



Errors in the Use of English: A Case of Primary School Pupils in Meme Division, with Focus on Morpheme and Word

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Abstract: This study describes the performance of pupils in the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) examination English language composition paper in Kumba and neighbouring localities. It was reported by previous researchers that the performance of students in the GCE English paper was falling steadily. However, it was unfortunate that no research has checked what obtains at the level of the FSLC, which is the concern of the present study. To effectively tackle any problem it must begin from the roots. So, this study set out to analyze the grammatical features in the written production of Class Six pupils in the FSLC English language paper in Meme Division in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. This study was conducted to answer the question “*what specific grammar features are observed in the written production?*” The study had as main objective to identify specific grammar features in the writings of pupils in the basic schools around Meme Division. A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study, and it was carried out within the theoretical framework of error analysis propounded by S.P Corder (1974). The material for this study is the past FSLC English language composition scripts for the 2014, 2015, and 2016 academic year. A total of 168 scripts were collected for this study, that is, 56 scripts for each of the three academic year were collected. Errors were identified and classified under morphemic and word errors. The findings for the study revealed that, word error recorded 70.7% of 942 cases identified, while morphemic error recorded 29.2% of 942 errors identified. The researcher recommended that the government should ensure all teaching materials are available at the beginning of each academic year and to make sure that pedagogic inspectors do their job as they should.

Keywords: Morpheme, Use of English, word errors, First school Leaving Certificate (F.S.L.C.).

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INTRODUCTION

This study examines the performance of primary pupils in the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) English language paper. The study is motivated by the findings of previous researchers who had observed that the standard of English at the Ordinary Level GCE examination was falling. FakoUK/ Fako News Center (2014), analyzed students' performance at the G.C.E ordinary level

English language paper and arrived at the finding that out of the 89,821 candidates who sat for the 2014 English language paper, 77,911 failed, giving a percentage failure of 86.74%. They also added that, only 4 candidates made an A grade in the entire nation. In line with FakoUK/ Fako News, Ntongieh (2016), said Anglophone students' performance in English language at the G.C.E. ordinary level was very poor, that is, 13% in the 2014 session. He

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added that “the newly introduced Advanced level English language paper of 2015 G.C.E. examination, produced an even worse result with a maiden performance of 8% pass in the subject”. Researchers such as Njikong (1993), FakoUK/ Fako News Center (2014), Ntongieh (2016), worked on the performance of students in the G.C.E. Ordinary level. This was like tackling a problem from the middle. Thus, the present researcher feels there is the need to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, especially at the basic certificate examination, the First school Leaving Certificate (F.S.L.C.). She believes that if secondary school students perform poorly at the GCE O/L, they might have performed poorly at the FSLC, which is what this study sets out to check.

Statement of the Problem

As reported above, previous researchers observed that the performance of students in the GCE English paper was falling steadily. Unfortunately no research as far as we are aware has checked what obtains at the level of the FSLC which is the concern of the present study. The deplorable performance of students in the G.C.E. English language paper at both ordinary and advanced levels brings to mind the following question. Could there be a problem in pupils' performance in the English language paper at the basic level? Could it be that the foundation is faulty? If that be the case, then to effectively tackle the problem, it must begin from the root. The study set out to investigate the performance of primary pupils in the FSLC in Cameroon within the Kumba area.

Research Question

This study which focuses on grammar is guided by the question:

What specific grammar features are observed in past FSLC composition scripts?

1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Cameroon is situated in the Central African sub region, and it is bordered to the West by Nigeria, East by Central African Republic, South by Gabon, Congo and Equatorial Guinea, and to the North by Chad. Cameroon has a surface area of about 475442km². The Germans annexed Cameroon in 1884 and ruled over it till 1916. They were defeated by the allied powers Britain and France during the First World War. After the defeat of Germany, Cameroon was placed as a mandated territory of the League of Nations and given to Britain and France to rule over it. They partitioned Cameroon into two parts with France receiving the greater share $\frac{3}{4}$, while Britain received $\frac{1}{4}$. English and French became the official languages of Cameroon.

1.1 The Cameroon Education System

Cameroon has two educational systems, the British system and the French system, and the languages of instruction are English and French. The academic year runs from September to June. The Cameroon educational system has three main levels: basic or primary, secondary and higher education. These different levels of education in Cameroon are under the supervision of ministries of education, i.e. the Ministry of Basic education, the Ministry of Secondary Education and the Ministry of Higher Education respectively.

1.2 English in Primary School in the Anglophone System of Education

In the Anglophone subsystem of education in Cameroon, English language is the medium of instruction. It is taught from Class One to Six. The six classes are classified under three levels namely: level one, two and three. Level one is made up of Class One and Two, level two is made up of Class Three and Four, while level three is made up of Classes Five and Six. The number of minutes allocated for the teaching of English per lesson varies according to level. Thirty minutes is allocated for the teaching of English per lesson in classes 1 and 2, forty minutes for class 3, and forty five minutes for classes 4, 5 and 6. This subject is taught every day. In the FSLC examination, English language is divided into two papers. They include: English paper I (1.2.1) and English paper II (1.2.2).

1.2.1 English Language Paper I

English language paper I is divided in sections and it is evaluated for one hour. It is graded on 40marks that is, 10marks per section. These sections include: Dictation (A), Hand writing (B), Guided writing (C), and Composition writing (D). Each is considered below.

Dictation is the action of reading out words to be written down or typed. It is also the activity of taking down a passage that is dictated by a teacher as a test of spelling, writing, or language skills. It is done in 15 minutes. Here, pupils are expected to listen attentively to the passage as it is read by the teacher and write it out neatly on their answer sheet. Dictation section is graded on 10 marks. Grading is done in a way that, after any three spelling errors, a mark is subtracted from the total mark the student made. Hand writing is an exercise that consists in neatly copying a paragraph or text provided using diverse writing pattern such as the cursive writing pattern or the upright un-joint script. It is a styled or manner of writing by hand. Hand writing section is graded on 10marks and it is written for 15 minutes. Candidates are presented with a text with different sentence types to neatly copy on their examination scripts.

Guided writing has two different types. In the first type, a text may be given with some missing words and students are expected to find suitable words from the list of words and fit in where appropriate. While the second type involves jumbled text, for them to rearrange and form a smooth and clear story. This section is graded on 10 marks with duration of 15 minutes. Section D of English paper 1 is the composition paper. A Composition is the combination of facts and ideas which appear in a coherent manner so readers can understand an argument or idea. Compositions comprise different topics or questions to be answered. There are four different types of composition. They include: descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative compositions. In this section, students are expected to write a composition of about 150 words on the scripts provided. Candidates are expected to present their facts in an orderly manner. Composition writing is graded on 10 marks with duration of 20 minutes. Things considered when correcting scripts include: legibility, meaning, coherence, presentation of materials respect of instructions. It is worth mentioning that, when evaluating composition, emphasis is not laid on grammar, punctuation or spelling.

1.2.2 English Language Paper II

This paper comprises three sections labeled: Grammar and Vocabulary, Reading comprehension, Listening comprehension. The time allocated for this section is 90 minutes and a total of 50 marks. The Grammar and vocabulary section carries 30 questions, that is, 20 questions for grammar and 10 questions for vocabulary. The total mark allocated for Grammar and vocabulary section is 20 marks, that is, 10 marks for grammar and 10 marks for vocabulary. This implies half a mark per question for grammar and a mark per question for the vocabulary section. Students are expected to choose the correct answer from the answer options provided A, B, C, or D, at the end of each sentence. Candidates are expected to put an X on the letter in the answer column corresponding to the correct answer. In case a candidate decides to change their answer, they supposed to put a circle round the already crossed letter, and then select the next option. Under vocabulary, there is a section on pronunciation where about four words per question with the same sound while one has an odd sound. So, candidates are expected to neatly underline the word with the odd sound in each set of words. In the next section under vocabulary, sentences are provided with underlined words. Lists of words are provided for candidates to mark an X on the letter corresponding to the antonyms of the underlined words or phrases.

Reading comprehension section is open to different text types. It could involve a letter talking about a particular thing or event and it could also be an expository passage that describes a situation in the past. Questions asked in this section are mostly open ended questions and is graded on 20 marks. Candidates are expected to read carefully and answer questions that follow immediately after the passage. This section usually carries 5 or 10 question depending on the passage provided. Listening comprehension is the last section and is graded on 20 marks for about 7 questions asked. Candidates are expected to listen carefully to instructions and passage which is read to them and answer the questions in the spaces provided in the answer sheet.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Works on the grammar of English in Cameroon are rare. Moreover, works on the grammar of the English production of learners at the primary level are non-existent. The few grammar works identified described the English of advanced learners. The previous researchers who have tackled this domain include: Mbasi-Manga (1973, 1976), Todd (1982), Simo Bobda (1983, 1986), Mbangwana (1986, 1987) and Sala (2003). These researchers have reached the following conclusions:

The misuse of “meanwhile”

Example:

- a) I’m from Bamenda...meanwhile Arrey is from Mamfe. Instead of (“I’m from Bamenda while/whereas Arrey is from Mamfe”).

Wrong use of relative pronouns:

- a) There was a certain assignment that the teacher didn’t give us the marks.
(... whose marks the teacher didn’t give us)

Unusual pluralisation:

- a) The Bakweris”, the Ngembas”
- b) PTA- parents/teachers association instead of (parent/teacher association)

Inaccurate use of prepositions:

- a) The film is scheduled against tomorrow.
Instead of (...”scheduled for tomorrow”)
- b) Ateh married her when they were in the US.
Instead of (“Ateh got married to her when they were in the US”)

The conventional wh- structure, yes/no and tag questions are distorted There are cases where tone rather than wh- movement is used for questioning as seen below:

- a) Your name is who? Instead of (‘what is your name?)
- b) Stella is at home? For, (“Is Stella at home?)

- c) He has not returned, isn't it? Instead of ("he has not returned, has he?")

Wh- word in root clauses was illustrated in the sentences that follow:

- 1- You are going where?
Where are you going?
- 2- He is eating what?
What is he eating?

Yes/no questions show the same word order as ordinary statements:

Example:

- 1- You are breaking your fast?
Are you breaking your fast?
- 2- The children are studying?
Are the children studying?

The present paper examines the written productions in English of primary school leavers i.e. pupils who have been educated in English for six years at the primary level. The frame adopted is Corder's Error Analysis (1974). Error analysis is a branch of applied linguistics which focuses on the gathering of errors of second language learners and also investigates aspects of second language acquisition.

Corder viewed errors as being significant to three groups of persons: learners, teachers and researchers. Firstly errors give valuable information to teachers as regards learners' progress in learning and what he still needs to learn. Secondly errors also provide researchers with clues into the process of second language acquisition (SLA) and the strategies learners employ in learning the target language. Thirdly, errors are significant to the learner himself. It helps him test his knowledge about the nature of the language he is learning. He suggested the following steps in EA research: (1) collection of a sample of learner language; (2) identification of errors; (3) description of errors; (4) explanation of errors; (5) evaluation of errors.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section considers the setting (3.1), the informants (3.2), the textual material (3.3), and the method of data analysis (3.4).

3.1 The Setting

The setting of this study is Meme Division in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. This Division is made up of Kumba, Mbonge, and Konye Subdivisions, with headquarter in Kumba connects five of the six administrative divisions that make up the SWR, a position that makes The city of Kumba is the centre of economic and business life in the Region. With about 106,000 inhabitants, it represents the seventh most populated city in

Cameroon comprising roughly 14% of the population in the Southwest Region (Ngoasong 2007).

3.2 The Informants

The population of this study is made up of primary school pupils in Kumba and its neighbouring rural localities such as Mbonge and Konye sub divisions. This sample population helps us evaluate pupil's performance in the F.S.L.C English language paper. The choice of primary school and class six in particular was based on the fact that, it is the initial level of education and the first ever academic certificate and a good foundation on English grammar will ensure future academic successes. The choice to conduct this study in Meme Division gave the researcher a better chance to reduce some of the assumed limitations, that is, cost, coordination and monitoring of research activities and time management, to the study.

3.3 The Textual Material

The research material used in this study is past FSLC examination English language composition scripts. Past FSLC English language scripts was collected for the 2014, 2015 and 2016 academic year. The researcher collected precisely the composition paper. The reason for choosing composition paper was to enable the researcher to analyze pupils English language grammar. A total number of 168 scripts were randomly collected from all the five sub divisions that make up meme division. We collected 84 scripts from the urban area (Kumba) and 84 scripts from the rural area (Mbonge and Konye). In order to successfully collect data that will cover the entire academic years under study, we collected 28 scripts per academic year. That is, the urban area (Kumba), 28 scripts were collected for the year 2014, 28 for 2015 and 28 for 2016, making a total of 84 scripts. The same was the case with the rural area (Mbonge and Konye).

The focus of this study is on the composition section, which is section D on paper I. Here, students are expected to write a composition of about 150 words on the scripts provided, and they are expected to present their facts in an orderly manner. Composition writing is graded on 10 marks with duration of 20minutes and it represents 25% of paper 1. Things considered when correcting scripts include: legibility, meaning, coherence, presentation of materials and respect of instructions.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

This section describes how the textual material will be analyzed in chapter 4. Data was analyzed following Corder's error analysis and the model grammar for this study is Quirk and Green Baum. Below is a five-stage procedure for the

analysis of errors elaborated by SP Corder and his followers. The stages include:

- i. Collection of a sample of learner language.
- ii. Identification of errors.
- iii. Description of errors.
- iv. Explanation of errors.
- v. Evaluation of errors.

Error analysis shows the different errors with a view to decide which ones should receive instruction. After following the five steps of error analysis outlined by Corder, a frequency count was done for each error type. Also to analyze the collected data, it was presented in the form of a statistical table with percentages. The frequency of an error of a particular error type was gotten by counting the number of times the same error appeared in the corpus of the study (Z%), was obtained from the division of the number of errors to that sub error category (Q) per the total number of errors (T) and the error was multiplied by one hundred as shown in below:

Same errors to a particular error type = Z

Total number of errors to that sub category of error = Q

Total number of scores = T

Multiplied by a 100%

$Z\% = Q / T \times 100 / 1$

Concretely, if there were 25 errors of the same sub category of errors, we took the 25 and divided by the total number of errors of that particular error type and multiplied by 100 to get the percentage score of that item. For example, 25 divided by 150 multiplied by 100 = 16.66%. The calculation was rounded up to two decimal points to ease data interpretation and representation.

4. ANALYSIS OF ERRORS IDENTIFIED

The errors identified are grouped under the labels: morphemic and word errors. Morphemic error was further sub divided under: inflectional morpheme error and derivational morpheme error, while word error was divided into wrong choice of words, wrong spelling and misuse of capital letters, omission of capital letters, preposition errors, article errors, pronoun errors and redundant words. It is worth mentioning that there are many errors in each sentence but the error being discussed is highlighted.

4.1 Morphemic Errors

Morphemes are the smallest meaningful units of grammar (Todd, 1987). There are two types of morpheme; bound and free morphemes. A bound morpheme cannot be uttered alone with meaning whereas; free morphemes can be uttered alone with meaning. Bound morphemes can be classified under inflectional and derivative morphemes. Derivational

morpheme can take the place of a prefix and a suffix and the change the word class, whereas inflectional morphemes takes the place of a suffix only and do not change the word class. In the corpus of this study a total of 276 morphemic errors were identified. The section considers errors made in the use of inflectional morpheme (4.1.1) and the errors made in the use of derivational morphemes (4.1.2).

4.1.1 Errors Made in the Use of Inflectional Morphemes

Inflectional morphemes are used to mark grammatical information that is, it can change or indicate the tense of a word. From the corpus of the study it was identified that most pupils committed errors in the use of inflectional morphemes. A total of 240 inflectional morpheme errors were identified and grouped under the labels omission of the plural form of words (4.1.1.1), omission of the 3rd person present tense marker -S (4.1.1.2), misuse of plural -S (4.1.1.3), genitive case omission 'S (4.1.1.4), omission of the V-ed (4.1.1.5), the misuse of the V-ed form (4.1.1.6), wrong use of the V-ing form (4.1.1.7). Each is taken up in turn.

4.1.1.1 Omission of the Plural Form of Words

In English language, the plural marker is indicated by the addition of -S to a noun. Omission errors occur when an item that must appear in a well formed utterance in written form is absent. The class six pupils frequently made this error in the FSLC examination scripts. Below are sentences extracted from past FSLC examination scripts:

- 1) The was lot of food and drink that day.
- 2) We went to buy gifts for our parent.
- 3) I invited so many people which I know e.g. my relative.
- 4) We went to my grandmother house and she gave us food and drink.

From the above sentences, we realized that pupils omitted the plural morpheme (-S) after a noun. In sentence (1) the noun "drink" is in its singular form whereas the preceding phrase "lot of food" signifies a large quantity. Thus, the noun "drink" is supposed to have an -S at the end to make it plural, since food go along with drinks. In sentence (2) "we enjoy ourself", the pronoun "ourself" is erroneous. This is because the subject "we" indicates plural; hence the pronoun "ourself" needs to be written in the plural form. The correct version of the above sentence is seen below:

- 1) There was much food and drinks.
- 2) We went to buy gifts for our parents.
- 3) I invited many people especially my relatives.
- 4) We went to my grandmother's house and she gave us food and drinks.

Next is omission of the 3rd person present tense marker.

4.1.1.2 Omission of the 3rd Person Present Tense Marker

In the English language, the 3rd person present tense marker is indicated by the addition of -S to the verb. In pupils' composition it was observed that the V-s form of the verb is usually omitted. That is, the V form is used where V- s is expected as seen in the examples listed below:

- 1) We cannot prevent Ebola because it *kill* in days.
- 2) When it *come* it kill in two day.
- 3) Each time I look at my dress, it remind me of my birthday.

The above sentences show clear instances of omission of the 3rd person present tense marker in pupils' composition scripts. For example in sentence (1) "we cannot prevent Ebola because it Kill in days." the verb "kill" is in its base form instead of the V-s form. That is, the 3rd person present tense marker -S has been omitted. This makes the sentence erroneous.

Also, in sentence (2) "when it come it kill in two day" the -S morpheme is omitted. The verb "come" is supposed to take the -S marker to make it 3rd person present tense but this was not the case. As seen in sentence (3) "each time I look at my dress, it remind me of my birthday", the verb "remind" which is supposed to be written in the 3rd person present tense, is written in the base form. This error type can be said to be a negative transfer from Pidgin since the 3rd person present tense is unmarked; some pupils' tend to translate the forms of Pidgin onto English, thus leaving out the 3rd person present tense marker. Just as Pidgin verbs in the third person present tense does not take the -S morpheme, so too do the pupils leave English verbs in the base form where the V-s form is expected. The correct version of the sentences is seen below:

- 1) We cannot prevent Ebola because it kills in days.
- 2) When Ebola comes, it kills in two days.
- 3) Each time I look at my dress, it reminds me of my birthday celebration.

4.1.1.3 Misuse of the Plural Form

In English language, nouns fall under count and uncountable nouns. Countable nouns take the plural form -S, whereas the uncountable nouns do not take the plural form. In the corpus of this study, it was noted that some pupils wrongly used the plural. That is, they insert an unnecessary plural marker -S to an uncountable noun. Some misused it by adding the -S to a verb. The error type identified

below is labeled "misuse of the plural form". Below are examples of the wrong use of plural.

- 1) we eat fufu and eru, chicken chips and many other foods.
- 2) we had a lot of funs.
- 3) I enjoy the foods, greetings, visitings and plays.

Form the above examples; pupils misused the plural marker -S. For example in sentence (1) the word "food" is an uncountable noun which cannot be counted but this candidate added an unnecessary plural -S to it. This makes this sentence erroneous and can be liken to an error of overgeneralization. The same is the case sentence (2) where an unnecessary -S plural has been added to the word "fun" which is an uncountable noun. Also, the misuse of plural is seen in sentence (3) "I enjoy the foods, greetings, visitings and plays. Here, the words "food", "visitings", and "plays" are written with an -S that is not needed. This makes the sentence ungrammatical. "Visiting" is an adjective that should not take a plural morpheme. These sentences can be likened to the interference of Pidgin in pupils' use of English grammar. Consider the Pidgin construction below:

- i. Gi mi dat buk dem
Lit: give me that book PL
i.e.: Give me those books

As this example show, in Pidgin nouns do not take plural through inflections. This difference in English and Pidgin plurality causes a fluent Pidgin speaker to transfer the system from Pidgin to English, there by misusing plural when speaking or writing English. Below are the correct versions of the sentences:

- 1) We ate different varieties such as fufu and eru, and chicken chips.
- 2) We had a lot of fun.
- 3) I enjoyed the food.

4.1.1.4 Genitive Case Omission

Genitives in the English language are formed by adding an -'S to a noun which denotes possession. There were instances of genitive case omission noticed in the corpus of this study. That is, nouns that needed the genitive case marker to indicate possessive were without it. Below are some example sentences to illustrate this error.

- 1) I celebrated my birthday in my anty house.
- 2) I left with my friend and we went to my uncle house.
- 3) We when to our grandmother house and we eat popcorn, grannut.

As seen above, candidates omitted the genitive case maker -'S. for example in sentence (1), the phrase "my anty house" indicates that the house

belongs to the aunt; which means possession, but the candidate failed to include or add the –S maker. This makes the sentence ungrammatical. Also, in sentence (2) “I left with my friend and we went to my uncle house” the phrase “my uncle house” is indicative of possession. It belongs to the uncle and it is supposed to take the possessive marker –S to make it grammatically acceptable in the English language. The genitive case omission above can be considered as a case of negative transfer from Pidgin English. In CP, the genitive case marker –S is unmarked. Rather it is the marker “Yi” that precedes the noun to signify possession. It is worth mentioning that in CP “Yi” also denotes 3rd person possessive pronoun. Consider the following examples:

- i. Stella yi buk
Lit: Stella her book
i.e.: Stella’s book

As these examples show, in Pidgin the genitive marker –S is unmarked. The structural difference between English and CP genitives could be the reason why some pupils’ omit it in their written and oral productions. The dual function of Yi in CP might pose learning problems to learners of English. This error type can be said to be an interlingual error, because genitive distinction does not exist in CP. Below are the correct versions of the sentences:

- 1) I celebrated my birthday at my aunt’s house.
- 2) My friend and I went to my uncle’s house.
- 3) We went to my grandmother’s house and ate popcorn and groundnut.

4.1.1.5 Omission of the V-ed form

In English the V form of the verb occurs in the present tense in all persons (I, you, we, you, they eat) except the third person singular (he, she, it eats). In regular verbs, this morpheme is added to the verb base as in “walk – walked” whereas in irregular verbs, the verb base is modified in various ways as in “sleep – slept”. In the data collected, the pupils consistently used the V form when the V-ed was expected, as the illustrations below show:

- 1) I *help* my mother to prepare food.
- 2) My father *bring* me a cake, toys, book, dress and many school things.
- 3) I *feel* very happy because my mother bought me a new dresses.

The verb “help” in sentence (1) above is in its base form which was supposed to take an “-ed” since it is a regular verb and the event being recounted is in the past. This makes the sentence erroneous. The candidate committed the error of omission of the V-ed, V form used in place of V-ed. On the other hand, the verb “bring” in sentence (2) is an irregular verb, and as mentioned earlier, irregular

verb base in the English language is modified in various ways in the past tense and since the story being told took place in the past, the verb “bring” is supposed to be “brought”. Sentence (3) reads “*I feel very happy because my mother bought me a new dresses*”. This sentence gives one the impression that the candidate is expressing his state of mind as of the time he was writing the composition test. However, the event recounted is in the past as seen in the subordinate clause “*my mother bought me ...*”. The presence of the verb “bought” indicates past action. Thus the verb “feel” should be “felt”. As can be observed in the compound sentence, the candidate is inconsistent in tense usage. He fluctuates from present tense in the main clause to the past tense in the subordinate clause. These errors seem to be a case of negative transfer from Pidgin English. Here verbs tend to be in the V- form in all persons; besides, there is no distinction between regular and irregular verbs. Below are a few illustrations:

- i. Yi go school
Lit: she go school
i.e.: She went to the school

As these examples show, in Pidgin the V form is used where the V-ed form is expected in English. The correct version of the above sentences is seen below:

- 1) I helped my mother to prepare food.
- 2) My father brought a cake, toys, a book, a dress and my school items.
- 3) I felt very happy because my mother bought me a pair of new shoes and a new dress.

4.1.1.6 Misuse of the V-ed form

Pupils sometimes add the –ed past suffix to irregular verbs. This can also be termed as verb regularization which is a system whereby irregular verb patterns are regularized thereby producing incorrect past tense forms. For example a child will use a word like “maked” when addressing a situation in the past. Pupils often apply the V-ed formation rule, but they unfortunately extend this rule to irregular verbs as the examples listed below show:

- 1) My birthday was very interesred.
- 2) I am going to celebrated my birthday in our house.
- 3) I had my shower I wored my dress and make myself good

The above illustrations are instances where pupils over regularize verbs forms and used derivational rules to create new words. As seen above pupils take an irregular verb and give it a regular verb pattern in the past tense. This error can be said to be as a result of overgeneralization of rules. Example (1) above illustrates how the word “interested” has been misused. “Interested” in the

normal sense of the word, describes a person who has a feeling of wanting to know or learn more about something, but this is not the case with sentence (1). Rather, the candidate should have used the word “interesting” since he/she is describing that thing that made them feel that way. People feel interested in something because that thing is interesting.

Also, as shown in example (2) above, the word “celebrated” has been wrongly used. The preceding verb “going to” indicates that this event is still to take place and this does not correlate with the word “celebrated” which has been inflected in the past tense. This renders understanding difficult. Below are the correct versions of the sentences.

- 1) My birthday was very interesting.
- 2) I am going to celebrate my birthday in our house.
- 3) After taking a shower I wore my dress and looked good.

4.1.2 Errors in the Use of Derivational Morphemes

Derivational morphology talks about how morphemes can be used to create new words. According to Paramita .K (2018), derivational morphology “studies the principles governing the construction of new words, without reference to the specific grammatical role a word might play in a sentence”. Derivational morphology creates new words from old ones (Crystal, 2011). It can change the part of speech of the meaning of a word. For example the suffix -ly modifies adjectives into adverbs “quick = quickly. In the corpus of this study a total of 36 derivational errors were identified. They are grouped under the labels errors in compounding (4.1.2.1), wrong suffix (4.1.2.2), and the absence of suffix (4.1.2.3), were identified. Each is taken up in turn

4.1.2.1 Errors in Compounding

The morphological process known as compounding is a process that depends on the combination of at least two free morphemes, such as black + board (blackboard). Quirk *et al.*, (1985), states that “a compound word may be open when its constituent morphemes are written separately as in tear gas and fire engine, it may be hyphenated as in far- fetched and it may be solid when the constituents are written together as in classroom”. Compound words can be formed through diverse parts of speech. They include: noun + noun, noun + verb, noun + adverb, verb + noun, verb + adverb, adverb + noun, adjective + noun, adverb + verb. It was observed in the corpus of the study that some Class Six pupils do not have good knowledge of the compounding process. This study reveals that some solid compounds were written as open compound. Below are some examples to illustrate this claim:

- 1) Do not abuse some one
- 2) To be come a nurse I will like to read hard and pass my exans.
- 3) From every thing I have reating I my self I have learn that ebola is bad.

These errors may be due to the ignorance of some restrictions to certain morphological rules. In sentence (1) “do not abuse some one” above, the word “someone” has been written as an open compound; two separate words which is against the rule of most compound nouns which is supposed to be written as one word. The same is the case with sentence (2) “To be come a nurse I will like to read hard and pass my exans” where the word “become” has been written as two separate words, thus rendering understanding difficult. Furthermore, in sentence (3) “From every thing I have reating I my self I have learn that ebola is bad” “everything” and “myself” are written as separate words and this makes it erroneous and renders understanding difficult. This type of error can be likened to errors of word combination:

- 1) Do not abuse anyone
- 2) To become a nurse, I will study hard to pass my exams.
- 3) From everything I have written, I have learnt that Ebola is bad.

The next error category to be analyzed under derivational morphemes is the use of wrong suffix.

4.1.2.2 Wrong Suffix

Suffixes are morphemes which can only occur when joined to other morphemes or root, stem or base form of a word. These are bound morphemes which cannot exist on their own. In this study, some pupils used suffixes erroneously, that is, inappropriate suffixes were attached to wrong words. The candidates were unable to tell when to use what suffix. Below are example sentences to illustrate the use of wrong suffix:

- 1) My best profession is teacher that is what have chosen teacher I what child to be teach very well and by enducative.
- 2) My birthday was very interested and I was very happy.
- 3) My father was very happily with me and even my family

The word *teacher* in sentence (1) has been wrongly written. A teacher is someone whose job is teaching. So when talking about the profession, it is wrong to use the word “teacher” rather the candidate should use the word “teaching” which refers to the profession of a teacher. Still on this same sentence, the last word *educative* was wrongly written. *Educative* is an adjective which means

something serving to educate. This is not the intended meaning of the sentence. Since the writer was talking about teachers teaching students very well, it could be implied that he was referring to teachers giving pupils good education. Thus the right word should be “education” which is a noun and not “educative” and adjective.

In sentence (2), the word *interested* was wrongly written. Interested is an adjective that means to show concern or live for something, but this was not the intended meaning of the sentence. Sentence two was talking about something that made the writer happy, that is, his birthday made him happy. Thus the right word to use in this case is “interesting” which means something that catches the attention of someone or arouses his interest or curiosity. Another instance of the wrong use of suffix is seen in sentence (3) where the word *happily* was wrongly written using the wrong suffix. Happily is an adverb which means feelings of pleasure and satisfaction. This word was erroneously used since the sentence is talking about state of the father and the family, hence to be happy is a state of being pleased with something. Happy is an adjective which was supposed to be used, since it describes the state of the father who was pleased with the son on his birthday. Thus the right word to be used is “happy” and not “happily”. This error can be likened to an error of over generalization or ignorance of some restriction to certain morphological rules. Below is the correct version of the above sentences:

- 1) My best profession is teaching. I want children to be taught very well and given good education.
- 2) My birthday was very interesting and that made me very happy.
- 3) My family members were very happy with me.

The next category is the absence of suffix.

4.1.2.3 Absence of Suffix

As stated above, a suffix is a bound morpheme that cannot stand alone. It must be attached to a root word to bring out the complete sense of the word. In this case, some candidates failed to attach a suffix where it was needed hence constructing erroneous sentences. Below are some examples:

- 1) To conclude if I be a teach I will good to the school and teach.
- 2) AIV infect are it kills people and if you have the illness you will go to the hospital and inform the doctor about it.

In sentence (1) “to conclude if I be a teach I will good to the school and teach”, the word “teach” has been wrongly written. That is, it has been written omitting the suffix “er”. This makes the sentence ungrammatical. The word “teach” means to impart knowledge, meanwhile, a “teacher” is someone who teaches especially in schools. From the above sentence, the candidate is talking about what he would do if he becomes a teacher in future. Hence, the word “teach” is supposed to take the suffix “er” to make it grammatical. Also, sentence (2) shows an instance of the absence of suffix. In the sentence “AIV infect are it kills people and if you have the illness you will go to the hospital and inform the doctor about it”, the word “infect” is wrongly written. This makes it ungrammatical. The word “infect” means to be contaminated, whereas “infection” means the state of being infected. In sentence (2) above, the candidate is talking about an infectious disease “HIV/AIDS” that kills. So, it is appropriate to add the suffix “ion” to the root word “infect” to derive the word “infection”. Below is the correction of the above sentences:

- 1) If I become a teacher, I will teach in schools.
- 2) HIV infection kills people.

Table 1: Summary of morphemic errors

Summary of morphemic errors		
Error sub-type	Number of occurrence	Percentage %
Inflectional morpheme errors	240	86.95%
Derivational morpheme errors	36	13.04%
Total errors involving morphemes	276	100%

As table 16 show, inflectional morpheme recorded 86.95% of 276 cases, while derivational morpheme recorded 13.04%. There are different causes related to morphological errors in this study. Firstly, the negative transfer from other languages such as: Pidgin, native language, French and the mother tongue. Many students do word-for-word translation from one language to the other. For example, pupils transfer features from Pidgin into English. In other words, they literally translate from

Pidgin to English. Secondly, overgeneralization of rules is another cause of morphological errors. In most cases, pupils overgeneralize morphological rules e.g. they generalize the past tense form of regular verbs (V-ed) and use on irregular verbs, thereby creating strange new words like “maked” and “goed”. Thirdly, the complex nature of English language makes understanding difficult for pupils especially in the formation of the past tense of

irregular verbs as well as the formation of some plural nouns.

4.2 Word Errors

A total of 666 word errors were found in the corpus of this study. They are classified under wrong choice of words (4.2.1), wrong spelling (4.2.2), misuse of capital letters (4.2.3), omission of capital letters (4.2.4), preposition errors (4.2.5), article errors (4.2.6), pronoun errors (4.2.7), and redundant words (4.2.8). Each is taken up in turn

4.2.1 Wrong Choice of Words

In the English language, there are words that look alike but have diverse meanings. In the corpus of this study, it was identified that some pupils wrongly select words when constructing sentences. Below are some example sentences to illustrate this claim:

1. People come to you to pass the confetions and you pray for them.
2. Be attentive in school, pass you education.
3. I talk many things to school pop corn, corn and grnot and sheard to my teacher friends.
4. I will advice another child to eat fruit like apple.

From the corpus of the study, it was identified that some pupils had serious problems with choosing the right words and fitting them in appropriate places. They used words that were different in meaning with what they were saying was what they used in sentences. For example in sentence (1), “people come to you to pass the confession and you pray for them” the candidate was trying to explain how Christians confess their sins to a priest who in turn, prays for them. The word “pass” could have been left out or better still the word “make” would have been the most suitable choice of word in this sentence. The meaning of the word “pass” means succeeding in something and this makes the sentence erroneous and renders comprehension difficult. The revised version of the sentence is “people confess their sins and you forgive them”.

Another instance of wrong choice of word is seen in sentence (2), “be attentive in school, pass you education”. The word “education is not supposed to appear in this sentence, since it is a process of teaching and learning to improve knowledge and develop skills (Oxford dictionary). Rather, the candidate was supposed to use the word “exam” which means a formal test whether written, spoken or practical test at school (Oxford dictionary). Still on the same sentence, the word “school” is a wrong choice. People are attentive in class and not in school. The correct version should be “be attentive in class in order to pass your exam”. Also in sentence (3), there is an instance of the wrong choice of word. The sentence reads “I talk many things to school pop corn, corn and grnot and sheard to my teacher friends”. The word “talk” refers to human beings speaking to each other. However this is not the meaning of the sentence. In order words the sentence is “I speak many things to school pop corn, corn and grnot and sheard to my teacher friends”. Things don’t talk, only human beings do, thus the presence of the word “talk” makes the sentence erroneous. This error can be as a result of inadequate vocabulary. Their word bank is insufficient causing them to choose inappropriate words. Also this wrong choice of word errors can be as a result of interference from the mother tongue or translation errors where pupils who are bilingual, do word for word translation from their first language. Some wrong choice of word errors come as a result of wrong spelling. The correct version of the above sentences is seen below:

1. People pray and confess their sin.
2. To succeed, you must be attentive in class.
3. I took popcorn and groundnut to school and shared with friends.
4. My advice to children is for them to eat fruits especially apple.

4.2.2 Spelling error

From the corpus of this study, many spelling errors were identified. Below are some cases of misspelling identified in pupils’ composition in the F.S.L.C examination English language paper.

NO	Error	Causes	Correction
	Pow pow	Spelling pronunciation	Pawpaw
	Wach	Spelling pronunciation	Wash
	Firs	Omission error	First
	Orang	Omission error	Orange
	Fut	Omission error	Fruit
	Becuase	Adjacent reversal	Because
	Anut	Adjacent reversal	Aunt
	Mangoses	Insertion error	Mangoes
	Ploum	Insertion error	Plum
	Ret	Devoicing of final consonant	Red

The above examples display misspelled words identified in pupils' compositions. Some pupils' spell words as they are pronounced for example the word "chicken" is spelled "chicking" just as it is pronounced. Other examples of misspelled words such as "ellote", "becus", "osau" are spelled just as they are pronounced. From the above examples, we realize that pupils have a very serious problem with spelling. The word "powpow" as seen in the table is wrongly spelled. Instead of the vowel sound "a" between the two consonant sounds, this candidate wrote the sound "o" which makes it erroneous. Since the word "pawpaw" has the "ɔ:" sound and is transcribed as /Pɔ: Pɔ:/, the child decides to spell the word as it is pronounced. This error can be said to have its origin from the phonetics of the word.

The word "wach" (wash) is the next on the table. This word is spelled with the /tʃ/ sound at the end instead of the /ʃ/ sound. This makes it erroneous. This error can be likened to an error of interference from Cameroon Pidgin, where the word is pronounced as /wɔʃ/. The next erroneous word is "firs" (first) is spelled without the final consonant sound "t". This is a case of spelling omission. This error seems to be as a result of the influence of Cameroon Pidgin where the final "t" of the word "first" is omitted.

4.2.3 Misuse of Capital Letters

From the corpus of this study, it was identified that some pupils' misuse capital letters. That is, they insert a capital letter where it is not needed. Consider the examples below:

1. My best profession is foot Ball erer went I was a child, I always dream of being a footBaller.
2. I like This occupation becuse nurse thy look very neat.
3. We prepar some Food on my birthday.
4. my Birthday is on 4 September in 2004.

In sentence (1) "my best profession is football erer went I was a child I always dream of being a foot Baller" the word "fooballer" has been written with a capital letter "B" in the middle of the word. The literal translation of this sentence is "my best profession is footballer when I was a child I always dream of being a footballer". It is unnecessary and ungrammatical to write a capital letter in the middle of a word. Also, in sentence (2) "I like this occupation becuse nurse thy look very neat" the word "this" has been written with a capital letter "T" in the middle of a sentence. This makes the sentence ungrammatical. Another instance of misuse of capital letters is seen in sentence (3) "we prepar some Food on my birthday". From this sentence, we

can see the misuse of capital letter by the candidate. The word "food" has been written with a capital "F" which makes the sentence erroneous. The correction of the above sentences is seen below:

1. Since I was a child I have always dreamt of becoming a footballer.
2. I love the nursing profession because they always look very neat.
3. Food was prepared on my birthday.
4. My birthday was on September 4, 2004.

4.2.4 Omission of Capital Letters

In the English language rule of capitalization, you must capitalize names and other proper nouns, the first word of every sentence, capitalize days, months, and holidays, names of cities, countries nationalities and languages just name but these. From the corpus of this study, it was identified that some pupils' omitted capital letters where it was needed. Consider the sentences below:

1. my Birthday is on 4 September in 2004.
2. my birthday was maDe in 8 march 2016.
3. my birthday is on wednesday 4th 2016 may when they made my birthday.
4. So one day I was wash a football match the two countries who wew playing are brazil and portugal.

In sentence (1) "my birthday" is on 4 September in 2004", the first word of the sentence has been written with a small letter, hence violation the capitalization rule that states that "you must capitalize the first word of every sentence". Also in sentence (2) "my birthday was made in 8 march 2016" there is the omission of capital letter. The first word "my" in this sentence is not capitalized, and the month "March" is written with a small letter. This has violated the rule of capitalization that says "you must capitalize days, months and holidays". The omission of capital letter error can be likened to the non-mastery of the capitalization rules. The correction of the above sentences is seen below:

1. My birthday was on September 4, 2004.
2. My birthday was celebrated on March 8, 2016.
3. My birthday was on Wednesday May 4, 2016.
4. I watched a match between Brazil and Portugal.

4.2.5 Errors of Punctuation

The intentions and message of a writer can be misunderstood because of inaccurate punctuation. The data under study shows that most pupils lack the knowledge of punctuation. Example sentences are presented below and the part that needs a punctuation mark is indicated by a gap between the preceeding word and the one that

follows the punctuation mark. Consider the examples below:

1. On the first day my mother delivered me [] my mother mark my celebration [] I watch it on the television and I see as there were dances in the television [] and I see it there live [] it was about dances for the celebration [].
2. The diseases spread in many ways [] it can spread easily by touching dead bodies, eating dead animals like bats, gorilla and monkey, by touching urine, sweat and feces etc.
3. It is not necessary to prevent Ebola [] because it spreads quickly [] we can not prevent Ebola [] because it kills in days.

In sentence (1) "on the first day my mother delivered me my mother mark my celebration I watch it on the television and I see as there were dances in the television and I see it there live it was about dances for the celebration", there is the absence of commas and a final full stop. The literal translation of this sentence is "on the first day my mother delivered me my mother made my celebration I watch it on the television and I see as there were dances in the television and I see it there live it was about dances for the celebration". Also, in sentence (2) "The diseases spread in many ways it can spread easily by touching dead bodies, eating dead animals like bats, gorilla and monkey, by touching urine, sweat and feces etc" there is the omission of a full stop after "was". It should have been "the disease spreads in many ways". It can spread easily by touching... This type of error can be likened to developmental errors. The correction of the above sentences is seen below:

- a. My mother celebrated my birth the same day I was born, and I later watched it on television.
- b. This disease spreads in many ways; it can spread easily by touching dead bodies, eating dead animals like bats, gorillas etc.
- c. It is difficult to prevent Ebola because it spreads quickly.

4.2.5 Errors in the Use of Preposition

In the corpus of this study, a total of 35 errors were identified. Errors involving prepositions were sub-classified into different categories. They are as follows: selection of preposition (4.2.5.1), and preposition omission (4.2.5.2).

4.2.5.1 Selection of Preposition

From the corpus of this study, it was observed that pupils select incorrect prepositions and put in inappropriate places, which makes understanding difficult. Below are some examples related to the selection of preposition.

1. You shall come at Wednesday in 2:00am in the afternoon.

2. Powpow is good to the body.
3. The fruit I like best is apple it helps to give me vitamins and it helps to digestion after meal.
4. My birthday was in 24 July that was when the celebrate my birthday.

From the above examples, it could be said that in writing sentences, some pupils did not just make a single preposition error in a sentence, but there were double preposition error in a single sentence for example: in sentence (1), *you shall come at Wednesday in 2:00am in the afternoon*. In terms of classification, this candidate made two preposition selection errors, that is, in the use of "at" and "in". This candidate wrongly selected the preposition "at" to talk about when his event was supposed to take place, whereas the preposition "at" is used to indicate exact addresses. Rather, the candidate was supposed to use the preposition "on" which refers to more specific dates, for example "on Monday". As concerns the second preposition error "in", it was wrongly selected. The preposition "in" is used to describe location of someone or something at a particular point in time, but in this case, it was used to indicate time. According to VOA Learning English (2015), "English speakers use into refer to a general, longer period of time, such as months, years, decades, or centuries". "Moving to shorter, more specific periods of time, we use on to talk about particular days, dates, and holidays" (ibid). This error can be considered as an error of overgeneralization since the preposition "in" is used to describe longer period of time, some people turn to generalize the rule when talking about short and specific periods of time.

Another instance of wrong selection of preposition is seen in sentence (2), *powpow is good to the body*. The prepositions "to" and "for" are both used to talk about motive or reasons, however, the difference is in the fact that "to" is used with verbs, while "for" is used with nouns. So in this case it is erroneous because "to" is followed by a noun which is against the English language grammar rule. The most suitable preposition is "for" which talks about the importance of pawpaw in the body. Sentence (3) is quite similar to sentence (2) where a wrong preposition was selected to talk about the reasons for eating fruits. This type of error can be considered as an error of insufficient mastery of the English language preposition rules. The correction of the above sentences is seen below:

1. You will come on Wednesday at 2:00 pm.
2. Pawpaw is good for the body.
3. The fruit I like most is apple. It helps to give me vitamin, and it helps for digestion after meal.
4. My birthday was on July 24.

4.2.5.2 Preposition Omission

Errors are inevitable in the learning process of English as a second language to some Anglophone primary six pupils in Cameroon, especially the error in the use of preposition. From the corpus of the study it was identified that some pupils omit or drop prepositions where it was needed as seen in the sentences below.

1. My best fut – apple.
2. We go – my uncle house with my friend.
3. We go – the amusement park.

In sentence (1) “*my best fut – apple*” the candidate was talking about his/her preferred fruit, so there was the need for the preposition “*is*” to ease understanding. Another instance of preposition omission is seen, in sentences (2), and (3), where the preposition “*to*” was omitted. In English, the verb “*go*” is generally followed by the preposition “*to*” but this was not the case in the above examples where the preposition is occasionally deleted. In order for the last two above sentences to be clear and understood, the preposition “*to*” is inevitable. The correction is seen below:

1. There were many people on that day.
2. My best fruit is apple.
3. My friends and I went to my uncle’s house.
4. We went to the amusement park.

4.2.6 Errors in the Use of Articles

A total of 31 errors were recorded in the use of articles. These errors involve: article insertion (4.2.6.1), and article omission (4.2.6.2).

4.2.6.1 Article Insertion

In English language it is incorrect to write the date with the definite article “*the*”. From the corpus of this study, it was identified that some pupils’ misuse articles by inserting the definite article “*the*” before dates. This error sub-type is labeled “*articles insertion*”. Below are errors in the use of articles by class six primary school pupils in the FSLC examination scripts:

- 1) The day was on the 5thof May 2015.
- 2) My mother baked a dalishos cake a popcorn and groundnut.
- 3) On the day of my birthday my friend was there and we eat and drink and dance.

In sentence (2) “*my mother baked me a dalishos cake a popcorn and groundnut*”, the article “*a*” has been inserted where it is not necessary. This makes the sentence erroneous. Another instance of article insertion is seen in sentence (3) “*on the day of my birthday my friend were there and we eat and drink and dance*”. The definite article “*the*” has been inserted where it is not needed. Below is the correction of the errors in article insertion:

1. That day was May 5th, 2015.

2. My mother baked a delicious cake, popcorn and groundnut.
3. On my birthday, my friends came and we ate, drank, and danced.

4.2.6.2 Article Omission

Omission indicates situations in which pupils’ leave out an article where it is expected. From the sentences below, pupils’ omit the definite article “*the*” and the indefinite article “*a*”. The error type identified below is labeled “*article omission*”. Consider the article omission errors below:

1. Since I was a child I like to celebrate my birthday in – village.
2. My mother bought me – dress for my birthday.
3. People give me money and I bought – toy airoplane for myself.
4. She chases people out of – house.

In sentence 1 “*since I was a child I like to celebrate my birthday I – village*”, the definite article “*the*” has been omitted where it is needed. This makes it ungrammatical. This type of error can be considered a negative transfer from Pidgin English. Below is the correction of the above sentences:

1. Since I was a child I like to celebrate my birthday in the village.
2. My mother bought me a dress for my birthday.
3. People gave me money and I bought a toy airplane for myself.
4. She chased people from the house.

4.2.7 Errors in the Use of Pronouns

A total of 40 errors were identified in the use of pronouns. This section is grouped under the labels: objective personal pronoun insertion (4.2.7.1), pronoun substitution (4.2.7.2), when insertion (4.2.7.3). Each is taken up in turn.

4.2.7.1 Objective Personal Pronoun Insertion

From the corpus of this study, objective personal pronoun insertion was identified in pupils’ composition scripts. Below are some examples to illustrate this claim:

1. My friends enter the house when I was eating me.
2. As I was coming me back home I saw a very big snake.
3. ... We immediately left us to the Amiesment Park.

In sentence (1) “*my friends enter the house when I was eating me*” an unnecessary objective personal pronoun “*me*” was added to this sentence. This sentence is ungrammatical because of the presence of an item that is not needed. There was no need to add the pronoun “*me*” to this sentence. Also,

in sentence (2) “as I was coming me back home I saw a very big snake” an item that is not needed has been inserted. It is unnecessary to add the objective pronoun “me” in the middle of this sentence. Another instance of objective personal pronoun insertion is seen in sentence (3) “we immediately left us to the Amiesment Park”. In this sentence the pronoun “us” has been inserted where it is not needed, thus making the sentence ungrammatical. The correction of the above sentences is seen below:

1. My friends entered the house while I was eating.
2. As I was returning home, I saw a big snake.
3. We immediately left to the amusement park.

4.2.7.2 Pronoun Substitution

In English relative clauses are introduced with a variety of pronouns including which, who, where, that (see Quirk *et al.*, 1985). In their scripts pupils’ tend to substitute pronouns with a wrong one, for example “which” is used in place of “where”, “which” used in place of “that”, “who” is used in place of “whom”. Below are examples of pronoun substitution errors:

- 1) I invited so many people which I know.
- 2) My uncle who I have not seen in a very long time came home.
- 3) It was the time you forgive any one which has hurt you.

In sentence (1) “I invited so many people which I know” the pronoun “which” has been wrongly selected. “Which” means “asking for information specifying one or more people or things from a definite set or used referring to something previously mentioned when introducing a clause giving further information (definition from Oxford languages dictionary). From the above definitions, “which” in sentence (1) do not correspond to any of the categories. Another instance of pronoun substitution is seen in sentence (2) “my uncle who I have not seen in a very long time came home”. The pronoun “who” has been wrongly selected, making the sentence ungrammatical. However, the most suitable pronoun to be used in sentence (2) should be “whom”. Below are the correct versions of the above sentences:

1. I invited many people that I know.
2. My uncle, whom I had not seen for a very long time, came home.
3. It was time to forgive those who hurt you.

4.2.7.3 When Insertion

From the corpus of this study, it was identified that a candidate inserted an unnecessary wh- word where it is not needed. Below is an example sentence to illustrate this claim:

- 1) To begin with the day when I entered into this world is was October 13 2005.

- 2) We can prevent Ebola when some hygiene rule is follow.
- 3) It was on the 28th of February 2016 that was when I was bone.

In sentence (1) “to begin with the day when I entered into this world is was October 13 2005” the wh- word “when” has been erroneously inserted. This wh- word is an unnecessary item in this sentence, hence making it ungrammatical. Also, in sentence (2), (3), (4) and (5), the wh-word “when” has been inserted where it is not needed, hence rendering these sentences erroneous. This type of error can be related to developmental error. The correct version of the above sentences is seen below:

1. To begin with, I was born on October 13, 2005.
2. We can prevent Ebola by observing some hygiene rules.
3. I was born on February 28th, 2016.

4.2.8 Redundant Words

Redundancies are unnecessary repetition of words or phrases in a sentence. These words make the sentence unnecessarily lengthy and poor. In the corpus of this study, there were instances of redundancies identified. Consider the sentences below:

1. To begin with the day when I entered into this world is was October 13 2005.
2. I like this occupation because nurse thy look very neat.
3. My birthday was so much expencev.

In sentence 1 “to begin with the day when I entered into this world is was October 13 2005”, the phrase “to begin with” is unnecessary. It has only made it longer. This sentence can be well constructed without this phrase. Also, the word “when” is redundant in this sentence. “When’ can be used as an adverb, conjunction, pronoun, and noun, but in this case, it is used as an adverb that talks about time. Still on this sentence, the word “into” is redundant. It is ungrammatical to say “entered into”. This sentence can be correct without these words. Another instance of redundancy is seen in sentence 2 “I like This occupation because nurse thy look very neat”. The literal translation of this sentence is “I like this occupation because nurse they look very neat”. From the literal translation, the word “they” is redundant, since it adds no meaning to the sentence. Below is the correction of the errors in redundancy:

1. I entered this world on October 13, 2005. Or I was born on October 13, 2005.
2. I like this profession because nurses look very neat.
3. My birthday celebration was very expensive.

Below is a table summarizing errors involving word.

Table 2: Summary of errors involving words

Summary of errors involving words		
Error sub-type	Number of occurrences	Percentage
Wrong choice of word	85	12.76%
Spelling errors	258	38.73%
Misuse of capital letters	12	1.80%
Omission of capital letters	10	1.50%
Errors of punctuation	190	28.52%
Errors in the use of preposition	35	5.25%
Errors in the use of articles	31	4.65%
Errors in the use of pronouns	40	6%
Redundant words	5	0.75%
Total errors involving words	666	100%

As seen in table 2, spelling error recorded 38.73% of 666 cases followed by errors of punctuation with 28.52%. Wrong choice of word error recorded 12.76%, while errors in the use of preposition recorded 5.25%. Errors in the use of pronouns recorded 6% of 666 cases. The use of articles recorded 4.65% of 666 cases of errors

involving words. The misuse of capital letters recorded 1.80%, while omission of capital letters recorded 1.50%. The least of all is redundant words with 0.75% of 666 cases.

Summary of Errors Identified

Table 3: Summary of errors identified

Count of errors identified		
Morphemic error	276	29.2%
Word error	666	70.7%
Total number of errors identified	942	100%

As seen on the table, errors involving word recorded 70.7% of 942 errors identified, while morpheme error recorded 29.2% of 942 errors.

from one language to the other. For example, pupils transfer features from Pidgin into English. In other words, they literally translate from Pidgin to English.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The main objective of the work was to identify specific grammar features in the written production of pupils and to examine factors that impeded the acquisition of English skills and its resulting poor output in the FSLC examination. The study reveals that pupils have very serious problem with the use of English language grammar. The answer to the research question is seen below. "What specific grammar features are observed in past FSLC composition paper?"

At the level of morphemes, inflectional morpheme recorded 86.95% of 276 cases, while derivational morpheme recorded 13.4%. It is clearly seen that inflectional morpheme errors recorded the highest number of errors involving morpheme, making it the most frequent error under this category. The different causes related to morphological errors in this study can be likened to the negative transfer from other languages such as: Pidgin, native language, French and the mother tongue. Many students do word-for-word translation

Secondly, overgeneralization of rules is another cause of morphological errors. In most cases, pupils overgeneralize morphological rules e.g. they generalize the past tense form of regular verbs (V-ed) and use on irregular verbs, thereby creating strange new words like "maked" and "goed". Thirdly, the complex nature of English language makes understanding difficult for pupils especially in the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs as well as the formation of some plural nouns.

Also, the analysis shows that pupils have very serious problem with word. The highest number of word errors was recorded under wrong spelling with 38.73% of 666 cases, followed by errors of punctuation with 28.52%.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main aim of this research has been to identify grammatical features in pupils' written production, and to identify factors that impede the acquisition of English skills and its resulting poor output in the FSLC examination English language

paper. In a bid to demonstrate that, it has been identified that different stakeholders contribute in one way or another in pupils' poor performance in the English language paper. So, on the basis of the findings of this study, there is really a need for an intensive study of English language grammar by Anglophone primary school pupils, especially by class six pupils who are preparing for the first ever certificate examinations, and the common entrance examination into a college.

For the teaching and learning of English language grammar to be effective in Anglophone primary schools, the Cameroon government has an important role to play, given the importance of English language around the world today. The government should ensure that the number of hours used in the teaching and learning of English should be increased and that English language grammar should not be limited to some classes in the primary school, rather it should begin from the kindergarten level. This would help a child to master the language very well before he/she enters the secondary school. Also, the government should make sure that those sent for inspection mission actually do their job. This is because it has been reported that some inspectors don't enter the classes to inspect teachers as they teach. Most of them remain in the head teachers office, sits there for a while and leave. This attitude of some pedagogic inspectors should be checked by the government in other to raise the awareness of these unscrupulous inspectors.

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