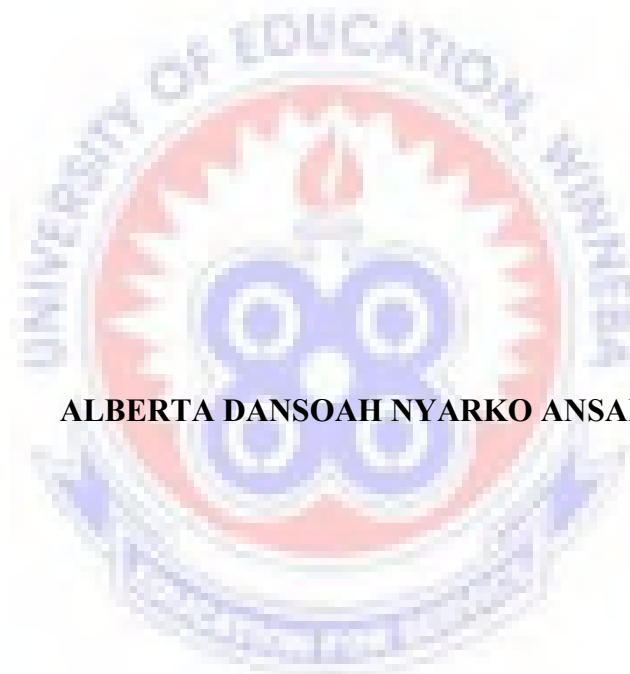


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE USAGE OF NOMINAL GROUPS AMONG STUDENTS OF DON BOSCO
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE, SUNYANI**



ALBERTA DANSOAH NYARKO ANSAH

2017

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(7150080007)

**A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS,
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MASTER OF EDUCATION TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE
(TESL)**

DECEMBER, 2017

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Alberta Dansoah Nyarko Ansah 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 thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba

NAME OF SUPERVISOR:

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DATE:

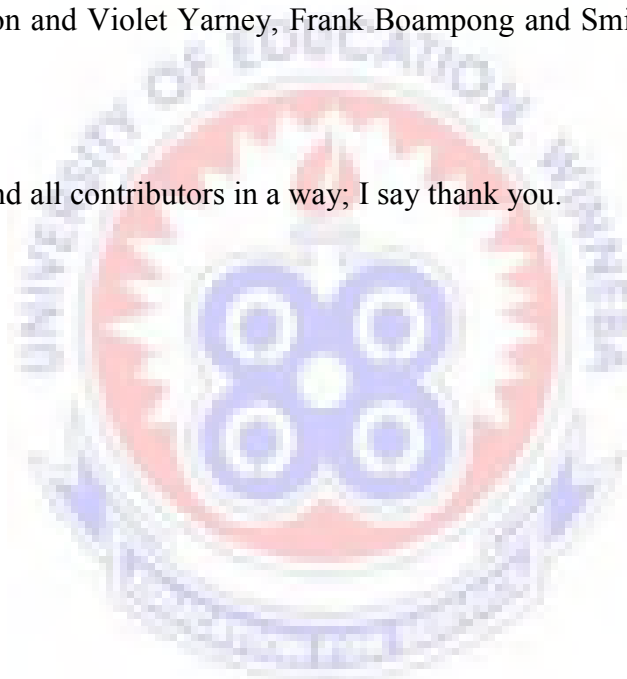
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I will bless the Lord at all times; I am indebted to God, had it not been the Lord on my side. Abba Father; you are great!!!

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This acknowledgement column will never be complete without appreciating my friends; Linda Atta Boison and Violet Yarney, Frank Boampong and Smith-Manford. God bless you all.

My colleagues and all contributors in a way; I say thank you.



DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to my husband Rev. Ebenezer Kodjo Nyarko Ansah. Honey, your love is inestimable, indeed an example of Ephesians 5:25, and my siblings – Juliet, Rosemond, Rosemary, Mac Khama and Godwin (Phlash); let love continue. Hebrews 13:1.



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ABSTRACT

The complexities and technicalities in the usage of the nominal group has been a matter of concern to English users especially in countries that have adopted English as their official language. In such countries English is only taught in school but students generally speak their native language and seldom speak the English language. The situation is no different in Ghana where students will generally use their native language as medium of communication and only use the English language at school, thus there is less practise of the English language. However, the extensive use of English language in the formal sector and as a means of teaching and learning requires that students have a firm grip on sentence construction for which the nominal group is an integral part. The study sought to investigate the use of nominal groups in Ghanaian schools using Don Bosco Technical and Vocational Institute, Sunyani as a case study, dwelling on the premise of Systemic Functional Grammar Theory by Halliday (1985). Adopting a descriptive survey method for the study as described by Ary et al (2002), findings revealed that the philosophy of the school which is geared towards excelling in technical pursuits of students' choice of subjects has influenced their attitude towards the use of the English language. Factors including insufficient learning materials, class size, poor library facilities, lack of modern study resources, poor use of instructional time, among others, have contributed to poor fluency, vocabulary and grammar usage in the use of nominal groups among students. The study recommended that the existing philosophy in the school be altered to make students have a renewed interest in enhancing their use of the English language. Moreover, the School's management should endeavour to make available all that is required in the school to provide students with a unique learning experience.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The English nominal group is a significant grammatical unit in English, and its internal structure is very complex. In systemic functional grammar, a nominal group is considered as a group of words which represent or describe an entity. A Nominal group is an important element of most languages including the English language (Bamigbola, 2015). Akande (2002) observed that a nominal group can have both simple and complex structures.

Jimba (2000) observed that complex nominal groups are not normally encountered as often as simple nominal groups but the complex nominal groups are often more difficult to understand. Ordering remains an important aspect of the nominal group of any language. Bamigbola (2015) observed that ordering influences all aspects of words in a group. The author therefore postulated that ordering of nominal groups remains an important aspect of understanding and usage of English language. In any type of phrase or group, the head serves as the nerve centre since all other elements function to characterize it and locate it in a linguistic or situational context. According to Li (2015), the head is the essential element in the English nominal group. To support his claim, Li refers to Sinclair (1991) who holds the view that “the identification of headword is the first step in describing a nominal group” and “it is reasonable to expect the headword of a nominal group to be the principal reference point to the physical world. Downing & Locke (2008) identify four primary elements or structural function of a nominal group. They include the head, which is the central element, the determiner and the pre-modifier which function in the pre-head Position and the post-modifier which functions in post-head position. Of all these elements, the pre- and post-modifiers can usually be omitted,

while the head together with the determiner, when present, may realize the nominal group. Li (2015) categorizes the above into two -- the pre-modification and post modification constituents. These are elements that are put before and after the head to trace it in a linguistic or situational context.

The technicality involved in ordering in English nominal group has been shown to be critical to the understanding and usage of English nominal groups (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). Nominal group, Okanlawon (2007) has shown that they can be used as a subject as well as a complement in a clause and also as a preposition in a propositional phrase. There are therefore several uses of the normal group in sentence construction. The mastery of nominal group and its usage is thus an important ingredient in the understanding and usage of English language. The importance of nominal groups is probably the reason why it has gained popularity and has become an important aspect of the English language lexicon. The nominal group structure is important and useful particularly because of its elasticity; it has the potential of expanding to include qualifying information around a head noun. A nominal group allows the writer to condense a lot of information into one sentence. It is therefore an asset in communication using the English language to have a grip on the usage of nominal group for a concise communication.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Students of Technical and Vocational institutes more often than not are not considered to be English oriented and are often times looked down upon when it comes to English speaking and writing. The interest solely is about having mastery in your field of study so that you can produce for selling and not to speak or write English. The situation is no different from what happen at Don Bosco; “let me make batik and sell for money and not write or speak English”. They tend to forget that at the global market, they would need to

brand their products and there would be the need to add manuals to finish products. Even if that is out sourced you would still be required to ensure what is given to you is actually selling the use of your product and nothing else and so therefore you would need to read and understand very well.

The complexities and technicalities in the usage of nominal group has been a matter of concern to English users especially in countries that have adopted English it as their official language yet English is not a native language (De Klerk, 2006). The author argues that in such countries English is only taught in school but students generally speak their native language and seldom speak the English language. The situation is no different in Ghana where students will generally use their native language as a medium of communication and only use the English language at school, thus there is less practice of the English language. However, the extensive use of English language in the formal sector and as a means of teaching and learning requires that students have a firm grip on sentence construction for which a nominal group is an integral part.

However, the mastery of the complex sequencing of English nominal group according to Bamigbola (2015), is considered a challenge to a lot of people using English as a second language even though is a necessary condition for understanding and usage of English nominal group. Amua-Sekyi & Nti (2015) study that sought to investigate the challenges of understanding and usage of English language among students have totally ignored the importance of English nominal group and has therefore created a gap in the literature and its attendant effect on policy formulation.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The nominal group is a complex but an important aspect of the understanding and usage of English language and requires specific attention to understand its complex structure

and sequence. The study generally investigates the role of sequencing in the understanding and interpretation in the use of English nominal group, and factors that affects nominal usage positively or otherwise.

The study specifically investigates the following:

- i. Assess students' use of English nominal group.
- ii. Assess the fluency, vocabulary and grammar of students in the use of English nominal group.
- iii. Analyse the factors that contribute to the low performance of students' use of English nominal group

1.4 Research Questions

- i. Do students have any understanding in the usage of English nominal group?
- ii. To what extent do the fluency, vocabulary and grammar of students affect students' use of nominal groups in communication?
- iii. What factors influence the paucities in the use of English nominal group by the students?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study is focused on students' use of English nominal group in their daily communications. Other aspects of the English language fall outside the focus of the current study. The study also concerns itself with the fluency, vocabulary and grammar of students that influence students' use of nominal groups in communication and other factors that impact the inadequateness in the use of English nominal group by the students. The study also focused only on students of Don Bosco Technical and Vocational Institute, Sunyani,; students in other educational institutions do not form part of this study

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is significant for a number of reasons. First, to the best of the knowledge of the author no such study has been conducted using data from a Technical and Vocational Institute, in Ghana. This therefore suggests that the current study fills a gap in the extant literature.

Again findings of the study is expected to inform policy decisions on strategy educational institution that the Technical and Vocational institute can adopt to improve on students' performance in English.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction to the study. This chapter discusses the background to the study, where general issues of English nominal groups are presented. This is followed by the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the research questions. The rest are the scope of the study, the significance of the study and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 is literature reviews on related studies, both empirical and theoretical. Chapter 3 of the study presents the research methodology where the overall approach to the study is presented. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and discussions of the results whereas chapter 5 presents a summary of main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In most African countries students have great difficulties learning simply because they do not understand what the teacher is saying. Teacher guides are being worked out and teacher training courses given to have African teachers become more “learner-centred”, to help them activate their students and engage them in critical thinking and dialogue. Teachers are asked to abandon a teacher style where students just copy notes from the blackboard, learn their notes by heart and repeat them at tests. Little thought has been given to the fact that this teaching style might be the only one possible when neither the teacher nor the students command the language of instruction. Africa is called Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone according to the languages introduced by the colonial masters and still used as official languages. According to Alidou and Maman (2003) when taught in African languages students are much more active than when taught in the national, yet foreign languages. The teaching through mother tongue is more effective and provides for quality learning for students, learning where they can combine existing knowledge with new knowledge. In other instances, teachers switch between the official language of instruction and the local language that children speak. This they do in order to have pupils understand subject matter. Though this teaching strategy is devalued and in some places; it is even not allowed, it may be a pedagogical sound and sensible strategy. On the contrary, there are numerous debates surrounding the use of local language as the language of instruction for students in Africa (Ouane, 1995; Heugh, 2000). At the place of this study the case is same as discussed. ...Students and teachers rarely use the English in their interactions but instructional time and this is not enough for effective usage of the nominal group in the language.

2.2 Identifying English Language Proficiency

Language acquisition differs from language instruction in that the latter is more formal and systematic (Krashen, 1988, 2003). Some people acquire additional languages in their natural environment, through interacting with speakers of those languages, similar to acquisition of their first language, a process which is typically needs based. In multilingual countries many people, including some who have never gone to school, speak two or more languages in order to communicate with members of their community who do not speak their language. Though they may have oral proficiency in multiple languages, they may not be able to read or write any of the languages, as these skills are not a necessary part of their communicative needs within that community. It is important to recognize that language proficiency is not monolithic. A student can be proficient using English to interact with an English speaker in casual conversations but not proficient in using appropriate language in the classroom to talk about mathematics or science (Bailey, 2007). Formal instruction is necessary to develop reading, writing and more advanced oral/listening skills, whether in the first or an additional language. This process can be viewed as a second language learning-acquisition continuum along which speakers move from the pre-production to advanced levels of proficiency, approximating a near educated-native-speaker command of the language (Krashen, 1983). Yet, not all language learning leads to that advanced level of proficiency.

Cummins (2003) has identified three dimensions of language proficiency which second language learners develop concurrently at various stages of the continuum: discrete language skills, academic language proficiency and conversational fluency. Discrete language skills include the alphabetic principles (Blachman, Ball, Black, & Tangel, 2000), language conventions, and syntax, with vocabulary development as an essential part of each of these dimensions. Academic language comprises complex linguistic

forms at increasingly demanding conceptual levels. Students can have different proficiency levels in each of the four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Their conversational fluency may be stronger than their reading skills or the reverse. Proficiency is related to the amount of practice one receives in specific domains, and can be impacted by instruction (Elly & Mangubhai, 1983; Fielding & Pearson, 1994). There is a strong correlation between reading proficiency and the amount of reading a student does (Krashen, 2003; Postlewaite & Ross, 1992), as through extensive reading students develop strategies for constructing meaning from texts they have not previously encountered (Cummins, 2003). Another dimension of English language acquisition relates to the variety of the language English speakers acquire. McArthur (1998) has outlined a circle of English which includes eight broad varieties: American, British, Canadian, Australian/New Zealand, African, East Asian, South Asian, and Caribbean. Within each variety there are localized dialects spoken in different countries, e.g., Kenyan English, Singapore English, Indian English, Jamaican English, and Zimbabwean English. These indigenized forms of English incorporate functions which differ from those in native English speaking contexts (Chisanga & Kamwangamalu, 1997; Mutonya, 2008) as they accommodate the communicative needs of the respective societies (Kachru, 1997). Don Bosco Technical and Vocational Institute located, in the Brong Ahafo West District Assembly is a community based school, and the community mostly Akans and Northerners; are no native speakers of English but the requirements for academic purposes call for the use English Language and so it behoves on them thus teachers and students to acquired proficiency in its usage.

2.3 Identifying Language Needs Across the Curriculum

The curriculum is the key reference point for teachers, particularly in developing countries, where it is encoded in the official textbook and teacher guides, often the sole

resource used by teachers. Teachers' pedagogic approaches, strategies and practices thus serve to enact the curriculum. The curriculum links the macro (officially selected educational goals and content) with the micro (the act of teaching and assessment in the classroom/school), and is best seen as 'a series of translations, transpositions and transformations' (Alexander, 2009). The official curriculum is transacted and in the process gets transformed, as 'teachers and students interpret, modify and add to the meaning' embodied in the official specification. Thus, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are interrelated and mutually influence one another in the day-to-day classroom interaction (Alexander, 2009, Bernstein, 1975). In addition, the understandings and learning that students acquire are mediated by student-related factors such as student agency, motivation, home language, needs, age, gender and socioeconomic status (SES).

There are four models of the curriculum that are found globally and in developing countries:

1. Content-driven curricula exemplify Bernstein's 'collective' code, in which subjects such as mathematics or science are used to describe the curriculum, with increasing specialisation for older students. The key concept is discipline, which 'means accepting a given selection, organization, pacing and timing of knowledge' in the pedagogical relationship between the teacher and the taught in order to cover the curriculum (Bernstein, 1975). Knowledge is transmitted in a situation where the teacher has maximal control.
2. Process-driven curricula exemplify Bernstein's 'integrated' code, in which the content areas stand in an open relation to each other. Students have more discretion over what is learnt compared to individual teachers, who have to collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines. Process-driven curricula

include a range of models - cross-curricular, integrated, interdisciplinary, and thematic. Multiple forms of assessment are used, with a focus on formative, personal, coursework-based and open-ended assessment (Ross, 2000).

3. Objectives-driven curricula are structured around sets of expected learning outcomes, which are written by specifying the kind of behaviour as well as the context in which that behaviour is expected to operate, e.g. comprehending, applying, analysing, starting with lower-order objectives and moving to increasing levels of complexity (Tyler, 1949). Driven by utilitarian ideals, content is usually selected on the basis of its relevance to the workplace.
4. Competence- or outcomes-based curricula are structured around sets of learning outcomes that all learners are expected to be able to achieve successfully at the end of their learning experiences (Botha, 2002). Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are organised in a way that makes sure that this learning ultimately happens. It is considered to produce life-long learners who can better adapt to the world of work, and is considered inherently more democratic.

In view of this, Cummins (1980, 1984) has distinguished between two types of language proficiency: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS refers to those skills necessary for communicative competence, i.e. vocabulary, grammar and rules for appropriate use of language in daily communication. In the context of learning English as an additional language in a country where English is the native language, it usually takes 3 to 5 years for students to become as fluent as their native English speaker peers (Collier, 1995; Wong-Fillmore, 1991). Because many students in Kenya do not typically interact with native English speakers, it may take some of them even longer than five years to develop BICS in English. CALP refers to higher order language skills necessary for academic success. This typically

takes 5 to 10 years to develop (Collier, 1995). Bearing in mind Sure and Ogechi's (2009) observation that by Class Eight some students are unable to communicate effectively in English, it is reasonable to assume that they would encounter challenges in coping with the academic English demands of secondary school, particularly since these skills must be explicitly taught to ELL students (Carrasquillo & Rodríguez, 1996; Cummins & Yee-Fun, 2007).

Halliday's (2007b) conception of culture and context is helpful in understanding the language demands of the academic content areas. He draws on Christie's description of school as a cultural context in which "curriculum genres" emerge from the language systems of the various registers of education (p.288). Part of the English teacher's responsibility, he contends, is to help students understand and produce language of the different subjects. Highlighting the three types of language—prescriptive, descriptive, and productive—Halliday (2007) emphasizes productive language as the most important for language teaching, but recognizes the importance of descriptive and prescriptive language as essential knowledge for the teacher to draw upon in developing their pedagogy and selectively explaining to students where helpful. Macken-Horaik (2002) has drawn upon Halliday's proposed connection between social context and text meaning in her employment of the constructs of genre, field, tenor and mode to contextualize interpretation and production of text in formal school learning. She uses genre to refer to the social purpose of a text and field to identify the subject matter of the written language. In her description of how a secondary school teacher applied the model in focusing on the language features in scientific text, she noted the teacher's crucial role in organizing learning experiences for the students to initiate them into the linguistic demands of the genre.

This case provides an illustration of Halliday's construct of descriptive language as the students were engaged in the use of meta-language to guide their understanding. Assisting students in developing awareness of specific language needed to engage in the academic functions required by the different content areas is an important aspect of the linguistic and academic proficiency necessary for academic success (Dutro & Moran, 2003). In learning the language needs associated with specific content areas, teachers can identify the vocabulary and sentence patterns necessary for communicating specific content. As Hernández (2003) pointed out, this can provide English language learners with purposeful content for language use. When language is used as the medium for accessing knowledge, the language embodied in the content is implicit. In focusing on the content area as an object of instruction in the English classroom, teachers can make this language explicit (Hernández, 2003). Employing Halliday's systemic functional linguistic theory Schleppegrell (2004) draws a distinction between school-based texts and everyday language. She contends, Academic texts make meanings in ways that that are dense in relation to information and authoritatively presented. At the same time these texts embed ideologies and position readers in ways that can seem natural and unchallengeable (p 44). In this respect, school-based texts require a different set of linguistic resources than everyday language, and this becomes increasingly complex as students move from primary school to secondary school and into higher education. Schleppegrell purported that this does not come naturally as a part of language development; students need to be taught these registers. Students have differential access to this form of language depending on their language background or prior experiences. Focusing on academic language in school provides this access to all students.

2.4 Nominal Groups: A Theoretical Perspective

The works of linguists who have earlier discussed the English nominal phrase spread through different grammar groups (Butler, Hidalgo 2007; Blake, 1988; Allerton, 1979; Berry, 1975; Allen, 1972). This is the reason for the use of the terms “phrase” and “group” interchangeably, since some of the linguists use the former (Chomsky, 1965; Hudson, 1973) while some others use the latter (Bloor & Bloor, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999; Boadi, Grieve, & Nwankud, 1968). According to Boadi et al. (1968), group is a term applied to a sequence of words used together. Where one of the words in the group (basically the essential word—head) can be used in the place of the group without changing the grammatical structure of the words, then the sequence makes up a group.

Halliday (1994) defines group as the rank in the lexico-grammar between clause and word. It functions in clauses and are composed of words. A group, he further explains, is in many respects a set of words or a word complex. The structure is that of head and modifier(s) Halliday, (1994). Obilade (1976) in his discussion of the nominal phrase in West African Pidgin English uses Halliday’s systemic model to explain the various meanings expressed in the nominal phrase and how they are given grammatical expression. He defines the nominal phrase in terms of its constituents (modifiers, head, and qualifiers) and in terms of a higher unit, the clause (where in the structure of the clause a nominal phrase functions). However, this study adopts the definitions and explanations given by the later and his cohorts to arrive at set objectives.

Gleason (1961) observed that “the English nominal phrase has a complicated structure involving at least six distinguishable positions before the head, each fill-able by a class or set of classes of words or phrases” (p. 409). The nominal groups occurs in different positions in English sentences. When a nominal group contains only the essential word

(the head) or with a determiner or marker, it is said to have a simple structure. In a complex noun phrase, there are several components. Determiners and modifiers come before the head of a noun group while qualifiers come after the head. The reason for the complexity of some nominal phrases, as earlier stated, is an attempt by writers to reshape several simple sentences to come within nominal group structure and form a single statement. Often in English, it is possible to combine several simple facts into one single sentence with the use of a very complex noun phrase. This is made possible by expanding and elaborating the phrase to a considerable degree. The sequential pattern of items in a noun group is regulated. If for example there are several adjectives between the article and the noun, they fall into order of classes. Thus, adjectives denoting size and shape precede adjectives of colour (Greenberg, 1977). For example, it is acceptable to say “a big red bucket” but not “a red big bucket”.

Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter (2010) pointed out that the nominal group has the potential for including embedded groups/phrases and clauses in its structure. Greenberg (1977) compared the possible expansion of noun phrase with infinity in mathematics, whereby the natural numbers constitute an infinite set because given any number, one can always name the next higher number. What this simply means is that in the noun phrase, adjectives may be added without limit. Hence, the number of possible noun phrases or sentences is infinite, although each individual instance must, of course, be finite in length. This is what the transformational generative grammarians explained as recursiveness, that is, the rule which expands sentence and the rule which expands noun phrase (Jackendoff, 1974; Peters & Ritchie, 1973).

It is generally accepted that language is linearly manifested, that is, it is serial in presentation. Muir (1972) pointed out that in speaking or writing, items follow each other in temporal or spatial succession. However, cases of internal discontinuities within a

noun phrase may occur. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik (1985) observed that in most cases, the part usually affected by discontinuity is the post-modification of noun phrases, and the units often postponed are the appositive clauses. However, other post-modifying clauses and even phrases can also be postponed. The reason why writers sometimes postpone part of a noun phrase is to achieve an end-focus. Like the English clause, the nominal group is a combination of three distinct functional components which express three largely independent sets of semantic choice: the ideational (what the nominal group is about), the interpersonal (what the group is doing as a verbal exchange between speaker and listener, or writer and reader), and the textual (how the message is organized—related to the surrounding text and the context in which the group occurs). In a clause, each meta-function is virtually a complete structure, and the three structures combine into one in interpretation. However, beneath the clause—in phrases and groups, such as the nominal group—the three structures are incomplete in themselves and need to be interpreted separately, “as partial contributions to a single structural line”. In nominal groups, the ideational structure is by far the most significant in pre-modifying the head. To interpret pre-modification, the ideational meta-function splits into two dimensions: the experiential and the logical (Halliday, 1985). Students in their sub-consciousness are to understand these functions and be able to display them appropriately to interpret their thoughts in their everyday communications.

From a functional grammar perspective, all nominal groups are grammatical “participants” in a text; presenting the actors, Sayers, thinkers, and other semantic roles in the processes constructed by each clause. The types of grammatical participant vary by register, as some texts construct a series of events with actors and receivers of actions; some texts construct descriptions, where the relations among phenomena are laid out; some construct debates or arguments, reporting the thinking or saying of social actors;

and so on. Each participant role is constructed in a nominal group. The variation in registers is simultaneously semantic and structural, as the meanings emerge from the writer's choices in constructing clauses, sentences, and texts. Nominal structures contribute different kinds of meanings, including specific, generic, abstract, and technical meanings, and can flavour a text with meanings that carry judgment and value. They can refer to something in the situational context or something constructed only in the text, and they can incorporate notions of individuation, agency, technicality, and other features. These different kinds of meanings will be exemplified and contrasted here in three texts from different academic subjects and grade levels.

Structurally, nominal groups can be simple or complex. Simple noun phrases are nouns without modification, including pronouns (e.g., *we*, *it*) and proper names (e.g., *Elvis Presley*, *New Orleans*). All other noun phrases are more complex, some having multiple modifications (e.g., *the very ferocious Florida CROCODILE with sharp teeth that attacked the football player who scored the game-winning touchdown last Saturday against a talent depleted Miami team that had been going downhill due to recent NCAA sanctions*).

The registers of informal spoken interaction typically draw on simple nominal groups and pronominal referents as speakers often refer to participants in the situational context or known to the speakers (Eggins & Slade, 2004). In the written texts of schooling, on the other hand, it is found that elaborated and abstract nominal participants with pre- and post-modifications, noun clauses, and nominalized forms, typically constructing reference within the text itself (Fang, 2006; Perera, 1982; Schleppegrell, 2004;). As a powerful resource for making meaning, nominal elements can pack a lot of information into a clause through a variety of pre- and post-modifying elements, including adjectives, adverbs, *-ed/-ing* participles, prepositional phrases, and relative clauses. The use of

embedded clauses and other means of expanding nominal groups are characteristic of the registers of advanced literacy. In developing a text, writers depend on nominal elements to both introduce referents and maintain reference to participants that have been introduced (e.g., *There was once a large family of mice...They lived together...the little ones ... the older mice*, etc.), taking the form of pronouns, demonstratives, hyponyms, synonyms, and nominalizations. Finally, nominal elements provide a means for distilling or condensing what has already been written so that the text can go on in further development. For example, by referring in one nominal structure to a prior sequence of text, a writer is able to take the information that has already been presented as the point of departure for a clause that goes on to add more information.

Nominalization, a pervasive feature of academic and particularly scientific texts, is the expression as a noun or noun phrase of meanings that might more typically be expressed in a verb, adjective, or whole clause (Martin, 1991). For example, *to attend* is a verb, but it can be turned into a noun as *attendance*, and that enables it to be modified and expanded (e.g., *perfect attendance; attendance at every session*), often enabling at the same time the incorporation of judgments or values. Nominalization contributes to both the information density of a clause and the referential linking that builds in the construction of a text. In text-organizational terms, nominalization enables something that has been presented in a series of clauses to be distilled into one nominal element. Such distillation enables a chain of reasoning to be developed by the writer (note, e.g., how the nominalization *such distillation* at the beginning of this sentence refers back to the point of the previous sentence). At the same time, however, it also tends to introduce abstraction, ambiguity, and uncertainty, which can greatly decrease a text's comprehensibility and, thus, the reader's interest and engagement. Because nominalization enables a lot of information to be packed into a nominal element,

students have to process more ideas per clause when they read academic texts and are expected to incorporate more information into the nominal elements of the texts they write. Students who are unfamiliar with this grammatical resource may have difficulty understanding the meanings being constructed. They need opportunities to unpack and translate distilled concepts and to recognize the writer's strategy in using them to structure texts in ways that highlight new information and background what has already been said.

2.5 Structure of English Nominal Group

Groups, in general, constitute the immediate structure after clause in the rank ladder offered by Thompson (2000). Just as the clause has functional slots (e.g. Subject; Actor; Theme) which are filled by groups and phrases, so these slots or elements themselves "can be analysed in terms of the functional slots that they offer". Before one goes on in analysing the structure of the nominal group, two points should be clarified: First, a group is not a phrase; a phrase is different from a group in that, the former is a contraction of a clause, whereas the latter is an expansion of a word (Arnold, 1985). In spite of this structural difference, the two hold the same status on the rank scale, "as units that lie somewhere intermediate between the rank of a clause and that of a word". Second, linguists in Systemic Theory used to deal with two types of group structure in general: experiential, and logical (Martin, 1997:72). The first type is the focus of this paper, however, this does not mean that the logical structure is irrelevant, but this paper falls short of exposing such a complex and highly abstract interpretation of groups in terms of formal logic.

2.6 Experiential Structure of the Nominal Group

The nominal group is the grammatical unit which has the most variety at this rank of groups and this would allow the widest range of meanings to be expressed Thompson,

(2000: 181). If one considers, for example, the following nominal group: the unexpected news for which you have been waiting, according to Thompson (2000: 183), one can set up a basic three-part functional structure for the nominal group: Pre-modifier, Head, Post-modifier. That is, there are slots before the Head (news), the noun which forms the central axis, and others following the Head.

Pre-modifier	Head	Post-modifier
the anticipated	Gift	For which you have been waiting

Of course, not all nominal groups have all three slots filled see Halliday, (1994:135). The only obligatory slot is the Head. This is normally filled by a pronoun, a proper name or a common noun, though there are some exceptions, for example, in an elliptical nominal group the Head may be a determiner (or 'Deictic') Thompson,(2000: 180), pronouns and proper names rarely need any further specification, and therefore usually appear with no pre-or post-modification. Common nouns, on the other hand, refer to a class of things, either concrete or abstract (e.g. 'eyes'; 'situation') and they frequently require some kind of specification to be added Morley, (1985: 35). It is the function of the pre- and it is the function of the pre- and post-modifiers to provide the specification in different ways

2.6.1 Functional Slots within the Pre-modifier

i. Deictic: The Deictic element indicates whether or not some specific Head is intended; and if so, which one. It is either (i) specific or (ii) non-specific. Specific deictics may specify the intended Head by one of two possible ways: either demonstratively, i.e. by reference to some kind of proximity to the speaker (this, these = 'near me'; that, those = 'not near me') Morley (1985), or by possession, "by reference to person as defined from the standpoint of the speaker (my, your, our, his, her, its, their; also Mary's, my father's, etc.)" All these have the function of identifying a particular Head that is being referred

to. Non-specific deictics work in a different way: they signal that the hearer or reader is not assumed, or does not need, to be familiar with the specific identity of the Head at that point Thompson, (2000: 182). Since the Deictic slot is not needed for identification, "it is used instead to indicate what quantity of the Head is involved- all, some or non", as it is shown in the examples below:

There are some trains on the track.

Both trains have left.

I have noticed no trains go by.

It should be noted that one often finds a second Deictic element or (the Post-Deictic) Morley, (1985: 52) as in: 'the other unexpected influences'; 'some other people'; 'a certain project'; 'your own life'; . . . etc.

ii. Numerative: The categories of numeratives overlap with deictics to a large extent. It indicates "the number or quantity of the Head, either in exact terms, 'three', 'twenty', or in inexact terms, 'many', 'much'; or it specifies order, 'first', 'fifth" Halliday (1994:183).

iii. Epithet: The epithet indicates some quality of the Head, e.g. old, long, blue, fast Arnold (1985:163). It can answer two main questions: "What do you think of the Head?" and "What is the Head like?" Thompson (2000), i.e., the Epithet may be an expression of the speaker's subjective attitude towards the Head, e.g. splendid, silly, fantastic, or it is an objective property of it, e.g. red, tall, huge; Morley, (1985:89). Generally speaking, there can be any number of Epithets, though in practice it is rare to find more than two. The difference between the two types of the Epithet is not clear-cut, however, the attitudinal Epithet express "evaluation and modality, they represent an interpersonal element in the meaning of the nominal group" Halliday, (1994:142), whereas the

objective Epithets are experiential in function in the sense that they express the properties of the Head itself.

As for the Post-modifier, it is typically an embedded phrase or clause; it is also part of the nominal group, having a function referred to by linguists as Qualifier Thompson, (2000). Unlike the elements that precede the Head, which are words (or sometimes word complexes), what comes after the Head is either a phrase or a clause Arnold, (1985:166). Almost all Qualifiers are embedded phrases or clauses thus, Morley (1985: 97) points out that they are structurally of a rank "higher than or at least equivalent to that of the nominal group"; such qualifying structures are said to be 'embedded' or using systemic terms, "rankshifted" Halliday, (1994: 144). The examples below may give a clear idea about the structures that may realize the Qualifier element:

The news for which you have been waiting.
The decisions made in your name.
The foundations of your ambitions.
Situations beyond your control.
Tensions at work.
Events happening in the future or situations to do with overseas.
A feeling that you really do not know which end is up.

Structurally, a post-modifying embedded clause might be finite or non-finite Thompson (2000: 186). If finite, it may be a defining relative clause, (see the examples above). If non-finite, it may be an '-ing' clause, or an '-en' clause, ('The decisions made. . .'; 'Events happening . .'). The embedded non-finite clause may also be a 'to-infinitive' clause, (Arnold, 1985: 167) ('. . . situations to do with . . .'). A prepositional phrase may occur as a qualifier in a nominal group, ('the foundations of your . . .'), ('Tensions at work').

2.7 Effects of Sequencing in English Nominal Group on Students' Understanding

In any sentence, group of words or more than one word, there arises the question of order. There also arises the question of the sequence of the members of complex groups or sentences.

2.7.1 Effect of Sequencing on Meaning and Interpretation

Coordination provides some points of interest in relation to multiple modifications. For example; Children who have *speech that is impaired*

In such cases, the following occur:

(a).....More than one modification is applicable to a single head. For example: The man in *the corner painted red*

In this case 'painted red' modifies the whole of the preceding complex noun phrase. The problem of ambiguity arises with the difficulty of knowing which of the phrases is directly modified.

Without a conjunction or punctuation the ambiguity cannot be resolved.

Thus: *The car in the corner, painted red*

(b) A modification is applicable to more than one head as in the earlier example

He unites long papers and books and (the man woman ((in (the corner]]]

(c) Complex structures as in:

- 1) The man and woman] [in the corner talking to John
- 2) The [Man and woman] [in [the corner] nearest the door]] (talking to John))

In example (2) above ambiguity is a bit removed from the last post modifier (talking to John) because the door could not be talking to John. Nevertheless to take ambiguity farther, the use of a finite relative clause is possible (... who are talking to John).

Frequently, careful ordering of constituents in a noun phrase is essential to effective communication. For example:

The man in black talking to the girl.
The man talking to the girl in black.

2.7.2 Views of Different Schools of Grammar on Nominal Group Sequence

In the discussion and analysis of any grammatical term, the choice of method and terminology for analysis often depend on the grammarian, and basically the school of grammar to which he belongs. Thus, different grammarians have discussed the English Nominal Group using various dimensions and terminology.

2.7.2.1 Traditional Grammar

The traditional grammarians place emphasis on correct usage. Traditional grammar precedes what is now regarded as the scientific approach to the study of language. According to Crystal (1971) in traditional grammar, syntactic categories are described using features which have been identified in classical languages such as Greek and Latin. On the basis of these features, a universal grammar is worked out which is used as a descriptive model for all language, which the traditional grammarians wish to describe. Most of the terminology they used such as subject, predicate, object, noun, verb, adverb, adjective etc., are still much in use today. However, these terms have assumed clearer definitions and descriptions in modern grammars. Traditional grammar recognizes also

units such as sentence, clause, phrase, word and their relationships. These are given formal and notional definitions.

To them, a phrase would be classed as a noun phrase because it 'functions as' or 'does the work of a noun in a sentence Lyons (1968). In their view therefore, the phrases of the form adjective + noun have the same distribution in the sentences as nouns; for example, *poor John, new house*, can be freely substituted for *John* and *house* in any sentence. One of the criticisms against the traditional description of these units is that they are sometimes ambiguous and confusing (Dineen 1967; Newsome, 1961).

2.7.2.2 Structural Grammar

The structural grammar associated with Gleason (1955), Christophersen & Sandved (1969) is firmly connected with the notion of Immediate Constituent (IC) analysis. The theory rests on the assumption that elements of any string are often combined in a logical order. It consists of a hierarchical arrangement of elements.

Roberts (1962) explaining the idea of immediate Constituents said that they are constituents in the sense that they constitute, or make up, the sentence. They are immediate in the sense that they act immediately on one another (that is, the whole meaning of the one applies to the whole meaning of the other). He added that a group of words are a constituent of something if they go back to some division point, but if not, they are not.

In relation to noun phrase he explained, that the ICs of the determiner and the noun are the group after it.

For example:

The old man who rented the room upstairs likes the movie

The noun phrase above of which 'man' is the headword is the subject of the whole verb cluster. Similarly, 'who rented the room upstairs' is also an Immediate Constituent of 'the old man.

Robert (1962.) also explained IC in relation to prepositional phrases.

by/the tree which my father had planted behind the house could often be used to generate complex constructions in English language.

In the following phrase for example,

by/ the tree near the house across the road in the village

We see that the object of the first preposition 'by' has its headword 'tree' again modified by another prepositional phrase beginning with 'near' and so on in the following fashion:

by/the tree near the house across the road in the village

He said that a preposition and the object of the preposition (which may be a complex noun phrase) as in

the tree/near the house across the road in the village

near/the barn across the road in the village

the barn/ across the road in the village

across / the road in the village the road/in the village

in/ the village

The above theory has its own criticisms. In Halliday's (1985:p22) terms, IC analysis can be seen as the grammar which does not "allow more than two elements in a bracket". For instance, a simple IC analysis (terminating at the word unit) will have the following:

Old soldiers love games.

Halliday also points out that IC yields "maximum bracketing" as opposed to "minimum bracketing" of unit analysis. The IC analysis is a rank-free analysis whereas the modern grammars allow minimum bracketing which will afford functional labeling of the elements of a nominal phrase.

The IC analysis is a rank-free analysis whereas the modern grammars allow minimum bracketing which will afford functional labeling of the elements of a nominal phrase.

The structural descriptions provided were notable, in an enormous number of cases, to provide an account of the kinds of structural information available to the native. Also, the complexity involved in phrase structure description proved truly extraordinary; many simple and easily discovered regularities were excluded and many essentially identical parts of the grammar had to be repeated several times (Fodor & Katz 1964, pp. 138-151).

Noam Chomsky, the prominent proponent of Transformational Generative Grammar, explains the constituents of noun phrase using the phrase structure rules. One of the rules says that a NP need only consist of a noun that is, NP → N while the other rule says that NP consist of an article and a noun that is, NP → ART N. The two rules according to Jacobs et al (1968) may be combined into one indicating both possibilities - NP → (ART) N.

The parenthesis is said to mean that the enclosed constituent does not have to appear in every noun phrase. Jacobs et al (1968) added that noun phrases may contain not only articles but sentences as well. For example:

(1) Grace accepted *the idea that we could buy the book*.

To the TG grammarians, the fact that passive transformations can be applied to the structures of the above sentence as shown below, confirms the italicized string is a noun phrase.

(2) *The idea that we could buy the book* was accepted by Grace.

However, if the word 'that' is excluded, the italicized noun phrase can be seen to contain the sentence:

We could buy the book.

The sole function of "that" therefore seems to be to indicate that the italicized string is an embedded sentence.

2.7.3 The Problem with Long Noun Sequences

Long noun sequences pose considerable difficulty to a natural language analyser. The problems will be described and treated in this section in terms of phrasal analysis, but they are not artefacts of this approach. A comparison with other approaches to such constructs, mentioned later in this paper, also makes this clear.

The main difficulties with multiple noun sequences are:

2.7.3.1 Determination of their Length: One must make sure that the first few nouns are not taken to constitute the first noun phrase, ignoring the words that follow. For example, upon reading 'chocolate request cycle' we do not want the analyser to conclude that the first noun phrase is simply 'chocolate or chocolate request'.

2.7.3.2 Interpretation of Ambiguous Noun/Verbs: A large portion of the vocabulary used in digital system specification consists of words which are both nouns and verbs. Consequently the phrase interrupt vector transfer phase, for example, might be

interpreted as a command to interrupt the vector transfer phase, or (unless we are careful about number agreement) as the claim that phase is transferred by interrupt vectors. In spoken language stress is sometimes used to "adjective-ize" nouns used as modifiers. For example, the spoken form would be "arithmetic register transfer" rather than "arithmetic register transfer". Obviously, such a device is not available in our case, where specifications are typed.

2.7.3.3 Determination of Enough about their Meaning to Permit Further Analysis of

the Input: Full understanding of such expressions requires more domain knowledge than one would wish to employ at this point in the analysis process. Finin (1980). However, at least a minimal understanding of the semantics of the noun phrase is necessary for testing selection restrictions of higher level phrasal patterns. This is required, in turn, in order to provide a correct representation of the meaning of the complete input. The phrasal approach utilizes the phrasal pattern as the primary means of recognizing expressions, and in particular noun sequences. In effect, a phrasal pattern is a sequence of restrictions that constituents must satisfy in order to match the pattern.

2.7.4 Training Learners to Notice Linguistic Forms

Conscious learning is the crucial concept of noticing Skehan (1998). Noticing focuses on concrete features of real language use and, therefore, it may be considered as an effective source of available information for competent learners. Noticing is basically the result of the learner's paying attention to the form and meaning of certain language structures in a given input. According to Schmidt (1995, p. 20), "the noticing hypothesis states that what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning." Schmidt also states that whether a learner deliberately attends to a linguistic form in the input or it is noticed purely unintentionally, if it is noticed it becomes intake. The author adds that noticing is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for learning acquisition. Noticing involves

‘noticing the gap’, i.e. identifying how the input to which the learner is exposed to differs from the output the learner is able to produce at a given learning stage. In the case of NG, the gap is evident, especially in the first stages of English learning.

Intake, a term first coined by Corder (1967), refers to those language features the learner successfully processes to build up internal understanding of learning. The simple fact of presenting a certain linguistic form to a learner in the classroom does not necessarily qualify it for the status of input, for the reason that input is “what goes in” not what is available for going in, and we may reasonably suppose that it is the learner who controls this input, or more properly his intake Corder (1967). We cannot expect our learners all to be at the same stage in their English learning. Pienemann (Pienemann & Johnson, 1987; Spada & Lightbow, 1999) explained the concept of ‘learnability’ suggesting that learners at any one stage will find ‘learnable’ only those language items that are at just the next stage of their natural acquisition. The author adds that it may be possible to accelerate the learners’ progress, but not to jump stages altogether. Their intake capacity must be supported by other previous knowledge so that input and intake may become parts of the same learning process (Van Patten, 2002).

According to Ellis (2002), the stage in which input becomes intake involves learners noticing language features in the input, absorbing them into their short-term memories and comparing them to features produced as output. Cross (2002), following Schmidt (1990), claims that four factors facilitate learners drawing attention to certain features in input:

- **Explicit instruction:** explaining and drawing attention to a particular form, which ensures understanding the grammar point. With help from the teacher, the students analyse the data and “discover” the rule.

- **Frequency:** the regular occurrence of a certain structure in input; the more frequent an item, the greater number of opportunities for noticing.
- **Perceptual Salience:** highlighting or underlining to draw attention to a certain structure to make it prominent in input.
- **Task Demands:** constructing a task that requires learners to notice a structure in order to complete it. In relation to explicit instruction, Ellis (2002) warns that this is not designed to develop implicit knowledge, but simply to develop awareness of grammar, which—when supplemented with.

2.8 Nominal Modifiers: Definition and Characteristics

As previously noted, noun phrases are built up of a noun acting as head, around which some dependents cluster, amongst these modifiers. The prototypical category fulfilling the position of premodifier is that of adjective. However, nouns as modifiers are also frequently found. In what follows, a comprehensive overview of the features which define nouns as modifiers is presented. The construction of a noun phrase is recursive, that is, we may add new items to its head which help to specify and characterise the extra-linguistic referent that the NP is alluding to. The head noun allows the insertion of items to both its left and right sides with pre and post dependents, whether they are internal or external (Payne & Huddleston, 2002: 439-447; Quirk et al. 1985). The premodifier position can be filled by different categories, such as adjectives (e.g. a red car), participles (e.g. the missing documents) or nouns (e.g. a gold watch). Adjectives are the prototypical category fulfilling this position (Biber & Clark 2002; Jucker 1992). Adjectives are classified depending on the properties they lend the noun which they modify. Their place and order within the noun phrase has been a frequent subject of study (Bache 1978; de Mönnink 2000; Rijkhoff 2002).

In spite of the status of adjectives as the prototypical pre-modifying category, there is evidence of the increasing use of nouns as pre-modifiers. Biber et al. (1999) observed that, within pre-modification, nouns are nearly as frequent as attributive adjectives in the Longman Spoken and Written English (LSWE) Corpus, a compilation of about 40 million words distributed into four different genres, namely conversation, fiction, news and academic prose; this tendency was especially notable in news and academic prose. Within post-modification, prepositional phrases are the most frequently used dependents, which means that non-clausal modification shows a clear supremacy in Present Day English. Furthermore, the work by Biber & Clark (2002) on the spread of nouns as pre-modifiers in the Present Day English noun phrase is just another example of this tendency and the interest it has raised among scholars. Hence, it will be of interest to consider why nominal pre-modifiers are now on the rise, and which specific functional reasons there might be for this.

2.8.1 Nouns as Modifiers

A noun may be defined as the category which characteristically occupies the head position in an NP. It usually inflects for number and it may be accompanied by various dependents, such as determinatives, adjective phrases and relative clauses. Such a definition clearly allows for the possibility that nouns may adopt new functions, since the function of the head is seen as characteristic but not the only possible one. Nouns as dependents accompany the head of the noun phrase, providing it with those specific qualities that are singular to the given entity. They specify and characterise the head noun, and by providing additional information become essential ingredients in the process of exchanging information within a given communicative process. Modifiers can also be nominal (understood as a category intermediate between the noun phrase and the noun; owing to the fact that they themselves can contain their own pre-head dependents.

However, they cannot usually take dependents to their right side. Nouns as dependents can be of two kinds: complements or adjuncts. As complements, they and the head noun are part of an unbreakable combination (e.g. a linguistics student). As adjuncts, they freely combine with the head noun (e.g. an Oxford student). Payne & Huddleston (2002: 439-443) make a rather sharp distinction between these two types of noun dependents. However, when dealing with nouns as complements, it is sometimes difficult to discern whether they are part of a syntactic phrase or, rather, whether they combine with another noun to form a morphological compound (Bauer 1998; Bisetto & Scalise 1999; Giegerich 2004; Rosenbach 2007).

The former distinction is intimately related to the order of pre-modifying nouns within noun phrase structure. Thus, the Principle of Head Proximity Rijkhoff, (2002: 264) captures the idea that in a subordinate domain the preferred position of the head constituent is as close as possible to the head of the super-ordinate domain. This implies that, given an NP as a super-ordinate domain, the head constituent of a subordinate domain (that is, a modifier) is as close as possible to the head of the NP. In relation to this, there are differences among categories, thus nouns are closer to the head noun than attributive adjectives. The above mentioned distinction between complements and adjuncts may serve to explain why there is such a fixed order of occurrence. Complements are mainly realised by nouns or nominals, as in a linguistics student; adjuncts, on the other hand, are mainly realised by attributive adjectives, such as white in a white skirt. As has already been noted, the relationship between a complement and the head noun is tighter than in the case of adjuncts, a further reason why those complements are closer to the head noun than adjuncts such as adjectives (e.g. a smart linguistics student). However, there are exceptions to this, and adjectives which are complements can be found Payne & Huddleston (2002: 439), as with criminal in criminal lawyer, or

nouns which are adjuncts, as with London in London Psychiatric Hospital, in which there is a modifying noun followed by a modifying adjective.

Another classification which resembles Payne & Huddleston's is the distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive modifiers (Warren, 1993: 59-60). Nouns as modifiers are usually restrictive, since they combine with their heads to form units with a specific reference (e.g. flower seller), whereas adjectives as modifiers tend to be non-restrictive, since they simply provide the head of the noun phrase with additional information about the referent (e.g. an amusing joke). As restrictive modifiers, nouns can be defining or classifying, in this latter case narrowing the denotational class of the head noun to a subset denoted by that head (e.g. telephone box, since this is not a kind of box but it refers to another kind of entity) (cf. De Mönnink 2000; Rosenbach 2007). As restrictive modifiers, nouns can also be identifying, when they restrict the reference of the head noun (e.g. winter clothes, restricting clothes to the ones that are usually worn in winter). However, there are occasions when nouns as modifiers are non-restrictive, such as an Oxford old residence, in which context makes it evident that Oxford neither identifies which particular residence is not referred to, nor indicates a particular type of residence Warren (1993: 64). As noted in Warren (1993: 60), this distinction would explain the phonological, morphological and syntactic features of nouns as modifiers:

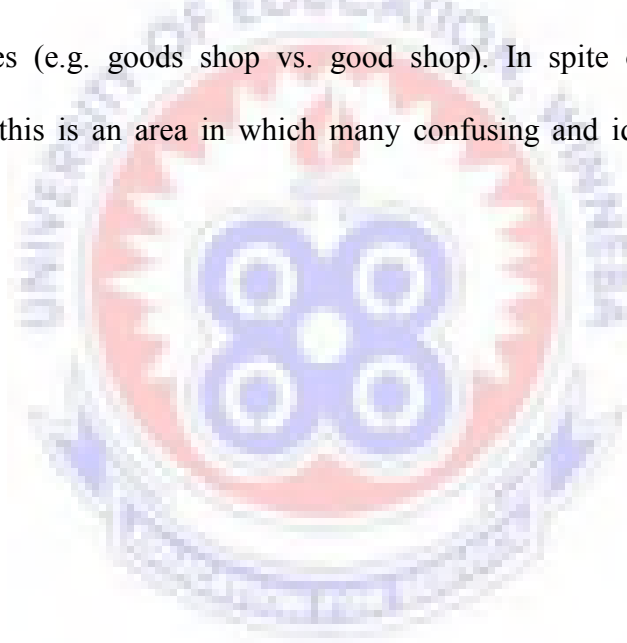
Nominal modifiers, because of their restrictive function, tend to be part of a stress pattern involving stress reduction, lose their ability to be inflected and, when combined with another modifier, have no predictable scope of modification, so that this has to be indicated by position or coordinating conjunctions. Warren (1993) refers here to the stress pattern characteristic of nouns when combining with other nouns. She also notes that modifying nouns are not inflected for plural even if they refer to plural referents and

goes on to identify the problem of ambiguity when nouns as modifiers co-occur with other nominal modifiers

2.8.2 Morphological Properties of Nouns as Modifiers

As Warren (1993) reminds us, nominal modifiers, because of their restrictive function, tend to lose their ability to be inflected and thus usually appear in singular form (e.g. book seller). There are even cases of nouns which usually have a plural inflection in their referential use (e.g. trousers) and lack the plural inflection when they modify another noun (e.g. trouser press). With this in mind, Adams (1973) raises the possibility of considering the first elements in N+N structures as grammatically neutral rather than morphologically singular, arguing that on some occasions it is in fact the s genitive rather than the plural s that is lost (e.g. pigtail < pig's tail). The lack of plural marking might also be a consequence of the reduced referentiality of noun modifiers, a conclusion drawn by Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Rosenbach (2005 cited in Rosenbach 2007) on the basis of web-based analysis. They found that the dependent Bush in the Bush Administration was less likely to be referred to in the previous or subsequent context than in the case of a genitive like Bush's Administration. This implied that the modifying noun Bush was less salient, i.e., more backgrounded, than the genitive. However, as Quirk et al. (1985) point out, the plural attributive construction (e.g. grants committee) is on the increase, particularly in British English, where it is more common than in American English. The use of these plural modifying nouns may also be due to a process of institutionalisation. They are referred to by Quirk et al. (1985) as exclusive plurals: whereas the singular form is more generic and ambiguous, the plural form is not ambiguous and its interpretation is more accessible. They tend to occur with collective nouns and names of institutions as heads, and the stress tends to be on the pre-modifying plural.

Taylor (2000) considers that plural forms, such as sports in the N+N structure sports administrator, are acceptable maybe because those plural nouns have been subject to semantic drift and have acquired a semantic connotation that is lacking in the singular form. The construction of an N+N structure with one or the other modifying noun will result in two different meanings, and thus the kind of specification will also be different. This can be seen as a consequence of something akin to Goldberg's (1995) Principle of the No Synonymy of Form (Bolinger 1977; Givón 1985; Wierzbicka 1988). This implies that the smallest change in the form of an item necessarily implies a change in its meaning. The use of singular or plural forms for modifying nouns can also be a reason to avoid ambiguities (e.g. goods shop vs. good shop). In spite of this, Taylor (2000) reminds us that this is an area in which many confusing and idiosyncratic exceptions exist.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the method used in investigating the usage of nominal groups. It discusses the research design, population, sample, sampling technique(s), instruments, procedure for data collection, validity and reliability and data analysis procedure.

3.2 Research Design

Burns and Grove (2003) define a research design as “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings”.

A research design is “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed. The design indicates whether there is an intervention and what the intervention is, the nature of any comparisons to be made, the method to be used to control extraneous variables and enhance the study’s interpretability, the timing and frequency of data collection, the setting in which the data collection is to take place, and the nature of communications with. This research is a descriptive survey through which responses are sampled from students in order to find out their understanding of English nominal group usage.

Avoke (2005) citing Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (1996), indicated that survey research in education involves collection of information from members of a group of students, teachers or other persons associated with educational issues. According to Ary, et al (2002), “survey permits the researcher to gather information from a large sample of people relatively quickly and inexpensively”. In this study teachers and students from various departments of Don Bosco Technical and Vocational Institute in Sunyani were used.

The descriptive survey was chosen because according to Fink (2002:67) it is the dominant form of collecting data in education and other social sciences. The descriptive survey was considered the most appropriate design for conducting this study since it is the one that deals with current things (Creswell, 2003:43). Our concern here is with how nominal groups are used in everyday communication. Again, information gathered from the descriptive research could be useful in diagnosing a situation since it involves observing, describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting aspects of a situation as they naturally exist. It is designed to provide a 'snapshot of how things are at a specific time'. In this study we observed, recorded, analysed and interpreted situations as they exist in their natural state by staying around the campuses during teaching sessions, break and all other activities of students and teachers and the researcher engaged them in talking generally about everyday life issues more especially concerning their academic life and teaching for a period of over a month.

Notwithstanding the efficacy of the descriptive survey, it is not without difficulties. Kelley et al (2003: 263) pointed out some demerits associated with its use. These included the danger that, the significance of the data could be neglected if the researcher focuses too much on the range of coverage to the exclusion of an adequate account of the implications of those data for relevant issues, problems, or theories. In using the descriptive research design, the quantitative means of collecting data was used. This was because it allowed meaningful generalization with respect to the numerical relationships which existed in the data, and which reflected the attributes of the entire population. As Sarantakos (1988:123) had said, one of the most important attributes of a quantitative technique is that, the sample reflects the larger population, and hence conclusions drawn reflect the general attributes of the entire population.

3.3 Population

According to Ary et al (2002), population refers to the entire group of individuals to whom the findings of a study apply. It is whatever group the investigator wishes to make inferences about. Our population for this study is students and teachers of Don Bosco Technical and Vocational institute. The population of the study was 80 S.H.S. students from various departments of Don Bosco. Among the students 45 were males and 35 were females. None of the students had any form of disability whatsoever. The students all come from diverse cultural backgrounds Akans (predominantly Bono) and Northerners are found in the area (mainly Dagaare's and Frafra) and they can all speak their mother tongue very fluently and proficiently apart from the English language which is used to each in school.

3.3.1 Teachers' Demographics

Below shows the valid number of 10 teachers who fully participated in the study.

Table 1 Number of Teachers

Age		Statistics
N	Valid	10
	Missing	0
Total		10

Table 2 below presents the ages of the teachers. 3 of the teachers fall within the age brackets of 23-28; whereas 5 fall within the ages of 29-34, and the remaining 2 fall within 35-40 years. The data shows that none of the teachers is up to the age of 50. This is an indication that most of the teachers are quite young and active and as such are expected to discharge their teaching duties effectively from a physical perspective.

Table 2 Age brackets of Teachers.

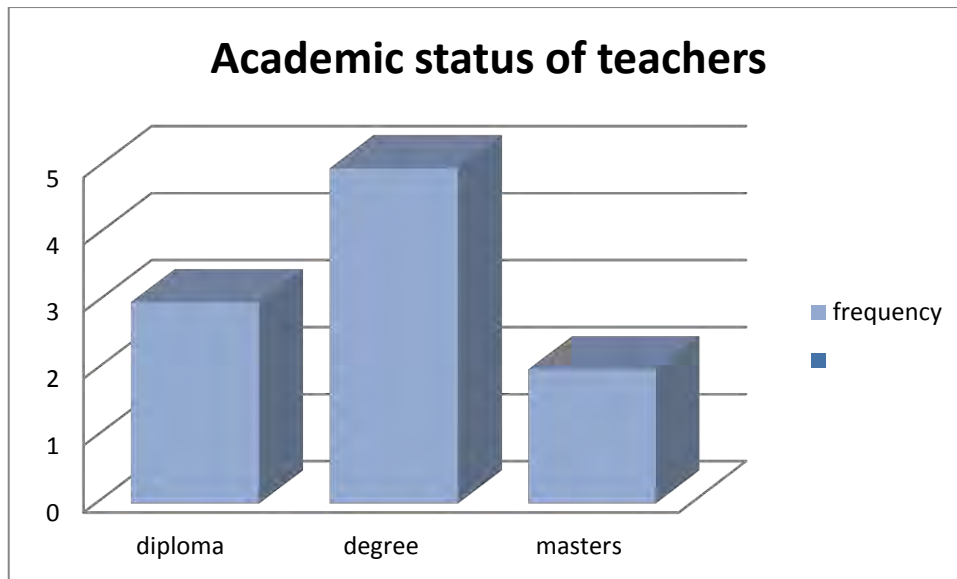
Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
23-28	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
29-34	5	50.0	50.0	80.0
35-40	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 depicts the academic status of the teachers. 30% of the teachers have diploma qualifications whereas 50% possess degree certificates. Only 20% of the teachers possess master's degree certification. There is cumulative percentage and this indicates that among the teachers those with degree certificates are ranked highest.

Table 3 Academic Status of Teachers

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Diploma	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
Degree	5	50.0	50.0	80.0
Masters	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Figure 2 shows the bar chart of the teachers' academic status. The bar shows a steady rise in the trend, reaches a peak and further shows a decline in the trend. Degree holders are represented by the peak rise in the chart and masters holders are the least represented in the chart whiles diploma holders' are runner ups in the trend.



3.3.2 Students' Demographics

Table 4 depicts the statistic of the student population. The participants comprised 80 students. None was missing as they all willingly and fully participated in the study.

Table 4 Number of Students Participants

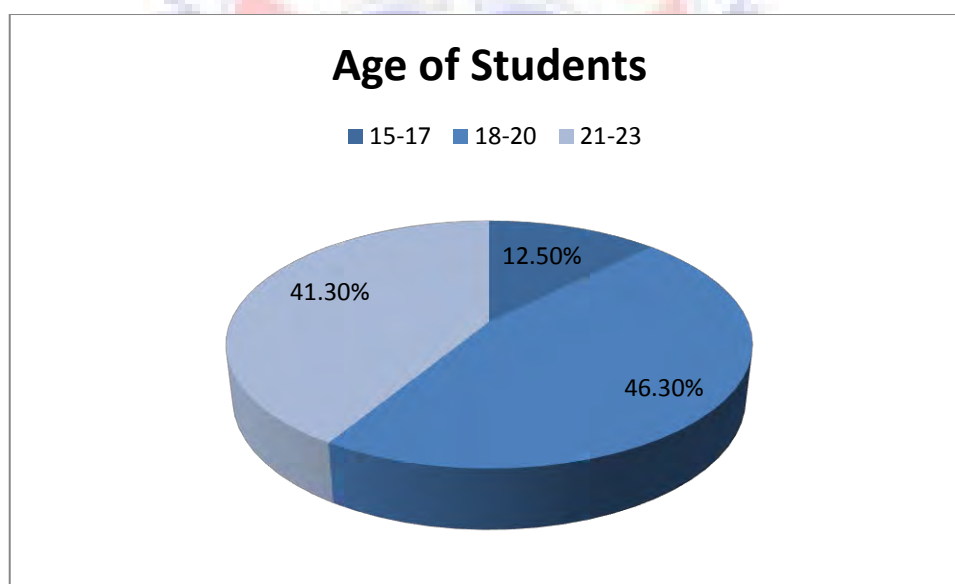
Age		Statistics
N	Valid	80
	Missing	0
Total		80

Table 5 shows the age of the students who actively took part in the research study. 12.5% of the students were aged between 15-17 years, 46.3% fell within 18-20 years, whereas 41.3 fell within 21-23 years. A cumulative per cent of 58.8 represented students who fell within the 21-23 years bracket and this indicated their high representation among the population.

Table 5 Ages of Students

	Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-17	10	12.5	12.5	12.5
	18-20	37	46.3	46.3	58.8
	21-23	33	41.3	41.3	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Figure 3 below is a pie chart showing the appropriate percentages of the different age range of the students. The largest portion is 46.30% pointing to students within 18-20 years bracket. The second rank is represented by an impressive 41.30% pointing to the age range of 21-23, and the least is represented with a 12.50% for the age ranges of 15-17.



In table 6 the gender of the students are clearly entered in their respective sections. One can see that out of the population of 80 students 45 were males whereas 35 were females.

Table 6 Gender of Students

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	45	56.3	56.3	56.3
	Female	35	43.7	43.7	100
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 shows the various departments that the students fall under. The department with the highest number of students are the Building and Construction with a valid percentage of 47.5. This is followed by the Catering department with a valid per cent of 25.0. The Graphics and Arts department is represented by a valid 15% and the least represented among the department is the Electrical and Electronic department with 12.5%.

Table 7 Students' Departments

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Catering	20	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Building and Construction	38	47.5	47.5	72.5
	Graphics and Arts	12	15.0	15.0	87.5
	Electrical and Electronic	10	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

3.3.4 Sample

A sample can be defined as a group of relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purpose. In investigation it is impossible to assess every single element of a population so a group of people (smaller in number than the population) is selected for the assessment. On the basis of information obtained from the sample, the inferences are drawn for the entire population (Alvis, 2016). In this study, the various departments were sampled including students from the Catering, Building and Construction, Graphics and Arts and Electrical and Electronic departments. The focus was on S.H.S. students as these are assumed to have attained certain level of communicating effectively in the English language after going through the basic level of

education in the country. This sample was made up of 20 Catering students, 38 Building and Construction students, 12 Graphics and Arts students and 10 Electrical and Electronic students thus making a total of 80 students.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting the participants for the study. Students were purposively sampled knowing the various departments that they belonged to. In purposive sampling the sample is approached having a prior purpose in mind (Alvis, 2016). Researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand a phenomenon. Cohen et al (2003) as cited in Avoke (2005) also pointed out that purposive sampling enables researchers to handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment and typicality. By so doing the researcher builds up a sample that is satisfactory to specific needs. Simple random sampling technique which provided participants with equal opportunity to be randomly selected was used to select the students from the various departments. The sample was selected according to convenience of the researcher, which was influenced by the availability of respondents and other factors. The selected sampled were handed over with structured questionnaire to fill out.

3.6 Research Instruments

The instruments employed in collecting the data were pretest questions on nominal group, questionnaire and observations. This was because the use of multiple data collection instruments ensures validity and reliability of data generated. According to Ary et al (2002), interview and questionnaire are the two basic ways in which data are gathered in survey research. Best & Kahn (1995) maintained that observation offers first-hand information without relying on the reports of others.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire, according to Creswell (2002), is a form used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher. He further stated that, participants mark choices to questions and supply basic personal or demographic information. It relates to the aims of a study, the hypotheses and research questions to be verified and answered. Best and Kahn (1995:20) highlighted that a questionnaire is used when factual information is desired.

As a result of the desire to collect factual information on students' understanding of/and also the use of English nominal groups, Questionnaires and the Revised Student Oral Language Observation Matrix were used. Research indicates that ratings of proficiency alone are not sufficient to determine bilingual language status and that bilinguals' language learning and language use experiences play a significant role in shaping their linguistic competence (e.g., Grosjean, 2004; Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson, 2003).

In the various departments, students who were selected using the random sampling filled out structured questionnaire. This exercise was successful but not without hesitation from the students but with help from teachers who believe the standard of English Language in schools such as theirs should be looked at therefore such a project is a wakeup call so helped in supervising the whole process and at the end everyone involved conducted the exercises.

3.6.2 Observation

According to Amedahe (2002), observation is a method of data collection that employs vision as its main means of data collection. In observational data collection, researchers collect data on the current status of subjects by watching them, listening and recording what they observe rather than asking questions about them. In

order to achieve the purpose of observation for the study, the Student Oral Observation Matrix (SOLOM) was used. SOLOM is a rating scale that can be used to assess an individual's command of ORAL language on the basis of observations and interview questions. Purpose is to collect natural language samples (not academic language). Natural language measures are considered more reliable measures of oral language proficiency than discrete point tests. Sensitive to growth and change over time in oral language. The author chose to use SOLOM as a data collection instrument due to the advantages that it offers the study. SOLOM is based on observations, yields diagnostic information (work on grammar, vocabulary, etc.); open ended questions (not discrete point). It is a more comfortable way to assess students, more enjoyable for students and can also be used with multiple age groups. However, a key disadvantage to the use of the SOLOM is its time consuming nature. With the SOLOM the author was able to measure proficiency, fluency and vocabulary, and Grammar which is of key importance in this study. The researcher had the opportunity to be among the students at various times just to observe their natural use of the language in their interactions at break times (canteen) and classroom, and close of school. Again, the researcher, managed to engage them in normal life issues just to capture their language use in terms of nominal by interacting with students by asking for directions among others.

Some students at some point in time feel they do not have time to have any chit chat, at other times too they think you should not disturb them with “brofobrofoasem” (speaking of English) and so shy away at your presence though they formally are aware you are in their midst to conduct a research. All in all, the researcher had a great time with them during that period of the study.

3.7 Validity

Validity is very important in the development and evaluation of research instruments. Ary et al (2002). It is used to determine if an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire and the observation guides (SOLOM), draft copies were given to the respective supervisors who read through and made the necessary corrections to ensure face validity. From the responses in the pilot study, it was clear that respondents understood the questions as they were fully and well answered indicating that all the questionnaires that were administered were fully received and all had responses.

3.8 Reliability

To ensure reliability of the instrument used for the study, a pilot testing was conducted at the Don Bosco Technical and Vocational school. The researcher chose this school because it was one of the schools which exhibited the same characteristics as the schools that were of interest to her.

3.9 Analysis of Data Form

The data collected were analysed using appropriate descriptive statistics which enabled the researcher to use numerical values to represent scores in the sample. Analysis of data provided facts and figures that made it possible to interpret results and to make statements about the findings of the study. All items on the questionnaires and SOLOM were coded. The coded items and their corresponding frequencies were entered into the computer using the SPSS software.

Data were analyzed using factor analysis, multiple regressions, simple mean scores, percentages and frequencies. The coding scheme were re-evaluated and reinterpreted until all the options (responses) in the questionnaire were eventually coded into the SPSS software.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter shows the presentation, analysis of findings and the discussions of data gathered. The analysis was carried out using mean scores, percentages and frequencies. Due to the appropriate sample size that was chosen for the study, a total of 90 individuals fully participated in the study. The primary focus of the study was to answer the research questions by assessing students' level of understanding of the use of English nominal group, assessing the fluency, vocabulary and grammar of students in the use of English language, and analysing the factors that contribute to the low performance of students' use of English language.

4.4 School Environmental Factors

Environmental factors considered included English Textbooks, school library, Library books, teaching and learning materials, effective use of instructional time, class size, school infrastructure and the relationship that exist between teachers and head teachers. The following tables depict the situation of things in the learning environment.

In table 8 below, a total of 90 respondents, made up of English language teachers, and head teachers provided responses to the questionnaire. As depicted below only 10 respondents, representing 12.5% admitted that English text books were available and adequate in the school. The rest were of the view that they were either available but not adequate or not available at all.

Key: AA-Available and adequate, ANA- Available but not adequate, NA-Not available, T-Total, M-Mean.

Table 8 Responses of Teachers Regarding Availability of Learning and Teaching Resources

VARIABLES	AA		ANA		NA		T		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
English textbooks	10	12.5	27	67.5	8	20	90	100	2.08
School library	8	9.8	10	25	26	65	90	100	2.55
Library books	5	15	25	62.5	9	22.5	90	100	2.08
Teaching and learning materials for teaching English	0	0	6	15	34	55	90	100	2.55

On school libraries, few of the respondents, representing 8%, indicated that they had adequate functionality in the school library. However, the majority of them said the library is not as functional as expected with 5% admitting that the library was not in good condition. The next item was on the availability of library books. None of the respondents admitted that they were available and adequate. Five of them, representing 15% said they were not adequate. 85 per cent of the respondents stated that most of the library books were old and outdated. After some weeks of observations the researcher noted that the majority of the respondents lacked teaching and learning materials for teaching English.

Table 9 Responses of Head Teachers on School Environmental Problems.

The first item that attempted to find out whether effective use of instructional time was a problem in the schools revealed that instructional time was not effectively used as the majority of the head teachers, a representation of 60%, admitted that it was a critical problem with 10% seeing it as a very critical problem. 15% saw it as just a critical problem while 15% did not see it as a critical problem at all. Majority of the respondents indicated that class size was a critical issue in the school. Only 10% of the respondents did not indicate that class size

was a critical issue in the school. 50% of them saw it as a more critical issue while 15% saw it as a very critical issue in their schools.

Table 9 Responses of Head Teachers on School Environmental Problems

VARIABLES	MOC		MC		C		NC		T		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Effective use of instructional time	2	10	12	60	3	15	3	15	20	100	2.35
Class size	3	15	10	50	5	25	2	10	20	100	2.30
School infrastructure	4	20	13	65	2	10	1	5	20	100	2.00
Teachers' good relationship with head teachers	0	0	2	10	3	15	15	75	20	100	3.65

KEY: C- Critical, MC- More Critical, MOC- Most Critical, NC- Not Critical

4.5. Solom

SOLOM measures five aspects of oral language proficiency: Comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. However, in order to meet the research objective and answer the research question fluency, vocabulary and grammatical aspects were chosen to assess the students. The grading of performance of the students is done by observation.

Level 1: Score 5-11-- **Beginning**

Level 2: Score 12-18-- **Intermediate**

Level 3: Score 19-24--**Advanced**

Level 4: Score 25--- **Proficient**

4.5.1 Fluency

After observing the students in table 10 it was noted that their overall fluency in the use of English language is not impressive. Being a technical school, the use of the English language does not seem to be a priority. 50% of the students are graded as beginners who can produce simple words and phrases to convey meaning, but halting, fragmentary speech can make

conversation difficult. 10% are represented at the intermediate level and 15% at the advanced level. Only 5% of the population are proficiently fluent. With reference to express self in simple interactions, but usually hesitant and often forced into silence by language limitations. The trend reveals that more than half of the students are scored as beginners implying their level of weakness in the use of English language. Moreover, 31% of the population are proficient with their self-expression but with frequent pauses to search for the correct manner of expression. 35% can express self with general fluency, with occasional pauses to search for the correct manner of expression whereas 40% of the population can express self fluently and effortlessly similar to other proficient speakers. In summary, it can be stated that a fair sample of the population can fluently express themselves in the English language.

Table 10 Fluency levels of students

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can produce simple words and phrases to convey meaning, but halting, fragmentary speech can make conversation difficult.				
% no. of students	50%	10%	15%	5%
Can express self in simple interactions, but usually hesitant and often forced into silence by language limitations.				
% no. of students	6%	12%	28%	40%
Can express self, but with frequent pauses to search For the correct manner of expression.				
% no. of students	12%	18%	19%	31%
Can express self with general fluency, with Occasional pauses to search for the correct manner of expression.				
% no. of students	5%	20%	20%	35%
Can express self fluently and effortlessly similar to Other proficient speakers.				
% no. of students	5%	10%	25%	40%

4.5.2 Vocabulary

In table 11 below the results on the vocabulary proficiency of students are presented. Only 15% of the sample population exhibited advanced and proficient levels whereas 30% exhibited beginner and intermediate levels of proficiency. The sample population who exhibited advanced and proficient levels could use a few words and phrases, but vocabulary knowledge not yet sufficient to express self beyond very basic messages. For the students who could use small but growing vocabulary, but large gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it quite difficult to express intended meanings; only 27% represented the sample population at the proficiency level, and 12% were beginners. 18% and 23% represented the intermediate and advanced levels respectively. 10% of the sample population showed proficiency in increasing range of vocabulary, but gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it somewhat difficult to express intended meanings. 30% exhibited both beginner and intermediate levels of those who can use extensive vocabulary, but gaps in less familiar domains and occasional misuse of words may require need to rephrase to fully express intended meanings.

Table 11 Vocabulary of students

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can use a few words and phrases, but vocabulary knowledge not yet sufficient to express self beyond very basic messages.				
% no. of students	30%	30%	15%	15%
Can use small but growing vocabulary, but large gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it quite difficult to express intended meanings.				
% no. of students	12%	18%	23%	27%
Can use increasing range of vocabulary, but gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it somewhat difficult to express intended meanings				
% no. of students	30%	30%	10%	10%
Can use extensive vocabulary, but gaps in less familiar domains and occasional misuse of words may require need to rephrase to fully express intended meanings.				
% no. of students	40%	30%	5%	5%
Can use extensive vocabulary and idioms similar to other proficient speakers.				
% no. of students	50%	10%	6%	14%

4.5.3 Grammar

Table 12 depicts the test on grammar. for the sample population who can say a few words and phrases, but errors in grammar and word order make speech very difficult for others to understand, only 5% was represented. This is an indication that the most part of the sample exhibited very poor grammatical expressions. This is evidenced by 40% representing the sample population as beginners and 20% as intermediates. When it comes to expressing self-using simple patterns, but frequent errors in grammar and word-order in longer utterances frequently obscure intended meanings, only 10% of the population sample was represented. 32% of the sample population indicated a beginner level whereas 30% exhibited intermediate levels of grammatical expressions. Only 2% can express self well with only occasional grammatical and/or word-order errors that do not obscure intended meanings. 32% of the

sample population exhibited intermediate levels, and 18% exhibited intermediate levels. For the sample population who can express self with grammatical usage and word order similar to other proficient speakers, only 6% exhibited proficiency and 4% advanced proficiency. 55% exhibited beginners indicating that most of the sample population is not good at expressing themselves with grammatical usage.

Table 12 Grammatical level of students

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can say a few words and phrases, but errors in grammar and word order make speech very difficult for others to understand.				
% no. of students	40%	20%	15%	5%
Can express self-using simple patterns, but frequent errors in grammar and word-order in longer utterances frequently obscure intended meanings.				
% no. of students	32%	30%	8%	10%
Can express self-using longer utterances, though errors of grammar and word order may occasionally obscure intended meanings.				
% no. of students	28%	32%	18%	2%
Can express self with grammatical usage and word order similar to other proficient speakers.				
% no. of students	55%	15%	4%	6%
Can use extensive vocabulary and idioms similar to other proficient speakers.				
% no. of students	50%	10%	6%	14%

4.6. Observations

It was generally observed that the school's philosophy as a technical institution shaped the behavioural disposition of the students in relation to English language usage. Apart from this it has been noted earlier on that the school's environmental factors also play a role in aiding students learning and understanding of the English language. Few English teachers are available to teach the students and moreover lack of sufficient English language learning materials are factors. In addition, some of the students felt they really need not put much

emphasis on their English speaking fluency as compared to the technical skills they want to acquire in the school. The researcher believes that this same philosophical mind-set has also affected the students' use of vocabulary and grammar. Although English is the primary language of instruction for teaching all subjects in the school, majority of the students pay much attention to the vocabulary aspect of their respective subject areas.

Lastly, the use of English as a second language is considered as a burden for most students who consider it to be a second language. Some students expressed cultural bias regarding its preference over their mother tongue. Some students hold the opinion that it is not worth mastering the English language because it has suppressed their local dialect.

4.7 Discussions of the Findings

The discussion is carried out based on the presentation and the analysis of findings of the study.

4.7.1 Level of Students Understanding of Nominal Group Usage

The pretest conducted on nominal revealed that students usage on nominal is very low. Identifying the head words in the group is a challenge. Once these words are combined in sentences and it is spoken or written correctly (to the best of their knowledge), they have form nominal group not considering the grammaticality of the language. The students from the written work can be said to be limited in registers. The choice of words they are familiar with in their daily experiences makes it a challenge to decipher and understand which word is right in particular sentence and also the order of sequence to follow to form complete or grammatical nominal group.

4.7.2. School Environmental Factors

Based on the responses from the research participants it can be stated that the school lacked the necessary teaching and learning materials. Learning and teaching is the concern of trained

teachers. Research proves that instructional materials highly facilitate learning and greatly draw learners' attention to the target language Littlejohn, (2012; McDonough, Tomlinson, 2012; Solak & Çakır, (2015). To support this view, Richards (2001) asserts that instructional materials generally serve as the basis of much of the language input that learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. Thus, it is suggested that instructional materials need to be motivating and interesting. Ogaga et al., (2016) asserted that learning can be reinforced with instructional materials of different variety because they stimulate, motivate and as well as arrest learners' attention for a while during the instruction process. Instructional materials are learning aids and devices through which teaching and learning are done in schools. Instructional materials are those materials used in classroom or workshops for instruction or demonstration purpose by students and teachers. They are actual equipment used as "hands on" process by learners in order to develop the degree of skills sought by the course of requirement. Examples of instructional materials include visual aids, audio aids, audio-visual aids, real object and many others. The visual aids in form of wall charts illustrated pictorial materials, textbooks etc. thus audio instructional materials refer to those that make use of the sense of hearing only like the radio, audio tape recorder etc. an audio visual instructional material therefore is a combination of devices which appeals to the sense of both hearing and seeing such as television, motion pictures and computers. Such instructional materials are pre-requisites to enhancing student teaching and learning of the English language. Selection of materials which are related to the basic contents of a course or a lesson helps in-depth understanding of such a lesson by the students in that they make the lesson attractive to them, arresting their attention and thus motivating them to learn. Instructional materials play significant roles in the teaching and learning process. Doublegist (2013) posit that Instructional material management is a crucial component of the entire classroom control and management. This is because the excitement usually generated by the

introduction of instructional materials can generate a lot of noise, undue movement of pupils, chairs and tables but make the student participate in the lesson. It provides the much needed sensory experiences needed by the learners for an effective and meaningful behavioral change. Instructional materials are meant to improve the quality of education for effective academic performance of students in schools. The performance of the students on the intended learning outcomes provide the validation – loop on the success of the interaction and instruction. The creative use of a variety of media for learning increases the probability that students would learn more, retain better what they learn and improve their performance on the skills they are expected to develop.

The school library is the backbone of functional education without which academic excellence cannot be achieved. Therefore, lack of school libraries, English text books, story books and teaching/learning materials in the School as shown by the study, contribute immensely to the inability of the students to learn and use the English Language especially in the area of nominal groups.

4.7.2.1 School Learning Issues

The next item that the study sought to find was whether effective use of instructional time was an issue in the school showed that instructional time was not effectively used as most of the teachers indicated that it was a critical issue. This finding is confirmed in the study conducted by Tebukooza (2015) on how to manage instructional time in schools. The finding provides a probable reason for the poor performance of students in relation to their use of English nominal groups. The author posits that the amount of quality instructional time is one of the most powerful variables in determining student learning. Adhering to classroom schedules has not always been easy. Students, administrators, visitors and other interruptions always seem to compete with this little time given for instruction. Though good teachers convey to their students the importance of learning, it is in the processes of time management

that they maximise learning. Since on many occasions the amount of learning time is so little, different ways have been designed to increase the amount of learning time. First, the teacher can look for ways to find additional time for instructional activities. Second, they may look for ways to increase the impact of the learning activities themselves. It is good to remember that learning is important and all students can learn, but we must not be delusional to think that this can happen at the same time or same pace for every individual student; hence teachers need to prioritize the skills that students need and adjust schedules accordingly.

For example, students who need extra practice on their English vocabulary problems can spend more time working out practice exercises, while students who need additional practice on reading skills can work with more written pieces. Therefore, it is necessary to assign appropriate time to meet the individual instructional needs of students. A schedule must be developed so that it is flexible enough to provide the right amount of time for students who work quickly and also for those who require additional time to finish activities. Particular care must be taken to maintain allocated time for high priority areas. Core academic skills such as reading can be scheduled earlier in the day when students' attention is greater, with less interruptions and delays to use up time. This may vary depending on the classroom and the student. Activities such as announcements, breaks, attendance calls, natural calls, and cleaning up after activities can easily compete with instructional time, a teacher should then be able to spend time developing a plan for handling such non-instructional activities. Starting activities quickly and on time should come in handy. This covers situations where a teacher accommodates different rates of task completion by having relevant supplementary work ready for students who finish activities early. These activities should not be busy work but should be independent work related to the individual students' needs and skill levels. Minimizing open-ended discussions of student opinions and beliefs, if they are not the direct objective of the lesson. Students can become very skilled at avoiding the actual lesson by

engaging the teacher in diverting discussions. However, the teacher should know when to break these discussions. Discipline should be dealt with as quickly as possible in a manner which provides students the least attention possible. A teacher should avoid wasting time talking about discipline issues or derailing on them

Both student and teacher social interruptions should be eliminated since social convergences bring unscheduled discussions on personal interests such as sports and movies, during academic time. Administrators should be aware of the social integrations and allocate appropriate time within the schedule which does not interfere with priority academic areas.

Planning and organizing lessons prior to meeting with students' is also crucial in effective management of instructional time. It is inclusive of the use of complete lesson plans that align with the set objectives. In material management, handling and distribution of materials in the classroom can take a significant amount of time. So the teacher has to establish strategies for making the distribution of materials more efficient. Proper storage of frequently used materials can help in preparation of materials ahead of time. Establishing a practice procedure for handing out and picking up learning materials and student papers can be helpful.

According to Marzano, et al., (2001), to effectively teach their students, teachers need to employ effective behavior management strategies, implement effective instructional strategies, and develop a strong curriculum. In addition to managing the instruction in the classroom, a teacher's most significant challenge is also managing the behavior of students in the classroom because of how it can affect instruction, learning, and achievement. Teachers must continuously decide whether they should address disruptive behavior through disciplinary actions or continue to attempt to teach those students Etheridge, (2010). According to Shupe (1998), student achievement has suffered in schools where plaguing discipline and behavioral issues have not been adequately addressed. "There's not a

teacher alive who hasn't felt the frustration of trying to manage a classroom with at least one student who repeatedly pulls other students off-task with annoying, disorderly behavior" Daly, et al., (2005). When students with behavior issues are not handled properly, research has shown they can negatively influence the learning environment by persuading other to join them, which cause teacher effectiveness to be questioned, and causing an increased stress for the teacher Etheridge, (2010).

4.7.3 Solom Tests

4.7.3.1 Fluency

The findings from the SOLOM test indicated that most of the students were not fluent in the use of English nominal groups. Gawy (2015) posit that fluency means speaking without hesitating too much, making very few mistakes, being very easy to understand others and understanding the majority of what is said to you in normal and casual contexts. When a student speaks fluently, he could get the message across with whatever resources and abilities they have got regardless of grammatical and other mistakes. Accordingly, the speaker should not be corrected during speaking activities. A fluent speaker, therefore, should control the sound system and the structure of a foreign language. However, in feedback afterwards the teacher can comment favorably on any strategies the student used to increase his fluency.

Students clearly transfer many of their speaking skills when they speak English language (Roger Gower et al; 1983). According to the David Crystal's views (1993: 287) fluency disorder, in the language context, can be caused by the great lack of the ability to communicate easily, rapidly, and continuously. The difficulty is raised when the speaker is not able to control the rhythm and timing of stuttering. This phenomenon is difficult to summarize because it involves several kinds of non-fluency which vary from a speaker to another. However, one can achieve fluency in spoken language when he possesses the knowledge of a considerable number of English words and a good pronunciation so as to

speak fluently and accurately. A fluent speaker, therefore, should control the sound system and the structure of a foreign language. Learning to speak a foreign language fluently requires more than knowing its syntactic and semantic rules.

In addition, learners should acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in context of structural interpersonal exchange in which many factors interact Halliday, (1985). Therefore, it is difficult for EFL learners, especially the adults, to speak the target language fluently and appropriately. In order to develop students' fluency, it is necessary to test the factors that affect learners' oral communication, component underlying speaking proficiency, and specific skills of strategies used in communication. Speaking a foreign language is difficult for FL learners because effective oral communication requires the abilities to use the target language appropriately in social interactions. This process involves not only verbal communication but also paralinguistic elements such as gestures, body language, facial expressions, etc. to convey a message directly without any accompanying speech.

Brown (1994) argued that: "there is tremendous variation cross-culturally and cross linguistically in the specific interpretations of gestures and body language. Due to the lack of the linguistic environment, exposure to the target language, and contact with native speakers, students' performance is weak in spoken English and fluency. In fact, students need explicit instruction to practice speaking skills. It can be assumed that, fluency can be developed by assigning students general topic to discuss or by raising a topic for discussion.

There are some problems for speaking skill that teachers can come across in helping students to speak in the classroom. These are inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low participation, and mother-tongue use Tuan & Mai (2015). Inhibition is the first problem that students encounter in class. When they want to say something in the classroom they are sometimes

inhibited. They are worried about making mistakes and fearful of criticism. They are ashamed of the other students' attention towards themselves. Littlewood (2007) expressed that a language classroom can also create inhibitions and apprehension for the students. The second problem is that learners complain that they cannot remember anything to say and they do not have any motivation to express themselves. This is supported by Rivers (1968) who thinks that learners often have nothing to say probably because their teachers had selected a topic that is not appropriate for them or they do not have enough information about it. Baker & Westrup (2003) also supports the above idea and stated that it is very difficult for learners to answer when their teachers ask them to tell things in a foreign language because they have little opinions about what to say, which vocabulary to apply, or how to use grammar accurately. The third problem in the speaking class is that the participation is very low. In a class with a large number of students, each student will have very little time for talking because just one student talks at a time and the other students try to hear him/her. In the speaking class, some learners dominate the whole class while others talk very little or never speak. The last problem related to the speaking ability is that when some learners share the same mother-tongue, they try to use it in the speaking class because it is very easy for them (Tuan & Mai, 2015). According to Harmer (1991), there are some reasons why learners use mother-tongue in their speaking classes. The first reason is that when teachers ask their learners to talk about a topic that they do not have enough knowledge, they will try to use their language. The second reason is that the application of mother-tongue is very natural for learners to use. If teachers do not urge their learners to talk in English, learners will automatically use their first language to explain something to their classmates. The final reason refers to the fact that if teachers regularly use their learners' mother language, their learners will feel comfortable to do so in their speaking class. Hyland (1997) investigated learners from eight disciplines at five Hong Kong institutions. The findings of his research

indicated that proficiency in English was a significant factor in the academic success of an English environment. The findings also showed that the learners' language difficulties were related to the productive skills of writing and speaking. Evans & Green (2007) examined the language difficulties experienced by the students at a Hong Kong university.

The results of this study represented that the students' difficulties centred on the academic speaking such as grammar, fluency, and pronunciation and the academic writing like style, grammar, and cohesion. If teachers want to help learners overcome their difficulties in learning speaking skill, they should identify some factors that influence their speaking performance. Learners' speaking performance is influenced by factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015). The first factor is pertinent to performance conditions. Learners carry out a speaking activity under different conditions. Performance conditions impact speaking performance and these conditions involve time pressure, planning, the quality of performance, and the amount of support (Nation & Newton, 2009).

The second factor is related to affective ones. Oxford (1990) said that one of the important factors in learning a language is the affective side of students. According to Krashen (1982), a lot of affective variables have been connected to second language acquisition and motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety were the three main types that have been investigated by many researchers. Listening ability is the third factor. Doff (1998) says that learners cannot improve their speaking ability unless they develop listening ability. Learners should comprehend what is uttered to them in order to have a successful dialogue. Shumin (1997) represented that when students talk, the other students answer through the listening process. Speakers have the role of both listeners and speakers. It can be concluded that students are not able to reply if they cannot comprehend what is told. That is to say, speaking is very closely related to listening. Topical knowledge is the fourth factor. Bachman &

Palmer (1996) defined it as the knowledge structures in long-term memory. That is, topical knowledge is the speakers' knowledge of related topical information. It enables students to apply language with respect to the world in which they live. Bachman & Palmer (1996) assert that topical knowledge has a great impact on the learners' speaking performance. The sixth factor is related to the feedback during speaking activities. A lot of learners expect their teachers to give them the necessary feedback on their speaking performance. According to Harmer (1991), the decisions that instructors adopt towards their learners' performance depend on the stages of the lesson, the tasks, and the kinds of mistakes they make. Harmer (1991) also continued that if instructors directly correct their students' problems, the flow of the dialogue and the aim of the speaking task will be spoiled. Baker & Westrup (2003) supported the above statement and said that if learners are always corrected, they will be demotivated and afraid of talking. It has been suggested that instructors should always correct their learners' mistakes positively and give them more support and persuasion while speaking. According to Mahripah (2014), EFL learners' speaking skill is affected by some linguistic components of language like phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics and psychological factors such as motivation and personality. Phonology is a difficult aspect of language learning for EFL learners. As we know, English is not a phonetic language. That is, pronunciations of English words are not similar to their spellings. Words with similar spellings are sometimes pronounced differently because of their surrounding contexts like tenses and phonemes that come after them. This can cause a lot of problems for non-native speakers of English and they sometimes get confused in producing the English words. EFL learners should have the knowledge of words and sentences. They should comprehend how words are divided into different sounds and how sentences are stressed in specific ways. Grammatical competence can help speakers apply and perceive the structure of English language correctly that leads to their fluency Latha, (2012). Native speakers say what they

want without having any problems because they are familiar with the language. If they have problems in expressing some concepts, they try to use other ways of telling those things. They may make certain mistakes syntactically but these mistakes do not change the meaning of the sentences they want to express and this doesn't create serious problems for the listeners to comprehend them. But the mistakes non-native speakers commit are those that change the meaning of utterances they want to convey and can create some problems for their understanding (Mahripah, 2014). Motivation can influence and be influenced by the components of language learning. According to Merisuo-Storm (2007), an integrative and friendly view towards the people whose language is being learned makes sensitise learners to the audio-lingual aspects of language and making them more sensitive to pronunciation and accent of language. If learners have an unfriendly attitude towards the language, they will not have any substantial improvement in acquiring the different features of language. The above sentences support the view that just communicative competence is not sufficient for learners to improve their speaking skill. Without positive attitudes towards the speaking performance, the aim of speaking will not be obtainable for learners.

The fear of speaking English is pertinent to some personality constructs like anxiety, inhibition, and risk taking. Speaking a language sometimes results in anxiety. Sometimes, extreme anxiety may lead to despondence and a sense of failure in learners Bashir et al., (2011). According to Woodrow (2006), anxiety has a negative effect on the oral performance of English speakers. Adults are very careful to making errors in whatever they tell. In their opinion, errors show a kind of unawareness which can hinder them to speak English in front of other people. Speaking anxiety may originate from a classroom condition with the different abilities of language learners. Learners are divided into two groups: strong and weak ones. The strong learners often dominate the slow and weak ones. The weak learners do not usually want to talk in front of the strong ones which lead to their silence during the whole

class activity. Inhibition is a feeling of worry that stops people from telling or performing what they want. All human beings make a series of defences to protect the ego. Due to the fact that committing mistakes is a natural process of learning a language, it certainly causes potential threats to one's ego. These threats disappoint the learners to talk English and prefer to be silent rather than being criticized in front of a large number of people (Brown, 2000). Risk-taking is pertinent to inhibition and self-respect. EFL learners who have a low self-respect tend to stop taking a risk of committing mistakes in their speaking tasks which resulting in the inhibition to the betterment of their speaking skill (Mahripah, 2014).

Boonkit (2010) carried out a study on the factors increasing the development of learners' speaking skill. The results represented that the use of appropriate activities for speaking skill can be a good strategy to decrease speakers' anxiety. The results also revealed that the freedom of topic choice urged the participants to feel comfortable, persuaded to speak English, and increased the speaking confidence among EFL learners. Dincer & Yesilyurt (2013) carried out a study towards teachers' beliefs on speaking skills based on motivational orientations. The results of their study indicated that the teachers had negative opinions about speaking instruction though they believed that it was of great significance in speaking skill. The results also revealed that the teachers felt unskilled in oral communication though they had various motivational orientations towards speaking English. The researchers indicated that that learners have different opinions about the significance of speaking skill in English language and this difference is related with the learners' motivational orientations and their competent/incompetent feelings in speaking skill. The results demonstrated that learners' self-assessment about their speaking skill was negative and they expressed themselves as incapable speakers of English. Just some of them expressed that they had a good position in taking part in speaking tasks. Tanveer (2007) examined the factors caused anxiety for learners in learning speaking ability and the impact of anxiety on target language

communication. The obtained results indicated that learners' feeling of stress and anxiety stop their language learning and performance abilities. The researcher emphasized that the high anxiety lowers the learners' speaking performance. Eissa et al., (1988) performed a study towards the difficulties of using English as a means of instruction and communication. The results of this study displayed that learners had many difficulties in using English language as a means of instruction. A lot of participants stated that their learners have low English proficiency. The results also indicated that a lot of learners faced serious difficulties in understanding the lectures' content without translating or applying L1 to deliver the content of the lectures. Urrutia & Vega (2010) demonstrated that learners' oral performance was influenced by their lack of vocabulary, diffidence, and fear of being despised. It was also indicated that learners' cooperation, self-confidence, vocabulary knowledge, and the class environment encouraged them to improve their speaking skills.

Prieto (2007) performed a study about the cooperative learning tasks. The findings of her study showed that one way to improve speaking skill is to interact with others, learn from others, and the choice of the topics based on the learners' interests in order to encourage them. Bozorgian (2012) investigated the relationship between listening skill and the other language skills. The results revealed that there is a close correlation between listening comprehension and language proficiency. That is, the higher the listening scores, the better the speaking score. Lukitasari (2003) carried out a study towards learners' strategies in overcoming their speaking problems. The results obtained from this study show that learners face a lot of speaking difficulties such as inhibition, nothing to say, low participation, and mother tongue use in their speaking classes. The other result of this study demonstrate that learners did not better their speaking skill because they had not learnt three components of speaking called vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

4.7.3.2 Vocabulary

The findings from the SOLOM test indicate that a high sample of the population do not have any in-depth appreciation of the use of vocabulary in their usage of English Language. Vocabulary is generically defined as the knowledge of words and word meanings. More specifically, we use vocabulary to refer to the kind of words that students must know to read increasingly demanding text with comprehension Kamil & Hiebert, (2005). It is something that expands and deepens over time. Stahl (2005) stated, “Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world. Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use and, conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge.” Consequently, researchers and practitioners alike seek to identify, clarify, and understand what it means for students “to know what a word means.” The sheer complexity of vocabulary acquisition, as evidenced by reviewing critical components such as receptive vocabulary versus productive vocabulary, oral vocabulary versus print vocabulary, and breadth of vocabulary versus depth of vocabulary Kamil & Hiebert, (2005) raise questions worthy of further research. The goal of vocabulary instruction is to help students learn the meanings of many words so they can communicate effectively and achieve academically. Effective vocabulary instruction requires educators to intentionally provide many rich, robust opportunities for students to learn words, related concepts, and their meanings. Students need strong instructional opportunities to build their personal warehouse of words, to develop deep levels of word knowledge, and acquire a toolbox of strategies that aids their independent word acquisition.

The importance of vocabulary is demonstrated daily in and out the school. In classroom, the achieving students possess the most sufficient vocabulary. Researchers such as Laufer and

Nation (1999), Maximo (2000), Read (2000), Gu (2003), Marion (2008) and Nation (2011) and others have realised that the acquisition of vocabulary is essential for successful second language use and plays an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. In English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learning vocabulary items plays a vital role in all language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing Nation, (2011). Rivers and Nunan (1991), furthermore, argue that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary, we will be unable to use the structures and functions we may have learned for comprehensible communication. In production, when we have a meaning or concept that we wish to express, we need to have a store of words from which we can select to express this meaning or concept. “When students travel, they don’t carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries” (Krashen, as cited in Lewis, 1993, p25. Many researchers argue that vocabulary is one of the most important-if not the most important-components in learning a foreign language and foreign language curricula must reflect this. Wilkins (1972) states that: “there is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say ... While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. Recent research indicates that teaching vocabulary may be problematic because many teachers are not confident about the best practice in vocabulary teaching and at times do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning Berne & Blachowicz, (2008). Teaching words is a crucial aspect in learning a language as languages are based on words Thornbury, (2002). It is almost impossible to learn a language without words; even communication between human beings is based on words. Both teachers and students agree that acquisition of the vocabulary is a central factor in teaching a language (Walters, 2004). Teaching vocabulary is one of the most discussed parts of teaching English

as a foreign language. When the teaching and learning process takes place, problems would appear to the teachers. They have problems of how to teach students in order to gain satisfying results. The teacher should prepare and find out the appropriate techniques, which will be implemented to the students. A good teacher should prepare themselves with various and up-to-date techniques. Teachers need to be able to master the material in order to be understood by students, and make them interested and happy in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The teachers should be concerned that teaching vocabulary is something new and different from student's native language. They also have to take into account that teaching English for young learners is different from adults. The teachers have to know the characteristics of his\her learners. They moreover need to prepare good techniques and suitable material in order to gain the target of language teaching.

Some experts divide vocabulary into two types: active and passive vocabulary. Harmer (1991) distinguishes between these two types of vocabulary. The first type of vocabulary refers to the one that the students have been taught and that they are expected to be able to use. Meanwhile, the second one refers to the words which the students will recognize when they meet them, but which they will probably not be able to pronounce. Haycraft, quoted by Hatch and Brown (1995), indicate two kinds of vocabulary, namely receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary is words that learners recognize and understand when they are used in context, but which they cannot produce. It is vocabulary that learners recognize when they see or meet in reading text but do not use it in speaking and writing Stuart Webb, (2009). Productive vocabulary is the words that the learners understand and can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves what is needed for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write at the appropriate time. Therefore, productive vocabulary can be addressed as an active process, because the learners can produce the words to express their thoughts to others Stuart Webb, (2005). In order to

understand the language, vocabulary is crucial to be mastered by the learner. Vocabulary mastery is needed to express our ideas and to be able to understand other people's sayings. According to Webster (1992) mastery refers to (1) a. the authority of a master: dominion, b. the upper hand in a contest or competition; superiority, ascendancy and (2) a. possession or display or great skill or technique, b. skill or knowledge that makes one master of a subject comment. While Hornby (1995) defines mastery as complete knowledge or complete skill. From that definition, mastery means complete knowledge or great skill that makes someone a master in a certain subject. The specificity of any individual's vocabulary knowledge depends on the person and his motivation, desires, and need for the words Hatch and Brown, (1995). Vocabulary mastery refers to the great skill in processing words of a language. It is an individual achievement and possession Rivers (1989) for that reason, the biggest responsibility in increasing the knowledge is in the individual himself. The success in widening the vocabulary mastery requires their own motivation and interest on the words of a language. From the definition above, we can conclude that vocabulary mastery is an individual's great skill in using words of a language, which is acquired based on their own interest's needs and motivation. Vocabulary mastery plays an important role in the four language skills and it has to be considered that vocabulary mastery is one of the needed components of language.

By acquiring various vocabulary learning strategies, students can decide how they would like to deal with new words. According to Schmitt, many learners do use strategies for learning vocabulary, especially when compared to language tasks that integrate several linguistic skills, like oral presentation that involves composing the speech content, producing comprehensible pronunciation, fielding questions, and so on Nation,(2000) .Allen (1983) believes teachers in advanced classes have two major aims. One is to prepare students for the kind of English used by and for native speakers. The other special aim is to help students

become independent, responsible for their own learning. Advanced students have to count on their own efforts and habits of study for their further study. As the material which is read becomes increasingly difficult, there are many more new words to be explained. The teacher cannot, and should not, help students learn all of them.

Dictionary strategies are commonly used among learners in order to determine the meaning of unknown words. When learners come across a new word that they cannot infer from context they can either ignore it, or consult a dictionary. Instructors following traditional grammar translation methods have encouraged the extensive use of dictionaries. According to Nation (2001), using a dictionary is related to the intentional method of vocabulary learning as opposed to guessing, which is generally associated with incidental learning of vocabulary. In Summers's (1988) three studies, English learners using a dictionary receive a higher score on both post reading comprehension and vocabulary tests. Whereas using dictionary strategies is an intentional way of learning new words, inferencing or guessing strategies are closely related to the incidental learning of vocabulary. Inferencing is generally understood as using available information to guess the meaning of unknown words. It allows students to use all possible clues to guess meaning, to understand the overall meaning, and to find ways to get the message across. Gu & Johnson (1996) distinguish between two types of guessing among cognitive strategies: guessing by using background knowledge or wider context, and guessing by using linguistic clues or immediate context. Nation also believes that once learners know about two or three thousand words, they can use the reading skills they have developed to infer the meanings of unknown words that they come across. Once learners know 80 per cent of the new words, then they can eventually get the main idea of the passage. For a successful guessing of words students should have three kinds of knowledge: linguistic, world, and strategic knowledge Nagy (1997). As for linguistic knowledge, the higher the language level of students, the more effectively they are able to guess unknown words

Schmitt, (1997). A large vocabulary size is the prerequisite for successful guessing Nation, (2001). World knowledge is a kind of prior knowledge of the topic or the situation in general. Nagy (1997) finds it much harder to learn a word about a new concept than to learn a new word for a known phenomenon. The final type of knowledge, strategic knowledge, has been defined by Nagy (1997) as “involving conscious control over cognitive resources”. This definition implies that students may become better guessers if they are taught how to guess. Perceptions involve deciding on where to focus attention, how to focus the attention, and how often to give attention to the item. More specifically, the strategies enable learners to plan, observe and assess the best way of learning vocabulary in order to achieve better results (Schmitt 1997). In order to cope with new words when they occur and to learn unfamiliar words, learners have to be able to get information about the words. According to Levelt (1989) cited by Nation (2001), the lexicon can be divided into two parts, one that contains lemmas and one that contains forms. Learners need to be aware of both aspects of word knowledge. Generally speaking, the main concern of a vocabulary learner is to know the meaning of the word, but the need to use a word in speaking or writing requires attention to other aspects. Learners have to be able to know the word form itself, the context in which the word occurs, a reference source or analogies and connections with other languages. Encoding involves various techniques for committing new words to memory, such as analysis, association and grouping. Analysing target words into Latin roots and affixes can facilitate recall. It can be used to help the learning of unfamiliar words by relating these words to known words or to known affixes, and it also can be used as a way to check whether an unfamiliar word has been successfully guessed from context (Nation 1990: 168). Nation also suggests three concrete skills involved in using these kinds of strategies. These skills are breaking new words into parts, knowing the meaning of each part and seeing a connection between the meaning of each part and the dictionary meaning of the new word. This strategy

is similar to the keyword technique, which will be discussed later, in the association of form and meaning. Association is important because a new word can be integrated into existing knowledge like previous experiences or known words, or images can be custom-made for retrieval, which can be helpful in memorizing a new word Schmitt (2000). Grouping can aid recall, and learners seem to organize words into groups naturally without prompting. If words are organized in some way before memorization, recall is improved (Cofer, Bruce, & Reicher, 1966; Craik & Tulving, 1975, cited by Schmitt 2000).

4.7.3.3 Grammar

Findings from the data analysis indicated that student's grammatical constructions were poor. This was as a result of the students' perception of the English language and how they feel it's less importance to their technical course of study. However, without good grammar, clear communication is nearly impossible. Proper grammar keeps students from being misunderstood while expressing their thoughts and ideas. Canale & Swain (1980) proposed that grammatical competence was an integral part of communicative competence. One can't communicate effectively without having the knowledge of grammar. There are many methods, approaches to learn English language effectively. A good command over the grammar of a language does not imply that one is able to communicate effectively and at the same time those who can speak English fluently, they are not considered effective communicators. Accuracy is the most important along with fluency. Fluency can be developed by communicative centred approaches but accuracy can only be learnt by knowing and use of proper grammar. Grammar plays a vital role in speaking. Grammar plays a substantial role in governing the use and application of language. It gives the user the structure to build complete and meaningful sentences. The role of grammar can take many dimensions and varies according to the situation and context in which it is used. The underlying role of grammar lies in being the language which enables us to talk about

language. It names the words and words groups that make up sentences as well as the way in which they can be accurately put together. It is true that natives can subconsciously pick up their languages without any kind of explicit or formal instruction, but they can't talk about it or explain some of its irregularities without having learnt them.

Grammar also plays an important role in the writing and reading processes. One cannot write efficiently and professionally without this instruction. It would be nearly impossible for the writer to articulate his thoughts and make them intelligible for the reader. How would he be able to express the future perfect or doubt without knowing grammatically how? In addition to that, without grammar, one cannot even read without misunderstanding the meaning. If the reader has to go back and re-read a sentence several times because they are not quite sure what it means, it spoils their reading experience and they are quite likely to misunderstand the point or even to give up and not read any further. Knowing about grammar also helps us understand what makes sentences and paragraphs clear and interesting and without it any language will be totally coarse and ugly to deal with, not to mention that the language would eventually become completely illegible and nonsense. "Grammar communicates meaning, meaning of a very special kind". The learning of grammar can improve learners' reading and writing if they learn grammar "in context" (Goode, 2000; Sams, 2003; Sedgwick, 1989). The learning of grammar in writing rather than for writing should be taught so learners understand better how the language works, and function. Grammar in writing allows learners to understand about language when they write Hillocks & Smith, (2006). Learners find it less difficult to master grammar if they learn through discovery rather than drill-and-practice (D' Eoloia, 1987). It is crucial to provide writing input in learning of grammar (Del Van Patten, 2003). The opportunities to deliver output from learners are important to gain fluency and accuracy (Guilloteau, n.d.). Learning to write as a process to ESL learners was first introduced by Vivian Zamel in 1976 (cited in Kroll, Long, & Richards 2003). The need to use

grammatical conventions in various contexts is stressed by many researchers in order to control and use them correctly Anderson (2005).



CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter contains the summary of the study, conclusions drawn and recommendations made. The fundamental objective of the study was to investigate the use of English nominal groups among Ghanaian students using Don Bosco Technical and vocational Institute as a case study. The research focused on factors responsible for aiding or inhibiting the performance of students with regard to how they use English nominal groups in the school.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The study findings point some general conclusions. The data collected provided insight into the factors that influenced the teaching and learning of the English language and use of nominal groups. Some of the factors included:

- ✓ Insufficient teaching and learning resources such as English textbooks, students' dictionaries, library books and other audio/visual teaching aids.
- ✓ Large class sizes.
- ✓ Misuse of instructional time.
- ✓ Inadequate school infrastructure such as school libraries, classrooms, places of convenience, accommodation of teachers and school kitchen.
- ✓ Incompletion of the English syllabus.

In addition, findings from the SOLOM test indicated that most of the students performed poorly in the use of the English nominal groups in terms of fluency, vocabulary and grammar. Majority of the students also had a very wrong perception of the English language

usage and expressed low levels of interest as the researcher closely observed these behavioural dispositions.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the school needs an aggressive approach towards inculcating the right study culture into the students. The school authorities need to make the English language teaching and learning a top priority. This is because today's modern academic environment is fast changing and English language has become the top global language. There is the need for students to put in their best in order to master the language at all cost.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

There are certain areas such as the methodological design that the author believes is somewhat insufficient to ascertain or investigate the usage of English nominal groups among Technical and Vocational School's students. Hence it is recommended that other methodologies and data analysis approaches be adopted in further research to study this phenomenon.

Again, further findings into the verbal group which together with the nominal group make a complete sentence is recommended for study among the Technical and vocational students in order to come up with suggestions that will help policy makers to adopt strategies that will help them attain mastery in their sentence construction in the Language for better communication.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SECTION 1:TEACHERS

1. Age: 23-28 29-34 35-40
2. Gender
3. Academic Status
 - i. Diploma
 - ii. Degree
 - iii. Masters



APPENDIX B

STUDENTS

Age 15-17 18-20 21-23

Gender Male

Female

Department

Catering

Building and Construction

Graphics and Arts

Electronics and Electricals



APPENDIX C

ARRANGE THESE WORDS TO FORM NOMINAL GROUPS

Answers should be written in the space provided below

1.	Nursing	matron	that	old	Bristish	Beautiful		
Answer								
2.	The	Plan	Efficient	Promotion				
Answer								
3	In	The	Production	Many	Batik	Scale	Small	enterprise
Answer								
4.	Gucci	Leather	Bag	Purple	The	small		
Answer								
5.	Bullet	Proof	Jackets	The	Two	New	For	Presidency
Answer								
6.	All		The	Inclusive		Governor		
Answer								
7.	The		Man	Black		haired		
Answer								

Appendix D

Please Choose the Appropriate Option in the Likert Scale:

AA- Available and adequate

ANA- Available but not adequate

NA- Not available

4. Availability of teaching and learning resources.

	AA	ANA	NA
English Textbooks			
Teaching and Learning Materials for Learning English			
School Library			
Library Books			

5. School Learning Environment Issues

	C	MC	MOC	NC
Effective use of Instructional Time				
School infrastructure				
Class size				
Teachers' relationships with Head Teachers				

C- Critical

MC- More Critical

MOC- Most Critical

NC- Not Critical

APPENDIX E

STUDENT ORAL LANGUAGE OBSERVATION MATRIX (SOLOM-R)

This section utilized the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM-R) as a tool for investigating students' use of English nominal Groups. The SOLOM Matrix is classified into five sections: comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Students are scored based on four different levels as explained below:

Level 1: Score 5-11-- **Beginning**

Level 2: Score 12-18-- **Intermediate**

Level 3: Score 19-24--**Advanced**

Level 4: Score 25--- **Proficient**



Fluency

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can produce simple words and phrases to convey meaning, but halting, fragmentary speech can make conversation difficult.				
Can express self in simple interactions, but usually hesitant and often forced into silence by language limitations.				
Can express self, but with frequent pauses to search for the correct manner of expression.				
Can express self with general fluency, with occasional pauses to search for the correct manner of expression				
Can express self fluently and effortlessly similar to other proficient speakers.				

Vocabulary

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can use a few words and phrases, but vocabulary knowledge not yet sufficient to express self beyond very basic messages.				
Can use small but growing vocabulary, but large gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it quite difficult to express intended meanings.				
Can use increasing range of vocabulary, but gaps in vocabulary knowledge and frequent misuse of words make it somewhat difficult to express intended meanings.				
Can use extensive vocabulary, but gaps in less familiar domains and occasional misuse of words may require need to rephrase to fully express intended meanings.				
Can use extensive vocabulary and idioms similar to other proficient speakers.				

Grammar

	Level			
	1	2	3	4
	5-11	12-18	19-24	25
Can say a few words and phrases, but errors in grammar and word order make speech very difficult for others to understand.				
Can express self-using simple patterns, but frequent errors in grammar and word-order in longer utterances frequently obscure intended meanings.				
Can express self-using longer utterances, though errors of grammar and word order may occasionally obscure intended meanings.				
Can express self well with only occasional grammatical and/or word-order errors that do not obscure intended meanings.				
Can express self with grammatical usage and word order similar to other proficient speakers.				