, the population of this study is a group of students, who are rounding off various courses at the final level of the ND programme. Such students have passed a number of GNS English courses at first and second semesters of first year, and are expected to be fairly proficient in their language use,
especially in their written English. Hence it has become necessary to assess the written English of final year ND students with a view to determining their error status.

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The size of the parent population of this study makes it difficult, if not impossible, to get information from all the students that fall into the category. Consequently, the researcher has adopted a stratified random sampling technique to select 400 final year ND students. The students, who form the respondents of this study, are selected according to the proportion which their school contributes to the entire population.

The details of the population sampled in this study are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total Population of 2009/2010 ND II Students</th>
<th>Sample Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Studies</td>
<td>3260</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Arts</td>
<td>1580</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2410</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The instrument for collection of data is a questionnaire. This is structured in the form of Multiple Choice Test (MCT). The instrument is designed to test the students’ ability to understand and use a number of grammatical categories effectively. Prior to its administration, the instrument was face-validated by experts in Multiple Choice Test (MCT) methodology and was certified valid.

3.5 ADMINISTRATION OF INSTRUMENT

Since the researcher is a lecturer in English at the institution where the population of this study is drawn, the questionnaire was administered to the sampled population in the form of their traditional quizzes which constitute 40% of their semester scores in GNS English. The researcher personally supervised the tests and scored them objectively. This direct supervision ensures that the whole respondents are contacted, and also forestalls low rate of returns.
3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained in this study are analyzed with the following statistical tools:

a. Frequency distribution tables
b. Percentage of responses
c. Mean percent of responses

The statistical instruments are used to determine the relative rankings and percentages of responses given by the respondents. These instruments largely assist the researcher in the analyses and interpretations of the data. As our decision rule, we consider the number of respondents significant, if the cumulative mean percent is greater than 50% otherwise, we deem it insignificant.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the tabulation, computation, analysis and interpretations of data obtained in the study. A sample size of 400 students is used.

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

The researcher used the following questionnaire items to collect data with respect to this research question. The items are analyzed in the table below.

**TABLE 4.1.1 Students’ Test on Adverb**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Choose the option that best completes the sentence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Obi plays the piano – (a) beauty (b) beautify (c) beautiful (d) beautifully</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td>43.75</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>23.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>25.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>He lost – at pools. (a) woeful (b) woely (c) woelier (d) woefully</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of Resp. | No. of Resp. | No. of Resp. | No. of Resp.
<p>| | | | | | | | | |</p>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Those girls talk – (a) intelligent (b) brainy (c) sharp (d) intelligently</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>You drive so – that I am afraid someone will hit the car from behind (a) slower (b) lousy (c) slow (d) slowly</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Jane was – entertained by the two sisters. (a) lavish (b) lavishier (c) lavishedly (d) lavishly</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>She looked – at the man wearing the French coat. (a) suspicions (b) suspect (c) suspectfully (d) suspiciously</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I have been having serious headache – (a) later (b) latter (c) lattely (d) lately</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>21.25</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>33.75</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>You did that dance so – (a) good (b) bad (c) worse (d) well</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23.75</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. I don’t – agree with you.  
(a) fooly  
(b) full  
(c) fuly  
(d) fully  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Choose the option that best completes the sentence</td>
<td>No. of Resp.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of Resp.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1.  | John bought a pair of – shoes.  
(a) black leather  
(b) leather with black  
(c) leather black  
(d) black with leather | 165 | 41 | 170 | 42.5 | 30 | 7.5 |
|     | Total 10 questions X 400 students | 156 | 39.1 | 1139 | 28.48 | 510 | 12.75 |
|     | Source: Students’ Survey, 2010 |

4.1.2 How the students’ knowledge of adjective influences their written English.

The researcher used the following questionnaire item to collect data with respect to this research question. The items are analyzed in the table below.
2. Chidimma has – phone.  
   (a) an expensive mobile  
   (b) mobile expensive  
   (c) an mobile expensive  
   (d) a expensive mobile  

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

   (a) an old beautiful  
   (b) a beauty old  
   (c) a beautiful old  
   (d) a older beautiful  

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

4. The – visitors came from Aba.  
   (a) last two  
   (b) two last  
   (c) lastly two  
   (d) two lastly  

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. She should pass the – quiz very well  
   (a) easy  
   (b) eazy  
   (c) eazily  
   (d) easily  

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. The media was very – of the governor’s re-election.  
   (a) critical  
   (b) critique  
   (c) critic  
   (d) critically  

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. That is a – animal.
   (a) real strange
   (b) strange really
   (c) really strangely
   (d) really strange
   25  6  15  4  155  39  205  51

8. It’s a – building.
   (a) round big
   (b) big round
   (c) roundly
   (d) around
   75  19  215  54  45  11  65  16

   (a) an interesting old
   (b) an old interested
   (c) an old interesting
   (d) an interested Old
   95  24  145  36  75  19  85  21

10. She has – hair.
    (a) long black
    (b) black long
    (c) black length
    (d) length black
    95  24  245  61  35  9  25  6

   Total  10 questions X 400 students  835  20.88  1350  33.75  940  23.50  875  21.87

**Source:** Students’ Survey, 2010

### 4.1.3: On the extent to which students’ knowledge of Preposition affects their written English.

The questionnaire below was used by the researcher to collect data with respect to how the students’ knowledge of preposition affects their written English. A frequency and cumulative percentage computation of their answers is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choose the option that best completes the sentence</td>
<td>No. of</td>
<td>No. of</td>
<td>No. of</td>
<td>No. of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>He took the book - the shelf and put it - his bag.</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>26.25</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) from/into</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) at/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) by/on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) in/next to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>When the mad dog ran - me, I jumped - the fence.</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) toward/over</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) from/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) by/on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) in/next to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>He made his escape by jumping - a window and jumping - a waiting car.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) out of/into</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) between/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) out of/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) over/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>To get to the marketing department, you have to go - those stairs and then - the</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>corridor to the end.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) up/along</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) over/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) out of/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) out of/into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. I saw something about it – television.
   (a) on  
   (b) in  
   (c) at  
   (d) through  
   55  14  275  69  45  11  25  6

6. She took the key – her pocket and put it – the lock.
   (a) out of/in  
   (b) between/into  
   (c) over/into  
   (d) by/on  
   145  36  215  54  5  1  35  9

7. He drove – me without stopping and drove off – the centre of the town.
   (a) past/towards  
   (b) towards/over  
   (c) along/up  
   (d) from/into  
   105  26  270  68  9  2  16  4

8. I walked – him and ask him the best way to get – town.
   (a) up to/out of  
   (b) along/up  
   (c) by/on  
   (d) towards/Over  
   75  19  300  75  16  4  9  2

9. Look, that car is – fire.
   (a) on  
   (b) in  
   (c) into  
   (d) with  
   100  25  255  64  20  5  25  6
10. Eze comes to work – car but I prefer to come – foot.  
(a) by/on  
(b) at/into  
(c) in/next to  
(d) at/in  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choose the option that best completes the sentence</td>
<td>No. of Resp.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of Resp.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Each of you – responsible for the accident. (a) am (b) be (c) are (d) is</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Every means – tried but without result. (a) is (b) have been (c) are (d) has been</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Students’ Survey, 2010

4.1.4: A test of what extent the students’ knowledge of concord affect their written English.

The questionnaire below was used by the researcher to collect data with respect to this research question. The items are shown in the table below:
3. There – in this room.
   (a) are too much furniture
   (b) is too many furniture
   (c) are too much furniture
   (d) is too much furniture
   | 132 | 33 | 136 | 34 | 68 | 17 | 64 | 16 |

4. – is to attend our wedding.
   (a) both the singer and the dancer
   (b) the singer and dancer
   (c) the singer and dancers
   (d) either the dancers or the singer
   | 108 | 27 | 120 | 30 | 92 | 23 | 80 | 20 |

5. Not only I but also David and James – fond of playing basketball.
   (a) am
   (b) is
   (c) was
   (d) are
   | 124 | 31 | 168 | 42 | 76 | 19 | 32 | 8 |

6. – was wrong.
   (a) not only the teacher but the students
   (b) neither the teacher nor the students
   (c) not only the students but the teacher
   (d) both the students and the teacher
   | 148 | 37 | 156 | 39 | 52 | 13 | 44 | 11 |
7. The public – generous in their contributions to the earthquake victims.
   (a) were  
   (b) has been  
   (c) are  
   (d) was
   112  28  88  22  56  14  144  36

8. Mary is one of the girls who – always on time.
   (a) was  
   (b) am  
   (c) are  
   (d) is
   116  29  164  41  84  21  36  9

9. Mr. and Mrs. Eze – their breakfast in the morning when the rain was falling.
   (a) have  
   (b) has been having  
   (c) are having  
   (d) were having
   104  26  128  32  96  24  72  18

10. No one except two students – the meeting.
    (a) has been late for  
    (b) have been late for  
    (c) was late for  
    (d) were late for
    144  36  176  44  24  6  56  14

Total 10 questions X 400 students

Source: Students’ Survey, 2010
4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

4.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION I

To what extent does the students’ knowledge of adverb affect their written English?

Test Statistics = Measure of Central Tendency (Mean)

\[ \bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \]

Where \( \bar{X} \) = The mean being computed  
Sigma (\( \Sigma \)) = Sum of all the scores  
\( X \) = Scores in the set or series of scores  
\( N \) = The total number of scores in distribution

Test Table I: On Correct Answers (Adverb)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency of Correct Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>77.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1564</td>
<td>39.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If \( \chi \) = No. of correct scores in the series and
Then, \( N \) = No. of participating students, multiplied by the number of times they participated = \((400 \times 10 = 400)\) for the cumulative. Or sum of individual scores divided by the number of times.

**Decision Rule:**

It is considered significantly acceptable, if the computed cumulative mean percentage of students with correct answers is up to or greater than 50%. Otherwise, it will be deemed insignificant and unacceptable.

Significant = 50% or > 50%

Insignificant = <50%

\[
\begin{align*}
\bar{X} &= 125+110+188+168+152+104+172+110+125+310 \\
&= \frac{1564}{10} \\
&= 156.40 \\
\therefore \text{Mean Percentage} &= \left(\frac{1564 \times 100}{4000}\right) \text{ OR } \left(\frac{156.40 \times 100}{400}\right) \\
&= 39.10\%
\end{align*}
\]
CONCLUSION

Since the computed mean (39.10%) is less than our critical mean (50%), the result therefore declares the students’ knowledge of adverb insignificant and unacceptable, as it affects their knowledge of written English adversely.

4.2.2 Research Question 2

How does the students’ knowledge of adjective influence their written English?

Test Statistics = Measure of Central Tendency (Mean)

\[ \bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \]

Where \( \bar{X} \) = Mean being computed
\( \Sigma \) = Sum of all the scores
\( X \) = Scores in the set or series of scores
\( N \) = Total number of scores in distribution

Test Table 2: On Correct Answers by the Students on Adjective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Frequency of Correct Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>28.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Cumulative)</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>20.875%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Decision Rule:**

It is considered significant and acceptable, if the computed cumulative mean percentage of students with correct answers is up to or greater than 50%. Otherwise, it will be deemed insignificant and unacceptable.

- **Significant Accept** = 50% OR > 50%
- **Insignificant Unacceptable** = <50%

\[
\text{Mean Score} = \frac{165+15+30+115+55+165+25+75+95+95}{10} = \frac{835}{10} = 83.5
\]

\[
\text{Mean Percentage} = \frac{83.5 \times 100}{400} \text{ OR } \frac{835 \times 100}{4,000} = 20.875\%
\]

**CONCLUSION**

Since the cumulative mean percentage score of the students (20.875%) is less than the target score of 50%, the result here finds
the students’ knowledge of adjective quite insignificant and unacceptable.

### 4.2.3 Research Question 3

To what extent does the students’ knowledge of preposition affect their writing English?

Test Statistics = Measure of Central Tendency (Mean)

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}
\]

Where \( \bar{X} \) = The mean being computed

Sigma (\( \Sigma \)) = Sum of all the scores

\( X \) = Scores in the set of scores

\( N \) = The total number of scores in distribution

**Test Table 3: On the Correct Answers (Preposition)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Frequency of Correct Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>26.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>36.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>26.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Cumulative)</td>
<td>1145</td>
<td>28.625%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Decision Rule:**

It is considered significantly acceptable if the computed cumulative mean percentage is up to or greater than 50%. Otherwise, it will be deemed insignificant and unacceptable.

- Significant/Acceptable = 50% or >50%
- Insignificant/Unacceptable = <50

\[ \bar{X} = \frac{105+180+120+100+55+145+105+75+100+160}{10} \]

\[ = \frac{1145}{10} \]

\[ = 114.5 \]

\[ \therefore \text{Mean Percentage} = \left( \frac{114.50 \times 100}{400} \right) \text{ OR } \left( \frac{1145 \times 100}{4000} \right) \]

\[ = 28.625\% \]

**CONCLUSION**

Since the computed cumulative mean percentage score of the students (28.63%) is less than the target standard mean of 50%,
this result hereby affirms that the students’ knowledge of preposition is poor, insignificant and unacceptable.

### 4.2.4 Research Question 4

To what extent does the students’ knowledge of concord affect their written English?

Test Statistics = Measure of Central Tendency (Mean)

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}
\]

Where  \( \bar{X} \) = The mean being computed

Sigma (\( \Sigma \)) = Sum of all the scores

\( X \) = Scores in the set or series of scores

\( N \) = The total number of scores in distribution

**Test Table 4: On the Correct Answers on Concord**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Frequency of Correct Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>28.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Cumulative)</td>
<td>1221</td>
<td>30.525%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decision Rule:

It will be considered significant and acceptable if the computed cumulative mean percentage of students is up to or greater than 50%. Otherwise, will be considered insignificant and unacceptable.

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{113+120+132+108+124+148+112+116+104+144}{10} = \frac{1221}{10} = 122.1
\]

\[
\text{Mean Percentage} = \left(\frac{122.1}{400}\times\frac{100}{1}\right) \text{ OR } \left(\frac{1221}{4000}\times\frac{100}{1}\right)
\]

\[
= 30.525\%
\]

CONCLUSION

Since the computed cumulative mean percentage (30.53%) is less than the set target of 50%, we hereby declare that the students’ knowledge of concord is poor and affects their written English adversely.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION,
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

After a detailed statistical analysis of the data collected in this study, the following results were obtained.

1. The score for students’ knowledge of adverb is poor (39.10% aggregate) and thus unacceptable as it affects their performance in written English adversely.

2. The student’s knowledge of adjectives is also quite insignificant (20.88%), unacceptable and affects their performance in written English adversely, too.

3. The students’ knowledge of preposition was again found to be insignificant (28.63%), and also affects their performance in written English adversely.

4. Finally, the students’ knowledge of concord was found poor (30.53%) and again accounts for their aggregate poor performance in written English.
5.2 DISCUSSION

These four results from our study do not portray the whole students in I.M.T to be poor in written English. It only shows the cumulative or aggregate score of the entire students. This researcher needs to say that there are some of the students who are quite sound and could be unarguably rated ‘A’ students in both written and spoken English in the institution.

That notwithstanding, the fact that only 39.10% of the entire students are found to be sound in knowledge of adverb is not a cheery news. Adverbs are very important parts of speech. They make a speech smooth-sailing in the mouth and ear, like sugar in tea or salt in soup. It is a part of speech that must not be neglected like the verb.

The result of our findings in adjective which gave the students a paltry 20.88% rating in sound knowledge of it, again speaks volume of why most of our students do not have a deep grasp of both written and spoken English. Nouns could be said to be a ‘father’ in parts of speech, and it is adjective that qualifies, dresses, smoothens and beautifies the nouns. A sound knowledge of adjectives is therefore critical for good performance in written and spoken English.
It is again disheartening to learn from our analysis findings that the students’ aggregate knowledge of preposition is poor (28.63%). Without a sound knowledge of the uses of this vital part of speech, no man or woman can do well in either written or spoken English.

Finally, the knowledge of concord in English is like the harmonizer of all parts of speech, giving it better meaning and clearer understanding. That the students scored poorly here is therefore something to worry about.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Mindful of the findings and other revelations of this study, we hereby recommend as follows:

1. Greater emphasis and priority should be given to the teaching of English in secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria, in order to enhance students’ knowledge of written and spoken English.

2. Students should continually be drilled in English Language though, this makes a lot of demands on the language teachers who should be adequately remunerated and recognized. This is in view of the fact that English Language is the lingua franca of
Nigeria hence; the pivot upon which the teaching and learning of all other subject or course revolves.

3. Students should be encouraged to use their leisure times to read well written novels, newspapers, magazines and listen to news in English on radio and television, so as to significantly improve their knowledge of written and spoken English.

4. More language schools, evenly spread throughout the country well equipped and financed by the appropriate authority, should be established.

5. Authorities concerned should fund exchange programme where learners are sponsored to other countries that use English as L1 for immersion in the language.

6. It should be made compulsory for students to buy and read all recommended standard texts in English and literature in English, as this will help them improve their knowledge of both written and spoken English, quite significantly.

7. Teachers of English Language should be encouraged to frequently go for training and retraining in the skills of the language.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The researcher has, by this work, made her contribution to already existing findings about the instrument of error analysis
It has been exposed once more that error is a proof that learning is taking place. These errors being informative, diagnostic and facilitative will be utilized by the teachers and students of the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu to improve teaching and learning of English Language in the school.

Though our decision rule states that the cumulative mean percent should be greater than 50%, it does not mean that all the students in IMT, Enugu are poor in the above named parts of speech.

Finally, it is known that English is the official language of communication in Nigeria. Linguistically speaking, it serves like a binding force of the over 253 ethnic groups in the country, most of whom have their own native language. A sound knowledge of English is therefore a sine-qua-non for success in public life, national and international businesses. Teachers are therefore advised to be more dedicated to the teaching of the English and the students should also pay more attention to their study of English.
REFERENCES


Willcot, P. J. (1972). *An Analysis of the Written English of Native Speakers of Arabic as Found in American History Final Examination Given at the University of Texas at Austin.* Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, U.S.A.

TEST OF ADVERBS

Question 1 – 10
Choose the option that best completes the sentences

1. Obi plays the piano _____________
   (A) beautiful    (B)  beauty   (C)  beautifully  (D) beautify

2. Mr. Eze speaks _____________
   (A)  loud    (B)  audible   (C)   loudly  (D) a loudly

3. His kids are ______
   (A) well  (B) properly  (C) good  (D) perfectly

4. Those girls talk ______
   (A) intelligent  (B) brainy (C) intelligently  (D) sharp

5. You drive so ________ that I am afraid someone will hit the car from behind
   (A) slower   (B) lousy   (C) slowly   (D) slow

6. Jane was the ________ of the two sisters at gymnastics
   (A) best  (B) good  (C) better  (D) bad

7. Living in bondage is ____________ film
   (A) a beauty old  (B) a beautiful old  (C) an old beautiful
   (D) a older beautiful

8. She looked _____ at the man wearing the trench coat
   (A) suspicious  (B) suspect (C) suspiciously  (D) suspectfully

9. You did that dance so ______
   (A) good  (B) bad  (C) well  (D) worse

10. I don’t __________ agree with you
    (A) fooly  (B) full  (C) fully  (D) fuly
TEST OF PREPOSITIONS

Question 1 – 10

Choose the option that best completes the sentences

1. He took the book ________ the shelf and put it ____ his bag  
   (A) from/into (B) at/into (C) by/on (D) in/next to

2. When the mad dog ran ____ me, I jumped _____ the fence  
   (A) towards/over (B) from/into (C) by/on (D) in/next to

3. He made his escape by jumping ___ a window and jumping ____ a waiting car.  
   (A) out of/into (B) between/into (C) out of/between  
   (D) over/into

4. To get to the marketing Department, you have to go ____ those stairs and then ____ the corridor to the end.  
   (A) up/along (B) over/into (C) out of/between (D) out of/into

5. I saw something about it ____ television.  
   (A) on   (B) in   (C) at   (D) through

6. She took the key _____ her pocket and put it ____ the lock  
   (A) out of/in (B) between/into (C) over/into (D) by/on

7. He drove ___ me without stopping and drove off ____ the centre of town.  
   (A) past/towards (B) towards/over (C) along/up (D) from/into

8. I went ____ him and asked him the best way to get ____ town.  
   (A) up to/out of (B) along/up (C) by/on (D) towards/over

9. Look, that car’s ____ fire (A) on (B) in (C) into (D) with

10. Eze comes to work _____ car but I prefer to come _____ foot.  
    (A) by/on (B) at/into (C) in/next to (D) at/in
TESTING THE STUDENTS’ KNOWLEDGE OF CONCORD

Question 1 – 10

Choose the option that best completes the sentence.

1. Each of you ____ responsible for the accident
   (A) am (B) be (C) are (D) is

2. Every means ____ tried but without result.
   (A) is (B) have been (C) are (D) has been

3. There ___ in this room (A) are too much furniture (B) is too many furniture (C) are too much furnitures (D) is too much furniture

4. ____ is to attend our wedding (A) both the singer and the dancer (B) the singer and dancer (C) the singer or dancers (D) either the dancers or the singer

5. Not only I but also David and James ___ fond of playing basketball (A) am (B) is (C) was (D) are

6. ____ was wrong (A) not only the teacher but the students (B) neither the teacher nor the students (C) not only the students but the teacher (D) both the students and the teacher
7. The public ___ generous in their contributions to the earthquake victims (A) were (B) has been (C) are (D) was

8. Mary is one of the girls who ____ always on time (A) was (B) am (C) are (D) is

9. Mr. and Mrs. Eze ___ their breakfast in the morning when the rain was falling (A) have (B) has been having (C) are having (D) were having

10. No one except two students ____ the meeting (A) has been late for (B) have been late for (C) was late for (D) were late for