UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEVIATIONS IN THE USE OF ENGLISH AMONG UNIVERSITY

STUDENTS: THE CASE STUDY OF PENTECOST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

AND REGENT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND

TECHNOLOGY, ACCRA

MICHAEL OWUSU TABIRI

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TECHNOLOGY, ACCRA

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

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

Signature:…………………………….

Date:………………………………….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Charlotte Fofo Lomotey

Signature :…………………………

Date:………………………………

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the following people:

● Mrs. Cindy Owusu Tabiri

●Michael Paul Owusu Tabiri

●John Elijah Owusu Tabiri

● Grace Georgina Owusu Tabiri

● Apostle Mrs. Georgina Owusu Tabiri

● Bishop Paul Owusu Tabiri

● Mrs. Esther Lartey

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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative case study that analysed common deviations made by the Level 400 students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The data used for the analysis comprised students' written test. From this, a total of 3060 deviations or errors were identified. Three categories of deviations were identified and they include morphological deviations (additions of words, omission, misformation of words), grammatical deviations (open and closed class systems) namely, wrong use of adjectives, nouns, verbs, pronouns, prepositions and correlative conjunctions, other grammatical deviations (concord errors, of clause, reported speech, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags and conditional sentence) and semantic deviations (punctuations and the use of tautology) in English. The result of the present study shows that morphological deviations was the highest number of deviations recorded in the students' test, with a total of 960 representing 31%. Second on the hierarchy was grammatical deviation of the open class system with a total of 720 deviations representing 23.5%.Third highest were other grammatical deviations (concord errors, of clause, reported speech, question tags, and conditional sentence) with a total of 660 denoting 21.5%. The fourth highest was grammatical deviation of closed class system with a total of 540 deviations representing 18% while semantic deviations were the least on the hierarchy with 180 deviations representing 6%. Based on the findings of the study, causes of deviations in students' writing were identified as fossilization, L1 interference on the teaching/learning of English (L2), ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization and unlearning on the part of students. Some suggestions are made to various stakeholders to ensure effective teaching and learning of the English Language in Ghanaian universities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the Study

The main focus of teaching and learning a foreign language is to develop students' linguistic or communicative competence through the acquisition of the four language skills, namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing. All the four language skills are to be taught and acquired chronologically and not haphazardly through communicative language teaching and integrated approach (Douglas, 2010). Learners who have been pursuing formal education in English from elementary school to tertiary level are supposed to surmount their language difficulties, but unfortunately, language deviations become concomitant of their daily interactions. As Brown (2000) stresses, in order to become well versed in any language, particularly, in English language, students have to be exposed to all the four language skills. To ensure the attainment of this aim, the adoption of the proper pedagogical approaches need to be embarked on at the basic level up to the tertiary level in the country. Once learners do not have a strong language foundation, making countless deviations in the English language is inevitable.It is an undeniable fact that the impact of the first language of students English is highly felt whenever they write in the English language (L2) (Chen & Huang, 2003; Collins, 2002).

Baah-Bentum (2013), writing under the caption, ―Crucifying the Queen's language" also expressed concerns similar to what Hammond raised (2018) as well as Gyasi raised nearly a quarter of a century ago. Level 400 students at the university who have been learning for not less than 17 years should have surmounted their language difficulties and to avert some deviations in English. But many stakeholders,

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especially lecturers, keep complaining about the poor level of students' academic performance which is evident in their written exercises, in all courses they do pursue at the tertiary level. Students make countless deviations in their writing and this turns to have serious repercussions on their academic pursuits. These deviations seem to occur due to several factors. In most Ghanaian universities, students who do not read English as a major course only study Communicative Skills or English for one academic year at the level 100, after which they continue pursuing their various programmes of study in English except those who may be given the opportunity to study some modern languages like French, Chinese and Spanish.

The Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology are situated in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana where the speaking of English is highly patronised by all and sundry. Greater Accra Region which is heterogeneous community has three dominant languages (Ga, Twi and English) spoken. The native speakers of the Greater Accra are Gas, but Twi is widely spoken everywhere in town. The two private universities have all the necessary learning facilities as well as accessible to technology that make the two universities congenial and conducive for effective and efficient academic work. If university students in Accra who have access to all learning facilities coupled with computer assisted language learning (CALL) do have difficulties in writing English, what will be the fate of Ghanaian students in deprived areas? One can say that deviations in the use of English among University students may be attributed to fossilization, L1 interference, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization of language rules and unlearning on the part of the university students. It is in this light that the current study seeks to identify and analyse the common deviations that the university students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and

Technology in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana make in their English Correct Usage Test.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that university students in Ghana, particularly, the students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana face some difficulties in distinguishing between correct usage and deviant constructions in English. This reflects in their Correct Usage Test where they constantly make deviations such as morphological deviations, grammatical (open and closed class systems) deviations, semantic deviations (linguistic redundancy and wrong punctuations). It has therefore become difficult for lecturers to read their scripts, let alone make meaning of their writings. This goes a long way to affect their performance in mid semester examinations, and end of semester examinations, and hence impede their academic progress, particularly affecting their final grade points since they are always marked down due to these deviations which most lecturers may consider as mistakes. It has also been realised that university students are not taught English after studying Communicative Skills for just one academic year at the level 100, and this can be a contributory factor for students making various deviations in English language (L2). Students seem to make deviations in all aspects of the target language. They usually face difficulties in learning the target language aspects such as morphology, English syntax, concord, reported speech, passive voice, subjunctive case, question tags, conditional sentence and semantics in English (L2).

In a similar study, Baah-Bentum (2013) laments that the Queen's language is under threat and that the standard of the Queen's language seems to be sinking by the day. He continues buttressing the point by saying that even when one listens to most

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people being interviewed on TV or radio these days, one cannot fail to agree that there is something basically wrong with most people's handling of the Queen's language.The low standard of the Queen's language has permeated all aspects of our lives. So English is being crucified in Parliament, on the pulpit, in classrooms, offices and consulting rooms. The story is the same even at Presidential debates (Baah-Bentum, 2013). Similarly, Mireku-Gyimah (2014) asserted that poor teaching and learning of the English language at the Junior and Senior High Schools have been identified as a primary cause of poor English at the tertiary level even though several interventions have been made to uplift the language at those lower levels. If the university students did not get a solid foundation in English at the basic level, what can the lecturers in the Ghanaian universities do?

Mireku-Gyimah (2014) stresses the point that in spite of numerous pedagogical interventions such as the introduction of new English textbooks and adoption of new methods of teaching in our schools, the poor standard of English persists among the pre-tertiary students and tertiary levels as has been shown by studies conducted by Hyde (1988), Bawa (1992), Tettey (1996), Yankyera (1996), and Edu-Buandoh et al (2008). These deviations in the use of English among university students may be attributed to fossilization (British Council, 2019), L1 interference (Owu-Ewie and Lomotey, 2016) and unlearning (Souriyvongsa et al, 2013). In comparing and contrasting the existing scholarship or knowledge, there has not been any such study in relation to the deviations that the students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology commit in their writings. It is expected that carrying out this study will go a long way to expose the university lecturers to the types and causes of deviations that are seen in their writings. In view of this, the present study focuses on analysing the common

deviations that the level 400 students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology commit in their Correct Usage Test, the causes of these deviations and their implications in the teaching of English language (L2) at the tertiary level since identifying the sources of students' deviations or errors is the panacea for learners' language deviations (Bennui, 2008; Penny, 2001).

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify types of deviations among university students.

2. To analyse the causes of the deviations found.

1.3.1 Research Questions

The study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What kind of deviations do participants make in their Correct Usage Test?

2. What are the causes of the various deviations in the writing of the participants?

1.4   Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are significant for several reasons. Pedagogically, the importance of the study cannot be overemphasised. The study of deviations in the use of English among university students is highly beneficial to the instructors of English, learners and university management in Ghana and in Africa as a whole. It is believed that once common deviations committed by the students are identified and corrected accordingly, it would definitely lead to minimising those deviations that have become concomitant of both verbal and non verbal communication in Ghana, particularly, in the teaching and learning of English as a second language. Again, this

study will create awareness in language teachers or lecturers about the kinds of deviations that university students make in their Correct Usage Test as well as unraveling the sources of these deviations.

Moreover, the findings of this study reveal to language lecturers at the tertiary level the aspects of the English language course (Communicative Skills) that need to be emphasised when teaching university students so as to take the necessary pedagogical measures to address them. It is expected that the findings of the study help students to identify and correct their own deviations in the use of English (L2) with time.Furthermore, as university students usually become people at the helm of affairs, studying their deviations or errors will help invariably to minimise deviations in the use of English in Ghanaian companies and communities thereby contributing to knowledge on language deviations in Ghana and beyond. Finally, the study is crucial as it seeks to address the main cause of students' poor performance in all subjects or courses, especially, in the English language examinations at the secondary and tertiary levels.

1.5   Delimitation

The study concentrates on the deviations that the level 400 students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana make in their Correct Usage Test in English. The study also looked at the causes of the deviations and their implications on the teaching and learning of English language at the tertiary level.

1.6   Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to only the level 400 students of the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology. It is also

limited to the Greater Accra Region of Ghana and its findings cannot be generalized to all Ghanaian university students. Also, due to financial and time constraints, the study could not focus on all the level 400 students in the two universities.

1.7   Organisation of the Study

The rest of the study is organised as follows: Chapter 2 reviews related literature on the study. This focuses on theoretical views that are closely relevant to deviations, contrastive analysis and error analysis. It includes the standard of English in Ghana, the concept of Standard English, deviance and deviation, what really constitutes deviation in English, types of language deviations, error taxonomies and related studies. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology adopted for the study. In this chapter, the instruments and sampling technique used for the study, as well as data analysis, are discussed. The results of the study are discussed in Chapter 4. The analysis revealed that students made morphological deviations, grammatical (open and closed class systems) deviations and semantic deviations. Lastly, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the study. This includes the summary of findings of the study, the pedagogical implications, as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter aims at reviewing previous works on deviations in the use of English language. The chapter will deal with what really constitutes deviation in the English language. Deviations in the use of language can be explained as non-standard and not acceptable or appropriate usage in a particular linguistics setting or language context.   All errors committed by learners can be termed as deviations. Areas reviewed in this chapter are as follows: the current standard of English in Ghana, the concept of standard English, deviance and deviation, what really constitutes deviation in English, types of language deviations, error taxonomies, sources or causes of errors, approaches to language learning such as contrastive analysis and error analysis and pedagogical/didactical significance of deviations or errors in teaching/learning English.

2.1   The current standard of English in Ghana

In recent times, listening to some journalists, lawyers, pastors, politicians, businessmen and so on only buttress the fact that our handling of the language is on a downward slide (Hammond, 2018). According to Hammond (2018, p. 7), what is the most disheartening is that some of our teachers who are supposed to impart impeccable language skills seem to be the worst offenders of deviations in the use of English. If some lawyers, teachers and politicians are guilty of deviant usage of English, then one can imagine the kind of knowledge our students are receiving from their schools. Baah-Bentum (2013), writing under the caption, ―Crucifying the

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Queen's language" also expresses concerns similar to what Hammond has raised. Baah-Bentum (2013) bitterly writes,

> The Queen's language is under threat. This is obvious. The standard of the Queen's language seems to be sinking by the day. Just listen to most people being interviewed on TV or radio these days and you cannot fail to agree that there is something basically wrong with most people's handling of the Queen's language. The low standard of the Queen's language has permeated all aspects of our lives. So English is being crucified in Parliament, on the pulpit, in classrooms, offices and consulting rooms. The story is the same even at Presidential debates.   (p.10)

Mireku-Gyimah (2014) asserts that poor teaching and learning of the language at the Junior and Senior High Schools has been identified as a primary cause of poor English at the tertiary level even though several interventions have been made to uplift the language at those levels. In spite of numerous pedagogical interventions such as the introduction of new English textbooks and adoption of new methods of teaching in our schools, the poor standard of English persists among pre-tertiary and tertiary students as has been shown by studies conducted by Hyde (1988), Bawa (1992), Tettey (1996), Yankyera (1996), and Edu-Buandoh et al (2008).

Deviations in the use of English have therefore become concomitant of humans communication or interactions. In the 1990s, a former Ghanaian headmaster and teacher of English expressed his frustration when he wrote that ―English in Ghana is very ill" and that ―The cancerous tumours are countless" (Gyasi, 1990, p. 24). Gyasi identified some of the ―tumours" to be wrong collocation; false concord; poor spelling due to unfamiliarity with the word or mispronunciation; inability to handle the third person singular in particular, ignorance of tense observance; wrong insertion

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or omission of the articles; misuse of prepositions; errors arising from mother tongue interference; paucity of vocabulary and then showed the extent of the problem. According to him, ―The cancer has spread too and is to be found everywhere: in the English of teachers, journalists, other professionals, ordinary men and women, and students from the secondary school to the university‖. In other words, deviations in the use of English in Ghana are as old as Methuselah, and have become concomitant of human interactions in Ghanaian communities. This emphasizes Mireku-Gyimah‗s assertion (2014) that nearly a quarter of a century, performance in English in Ghana, both spoken and written, has been described in various unpalatable terms to reflect concern about its falling standard.

2.2   The Concept of Standard English

A standard language is a variety of language that is used by academicians, scholars, political institutions or governments, in the media, in schools and for international communication. There are different standard varieties of English in the world, such as North American English, Australian English and Indian English. Although these standard varieties differ in terms of their pronunciation, there are few differences in grammar between them. In contrast, there are non-standard forms of a language that are used, for example, in different regional dialects and these non-standard varieties are different from each other. Also, according to the University of Pretoria, Library Services (2012), the label "standard English" could at times be misleading because of certain presuppositions it carries for many people. Strevens (1985, p. 6) gives two of these false presuppositions as follows:

(a) That Standard English is the English of the numerical majority of English-users;

(b) That it has some special quality of excellence because, it is believed either it is used by the majority, or it has some official sanction, and rather as Standard French has the imprimatur of AcadémieFrançaise.

Strevens attempts to clarify this issue. He argues that Standard English is used by ―a minority of the world‗s 700 million English-users‖ and that ―it is certainly not standard by statistical pre-eminence‖. Furthermore, he argues that there is no authoritative organisation ―which pontificates upon usage of English and establishes what should and should not be included within Standard English and what should be excluded‖. In his definition of Standard English, Strevens maintains that ‗it has no local base‖. He further makes an important point that ―Standard English is accepted throughout the English-using world‖ ... and that ―it is spoken with any accent‖ (Strevens, 1985, p. 6). In short, we have to agree with Wright (1993) that the truth may be unwelcome to some, but it seems unavoidable that in today‗s world of interdependent national states, the only English standard which educational authorities can reasonably implement is the international standard.

That is to say that the kind of Standard English academic institutions should endorse and encourage at all levels is international Standard English. We shall discuss deviations under the following subheadings: lexical deviations, grammatical or syntactic deviations, semantic deviations, linguistic deviations, pragmatic deviations, morphological deviations, discoursal deviations and phonological deviations. The discussions will be followed with error taxonomies, sources of errors, error analysis, and pedagogical significance of deviations or errors.

Brown (2006) notes that second language learning is a process that is not the same as first language learning as it is usually characterized by its trial and errors. It means

that errors are unavoidable and inevitable in learning second or any foreign language like English or French (Gass & Slinker, 1994).

2.3 Deviance and Deviation

Crystal (1980, 1994) distinguishes between deviance and deviation as follows: The word, deviance is a term used in linguistic analysis to refer to a sentence (or its units) which does not conform to the rules of grammar, that is, it is ill-formed while deviation can be termed as an institutionalized error, which is widely accepted, and it enjoys universal acceptance, but it is considered as an acceptable departure from the norm (Crystal, 1994). We will consider any form of deviation as unacceptable discourse or error that teachers have to make a conscious effort to correct accordingly.

2.4 Types of Language Deviations

2.4.1 Lexical deviations

Lexical deviations imply wrong use of words in language context or context of communication. In other words, vocabulary deviation is termed as lexical deviations in English. Lexical deviations comprise neologism that is newly coined words or expressions in language (Li & Shi, 2015). Neologism or the invention of new words or expressions by a speaker or a writer is the situation whereby he or she may exceed the usual usage of language (Leech, 1969, p. 42). What may make it a deviation is that the expression has been coined. It is generally agreed by second language researchers that learners' lexicons are likely to show innovative structures either through borrowings or switching in use, and these lexicons are commonly influenced by the L1, especially in situations where concepts exist in the L1 for which there is no firm equivalent in the L2 (Green, 2012). Again, according to Green (2012), L2 lexicons can be seen as highly creative as learners apply features of morphology or lexis from

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the L2 in ways that native speakers of that language are unlikely to do because they are constrained by what they know of ―accepted‖ word forming patterns, including exceptions and irregular forms. Learners make use of a number of strategies in the development of their lexicons and Ghanaian university students are no exception. Thus, learning a new language in life is a process. In every process, human beings make mistakes, misjudgments, and errors or deviations; especially, while learning a novel attitude (Akarsu, 2004).

2.4.2 *Grammatical or syntactic deviations*

Grammatical or syntactic deviations are structural errors in the use of language. For instance, using a specific subject-verb agreement or concord wrongly, is termed as grammatical or syntactic deviation. According to Leech (1969), syntactic deviation is about the bad or incorrect use of grammar. One important feature of grammatical deviations is the case of ungrammaticality such as ―I does not like him‖ (Leech, 1969).

2.4.3 *Semantic deviations*

Semantic deviations simply mean wrong deductions of meanings of words, expressions and sentences out of context communication. Semantic deviation can be meant as ‗non-sense‘ or ‗absurdity‘, so long as we realise that sense is used, in this context, in a strictly literal minded way (Word Reference Forum, 2014). For example,

I am not yet born; O hear me. (Louis MacNeice‘s Prayer before Birth)

2.4.4 *Linguistic deviations*

Linguistic deviations refer to the total wrong use of any aspect of language or grammar of a particular language such as phonology, pragmatics, semantics, morphology and syntax. That is a term used to describe spelling and pronunciation of

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a word or a sentence structure which does not conform to the norm in English language (Sadoon, 2010).

2.4.5 Pragmatic deviations

Pragmatic deviations imply wrong practical use of language rather than language structure. According to Canagarajah and Wurr (2011),grammar is deep structure and finds realisation in social life while pragmatics turns out to be a factorexterior to language in some traditional models. We are now moving to a position whereperformance cannot be separated from grammar. In fact, from what we see of multilingualcommunities, pragmatic strategies enable one to communicate successfully irrespective of thelevel of grammatical proficiency.

2.4.6 Morphological deviations

Morphological deviations refer to wrong formation of words and sentences in English language. Morphological deviations usually go contrary to a functional grammar which aims to match forms to function and meaning in context (Downing and Locke, 2006:03).

In other words, morphological deviation is a deviation from the ordinary spelling formation, construction or application of words in a given context communication (Minhas, 2013).

2.4.7 Discourse deviations

Linguistically, discourse deviations (DD) refer to wrong use of expressions and words in various linguistic contexts such as religious discourse, political discourse, academic discourse and judicial discourse. The factors that make up the context of language communication comprise audience, occasion, purpose and language medium (Harsh et al, 1973:225). In other words, a discourse deviation is an

act of using words, expressions and utterances that may not be appropriate in a specific context.

2.4.8 Phonological deviations

Phonological deviations refer to improper articulation of words in English language. For example, what is the correct pronunciation of the word, ‖cum"? How do we read, ‖A teacher-cum-researcher"? In other words, is the word, ‖cum" pronounced as /kum/ or /kʌm/ in English? It has been observed that a lot of learners of English as second language learners pronounce ‖cum" as /kum/ instead of /kʌm/. That is a real phonological deviation in the use of English.

All deviations can be classified as textual and contextualdeviations. Textual deviations encompass all wrong use of words in any discourse while contextual deviations deal with using words or expressions in language environment or setting that may not be suitable in a particular context of communication. This stresses the saying that, a word without a context is a pretext in any discourse as any word can be highly polysemic or polysemous. This subsection under literature review has discussed lexical deviations, grammatical deviations, linguistic deviations, semantic deviations, pragmatic deviations and phonological deviations in the use of English language.

2.5   Facilitators of Context Communication

What enables people to communicate is not a shared grammar, but communicative practices and strategies that are used to negotiate their language differences (Canagarajah, 2011). In other words, these strategies are not a form of knowledge or cognitive competence, but a form of resourcefulness that speakers employ in the unpredictable communicative situations they encounter (Canagarajah,

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2011). Two of the strategies that Khubchandani (1997) identifies are serendipity and synergy: ―individuals in such societies acquire more *synergy* (i.e. putting forth one‗s own efforts) and *serendipity* (i.e. accepting the other on his/her own terms, being open to unexpectedness), and develop positive attitudes to variations in speech (to the extent of even appropriating deviations as the norm in the lingua franca), in the process of coming out‗from their own language-codes to a neutral ground (Khubchandani,1997). What this means is that interlocutors are always open to codes they are not familiar with in their conversations. To achieve intelligibility and communication in this context of diversity, they aim to find a common ground between the codes and resources to achieve their interests (synergy). When these strategies are adopted, even deviations can become norms (Khubchandani, 1997).

2.6 Error Taxonomies

The term ‗taxonomy‗ is derived from the Greek word, ‗taxis‗ meaning arrangement or division. From the French word ‗taxonomie‗ meaning classification or ordering. Error taxonomy therefore is a branch of science that classifies types of errors (Dulay et al, 1982, James, 1998; Richards, 1971). According to Ellis (1999, p. 2), ―errors, according to behaviourist theory, were the result of non-learning, rather than wrong learning". Ellis‗s assertion might be partially true when learners refuse to learn but it cannot be accepted when learners learn wrong structures or poor pedagogy is adopted in teaching and learning, committing errors will then be inevitable. It is against this background that Brooks (1960), according to Ellis (1999), writes:

‗Like sin, error is to be avoided and its influence overcomes…‗

One can deduce from the above quotation that just as we have to avoid evil, error must equally be avoided or averted in teaching and learning languages, but we cannot

agree with Ellis (1999) in-toto, because errors are concomitant in teaching/learning foreign languages.

2.7   Sources of Errors

Among linguists, there are generally two sources of errors; (I) interference errors, and (II) intralingual errors (Kesmez, 2015). Interference errors occur when the learner uses a rule of his or her L1 while speaking or writing in L2. In other words, intralingual errors occur because of the influence of one target language item or rule on another, that is to say; intralingual errors result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer" (Erdoğan, 2005, p. 266). Richards (1971) identifies three sources of errors as:

i)   Interference errors (errors resulting from the use of elements from one language while speaking or writing another). This can be described as language transfer (L1 on L2 or L1/L2 on L3);

ii)   Developmental errors- errors occurring when learners attempt to build up hypothesis about the target language on the basis of limited experiences. That is he or she has not fully developed linguistically in the target language.

iii) Intralingual errors are the type of errors that reflect general characteristics of rule learning such as faulty generalisation, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply. Again, Richards divided intralingual errors into the following categories:

1)   Overgeneralisation error: This is whereby the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language. Examples: a) He can sings, instead of he sings/can sing, b) Does he knows him? Instead of does he know him?, c)When will he comes? Instead of when will he come?

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2) Ignorance of rule restrictions: the learner, here, applies rules to context where they are not applicable. Examples: a) He said, _stop talking' (direct speech), _he made me to stop to talk'(indirect/reported speech) instead of he ordered/told/asked me to stop talking; b) ―If he came, I would have gone home" instead of if he had come, I would/should have gone home.

3) Incomplete application of rules: the learners fail to use a fully developed structure. Examples: a) You are travelling? Instead of are you travelling? b) You want to go home? Instead of do you want to go home?

4) False hypothesis: this is a deviation where the learner does not fully understand a distinction in the target language. Examples: _they were travelled' instead of they travelled; _they were eaten' instead of they were eating, and _he was played' instead of he played.

Also, Dulay et al (1982) classifies errors as omissions, additions (double markings, regularisation, and simple additions), misformation and misordering. In other words, learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones, they may miss-construct an item or miss order them in a particular context communication or linguistic environment. Thus, the errors may be in the form of omission, addition, misinformation, and improper ordering.

a. Omission errors are characterised by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Although any morpheme or word in a sentence is a potential candidate for omission, some types of morphemes are omitted more than others.

b. Additional errors are the opposite of omission. They are characterised by the presence of an item, which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. Additional errors include double marking, regularization and simple addition.

c. Missed formation errors are characterised by the use of the wrong form of morpheme or structure. While in omission errors the items is not supplied at all, in missed formation errors the learners supplied something, but it is incorrect.

d. Improper ordering errors are characterised by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group morphemes in an utterance.

Furthermore, Dulay et al (1982) classify or categorise all errors as global errors and local errors. According to Dulay et al (1982), global errors affect overall sentence organisation and hence hindering communication while local errors do affect single elements, and therefore may not impede effective communication.

From the foregoing discussion, one can see that there are two sources of errors namely, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Richards (1971, p. 35) states that inter-lingual errors are errors caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue. Errors of this nature are frequent, regardless of the learner's language background. Therefore, inter-lingual errors are caused by interference from native language to the target language that they learn. Before someone masters the concept of the target language they will always use the concept of their native language. This kind of error is called inter-lingual errors. The other kind of error is intra-lingual errors. According to James (1998, p. 183), the less the learner knows about the target language, the more he is forced to draw upon any other prior knowledge he possesses. It is mostly because the learners do not know much about the target language.

This intra-lingual error is sometimes called a semantic error. It is the incorrect comprehension of distinction in the target language. These particular errors are usually the result of poor gradation of teaching. Soetikno (1996, p. 181) emphasises the ways surface structure is altered. Interference refers to the instances of deviation from the norms of either language in a bilingual situation which occurs in the speech

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of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language (Akindele & Adegbite, 2005, p. 38).

2.8 Innovations or Deviations?

How can native speakers of English classify utterances of second language learners that may be alien in their language repertoires? According to Adika (2012), beyond morphology and syntax (which are the oft-cited areas of deviant usage), the pragmatic uses of English (for example, modes of making requests) represent strong directions in which non-native varieties can hold sway, (Keleve, 1995; Dzameshie, 2001; Anderson, 2006). In effect, notwithstanding the great strides made in the description of non-native Englishes, doubts would continue to be expressed as to whether the innovations associated with their emergence are truly innovations or deviations from a standard native norm until these non-native varieties of English have been firmly established through adequate codification, (Bamgbose, 1997). Owusu-Ansah's (1997) ‗tolerability scale' may perhaps be the answer.

A tolerability scale would entail modelling non-native varieties towards a standard by arranging deviations on a scale showing the level of tolerability of deviations from the perspective of speakers (Adika, 2012). Only forms with high tolerability will form part of the standard, whereas low tolerability forms will be regarded as sub-standard (Adika, 2012) Such a tolerability scale may possibly help, for example, to guide the process of nativisation along the path of a national standard that is both internationally and locally acceptable. The works of Sey (1973) and Dako (2003) undoubtedly constitute the two major contributions to the documentation of Ghanaianisms – defined as vocabulary items peculiar to English in Ghana and used by educated English speaking Ghanaians (Adika, 2012). Some of these Ghanaianisms that are peculiar in Ghana, but alien in native speakers of English can be viewed as

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deviant utterances. In order to be able to distinguish between correct usage and language deviations, Mollin (2007:168) explains variations in English as follows:

More than ever we need a clear definition of a ‚second-language variety of English‘, also known as ‚new English‘, in order to be able to differentiate between what we would intuitively accept as a variety of English and what we would classify as less than this: as learner language. From the above quotation, what is learner language is synonymous with deviations in the use of English among learners of English language. A deviation first of all evokes the interest of the reader who may be linguistically inclined (CIIT Virtual Campus, 2015). Since a deviation is unusual use of language and expression it appears appealing as the reader finds it different. However, surprise is experienced when the reader interprets a deviation and finds out that what apparently appeared unbelievable and or abnormal makes sense at deeper level.

2.9   Approaches to Language Learning

According to Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016), there are four approaches to the analysis of error. These approaches can be either to L1 interference in L2 learning or L2 interference in L3 learning (Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016). The four approaches are as follows:

i)   Contrastive Analysis (CA)

ii) Error Analysis (EA)

iii) Interlanguage Analysis

iv) Contrastive Rhetoric

Due to the purpose of this study, I have decided to discuss the first two approaches, namely: Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis as follows:

2.9.1 Contrastive Analysis

The impact of a native language (L1) on the second language (L2) cannot be overemphasised in language studies and teaching. The transfer can be termed as negative (interference) when the structure of L1 is inappropriately used in L2 (Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016; Saville-Troike, 2006). Contrastive Analysis (CA) is the act of comparing two languages so as to determine the area of similarities and differences. The Contrastive Analysis hypothesis became popular in the field of applied linguistics and second language teaching in the 1950s. It is one of the earlier methods for accounting for second language acquisition (SLA) and learning. We can identify earlier influences on this development by writers such as C.C. Fries who as early as 1945 put up the view that for foreign language teaching; the most effective materials are those based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.

The early names associated with this linguistic school of thought are Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1953). However, the most detailed description of the C.A. is the one attempted by Lado in 1957. Lado made the assumption that: the student who comes in contact with a foreign language (FL) will find some features of it quite easy and other extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to the native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult. In other words, Contrastive Analysis (CA) takes the position that a learner's first language _interferes' with his or her acquisition of a second language, and it is therefore the major obstacle to successful mastery of the new language. The CA hypothesis holds that where structures in the L1 differ from those in the L2, errors that reflect the structure of the L1 will be produced. Such errors are said to be due to the influence of the learners' L1 habits on L2 production.

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The influence of L1 on L2 is as a result of transfer, that is, the learner's projection of rules from his mother tongue to the second language. According to Lado (1957) ‗transfer' is the process in which the knowledge of a language influences the learning of another language either positively or negatively. If the knowledge of L1 helps or facilitates the learning of L2, then there is a positive transfer, which is known as facilitation. If, however, the knowledge of L1 inhibits the learning of L2, then there is a negative transfer, which is known as interference. The ability of contrastive analysis to predict interference problems is then based on the transfer theory and this is clearly seen in Lado's remark that ―individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meaning of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture both productively and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practised by the natives" (1957, p. 2).

Lado enunciated that the specific procedures of the Contrastive Analysis of two languages involve the need to locate the best structural description of the languages involved; summarise in compact outline form all the structures and actual comparison of the structures, pattern by pattern, of the two languages concerned. This theoretical climate of the late fifties and the early sixties provided the ultimate rationale for the Error Analysis (EA) approach (Ojetunde, 2013).

2.9.2 Error Analysis (EA)

According to Green (2012), SLA research has given rise to several theories which have relevance to the development of effective and efficient teaching and learning of languages. The first is ‗error analysis', which grew out of the work of Corder in 1967 and followed on from the Contrastive Analysis theory which claimed

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to be able to predict learner errors by comparing the mother tongue with the second language (Lado, 1957). Corder writes:

> It is quite unreasonable to expect the learner of a second language not to exhibit such slips of the tongue (or pen). It will be useful therefore hereafter to refer to errors of performance as *mistakes*, reserving the term *error* to refer to the systematic errors of the learner (Corder, 1967, in Richards, 1974, pp. 24-25).

It is often claimed that there is a danger in paying too much attention to learners' errors. However, the reduction of errors is an important criterion for increasing language proficiency since the ultimate goal of second language learning is the attainment of communicative competence in the language. Scholars like Brown (1987, p. 83), Josephson (1989, p. 85) have observed that there has been a shift from preventing errors to learning from them (errors). According to Choon (1993, p. 1) between 1950s and 1960s learning of language structures has moved from memorising correct models through the acknowledgement of the influence of psychology on the theories of language acquisition to the application of the communicative approach to language learning. This trend has aroused the interest of scholars in identifying, analysing and treating errors through error analysis in order to create techniques of effective teaching/learning of foreign languages.

The first step in the process of analysis of errors is the identification of errors. Corder (1973, p. 260) provides a model for identifying erroneous utterances/ expressions in a second language. According to Corder's model, any sentence uttered and subsequently transcribed can be analysed for error. Corder (1973) makes a major distinction between _overt' and _covert' errors. Overt erroneous expressions are unquestionably ungrammatical at the sentence level (Ojetunde, 2013). Covert

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erroneous utterances/expressions are grammatically well formed at the sentence level but are not interpretable within the context of communication (Ojetunde, 2013). Covert errors, in other words, are not really covert at all if the surrounding discourse before and after the utterance is attended to. For example, ―I have been around since morning" is grammatically correct at sentence level but as a response to: When did you come? It is obviously an error. A simpler and more straightforward set of items then would be sentence level and discourse level errors rather than overt and covert errors. On a local level, errors can be described as errors of addition, omission, substitution and ordering following standard mathematical categories. For example, error of substitution:

She lived there since eight years instead of she lived there for eight years. Jibowo et al (2005, p. 12) therefore suggest that the teacher should conduct diagnostic error analysis during the initial contact of a given class. It is clear from the available studies that over the last two decades, general concerns about the falling standard of English among university students in Ghana have also prompted a number of studies in the public universities (Mireku-Gyimah, 2014; Amuzu and Asinyor (2016), Odamtten et al (1994), Dako (1997); Anyidoho (2002); Dakoet al (1997); Gogovi (1997); Gbeze (1997); Awuah-Boateng (1998); Mahama (2012). In short, the findings of these studies showed that students from these public universities committed errors related to wrong concord, wrong register, wrong tense, wrong use of the preposition, the conjunction and other parts of speech as well as determiners. Added to these were misspelling and misuse of words, wrong collocation, ambiguity, use of unidiomatic expressions, wrong punctuation and misuse of capital and small letters. Our present study focuses on deviations in the use of English language among university students in two (2) private universities in Ghana. The most recent study by Agor (2018)

revealed that final-year undergraduate students studying English as a major or a combined subject in public tertiary institutions in Ghana have varied degrees of familiarity with intra-sentence writing issues and that the majority of the respondents fell within the average performance bracket. The Lacuna or gap that our current study seems to fill is to assess and analyse the kind of deviations in the use of English among private university students in Ghana.

2.10   Pedagogical/Didactical Significance of Deviations or Errors

Pedagogically, the importance of the study cannot be overemphasised. The study of deviations in the use of English among university students is highly beneficial to the instructors of English, learners and university management in Ghana and in Africa as a whole. It is believed that once common errors committed by the students are identified and corrected accordingly, it would definitely lead to minimising those deviations that have become concomitant of both verbal and non verbal communication in Ghana, particularly, in the teaching and learning of English as a second language. Also, as university students usually become people at the helm of affairs, studying their deviations or errors will help invariably to minimise deviations in the use of English in Ghanaian companies and communities. Finally, the study is crucial as it seeks to address the main cause of students' poor performance in all subjects or courses, especially, in the English language examinations at the secondary and tertiary levels.

2.11   Related Studies

The analysis of the language deviations among students in Ghana depicts that over the last two decades, general concerns about the falling standard of English among university students in Ghana have also prompted a number of studies in the

public universities (Mireku-Gyimah, 2014; Amuzu and Asinyor (2016), Odamttenet al(1994), Dako (1997); Anyidoho (2002); Dakoet al (1997); Gogovi (1997); Gbeze (1997); Awuah-Boateng (1998); Mahama (2012). The findings of these studies showed that students from these public universities committed errors related to wrong concord, wrong register, wrong tense, wrong use of the preposition, the conjunction and other parts of speech as well as determiners. In addition to these were misspelling and misuse of words, wrong collocation, ambiguity, use of unidiomatic expressions, wrong punctuation and misuse of capital and small letters. Our present study focuses on deviations in the use of English language among university students in two (2) private universities in Ghana. The most recent study by Agor (2018) revealed that final-year undergraduate students studying English as a major or a combined subject in public tertiary institutions in Ghana have varied degrees of familiarity with intra-sentence writing issues and that the majority of the respondents fell within the average performance bracket. In another related study, Rod (1999) also asserts that deviations or errors, according to behaviourist theory, were the result of non learning, rather than wrong learning.

The gap that our current study aims at filling is to assess and analyse the kind of deviations in the use of English among private university students in Ghana.

2.12   Conclusion

This chapter has discussed and examined deviations or errors in the use of English among educated Ghanaian English users of English as a second language in Ghana. It has examined the current standard of English in Ghana, the concept of Standard English, deviance and deviation, what really constitutes deviation in English, types of language deviations, error taxonomies, contrastive analysis and error analysis. From the foregoing discussion on previous studies on deviations or errors,

one can deduce and perceive that deviations in the use of English among learners in Africa, and in Ghana, in particular, have become concomitant of humans' communication. The next chapter describes the methodology used to gather data for the study on deviations in the use of English language among university students in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the method used to carry out this research work. It discusses the research design, population and sampling, sample size of the study, sampling technique, data collection instrument, data analysis and classification of deviations or errors, possible causes of errors or deviations among university students and the reliability and validity of the research instruments for the study. The data for this study were derived from final-year undergraduate students studying ICT, Business programme and Engineering in two private universities in Ghana. Data were not accessed from public universities because this study focuses on students in private tertiary institutions only. Purposive sampling strategy was usedto collect data for this study from two universities in Ghana, namely, Pentecost University College and Regent University College of Science and Technology. In all, sixty (60) final-year (Level 400) students were asked to write a test or answer questions on ‒Correct Usage" The instructions that were given are as follows:

3.1 Research Design

This work was aimed at analysing deviations among 60 students from two private universities in Ghana. The two private universities are as follows: Pentecost University College and the Regent University of Science and Technology, both in Accra. Research design is crucial in this study because, it gives the most suitable and valid feedback in response to research questions (Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016). This study adopted a qualitative case study to analyse the responses that the 60 final year

level 400 students provided to enable the study to arrive at the answers to the research questions in the study.

3.2   Population and Sampling

According to Burns and Grove (1993), a population is defined as all the elements that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a specific study. The population of this study comprised both female and male final year or level 400 students from three private universities, namely, Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology in Ghana**.** The study involved a total of sixty (60) students from two private universities in Accra.

3.3   Sample and Sampling Technique

Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001) refer to the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the whole population as sampling. The sample size for this study comprised 30 final year or level 400 students from each of the two private universities in Ghana. That is to say that the population was made up of 60 students (males and females). The participants of this study were highly heterogeneous hailing from different ethnic groups in Ghana, but who have English language as their second language (L2). All the 60 private university students were asked to write the same test on *Correct Usage.* Purposive sampling strategy was usedto collect data for this study from two private universities in Ghana, namely, Pentecost University College and Regent University College of Science and Technology. Sixty (60) final-year (Level 400) students were asked to write a test on ―Correct Usage". Level 400 students were chosen for the purpose of this study as they seem to have developed their language competence after studying English or using English as second language learners (L2) for not less than 20 years. The choice of the researcher is in consistent with Parahoo

(1997) as well as Shughenssy and Zechmeister (1990) who also say that a purposive sampling method is usually adopted in the study based on the respondents' ability to provide the useful data.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The respondents from the two private universities in Ghana were numbered sixty (60) students, comprising male and female students. The *Correct UsageTest* that was administered at the two private universities was the major instrument of the study and the analysis of the 60 students written deviations or errors constituted the main focus of this work. All the 60 students were supposed to write the *Correct Usage Test.* The students were assured that the results for the test were not going to be used to determine their exam grades, but purely for research purposes. The researcher sought permission from the management of the two universities, establishing a rapport among students as well as ensuring that the respondents would give their consent before the test was administered.

3.5 Data Analysis and Classification of Deviations or Errors

The four main steps that were adhered to, and followed religiously and chronologically are as follows: data collection, identification of deviations, classification of deviations/errors into error types and error or deviation frequency. The researcher adopted the Error Analysis approach by Richards and Schmidt (2002), James (1998), Dulay et al (1982) and Richards (1971) to analyse and classify students' errors or deviations that were identified in the *Correct Usage Test scripts*.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is referred to as the consistency whereby an instrument measures what is supposed to measure (Maree, 2007). In order to gather reliable and valid data

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for the purpose of this study, the researcher did well to establish a rapport among all the respondents so to enable them to feel free and relaxed to write the test on Correct Usage. The researcher made it clear to all the final year level 400 students that the purpose of the exercise was not to victimize or intimidate any student who might not do well in the test. I assured the students that whatever response that would be provided would be held confidential. Also, the researcher informed them not to write their names on the question paper as there was no space provided for students to do so. However, the researcher told the respondents that those who might like to know their performance at the end of the test could choose to write their names that would enable them to trace their scripts accordingly.

3.7   Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology that was adopted to carry out this research work. In other words, the chapter discussed the research design, population and sampling, sample size of the study, sampling technique, data collection instrument, data analysis and classification of deviations or errors among university students and how the researcher ensured the reliability and validity of data that were collected for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the results of analysis of data obtained from all the sixty (60) level 400 students of Pentecost University College and Regent University College of Science and Technology who took active participation in the study. The results emphasised that students make numerous deviations when it comes to the use of English language, and hence stressing their learning difficulties in English language as second language learners in Ghana. This chapter is divided into three broad categories, namely, analysis of students' deviations in their Correct Usage Test scripts, the classification of the students' deviations or errors and the major causes of errors committed by students or causes of the deviations among the students respectively. The different deviations that were identified and analysed in the students' Correct Usage Test are as follows: morphological deviations (additions of words, omission, misformation of words), grammatical deviations (open and close class systems) namely, wrong use of adjectives, nouns, verbs, pronouns, prepositions and correlative conjunctions, other grammatical deviations (concord errors, reported speech, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags and conditional sentence) and semantic deviations (punctuations and the use of tautology) in English language.

It was discovered through the analysis of the errors committed by the students that only a handful of the students could distinguish between correct usage and deviant usage in English. About 90 per cent of the respondents considered all the wrong usage to be impeccable while 10 per cent of them were able to score 20 out of

50 questions that constituted the assessment test for the students. The second part of this chapter discusses the two main classifications of errors, namely, local and global errors while the final part focuses on the major causes of the deviations, such as language interference, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization, fossilization, unlearning and poor methodology of teaching English.

4.1   Categorization of Students' Deviations

After critical and careful analysis of the data, the researcher was able to identify numerous deviations in the students' Correct Usage scripts. The various deviations are as follows: additions of words, misformation of words, wrong use of (possessive) pronouns, concord errors, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of nouns, adjectives, prepositions, punctuations, wrong use of correlative conjunction (both), wrong use of verbs, wrong use of subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags, the use of tautology, wrong use of reported/indirect speech, wrong use of conditional sentence (if-clauses) and wrong use of clauses

4.1.1 Morphological deviations

Morphological deviations refer to wrong formation of words and sentences in English language. Morphological deviations usually go contrary to a functional grammar which aims to match forms to function and meaning in context (Downing and Locke, 2006). In other words, morphological deviation is a deviation from the ordinary spelling formation, construction or application of words in a given context communication (Minhas, 2013).

4.1.1.1 Additions of words

Addition of words is the opposite of omission. Additional errors are the opposite of omission. (Muhsin, 2016). In other words, addition of words is usually

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characterised by the presence of lexical items or morphemes that should not appear in a meaningful linguistic environment. Additional errors include double marking, regularization and simple addition which according to Dulay, Burt and Krashen, is the ‗result of all-too-faithful use of certain rules' (1982, p.156). All the words that were added by the respondents that rendered the sentences or utterances deviant are in red as follows:

1) Last but not the least is Mrs. Mary Adongo.

2) Please, I want to voice out my views.

3) We will discuss about the exam questions tomorrow.

4) I have decided to contest for the post.

5) There will be no wake-keeping on Friday.

From the above deviant utterances of addition of words, one can see that instead of the students writing ‗Last but not least is Mrs. Mary Adongo', they added the definite article ―the" This is a fixed expression or idiom in English that does not allow addition of the article ―the". Also, the addition of the word, ―out" should not be added as the ―voice" has been used. That is to say that the expression, ―Please, I want to voice out my views" is morphologically and semantically a deviant construction in English language. Again, the addition of ―about" which is a preposition makes the sentence, ―We will discuss about the exam questions tomorrow" highly deviant as the verb ―discuss" does not take the preposition, ―about" in a standard discourse in English. Similarly, the addition of the preposition, ―for" renders the sentence, ―I have decided to contest for the post" a deviant utterance. This is because the verb ‗to contest' does not accept the use of the preposition in English language.

Moreover, the addition of the morpheme ―ing" to the verb ‗keep' to make it the present progressive in English renders the utterance deviant. In other words, it can

be realised that the word, ‖keeping‖ has been added to a correct usage, ‖wake‖ which in the context of funerals depicts a gathering of mourners at night, for the purpose of staying awake to watch over a dead body before a burial ceremony.

In short, adding words or expressions in language context where it may not be grammatically, linguistically, pragmatically and semantically appropriate can be termed as a deviation.

4.1.1.2 Omissions

Omission of words is when learners ignorantly omit words which are syntactically, morphologically and semantically crucial in a given discourse as Dulay et al (1982) emphasised.

In other words, learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones, they may miss-construct an item or miss order them in a particular context communication or linguistic environment. Omission errors which synonymous with language deviations are characterised by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. We can realise that there are two key words missing in the following expression,

1) ‖Shake your friend.‖
2) ‖Thank you for yesterday‖
3) Thanks for yesterday
4) ‖My mother has delivered a bouncing baby boy.‖
5) My mother has delivered a baby.

To begin with, the first sentence, ‖Shake your friend is both semantically and grammatically wrong, even though the structure may appear morphologically correct. The omitted words are ‖hands‖, and ‖with‖ In other words, without the addition of ‖hands‖ and ‖with‖, the expression may mean, ‖shake the body of your friend

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backwards or forwards showing anger or displeasure". The correct utterance therefore should be ―shake hands with your friends". Also, all the students considered the sentence,

―Thank you for yesterday or thanks for yesterday" as impeccable and correct.

This is so unfortunate because important words like ―for", ―your", ―help", support offered me" were all omitted ignorantly. In other words, the correct sentence should have been, ―Thank you very much for your help and support offered me yesterday." Moreover, there is an omission of the preposition ―of" in the sentence,

―My mother has delivered a bouncing baby boy or my mother has delivered a baby."

This sentence may be correct if only the mother is a medical officer or precisely, a midwife, but it cannot be correct if the writer is referring to his or her mother to have been given birth to a baby.

4.1.1.3 Misformation of words/expressions

Missed formation or wrong formation of words is is a form of deviation or error that is usually characterised by the use of the wrong form of morpheme or structure. While in omission errors the items is not supplied at all, in missed formation errors the learners supply something, but it is incorrect (Dulay et al,1982, Richards,1974 and Kaweera, 2013). For example, the word, ―delay" can be used as a verb or a noun. The expression,

1)   I am sorry for the delayance.

2)   We are sorry for that delayance.

3)   These students are talkatives.

4)   The students are talkertives.

In the first place, the word ―delayance‖ is ungrammatical and does not exist in English language. The respondents or students might have written the above construction due to wrong analogies from derivatives like conveyance from convey, importance from important, entrance from entry, deliverance from deliver.

Also, the expression, ―These students are talkatives/ talkertives― is unacceptable syntactically or grammatically. This is because the word, ―talkative‖ is an adjective in English which does not take the plural morpheme ―s‖. Similarly, the word ―talkertive‖ does not exist in English, and therefore one cannot add a plural morpheme ―s‖ to word which even does not exist in the language. The students might have been influenced by a wrong analogy of the noun, ―talker‖ to write ―talkertives‖ In other words, the existing words in English are as follows: ―talkative‖ which is an adjective and ―talker‖ which is a noun form of ―talkative‖ and not ―talkertive‖. The deviation of omissions, additions and misformation of words are in consistent with Dulay et al (1982), Richards(1974) and Kaweera (2013) error taxonomies who classify errors as omissions, additions (double markings, regularisation, and simple additions), misformation and misordering.

The deviation of omissions, additions and misformation of words can be categorized as spelling deviations. The summary of the spelling deviations can be represented as follows:

Table 4.1: Morphological deviations (addition, omission and misformation)

Types of Deviation	Frequency	Percentage
Addition	480	50%
Omission	360	37.5%
Misformation	120	12.5%
Total	**960**	**100%**

Table 4.1 represents first classification of deviations, namely addition, omission and misformation of words shows that deviations emanating from addition of words recorded the highest form of deviation with 480 out of 960 accounting for 50% out of the total number, followed by omission of words also depicting 37% while misformation of words recorded 12.5% of deviations found in the data that were analysed.
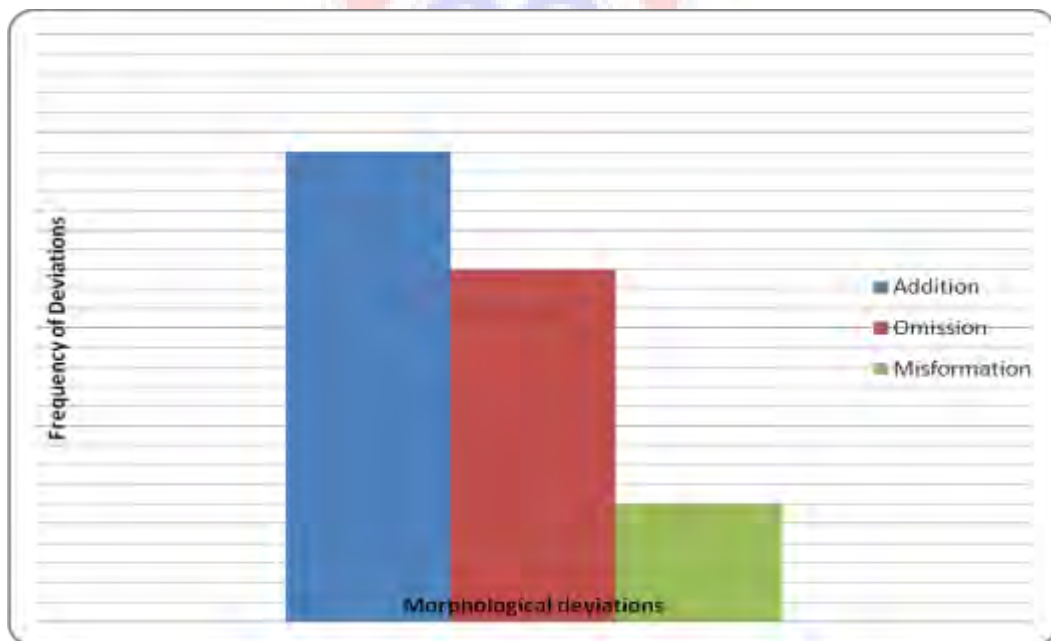
Figure 4.1.1: Morphological Deviations of Addition, Omission and Misformation

In related studies, the deviation of omissions, additions and misformation of words are in consistent with Dulay et al (1982), Richards(1974) and Kaweera (2013) error taxonomies who classify errors as omissions, additions (double markings, regularisation, and simple additions), misformation and misordering. The above results emphasise the universality of deviations in terms of addition of words, omissions and misformation of words in learning English.

4.1.2 Grammatical deviations

According to Adika (2012) and Leech (1969) syntactic deviation is about the bad or incorrect use of grammar. In other words,all the errors that have some bearing on syntax and morphology were analysed as grammatical deviations. The grammatical deviations that were found in the data are as follows:

4.1.2.1 Deviations from closed class system (Pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions)

4.1.2.1.1 Wrong use of (possessive) pronouns

According to Quirk et al (2002) and Downing et al (2006), pronouns which form part of the closed class system in English are words that are used instead of nouns. Etymologically, the term ―pro‖ in Latin means ‗instead of‗, and hence stressing the definition of Quirk et al (2002) and Downing et al (2006) that the term ―pronoun‖ simply means any word that is used to replace a noun or a word that is used instead of a noun. Some of the deviant use of pronouns is as follows:

1. ―My younger brother is taller than me.

2. He is a friend of me.

3. Let us be on our feet and greet ourselves.

4. They are her‗s.

5. His books are on the table, but where are our's?

Firstly, the sentence, ―My younger brother is taller than me‖ may appear correct to most Ghanaian students of English as a Second language but it is a deviant discourse in the sight of a native speaker of English. The correct sentence should be, ―My younger brother is taller than I‖ (Ofori, 2018). Also, about 50 per cent of the students considered the sentence, ―He is a friend of me‖ as correct, instead of writing ―He is a friend of mine‖. According to Noble-Atsu (2013), when the congregation stand up and begin to ‗greet ourselves‗, it means ‗Kofi greets himself‗, ‗Ama greets herself‗, ‗John Appiah greets himself‗. This deviation might have occurred as a result of L1 interference. For instance, in twi one may say, ―Mo nkyeamo ho‗, which literally means ―Greet yourselves‗ Grammatically, the above sentence is correct, but semantically incorrect. Therefore, the correct sentence should have been, ―Let us be on our feet and greet each other or one another‖

The last two sentences show that the students did not know how to use the possessive pronouns correctly. The appropriate possessive pronouns should have been ‗hers‗ and ‗ours‗ and not her's and our's which may suggest wrong possessions morphologically.

4.1.2.2 Wrong use of prepositions

According to Nordquist (2018), a preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and other words in a sentence. Examples of prepositions are words like *in* and *out*, *above* and *below*, and *to* and *from,* of and off, on, and these are words we use daily in our interactions. It was discovered in the research that students had difficulties in using prepositions correctly. Some wrong use of prepositions is as follows:

1. I congratulate you for your good exam results.

2. John, put off the light in the bedroom.

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3   I am going to buy in and out ticket.

4   You are travelling to abroad?

5   I encountered a lot of difficulties earlier on in this project work.

The above constructions indicate that students have difficulties in using prepositions appropriately. For instance, instead of the students writing ―I congratulate you on your good exam results" , they wrote ―I congratulate you for your good exam results". Also, the expression, put off" in English does not mean to switch off or put out". In other words, *put off* means to postpone. *Put out* means to turn off or extinguish (a light or fire). Again, instead of the students writing ―I am going to buy a return trip ticket", they wrote ―I am going to buy in and out ticket". Moreover, it was noted that some of the respondents did not know that the preposition ―to" cannot be placed before ―abroad or overseas". That is to say instead of the students writing ―Are you travelling abroad?" they wrote ―You are travelling to abroad/overseas? It was also uncovered in the study that, the students did not know the difference between ―earlier" and ―early on" and instead of writing ―I encountered a lot of difficulties early on in this project work", they wrote ―I encountered a lot of difficulties earlier on in this project".

4.1.2.3 Wrong use of correlative conjunction (both)

Examples of wrong use of correlative conjunction (both) that were found in the students' scripts are as follows:

1. NiiAbenapokyempahKwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to *NiiKwa* and *Mma Don*, all of blessed memory.

2. She was born on January 15, 1930 to Nana Aka Akwa and MaameAmaSika, all of blessed memory.

3. The wedding ceremony between AbenaAgnessKonap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt. You are all cordially invited.

4. The marriage ceremony between John Appiah and AmaMensah, all of Central Assembly will come off on Sunday, November 10, 2019 at the Pentecost University College.

5. The induction service of the Chairman-elect and the General Secretary-elect, all of the International Worship Centre will come off at the Conference Centre on Saturday, November 16, 2019.

The ―all‖ highlighted in the above sentences are used incorrectly. In other words, the correlative conjunction has been wrongly used which lays emphasis on the deviant use of ―all‖. The only usage of ―all‖ which can be considered as correct is, ‗You are all cordially invited'

Table 4.1.2: Closed Class System of Deviations

Type of Deviations	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of pronouns	180	33%
Wrong use of prepositions	240	45%
Wrong use of correlative conjunction	120	22%
Total	**540**	**100%**

We can deduce from the above table that the deviations originating from the use of preposition recorded the highest form of deviation with 240 out of 540 accounting for 45% out of the total number, followed by pronouns also depicting 33%

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while correlative conjunction recorded 22% of deviations found in the data that were classified and analysed under closed class system.
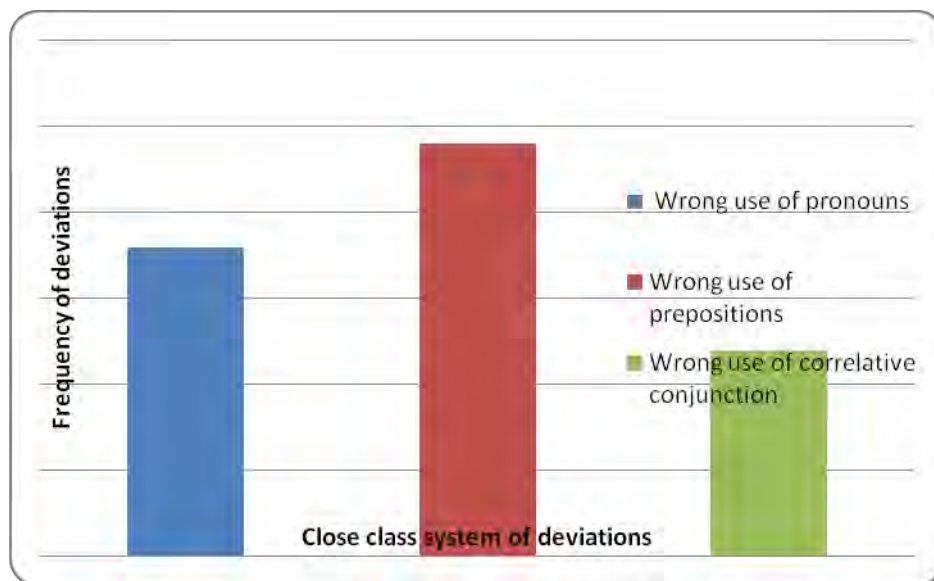
Figure 4.1.2: Closed class system of deviations

4.1.3   *Deviations from open class system*

According to Nordquist (2018), in English grammar, open class refers to the category of content words—that is, parts of speech (or word classes) that readily accept new members. The open classes in English are nouns, lexical verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Research supports the view that open-class words and closed-class words play different roles in sentence processing (Nordquist, 2019).

4.1.3.1 *Wrong use of nouns*

Some nouns that were wrongly used by the students are as follows:

1. Our Lecturer is an experience lecturer.

2. ―Good Morning, Mr. Michael"

3. ―The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon."

4. ―My junior brother can write all the English alphabets

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5. wrote ―Ladies and gentlemen, without much I do, I invite the President to give his speech"

The word ‚"experience" which is a noun or a verb has been wrongly used, instead of the students writing ―experienced" which is an adjective, a majority of the respondents opted for ―experience". Also, about 90 per cent of the respondents considered the deviant expression, ―Good Morning, Mr. Michael" as correct. What makes the above construction incorrect is the use of ―Mr." in front of a first name, ―Michael" in English language. The British English does not accept ―Mr" before first names. Again, instead of the students writing ―the inter-university quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon," all the students wrote, ―The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon." What makes the sentence a deviation is the use of ―inter" together with plural nouns. Moreover, all the students were confident and comfortable to write ―My junior brother can write all the English alphabets, instead of ―My younger brother can write the (entire) English alphabet. This is because the alphabet of one language cannot be described as ―alphabets". The students or respondents would have been correct if they had written, ―My younger brother can write English and French alphabets". One of the serious deviations among Ghanaian learners of English as a second language is the use of ―without much I do" instead of ―without much ado" as we saw in the students' scripts, all the sixty respondents wrote ―Ladies and gentlemen, without much I do, I invite the President to give his speech" emphasising a fossilization of errors by students, particularly, final year level 400 students. In other words, the students should have written, ―Ladies and gentlemen, without much ado, I invite the President to give his speech".

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Not all, another deviation in the use of English among students is the expression, ―Water is not flowing" instead of ―the taps are not running." 90 % of the respondents opted for ―Water is not flowing" instead of ―the taps are not running". Furthermore, the word, ―onset" is usually used with regard to the beginning of something which is not favourable. For example, the onset of a disaster, epidemic, disease, floods and bad weather while the beginning of an event or a process can be termed as outset. In other words, the word ‗onset' in the following sentence is a deviation:

―I would like to inform you at this very onset of this course that there are more questions than answers" In fact, all the 60 students wrote onset as a correct usage. ‗Happy Mother's Day.'

Furthermore, the correct form of the above utterance should be: ―Happy Mothers' Day!

This is because the celebration is meant for all mothers in the world. Therefore writing ―Happy Mother's Day!" is a total deviation. The apostrophe indicating the possession should be placed after ―s" to depict plural form.

4.1.3.2 Wrong use of adjectives

Learners of English as a Second Language need to be taught how to avoid the use of double comparatives in their sentence formation (Agarwal, 2016). Some of the examples of sentences that students constructed them wrongly using adjectives are as follows:

1. These students are talkatives.

2. The students are talkertives.

3. Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking.

4. They are experience lecturers. (experienced lecturers)

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The above constructions depict that the students had difficulties in using adjectives correctly in English. For instance, instead of the students writing, ―These students are talkative or talkers, they wrote ―These students are ―talkatives‖ or ―talkertives‖. This is because the word, ―talkative‖ is an adjective in English and must not take an ―s‖. Also, the word, ―talkertive‖ does not even exist in English language. Also, the students wrote, ―Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking‖, instead of ―Drivers in Accra are fond of parallel parking. Again, the word, ―experience‖ which is a noun cannot be used in the above sentence. That is to say that the students should have opted for the adjective, ―experienced‖ to pre-modify the complement, ―lecturers‖.

4.1.3.3 Wrong use of verbs

It was revealed in the study that most students did not have a proper grip on the use of different types of verbs as well as using their correct forms in English language (L2). Some of the verbs that the students used them wrongly are as follows:

1. It is 1 o‗clock, open the radio. (It is 1 o‗clock, turn on the radio.)

2. Please, don‗t drink all the soup. (Please, don‗t eat all the soup.)

3. They resemble too/so much. (They bear very close resemblance/they look very much alike.)

4. Are you understanding me? Do you understand me?

5. As I have a vehicle, and I can drive (myself), I usually send my children to school every day.

From the above sentences, one can see that all the five verbs were wrongly used by the students. In the first example, the use of the verb ―open‖ makes the whole sentence wrong as we do not open a radio but switch/turn on the radio in English. Also, in English, one does not drink soup, but eat soup. This deviation might have occurred due to the students‗ L1 interference. In other words, in Twi it will be

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impeccable to say ―Nom nkwan no", meaning ―drinks the soup". Again, instead of the students writing, they bear very close resemblance or they look very much alike, they wrote, ―They resemble…" probably, due to their L1 interference. In Twi, one will say, ―Ɔmo sɛ paa/yie", meaning ―They resemble so much".

No wonder some of the students even wrote ―They resemble so much." Furthermore, in English, some verbs are called stative verbs and therefore do not take the progressive forms. Stative verbs are verbs that express a state rather than an action. They usually relate to thoughts, emotions, relationships, senses, states of being and measurements (Grammar Rule, 2019, Yang, 1997 and Miller, 1970). One of the stative verbs that the students used them wrongly is the verb, ―understand". The students wrote, ―Are you understanding me? instead of ―Do you understand me"? Moreover, there is no way that the most suitable word or verb in this context can be ―send" This is because, the writer said, ―As I have a vehicle, and I can drive myself, I usually send my children to school every day". In other words, once the person does not ask his/her driver to take the children to school, then the most suitable word is ―take" and not ―send". One sends someone to a place when one does not go to the place himself/herself. In fact, all the sixty students' scripts that were analysed considered the sentence as impeccable or faultless.

Table 4.1.3: Open Class system of Deviations

Type of deviations	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of nouns	360	50%
Wrong use of adjectives	120	17%
Wrong use of verbs	240	33%
Total	**720**	**100%**

The above table represents the deviations emanating from the wrong use of open class systems with nouns recording the highest deviation of 360 accounting for 50%, followed by verbs with 240 deviations representing 33% and adjectives showing 120 deviations depicting 17%.
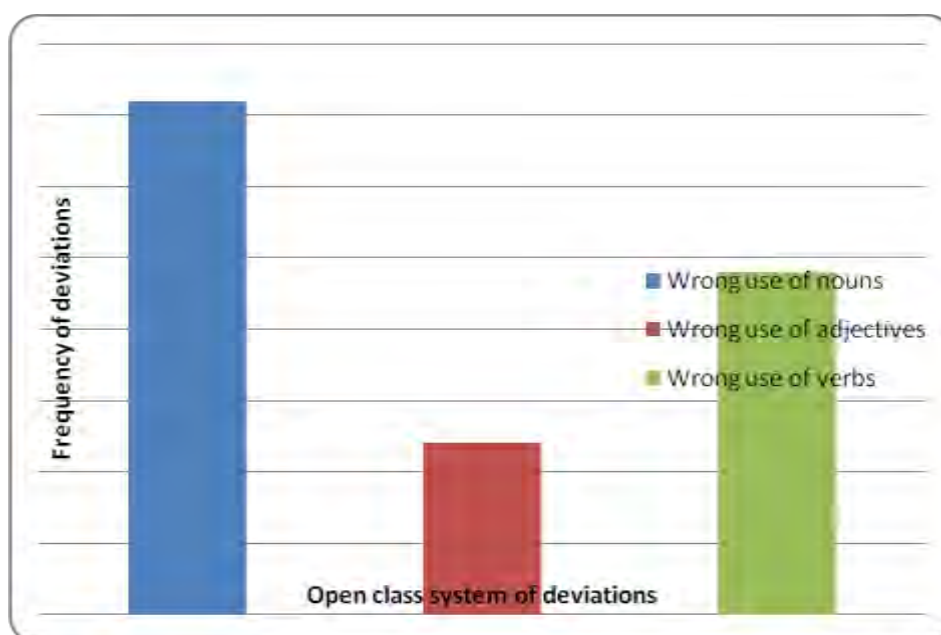
Figure 4.1.3: Deviations of Open Class System

In related studies, the works of Owu-Ewie and Lomotey, 2016; Saville-Troike(2006) emphasised the negative transfer (L1 interference), that is when the structure of L1 is inappropriately used in L2 (English). Also, the study of Ojetunde (2013) discussed overt erroneous expressions to be unquestionably ungrammatical at the sentence level. According to Ojetunde (2013), overt erroneous utterances/ expressions could be grammatically well formed at the sentence level but might not be interpretable within the context of communication. It is therefore expedient for teachers of English to help learners to become conscious of their morphological and grammatical deviations so as to enable them to minimise their deviations in communication.

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4.1.4 Concord errors

Concord errors which are considered to be deviations have to do with the wrong use of correspondence of a verb with its subject in person (first, second or third) and number (singular and plural) (Sabin, 1996). Similarly, the analysis of the present study revealed that most of the students had difficulties determining which verb tense was appropriate in all the five sentences. Some of the concord errors that were found in the study are as follows:

1. ―This study, along with many earlier research findings, show that students really have some academic difficulties."

2. ―Neither the buyers nor the sales manager are in favour of the system.

3. Anyone who *is* among the living *have* hope (has)

4. Anyone and everyone are *entitled* to a fair hearing.(is)

5. Not only a cost-profit analysis but also a marketing plan need to be developed. (needs)

From the first example, an experienced writer or learner of the language can perceive that the headword of the sentence is ―study" which is a singular word, and therefore adhering strictly to the subject-verb agreement, the verb in the sentence should be ―shows" and not ―show‖

All the respondents did not answer the sentence below correctly due to their lack of mastery of nearness or propinquity of concord:

―Neither the buyers nor the sales manager are in favour of the system."

In short, all the respondents answered the above sentences on concord incorrectly, recording 100% deviation in concord.

According to Sabin (1996), if the subject is made up of both singular and plural words connected by or, either.…or, neither―nor, or not only…but also, the

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verb agrees with the nearer part of the subject. It is crucial therefore for learners to be trained to be abreast of the fact that since sentences with plural subjects usually sound better with plural verbs, they have to try to locate the plural subject closer to the verb whenever this can be done without sacrificing the focus of the sentence. From the examples, it is evident that students chose the verb form which they deemed right due to the overgeneralization of forms they had studied.

4.1.4.1 Wrong use of subjunctive case

According to Sabin (1996) sentences that express necessity, demand, strong request, urging or resolution in the main clause require a subjunctive verb in the dependent clause that follows. For instance, if the verb in the dependent clause requires the use of the verb ‒to be", the form ‒be" must be used for the all the three persons, and not ‒am", 'is" or ‒are". Also, if the verb in the dependent clause is a verb other than ‒be', one has to use the ordinary present tense form for all three persons without adding the morpheme, ‒s" to the third person singular (Nordquist, 2019, Sabin, 1996). It is for this reason that the researcher found all the following sentences to be deviant.

1. The Director General urged that she writes and accepts the post.

2. I insist that I am allowed to take part in the discussion (I insist that I be allowed to take part in the discussion).

3. It is crucial that these questions **are** answered without delay(be answered)

4. It is necessary that the candidate arrives on time (arrive).

5. We have resolved that Daniel represents the class. (represent)

The correct words or verbs should be write and accept (subjunctive). Looking at the usage in context, the most appropriate structure that one has to use here is the present

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subjunctive case in English. The phrase, ―The ―Director General urged that she …‖ makes the use of the subjunctive case obligatory.

The above use of the subjunctive mood or case relates to one of the uses which students of English find it extremely difficult (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2000; Thomson et al, 1958)

4.1.4.2 Wrong use of question tag

Question tags in English are built out of statements which may be positive or negative. A positive statement will require a negative question tag while a negative statement will definitely require a positive tag. Nordquist (2019) explains that a *tag question* is a question added to a declarative sentence, usually at the end, to engage the listener, verify that something has been understood, or confirm that an action has occurred.

1. I am watching them very carefully, Am I not?

2. The boy ran very fast, doesn‘t he?

3. You are a student, don‘t you? (aren‘t you?)

4. She doesn‘t listen to her parents, doesn‘t she?

From the above sentence, one can realise that the students did not know that ―I am‖ in positive statements usually has the negative question tag ―Aren‘t I?

Also, ―The boy ran very fast‖ is in the past tense form, and therefore must have the negative question tag, ―Didn‘t he‖ and not ―Doesn‘t he?‖ as all the respondents opted for. The findings of the study stress that second Language Learners of English face difficulties when it comes the use of question tags as it was also evident in the work of Al-Nabtiti (2012) who investigated the difficulties that adult Arabic-speaking ESL learners have in the formation and use of English canonical tag question.

4.1.4.3 Wrong use of reported/indirect speech

According to Tabiri (2016), there two ways of relating what a person has said:

a) Direct speech (in direct speech we repeat the original speaker's exact words)

b) Indirect speech (in indirect speech we give the exact meaning of a remark or speech, without necessarily using the speaker's exact words)

It is a common fault with inexperienced writers/reporters (learners) to confuse past and present tenses as it was revealed in the study. Some of the deviant usage of the reported speech that was found in the students' test is as follows:

1. Kofi told me that he has lost his temper yesterday morning. (Kofi told me that he had lost his temper the previous morning.

2. She said that she wants this book. (she said that she wanted that book)

3. On Friday he said that his daughter was coming today. (On Friday he said that his daughter was coming that day)

4. He said Kofi, stop making that noise (He told/ordered/asked/commanded Kofi to stop making that noise).

From the above examples, it is evident that the students had difficulties in adhering toobservation of the sequence of tenses. In sentence(1), instead of writing ―had‖ they wrote ―has‖ as well as writing the adverbial phrases of time wrongly. Also, in sentence(2), instead of the students writing ―wanted‖, they opted for ―wants‖ and could not as well transform ―this‖ to ―that‖ in the reported speech.

4.1.4.4 Wrong use of conditional sentence- if clauses

According to Sabin (1996), when an ‗if-clause‗ states a condition that is highly improbable, doubtful, or contrary to fact, the verb in the ‗if-clause‗ should go through tenses change. Some of the wrong use of the conditional sentence that was found in the students' test are as follows:

1. ―If he has gone to abroad, he would see my friend"

2. If she came, she should have seen me.

3. If he has come, he should meet him.

4. If I have come earlier, I should finish the work.

5. If she has been invited to the wedding, she would have being glad.

The findings of the study are in consistent with earlier works like.

Table 4.1.4: Grammatical Deviations

Type of Deviations	Frequency	Percentage
Concord errors	120	18%
Wrong use of subjunctive	120	18%
Wrong use of question tags	120	18%
Wrong use of reported speech	120	18%
Wrong use of conditional sentence	180	28%
Total	**660**	**100%**

The Table 4.1.4 represents the deviations originating from other sub-category of grammatical deviations. Under other sub-category of deviations, the highest recorded form of deviation was wrong use of conditional sentence with a total of 180 errors or deviations representing 28% while concord errors, subjunctive case, question tags and reported speech all recorded 120 deviations each, and hence each of them representing 18% .
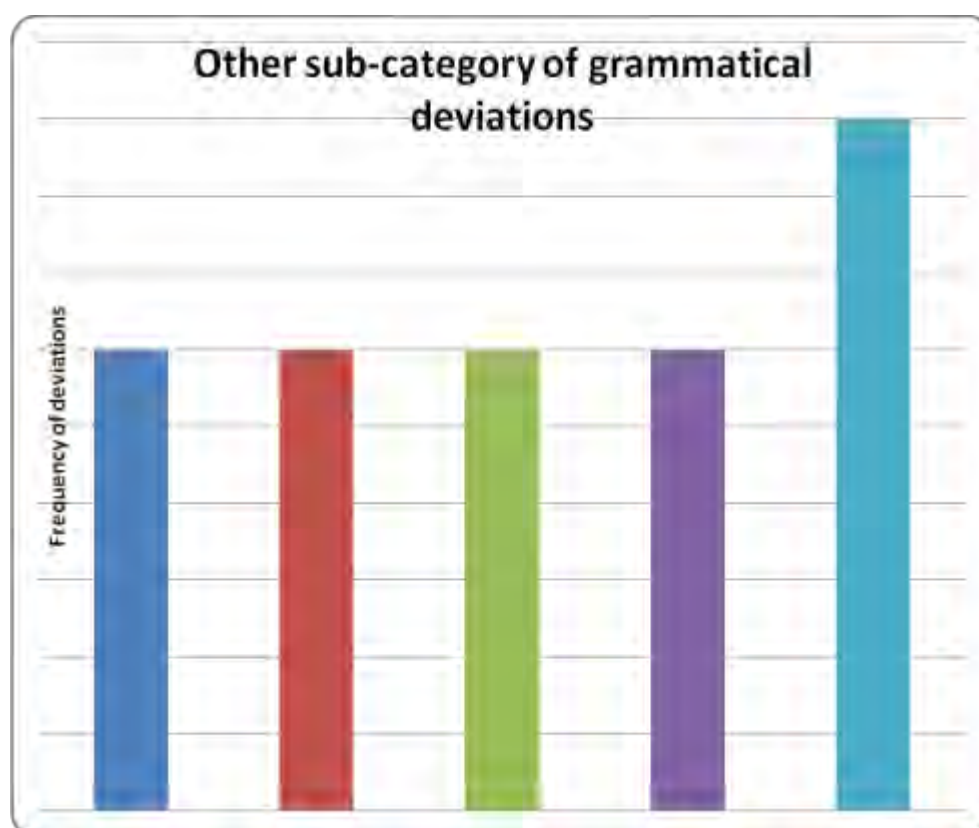
Figure 4.1.4: Grammatical Deviations

In related studies (Edu-Buandoh et al, 2008; Gyasi , 1990; Hammond, 2018) identified some deviations to be ―wrong collocation‖; false concord; poor spelling due to unfamiliarity with the word or mispronunciation; inability to handle the third person singular in particular, ignorance of tense observance; wrong insertion or omission of the articles; misuse of prepositions; errors arising from mother tongue interference; paucity of vocabulary.

4.1.5 *Wrong use of –of clause*

It was uncovered in the study that all the respondents did not know the difference between everyone and every one (of clause) in English. It was against this background that all the students could not produce any sentence correctly using *every one.* In other words, *anyone, everyone, and someone* should be spelled as two words

when these pronouns are followed by an *of phrase* or are used to mean ‑one of a number of things in English (Sabin, 1996).

1. Everyone of us likes to be appreciated.

2. Everyone of our lecturers is an experienced lecturer.

3. Everyone of the university students is studious.

4. Everyone of the workers has gone home.

5. Everyone of my M.Phil students is a student-cum-researcher.

All the respondents (100%) gave ‑everyone of us likes to be appreciated" as correct answer, instead of writing ‑every one of us…" In other words, the use of some expressions like any one of, every one of are used when these pronouns are followed by an *of* phrase or are used to mean ‑one of a number of things.

4.1.6 *Wrong use of passive voice*

The researcher detected a deviation in the use of passive voice in the following sentences,

1. ‑They have not given us any exam time-table."

2. They have not given us our salary.

3. They have not paid us.

4. They have not called us yet.

5. They have not invited us to the meeting.

All the above structures may appear impeccable to a learner of English, but none of them is correct. The students should have written:

1. We have not been given any exam time-table.

2. We have not been given our salary.

3. We have not been paid.

4. We have not been called.

5. We have not been invited to the meeting.

The use of the unspecified ―they‖ depicts wrong use of the passive voice in the English language. In order to avoid the unspecified ―they‖ coupled with the wrong use of the passive voice construction, the passive voice needs to be used religiously.

4.1.7   Semantic deviations

According to Word Reference Forum (2014), semantic deviations simply mean wrong deductions of meanings of words, expressions and sentences out of context communication. Under semantic deviations, I found tautology and wrong punctuations in the students‗ scripts. In other words, the use of tautology and wrong punctuation of words in a given context can change or affect the real meaning of a particular discourse. The analysis of the semantic deviations is as follows:

4.1.7.1 The use of tautology (Linguistic redundancy)

A redundant repetition of words which can be termed as tautology was also found to be a deviation in the data that were analysed (Rdhaiwi& Hussein, 2017). It was revealed that all the 60 students did not see any form of tautology in the following sentences:

1. ―I can be able to carry out the project.‖

2. Please, repeat again.

3. I want to emphasise on the point.

4.   I can be able to come tomorrow.

5. Raise up your hand if you do not understand anything.

All the above sentences are tautological in English. The use of the following words (can able, repeat again, emphasise on, and raise up) concurrently make the

sentences tautological and unacceptable. In the other words, the correct forms of the sentences should have been:

1. I can carry out the project.

2. Please, repeat (it).

3. I want to emphasise the point.

4. I will be able to come tomorrow.

5. Raise your hand if you do not understand anything.

4.1.7.2 Wrong punctuations

According to Nordquist (2019), punctuation is the set of marks used to regulate texts and clarify their meanings, mainly by separating or linking words, phrases, and clauses. The word comes from the Latin word ‑punctuare", meaning "making a point". In other words, punctuation marks are put in a sentence for a reason, in order to make the structure coherent and meaningful (Woods, 2001). The following unpunctuated interrogative statement is crying for punctuation marks.

‑Will you listen to me always class when I give pieces of advice?"

The correct form of the above interrogative statement should be:

Will you listen to me always, class, when I give you pieces of advice?

All the 60 students did not see anything wrong with the sentence, and that lays emphasis on the difficulties students of English language go through when it comes to punctuations. Without inserting commas in the above sentence, the sentence may appear meaningless and senseless.

Table 4.1.5: Semantic Deviations

Type of Deviations	Frequency	Percentage
Tautology (Linguistic redundancy)	60	33%
Wrong use of punctuations	120	67%
Total	**180**	**100%**

We can deduce from Table 4.1.5 that wrong use of punctuations recorded the highest form of semantic deviations with a total of 120 deviations representing 67%, and tautology or linguistic redundancy with a total of 60 deviations denoting 33%. The frequency of semantic deviations can be represented as follows:
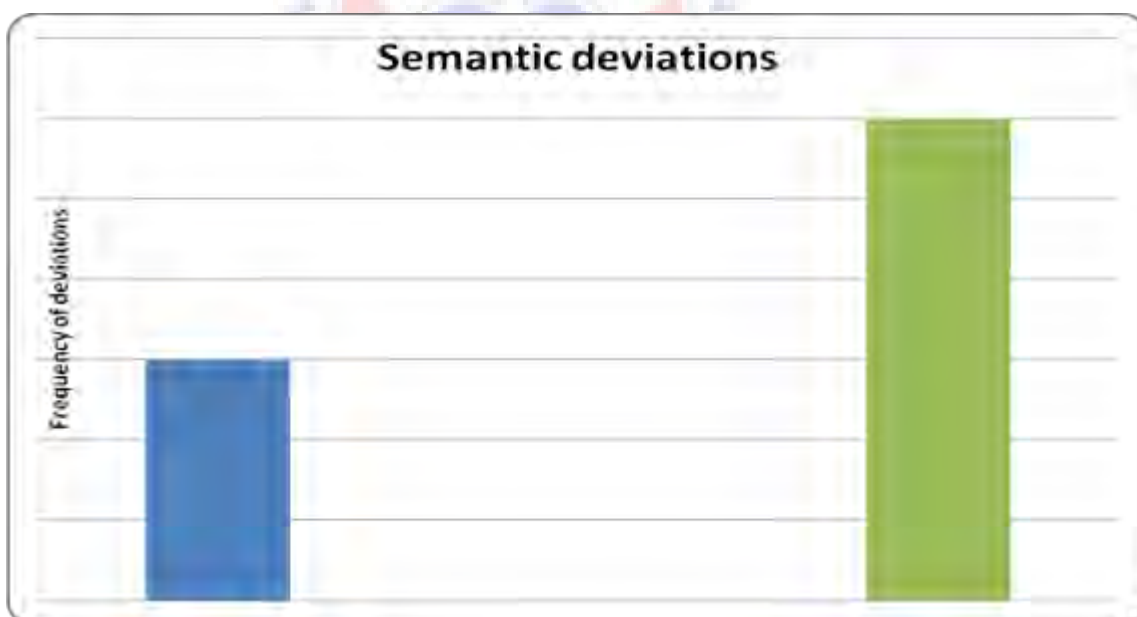
Figure 4.1.5: Semantic Deviations

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Summary of the Findings

The table below gives the statistical summary of the various forms of deviations that were found in the students' Correct Usage Test.

Table 4.1.6: Deviations in Students' Writings

Type of Deviation	Frequency of Deviations	Percentage (%)
Morphological	960	31%
Grammatical (close class)	540	18%
Grammatical (open class)	720	23.5%
Other grammatical deviations	660	21.5%
Semantic deviations	180	6%
Total	**3060**	**100%**
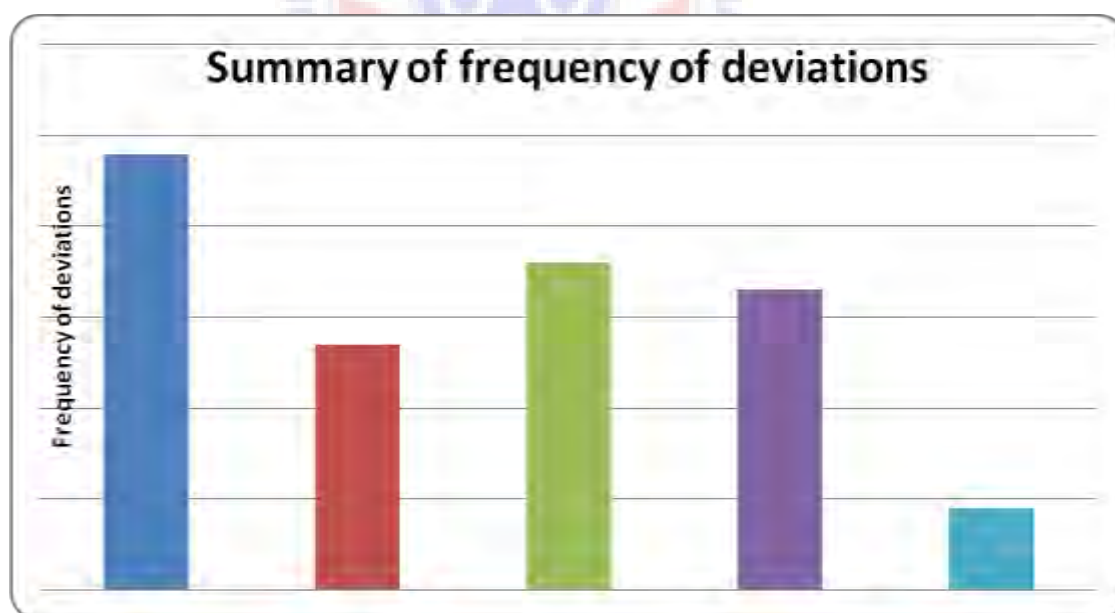
Figure 4.1.6: Deviations in Students' Writings

Figure 4.1.6 is a summary of Table 6 and depicts the total number of deviations or errors found in the students' Correct Usage Test. In the 60 scripts analysed, a total of 3060 deviations or errors were identified. The result of the present study shows that morphological deviations was the highest number of errors recorded in the students' test, with a total of 960 representing 31%. Second on the hierarchy was grammatical deviation of the open class system with a total of 720 deviations representing 23.5%.Third highest were other grammatical deviations with a total of 660 denoting 21.5%. The fourth highest was grammatical deviation of close class system with a total of 540 deviations representing 18%. Finally, semantic deviations were the least on the hierarchy with 180 errors representing 6%. The synopsis of the findings shows that the major area of students' learning difficulties in English was morphology. In other words, students could not distinguish between incorrect structures from correct forms in English, hence leading to addition, omission and malformation of words and sentences. In relation to the study, according to Adika (2012), beyond morphology and syntax (which are the oft-cited areas of deviant usage), the pragmatic uses of English represent strong directions in which non-native varieties can hold sway, (Anderson, 2006; Dzameshie, 2001;Keleve, 1995).

4.2   Causes of students' Deviations

This part of our discussion deals with five (5) main causes of deviations in the use of English among university students in the two private universities in Ghana. The analysis of the study has revealed that students' deviations are sometimes caused by teachers or lecturers, students themselves and the influence of their Mother Tongue or first language (L1). The five main causes of deviations in the use of English among university students are: fossilization, language interference, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization and unlearning.

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4.2.1 Fossilization

Fossilization refers to the process in which incorrect language becomes a habit and cannot easily be corrected (British Council, 2019, Tiago et al, 2017). Errors in general take time to correct but a fossilized error may never be corrected unless the learner sees a reason to do so. It was revealed in the data that a lot of errors or deviations that were made might have occurred due to fossilization. In other words, about 50% of the grammatical and semantic deviations can be attributed to fossilization. Some of the fossilized deviations are as follows:

1. These students are talkatives.

2. Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking

3. Birds of the same feathers flock together.

4. John, put off the light in the bedroom

5. As I have a vehicle, and I can drive (myself), I usually send my children to school every day.

6. Please, don't drink all the soup

7. Happy Mother's Day

8. NiiAbenapokyempahKwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, all of blessed memory.

9. The wedding ceremony between AbenaAgnessKonap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt. You are all cordially invited.

10. My mother has delivered a bouncing baby boy.

11. The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.

12. Will you listen to me always class when I give pieces of advice?

13. ─I would like to inform you at this very onset of this course that there are more

   questions than answers"

4.2.2   Language interference (L1 on L2, and L2 on L3)

It was observed through the study that students committed a lot of errors in their Correct Usage Test in English due to their background as Ghanaian students who study English as Second language learners (Owu-Ewie and Lomotey, 2016). In other words, a lot of deviations that were identified and analysed can be attributed to the Mother Tongue (L1) influence on the teaching/learning of English language (L2). Some of the deviations that came about due to L1 influence on English (L2) are as follows:

1.   They have not given us any exam time-table.

2.   It is 1 o'clock, open the radio.

3.   NiiAbenapokyempahKwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, all of blessed memory.

4.   The wedding ceremony between AbenaAgnessKonap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt. You are all cordially invited.

5.   Thank you for yesterday.

6.   My younger brother is taller than me.

7.   Let us be on our feet and greet ourselves.

4.2.3 Ignorance of rule restrictions

This is an application of rules to contexts where they do not apply. The following deviations might have occurred due to ignorance of rule restrictions on the part of the students:

1. My junior brother can write all the English alphabets.

2. The boy ran very fast, doesn't he?

3. Shake your friend.

4. I encountered a lot of difficulties earlier on in this project work

5. Will you listen to me always class when I give pieces of advice?

4.2.4 Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization errors: learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structure in the target language. Linguistics (in language acquisition) the process of extending the application of a rule to items that are excluded from it in the language norm, as when a child uses the regular past tense verb ending -ed of forms like ─danced" to produce forms like I comed or ─eated". One of the sentences that was found in the data is:

─I am sorry for the delayance**"**

The above sentence lays emphasis onmorphological deviations which refer to wrong formation of words and sentences in English language. Morphological deviations usually go contrary to a functional grammar which aims to match forms to function and meaning in context (Downing & Locke, 2006, p. 3). In other words, morphological deviation is a deviation from the ordinary spelling formation, construction or application of words in a given context communication (Minhas, 2013).

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4.2.5   *Unlearning*

From the foregoing analysis, we can also ascribe the various language or linguistic deviations to unlearning on the part of the students as Souriyvongsa et al (2013) also emphasised. That is to say, as second language learners of English, students need to pay attention to language rules and learn them religiously in context and not out of context. The motto of the Ghana Technology University College is, ―Knowledge comes from learning" in other words, students can only know or master second language when they learn and practice the correct structures accordingly. In a related study, Rod (1999) asserts that deviations or errors, according to behaviourist theory, were the result of non learning, rather than wrong learning. In concluding the causes of deviations among university students, one can say that, Richards (2015), similarly, outlines the causes of errors as overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized and ignorance of rule restrictions.

4.3   Conclusion

In this chapter, we have analysed types of linguistic or language deviations that were found in the data. We saw that linguistic deviations refer to the total wrong use of any aspect of language or grammar of a particular language such as phonology, pragmatics, semantics, morphology and syntax. The specific deviations among the university students that were analysed were, morphological deviations, grammatical (open and closed class systems) deviations and semantic deviations. It was discovered through the various deviations that were made by the students that some of the deviations could affect the overall sentence organisation and hence hindering communication while some deviations might not affect single elements, and therefore may not impede effective communication morphologically and semantically. The last part of the chapter also discussed five main causes of deviations, namely,

fossilization, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralisation, unlearning on the part of students and poor methodology of teaching/learning English. The study therefore suggests that students should be given enough room to practice well, should be taught correct usage at the tertiary level so as to enable them to minimise the amount of deviation occurrences in their writing. The next chapter discusses the summary of the study, its implications and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings of the research, the pedagogical implications, and recommendations and draws conclusions of the study. The purpose of the study was to identify the common deviations in the use of English among university students in Ghana. This study is a qualitative analysis conducted at the Pentecost University College and the Regent University of Science and Technology, both in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Data were gathered from 60 students. It revealed deviations that were categorized under morphological deviations (additions of words, omission, misformation of words), grammatical deviations (open and closed class systems) namely, wrong use of adjectives, nouns, verbs, pronouns, prepositions and correlative conjunctions, other grammatical deviations (concord errors, reported speech, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags and conditional sentence) and semantic deviations (punctuations and the use of tautology) in English language.

5.1   Summary of the Findings

In the 60 scripts analysed, a total of 3060 deviations or errors were identified. The result of the present study shows that morphological deviations was the highest number of errors recorded in the students' test, with a total of 960 representing 31%. Second on the hierarchy was grammatical deviation of the open class system with a total of 720 deviations representing 23.5%.Third highest were other grammatical deviations (concord errors, reported speech, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of

subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags and conditional sentence) with a total of 660 denoting 21.5%. The fourth highest was grammatical deviation of closed class system with a total of 540 deviations representing 18%. Finally, semantic deviations were the least on the hierarchy with 180 errors representing 6%. The synopsis of the findings shows that the major area of students' learning difficulties in English was morphology. In other words, students could not distinguish between incorrect structures from correct forms in English, hence leading to addition, omission and malformation of words and sentences.

The findings ascertain the notion that the tertiary institutions' students have a great deal of difficulties in using English language. The level of difficulties was realised through the various deviations that were found among the university students' test. Based on the findings of this study, five main causes were identified to be the contributory factors of the deviations in the use of English (L2) among university students' writings. The first cause worth mentioning is fossilization. Errors in general take time to correct but a fossilized error or deviation may never be corrected unless the learner makes a conscious effort to correct it. It was revealed in the data that a lot of deviations that were made might have occurred due to fossilization. It was also revealed in the study that about 50% of the grammatical and semantic deviations could be attributed to fossilization. Again, it was observed through the study that students committed a lot of deviations in their Correct Usage Test in English due to their background as Ghanaian students who study English as Second language learners (Owu-Ewie and Lomotey, 2016). In other words, a lot of deviations that were identified and analysed can be attributed to the Mother Tongue (L1) influence on the teaching/learning of English language (L2). Ignorance of rule restrictions, where learners applied rules to contexts where they were not applicable, also contributed to

the occurrence of numerous deviations in the writings of the students. Finally, overgeneralization errors as well as unlearning on the part of the students counted for countless deviations in the use of English among university students.

5.2   Pedagogical Implications of Deviations

Deviations or committing errors in teaching/learning English as Second Language (L2) is inevitable. The findings of the present study have both theoretical and practical implications. In considering the theoretical implications of the study, research should be carried out into English books that lecturers or teachers of English have been using where applicable. In other words, it would be expedient to conduct research at the tertiary institutions with the aim of finding out how much the teaching of correct usage or structures are enshrined and emphasised in their English Communicative Skills at the level 100. This is because once students do not get basic structures at level 100; deviations will become concomitant of their academic discourse or interactions. In terms of practical implications, the findings of this study can serve as a useful stepping stone to uncovering difficulties university students face as second language learners of English (L2). Firstly, the findings can assist learners to unravel some hidden deviations that students do not consider them as language deviations due to their background as Ghanaian students. That is to say that both students and lecturers will recognise some constructions that they might have considered as impeccable. Again, the study will assist lecturers to adopt proper approaches to teach English or Communicative Skills at the tertiary level in Ghana.

Through the findings of the study, teachers and lecturers will realise that it should be highly necessary to lay emphasis on correct usage when teaching Communicative Skills or English language in Ghanaian universities. It is also an undeniable fact that when students are consciously and deliberately assisted to correct

their deviations in the use of English, they become more impeccable in using the L2. In other words, consistently correcting students' errors or deviations should be encouraged at the level 100 when students are pursuing English Communicative Skills as Brown (2006) stresses that error correction can be very useful in L2 teaching/learning. Moreover, poor methodology of teaching English language (L2) at the basic level and the Senior High Schools can be considered to be one of the main causes of linguistic deviations among students (Taluah, 2016). In other words, learners who are not taught in proper language contexts and through incorporation of concrete techniques will definitely swim in linguistic deviations, and deviations will become concomitant of their communication or linguistic competence. It is therefore crucial for lecturers of English or Communicative Skills to incorporate both technological and Communicative Language Teaching approaches when teaching at the tertiary level.

5.3   Suggestions for Future Research

This study looked at the deviations in the use of English among university students in two universities, namely, the Pentecost University College and the Regent University College of Science and Technology in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The researcher upon analysing these few categories of deviations among university students would like to suggest that future research should focus on some aspects of language like proverbial deviations, pragmatic deviations and phonological deviations to help minimise deviations at the tertiary level of education in Ghana, and in Africa as a whole. Also, future researchers who are interested in deviations among university students should consider studying appropriate approaches that can be adopted in teaching and learning of English (L2) in order to help minimise deviations among students, particularly university students in Ghana.

5.4   Conclusion

This research work was aimed at analysing and assessing deviations among university students in Ghana. The researcher gathered data through the test he conducted at the two private universities in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The work analysed students' deviations in their Correct Usage Test scripts, the classification of the students' deviations or errors and the five (5) major causes of deviations that were committed by students. The different deviations that were identified and analysed in the students' Correct Usage Test are as follows: morphological deviations (additions of words, omission, misformation of words), grammatical deviations (open and closed class systems) namely, wrong use of adjectives, nouns, verbs, pronouns, prepositions and correlative conjunctions, other grammatical deviations (concord errors, reported speech, wrong use of passive voice, wrong use of subjunctive case, wrong use of question tags and conditional sentence) and semantic deviations (punctuations and the use of tautology) in English language(L2). It was discovered through the analysis of the deviations committed by the students that only a handful of the students could distinguish between correct usage and deviant usage in English. Based on the results and findings, English lecturers at the tertiary level are encouraged to teach students Correct Usage from level 100 to 400 as well as adopting Communicative Language Teaching(CLT) together with the integrated approaches so as to improve on students' linguistic or communicative competence and performance as well as addressing their language needs. As this study contributes to the existing knowledge on students' deviations, it is envisaged that more studies will be carried out in other language difficulties that students inevitably encounter as Second Language Learners of English (L2).

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