



**NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION**

A linguistic error analysis of examination scripts by students at the University of  
Namibia's Southern campus

By

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**THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
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**OCTOBER 2019**

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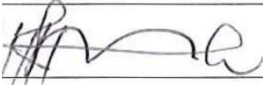
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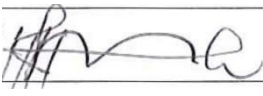
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**Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandmothers: Lusia K. Kapweya, Helena Nd. Shaumana and my grandfather Teofilus S. Nghitila who passed on while I was pursuing this study. Your utmost upbringing, inspirations, enthusiasm, hard work and advice encouraged me to work harder and to be strong during the production of this thesis. I also dedicate this thesis to my entire family, whose support and encouragement have been immense throughout my studies.

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## **Abstract**

At the University of Namibia Southern Campus, students commit recurrent written errors in daily tasks as well as examinations. This poor writing proficiency has been a great concern to the University of Namibia as the University is held accountable if it produces graduates who lack proficiency in writing. Writing is an integral part of any profession and an acceptable standard of writing in the official language is essential.

Therefore, it is against this background that this study aims to investigate linguistic errors made in the English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) examination answer scripts of the year 2018 by students at the University of Namibia, Southern Campus. The researcher used a combination of error analysis and document analysis as this study's theoretical framework. The qualitative method was used to identify the students' written errors from the examination scripts. A total of 72 students' answer scripts comprised the population of this study and 56 samples formed the sample size of this study. The 56 research samples were then analysed based on Corder's (1974) five steps in error analysis research, namely: (1) collection of a sample of learners' language; (2) identification of errors; (3) description of errors; (4) explanation of errors; and (5) evaluation of errors. The findings revealed that a total number of 17 categories of different types of errors were analysed from the students' examination scripts in the LEP 2500 module for the 2018 academic year.

These errors were classified into three major categories, namely: morphology, syntax and semantics. The observed errors in students' examination scripts were: errors in verb tense, subject verb agreement, use of pronouns, capitalisation, punctuation, articles, singular and plural linkage, use of inflections, use of auxiliary verbs, spelling, use of colloquialism, use of compounds, omission of letters, mis-selection of letters, mis-ordering of letters, and errors in sentences and paragraphs.

The study further revealed that these errors are attributed to: inter-lingual transfer, intra-lingual transfer; over-generalisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and technological interference. On the strength of the findings, the study recommends that English language instructions be emphasised across all the field of studies, provision of extensive online end of the semester examination reports, consider the process approach to teaching grammar and spelling, and a consideration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in all courses.

**Key words: error, error analysis, examination scripts**

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>L1</b>	First Language
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>TL</b>	Target Language
<b>EA</b>	Error Analysis
<b>DA</b>	Document Analysis
<b>CA</b>	Contrast Analysis
<b>BBA</b>	Bachelor of Business and Administration
<b>ESL</b>	English Second Language
<b>EFL</b>	English First Language
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>EAP</b>	English for Academic Purpose
<b>ESP</b>	English for Specific Purpose
<b>SVO</b>	Subject Verb Object
<b>LCA</b>	Learner Centered Approach
<b>LEP</b>	English Language and Literacy
<b>SMS</b>	Short Message Service
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>VTC</b>	Vocational Training Centre
<b>IUM</b>	International University of Management
<b>NUST</b>	Namibia University of Science and Technology
<b>UNAM</b>	University of Namibia

<b>FRPC</b>	Faculty Research and Publications Committee
<b>EFAL</b>	English First Additional Language
<b>MBESC</b>	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
<b>NIMT</b>	Namibia Institute of Mining and Technology

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Namibia gained its independence in 1990, after being colonised by various colonisers in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century such as Germany (1884), the British (1878), and the Boers by 1915. These transitions in the colonial era effected the official status of Afrikaans, and later English as official languages that were used in Namibia at the expense of native Namibian languages (Jansen, 1995, as cited in Lumbu, 2013). It was a norm during the colonial period, particularly during Apartheid, that the education system in Namibia was characterised by racial segregation, with different ethnic groups divided according to homelands and relegated to an inferior Bantu education system. Such an education system was largely meant to separate and divide native people in relation to their ethnic groups. According to Lumbu (2013), Afrikaans was then used as the medium of instruction in most parts of Namibia, whereas English was only used as a medium of instruction in private and elite schools.

Shortly after independence in 1990, Namibia perceived the need to have a new language policy for schools, colleges of education, and universities in order to promote mother tongue use, alongside English. A document called “The Language Policy for Schools: 1992-1996 and Beyond”, was formulated and implemented shortly afterwards. The Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture [MBESC] (2003), explicitly outlined that:

*5.1 Grade 4 will be a transitional year when the change to English as a medium of instruction must take place.*

*5.2 In Grades 5-7, English will be the medium of instruction. In the Upper Primary phase, the mother tongue may only be used in a supportive role and continues to be taught as a subject.*

*5.3 Grades 8-12 will be taught through the medium of English, and the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject.*

*5.4 Examinations: Grades 7, 10, and 12 national examinations will be taken through the medium of English, except for the mother tongue that is taken as a subject (p.4).*

However, due to ambiguous statements found in the Language Policy, and manipulation tactics by the policy implementers, there were discrepancies in the implementation of the language policy

from region to region. The policy implementers preferred teaching through English instead of the mother tongue.

Consequently, formerly disadvantaged learners were further marginalised in this process, as non-English speaking teachers were expected to teach through the medium of English, whereas examinations were also taken through English. Any teaching approach, including the learner-centered approach (LCA) to teaching advocated by the Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture, and the Ministry of Higher Education could not be easily realised if teachers and students lacked the necessary language skills and proficiency (MBESC, 2003).

Nevertheless, the implementation of English as the official language and its introduction as a medium of instruction in all state schools and schools subsidised by the government received diverse reactions from Namibians. Critics hold that English was fundamentally a foreign language, and a few people could speak it. Teachers and students of the time, who were largely incompetent in the usage of English, had to adjust to this reality and this created many challenges in education which are still evident to date (Benjamin, 2004).

To this day, twenty-nine years since English was adopted as the medium of instruction in all government and some private institutions, it is still perceived as a difficult and problematic language. Consequently, many learners are failing or passing English with lower symbols that sanction them placement in higher educational institutions since examinations are taken in English which is a foreign language.

The challenging nature of English in schools, particularly high schools is widely documented. Studies by Malaba, Wolfaardt, Shimhopileni, Munganda, and Compion (2007) observe the poor English language proficiency of Namibian students and the impact this has on the general academic performance of English by learners at Grade 10 and 12 national examinations and at tertiary levels.

According to Krishnamurthy, Kangira, Beukes, and Tjiramanga (2011), the level of written English expected at tertiary institutions has not been reached by the majority of students who joined the then Polytechnic of Namibia, now the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST). Like many students at other institutions in Namibia, those at the University of Namibia (UNAM)'s Southern Campus are not immune to such challenges.

As an attempt to get to the root of this problem, there has been growing interest amongst researchers to analyse what errors are commonly made by learners and students. For example, Kapolo (2013) conducted a research which analysed the writing errors that are made by grade 11 learners in ESL from the two selected secondary schools in the Omusati Education Region, in Namibia. The study revealed that as many as four hundred essays from two secondary schools in the region were analysed and errors were categorised into 16 types of errors. The most common errors identified were poor choice of words, spelling, punctuation, tenses, words omitted, singular/plural and capitalisation. Through qualitative analyses of the errors, the study further revealed that learners made many errors in the identified categories which were influenced by their first language. Intra-lingual transfer, fossilisation and overgeneralisation were further observed in their writing as other causes.

As for Corder (1967), students' errors indicate the processor discovering language, thus his views on students' errors are that there is a discrepancy between "transitional competencies" of students' target language (L2) and their first language (L1) (p.164). The author further argued that students use intrinsic internal linguistic processes to learn the language. Lado (1964) states that interference (negative transfer) is the negative influence of the mother tongue on the performance of the target language. Selinker (1972), defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language (p. 190). Crystal (1992) has defined error analysis as the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language. Errors are considered to be systematic, governed by rules, and appear because a student's knowledge of the rules of the target language is incomplete. Therefore, errors provide evidence about the nature of the language learning process.

The current study investigated linguistic errors made in the English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) year module's final examination answer scripts for 2018 by students at UNAM, Southern Campus. The final examination answer scripts for 2018 were analysed with particular attention to morphological, semantic and syntactical errors. Consequently, this study contributes to the development of the need-based curriculum at tertiary institutions. Thus, this study dealt with identifying written errors from selected written examination answer scripts of the academic year 2018, to determine the types of writing errors that are committed by undergraduate students of the aforesaid English module where English is the second language to these students.

However, although the researcher analysed students' written errors at morphological, syntactical and semantic levels, not all answers of this examination paper were analysed. The study only

focussed on the questions that required students to give answers at length such as; sentence-type answers, paragraphs and essay type answers. Shorter questions that require short answers, such as matching, and true and false questions did not form part of this study, because they do not require students to express themselves at length.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Linguistic error analysis studies have been done by many different linguists and researchers, such as Hourani (2008), Mungungu (2010), Sawalmeh (2013), Nghikembua (2014) and Maruma (2017) in various institutions. Some of these studies have revealed students' inability to differentiate between spoken and written language, not proofreading their work, negligence, and technological devices as some of the major contributing factors to student errors in English.

In the Namibian context, Krishnamurthy et al. (2011) documented the challenges in English faced by the majority of students at the then Polytechnic of Namibia, now NUST. At UNAM, Southern Campus students, commit similar written errors in daily tasks as well as examinations. This poor writing proficiency has been a great concern to the university as it is held accountable if it produces graduates who lack proficiency in writing. Writing is an integral part of any profession and an acceptable standard of writing in the official language is a critical skill.

Thus, this study aims to investigate the morphological, syntactical and semantic errors made by students registered in a year module known as English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) examination answer scripts of 2018 at the University of Namibia, Southern Campus.

## **1.3 Objective of the study**

The objective of this study was to investigate the morphological, syntactical and semantic errors in examination answer scripts of LEP 2500 students at UNAM, Southern Campus in 2018. The study sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What types of morpho-syntactic errors do the LEP 2500 students make in their written scripts?
- 2) What types of semantic errors do the LEP 2500 students make in their written scripts?
- 3) What are the possible causes of morpho-syntactic and semantic errors?
- 4) How can morpho-syntactic and semantic errors be resolved?

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

It is envisaged that this study will assist policymakers at tertiary institutions, students and lecturers with regards to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in ESL (English Second Language) students' written errors, by informing them on the types of errors that students make in their examination answer scripts and find remedies to such errors. It will also inform the various language centres particularly at UNAM to find solutions by informing students on the errors they make in their examination answer scripts, and by providing them with appropriate feedback with regards to written errors because students do not receive lecturers' feedback on their examination answer scripts.

This research will further inculcate positive steps towards supporting and executing an innovative English model syllabus at various institutions such as UNAM. Past research has been carried out in this area keeping in view the needs of adolescent English language students in various international scenarios. In addition, the research leads to the collection of data that can help in making a new and more effective language curriculum for undergraduate students across English courses at tertiary institutions. This, in turn, may help them to advance their language skills, and enable them to meet the demands of the public and corporate sectors.

This study can be beneficial to various bachelor students studying courses with components on English writing skills as the outcomes of this study can be applied in the tertiary education sector in many departments, and this can help to save valuable instructional time, and aid in the development of needs-based English writing training meant for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students in the future.

The study also provides evidence of students' errors prevalence from their examination written answer scripts, and the root causes of their written errors. It is also expected that various researchers can find the findings and recommendations of this study invaluable, hence that can provide the insights needed for further research projects.

#### **1.5 Limitations of the study**

This study was limited to UNAM Southern Campus, a satellite campus situated in //Karas region, Namibia. However, this study focused on the linguistic errors found in LEP 2500 students' examination answer scripts for the 2018 academic year. The types of errors that were investigated were only those found in the 56 study samples that were purposely selected for this study.

However, the instruments can also have a negative effect on the study results because students can be tense and anxious during the examination and they rush to finish writing their answers within the apportioned time. Nevertheless, these errors were categorised into three main categories: morphology, syntactic and semantic. The observed errors in students' examination scripts were further categorised into 17 themes: errors in verb tense, subject verb agreement, pronouns, capitalisation, punctuations, articles, singular and plural, errors in inflection, errors in the use of auxiliary, spelling, errors of colloquialism, errors involving compounding words, omission of letters, over-inclusion of letters, mis-selection of letters, mis-ordering of letters, and errors in sentences and paragraphs.

### **1.6 Delimitations of the research**

This research is limited to second year students' examination answer scripts for the English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) year module at UNAM, Southern Campus due to the researcher's proximity to the campus. The first, third, and fourth year students of any other English module at this campus are not part of this research as this study focused only on the second year students of the aforesaid English module. Nonetheless, this module is lectured by the researcher.

### **1.7 Definition of technical terms**

#### **Linguistics**

This refers to a description of languages or a feature of language (Neufeldt, & Guralnik, 1994).

#### **Errors**

"Errors refer to something incorrectly done through ignorance or carelessness" (Crystal, 1992, p. 496).

#### **Analysis**

"The detailed study or examination of something in order to understand more about it; the result of the study" (Crystal, 1992, p. 46).

#### **Language**

Language is defined as the systematic and conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in human culture for communication and self-expression (Neufeldt, & Guralnik, 1994).

## **Module**

A module is a standard or unit of measurement used to determine the section, structure, and content of learning (Neufeldt, & Guralnik, 1994).

## **Examination**

“This is a form of assessment done to determine learning or demonstration of knowledge and skills” (Crystal, 1999, p. 55).

### **1.8 Organisation of the study**

This study aimed to analyse the linguistic errors committed by LEP 2500 students for 2018 at UNAM, Southern Campus. The research is arranged as follows: Chapter one comprises of the background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and definition of the technical terms. Research questions that guided this study also form part of this chapter:

- 1) What types of morpho-syntactic errors do the LEP 2500 students make in their written scripts?
- 2) What types of semantic errors do the LEP 2500 students make in their written scripts?
- 3) What are the possible causes of morpho-syntactic and semantic errors?
- 4) How can morpho-syntactic and semantic errors be resolved?

Chapter two covers the literature review. It looks at the differences between errors and mistakes, the causes and significance of the written errors, and the types of errors. The theoretical framework further forms part of this chapter where the error analysis theory and document review theory are combined to form the theoretical framework for this study. The previous studies on error analysis done in Namibia and other parts of the world are also outlined in Chapter two. This chapter also provides justification for the need to conduct this research.

The research methodology used in this study is outlined in Chapter three, which includes the research setting, and research design. The study population, sampling procedure and the sampling size as well as the research instrument form vital parts of this chapter. The procedures of data analysis, ethical clearance issues and the validity and reliability of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter four looks at data presentation of findings, where errors were first classified into three categories, namely: morphological, syntactic and semantic errors. The observed errors from students' examination scripts are: errors in verb tense, subject verb agreement, pronouns, capitalisation, punctuations, articles, singular and plural, inflection, use of auxiliary, spelling, colloquialism, compounding words, omission of letters, over-inclusion of letters, mis-selection of letters, mis-ordering of letters, and errors in sentences and paragraphs are also discussed in Chapter four.

Chapter five concludes this study with a discussion of the findings and recommendations where error attributes such as intra-lingual transfer, inter-lingual transfer, overgeneralisation, carelessness and modern technology are further presented.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

Chapter one dealt with the background of this study as it looked at the state of English language in Namibia in relation to the MBESC language policy and its state at various levels in the Namibian educational fraternity. It also looked at the challenging nature of English language efficacy in the Namibian education system and its effects on students' progression at both schools and higher institutions. It further gave the details on the objectives of the study, statement of the problem of this study, the significance of the study, delimitations, and the definition of technical terms that can help to understand this research in depth.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter dealt with the historical background of this study, its objectives, and statement of the problem, significance, delimitations, and the definition of technical terms of the study. Conversely, chapter two presents the reviews of various selected literature studies that focused on linguistic error analysis done worldwide. It further looked at the differences between errors and mistakes, causes and significance of written errors as well as the types of errors investigated by various scholars in relation to this study.

Hart (2012) defines a comprehensive literature review as “a critical evaluation, analysis, and synthesis of knowledge relevant to your research problem” (p.152). It is however imperative to do an early review of literature as a prime source for selecting a topic to begin with as it provides significantly better insights into the dimensions and complexity of the problem under scrutiny.

#### **2.2 Errors and mistakes**

First and foremost, it is imperative to make a distinction between errors and mistakes. Brown (1994) defines an error as “a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker” whereas a mistake is defined as “failure to utilise a known system correctly” (p. 205). Thus, in relation to Hourani (2008), there are two issues that need clarity in relation to these definitions. Firstly, mistakes do not require special treatment assuming that they are recognised. Secondly, errors here refer to the structure. Brown’s (1994) definition of errors as a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflects the interlanguage competence of the student. On the other hand, mistakes refer to performance errors in that they are a failure to utilise the known systems correctly. Xie and Jiang (2007) elaborate that such recognition process of errors noticing and reflection is followed by the errors description process, where students’ sentences are compared with the correct sentences in the target language and find errors. This is followed by the explanation of errors’ stage, then finding the sources of errors.

Norrish (1987) further made a clear distinction between the two terms by noting that “errors are systematic deviations when a student has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong” (p.

8). Norrish clarifies that when a student of English as a second/foreign language makes an error systematically, it is for the reason that he/she has not learnt the correct form. Norrish (1987) defines mistakes as “inconsistent deviation”. Thus, when a student is taught a particular correct form, and continues to use one form correctly sometimes and other times incorrectly, such inconsistent deviations are known as mistakes.

Richards (1984, as cited in Mungungu, 2010) posits that “a mistake is made by a learner when writing or speaking which is caused by a lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness or other aspects of performance” (p. 95). Therefore mistakes are not necessarily a product of one’s ignorance of language rules. Therefore, it is in this light that the researcher chose the present study to entirely focus on students’ errors and not mistakes. Moreover, errors are widely considered more serious than mistakes. Thus, the researcher’s curiosity was to analyse the linguistic errors made by students at the UNAM, Southern Campus in particular.

Hourani (2008) laments that in Contrastive Analysis, the theoretical base, which was behaviourism, errors were seen as “bad habits” that had been formed as the response was based on the stimulus that interference of mother tongue resulted in errors transmitted into the target language (p. 5). Hourani (2008) states that in the cognitive approach, errors are taken as a clue to what is happening in the mind of the speaker or writer. This is coordinated as a natural phenomenon that must occur during the learning of the first or second language prior to mastering grammar rules. Therefore, errors are no longer a reflection of the teaching methods, but are rather indicators that learning is taking place. Hence, errors are no more regarded as ‘bad’ but ‘good’ or natural, just as natural as errors that occur in learning the first language.

Sawalmeh (2013) adds that committing errors is one of the most unavoidable things in the world. Students in the process of learning a language profit from the errors that they make by attaining feedback to make new attempts that successively approximate their anticipated objectives. For that reason, Weireesh (2003) views learners’ errors to be of particular importance because making errors is a strategy students use in order to learn. According to Weireesh (2003), error analysis is a valuable aid to ascertain and explicate difficulties faced by students. Weireesh (2003) goes on to say that error analysis serves as consistent feedback to project a counter active instruction technique. Moreover, Candling (2001) states that second language students’ errors are “hypothetically significant” for the understanding of the processes of Second Language Acquisition (p. 69).

Vahdatinejad (2008) maintains that error analysis can be used to determine what a student still needs to be imparted with. It provides indispensable data about what is lacking in the student's competence. Vahdatinejad (2008) also makes a distinction between errors and lapses (simple mistakes). Accordingly, lapses are produced even by native speakers and can be corrected by themselves. Linguists call for on the spot corrections rather than remediations, which is needed for errors. Olasehinde (2002) as well argues that it is inevitable that students make errors. Olasehinde (2002) also concurs that errors are inevitable and they are a necessary part of the learning curve. Sercombe (2000) explains that error analysis serves three purposes. Firstly, to find out the level of language proficiency the student has reached, secondly, to attain evidence about common technical hitches in language learning, and thirdly, to find out how people pick up a language.

Mitchell and Myles (2004, as cited in Keshavarz, 2003) add that, errors if studied could reveal a developing system of the student's second language and this system is dynamic and open to changes and resetting of parameters. This view is upheld by Stark's (2001) study, which also highlighted that educators "need to view students' errors positively and should not regard them as the students' failure to grasp the rules and structures, but rather should view the errors as a process of learning" (p. 19). Stark (2001) subscribes to the view that errors are normal and inevitable features of learning, adding that they are an essential condition of learning.

Lastly, Hourani's (2008) perception that errors are a natural and significant part of the learning process itself, and do not come from mother tongue interference is vital. There is a great variation in students' performance depending on tasks. So, students may have much control over linguistic forms for particular tasks, whereas others may be more prone to errors.

### **2.3 Causes and significance of written errors**

A case study done by Darus and Subramaniam (2009) in Malaysia on error analysis of written English essays found that many students' errors were produced by students as a result of "misunderstanding the rules of the new language" (p. 487). A widely available survey of Brown (2000) maintains that in relation to error analysis, error analysis emphasises "the significance of errors in learners' inter-languages system" (Brown 1994, p. 204). The term inter-language was introduced by Selinker (1972) and refers to the systematic knowledge of a second language (L2)

which is independent of both the students' first language (L1) and the target language (TL). Nemser (1974) referred to it as the 'Approximate System', whereas Corder (1967) referred to it as the 'Idiosyncratic Dialect or Transitional Competence' (p. 55).

As for Richards (1971), intra-lingual errors is another source of linguistic errors that happens as a result of language being learned, independent of the native language. Richards (1971) further stressed that errors are items produced by students which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalisations based on partial exposure to the target language. Therefore, students in this scenario try to "derive the rules behind the data which they have been exposed and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language" (Richards, 1974, p. 6).

In other terms, students produce deviant sentences by erroneously applying their knowledge of the target language rules and structures to new situations. Thus, Selinker (1974, as cited in Richards, 1974) reported five sources of errors, namely language transfer, transfer of language, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, and overgeneralisation of TL linguistic materials.

Richards and Simpson (1974) identified the following causes of linguistic errors:

1. Language transfer, to which one-third of the deviant sentences from second language learners could be attributed (George, 1971).
2. Intra-lingual interference: In 1974, Richards exposed four types and causes for intra-lingual errors:
  - a. Overgeneralisation (p. 174): It is associated with redundancy reduction. It covers instances where the student creates a deviant structure based on experience of other structures in the target language. It may be the result of the student reducing his/her linguistic burden.
  - b. Ignorance of rule restrictions: For example, applying rules to contexts to which they do not apply.
  - c. Incomplete application of rules
  - d. Semantic errors such as building false concepts/systems: For example, faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language

As a result, Krashen (1982) suggested that the attainment of grammatical structures follows a 'natural order' which is foreseeable. For particular languages, some grammatical structures have

a tendency to be acquired early while others areas are acquired later. This order seemed to be independent of the students' age, first language background and circumstances of exposure.

In one study, Penny (2001) concluded that there are two major sources of errors: inter-lingual transfer and intra-lingual transfer. Likewise, Heydari and Bagheri (2012) state that inter-lingual interference and intra-lingual interference are the two sources of errors committed by EFL and ESL learners.

In Thailand, a significant number of researchers also conducted studies to explore the sources of errors. Kaweera (2013) for example, concluded that there are two main sources of errors, namely inter-lingual interference and intra-lingual interference. The first one is a negative transfer of learners' first language. The other one involves errors caused by students' incomplete knowledge of the target language. Later, Runkati (2013) and Rattanadilok Na Phuket and Othman (2015) proposed the two sources causing errors which are inter-lingual interference and intra-lingual interference. After studying and analysing the research about errors committed by Thai EFL learners, another Thai scholar, Hinnon (2014) contrarily proposed that there are three sources of errors: Negative transfer of the mother tongue, limited knowledge of the target language, and the difference between words and sentence structures of the mother tongue and those of the target language.

According to Corder (1967, as cited in Darus & Subramanim, 2009), error analysis has two objects: "one is theoretical and another is applied" (p. 488), and explains the two objectives that the theoretical object is to understand what and how students absorb when they study a second language. The applied object is to enable the students to absorb more efficiently by using the knowledge of their dialect for academic purposes. At the same time, the investigation of errors can serve two purposes, diagnostic (to pinpoint the problem) and prognostic (to make plans to solve a problem). Corder (1967, as cited in Darus & Subramanim, 2009) further contends that it is diagnostic because it can tell us the student's grasp of a language at any given point during the instruction process. It is also prognostic because it can tell the instructor to modify learning materials to meet the students' problems.

Brown (1994) and Ellis (1996) are of the opinion that, EA research has limitations of providing only a partial picture of students' language, and having a substantive nature in that it does not take into account avoidance strategy in second language acquisition (SLA). Subsequently, EA

only investigates what students do. Students who avoided the sentence structures which they found difficult due to the differences between their native language and target language may be viewed to have no difficulty as it cannot be adequately measured by error analysis theory.

Hourani's (2008) study on the analysis of common grammatical errors in the English writing made by third year secondary school male students in the Eastern coast of the UAE, attributes writing errors to language transfer and regard it as another vital cognitive factor. Language transfer is defined as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired (Odlin, 1989). The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use (Ellis, 1994). Thus, Behaviourist accounts claim that transfer is the cause of errors, whereas, from a cognitive perspective, the transfer is seen as a resource that the student actively draws upon in inter-language development (Selinker, 1972).

Hourani (2008) also validated views on language transfer that, even though the fact that L1 transfer is no longer viewed as the only predictor or cause of writing errors at the structural level, a writer's first language plays a complex and significant role in L2 acquisition. For example, when students write under pressure, they may call upon systematic resources from their native language for the attainment and synthesis of meaning (Widdowson, 1990). Other linguistic studies have also shown that language students sometimes use their native language when generating ideas and attending to details (Friedlander, 1990).

Conversely, contrastive studies, which have focused on characteristics of L1 languages and cultures, have helped us predict rhetorical errors in writing. These studies have been valuable in the understanding of second language writing development. Nevertheless, many feel that these studies have also led to reductive, essentialising, and generalisations about ways of writing and cultural stereotypes around students from certain linguistic backgrounds (Leki, 1992; Fox, 1994; Spack, 1997). Consequently, erroneous predictions about students' learning based on their L1 language and culture have occurred irrespective of social factors such as "the contexts, and purpose of their learning to write, or their age, race, class, gender, education, and prior experience" (Raimes, 1998, p. 143).

Myles (2002) laments on the writing errors done by second language students as it is undoubtedly the act of composing which can create problems for students, especially for those writing in a

second language in academic contexts. Myles (2002) points out that formulating new ideas can be difficult because it involves transforming or reworking information, which is much more complex than writing. By putting together concepts and solving problems, the writer engages in a “two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing the text” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p. 12).

Moreover, Myles (2002) observes that with regards to writing errors made by second language writers with a brief survey on the nature of second language writing and first language models of the writing process illustrates why it is difficult to apply first language research to a model for second language writing. Myles (2002) further commented that certain social and cognitive factors related to second language acquisition show that strategies involved in the language learning process also affect second language writing. With a discussion of these factors, fundamental questions about an error in writing and second language proficiency are raised. It should then become apparent that the process approach to writing instruction can only be effective if these two components are taken into consideration.

Thus, in accordance to Myles (2002), discourse explores errors in writing in relation to particular aspects of second language acquisition and theories of the writing process in first language and second language, and the process approach to instruction is only appropriate for second language learners if they are both able to get sufficient feedback with regards to their errors in writing, and are proficient enough in the language to implement revision strategies.

In addition, Kern (2000) is of the idea that the culture-specific nature of schemata-abstract mental structures representing our knowledge of things, events, and situations can lead to difficulties when students write texts in L2. Knowing how to write a “summary” or “analysis” in Mandarin or Spanish does not necessarily mean that students will be able to do these discourses in English. As a result, any appropriate instruction must take into consideration the influences from various educational, social, and cultural experiences that students have in their native languages. These include textual issues such as rhetorical and cultural preferences for organising information and structuring arguments, commonly referred to as contrastive rhetoric knowledge of appropriate genres familiarity with the writing topic (Myles, 2002).

Stander (2001) is of the opinion that the second language errors in the first language ascertain the use of the language transference strategy by second language speakers from the first language to the second language and subsequently to the inter-language of the speakers to assist them in learning the second language. In cases where an acquisition strategy for language

transference is absent, this can be detrimental to the communication of the second language. Stander (2001) pointed out that the problem is compounded when there is no choice in the first language and the speaker is forced to choose an element from the second language. Transference from one speaker's use of language to another speaker's use of language can be viewed as a contamination factor in the use of the second language (Nel & Swanepoel, 2010).

However, Jabulani (2014) is of the view that written errors of second language students' literature as sources and types of errors is instructive to the identification of the nature and possible causes of language attribution to errors. James (1998) has three main categories of errors namely; inter-lingual, intra-lingual and induced errors. James (1998) stresses that Inter-lingual errors emanate from the imposition of the system of a first language (L1) on the second language (L2) when the two are not compatible leading to negative transfer. Intra-lingual errors occur within a language as in where a rule is overgeneralised, incompletely applied and many other manifestations. Induced errors emanate from the failings of the material, exercises, pedagogical approaches or educator talk that is used.

Maruma (2017, as cited in Sawalmeh, 2013) defines inter-lingual errors as those errors that result from language transfer caused by the learner's mother tongue, whereas the intra-lingual errors are those which result from incorrect or partial learning of either first or second additional language by students. Maruma (2017, as cited in Sawalmeh, 2013) also underscores that in intra-lingual error categories, some spelling errors may reflect poor linguistic competence on different levels, including phonological awareness, and knowledge of orthography, vocabulary, morphological and semantic relationships, and mental orthographic images.

Sawalmeh (2013) later coined another type of writing errors; mechanical errors, which entail punctuation errors, and confusable homonyms, for example; the word 'dessert' which means a sweet meal, can be easily misspelled in writing with 'desert' which is a noun describing a dry sandy area where there is no rain.

The above point is affirmed by Banacha (2013) who investigated the types of spelling inaccuracies students made. Banacha (2013) found that the causes of spelling errors came from various elements of language which are mentioned in Zawahreh's (2012) study where student writers use present tense forms instead of past tense forms. For example, in an essay topic where a student must give his or her own experience about the day that he or she will never forget, students usually use present tense like 'I am afraid when I was attacked' instead of 'I was afraid when I was attacked'.

Bancha (2013) speculates that there is also another trend of the misspelling of words such as 'because' which is often written in the colloquial form as 'cause' and many more. Researchers such as Zafar (2016) identified forms of the present tenses and past tenses as the most problematic tenses to students through Zafar's (2016) personal English language teaching (ELT) experience of teaching English in the Higher Education sector for approximately ten years in Pakistan. Zafar (2016) investigated three types of errors namely, over extension of analogy, transfer of structure and inter-lingual (L1) or intra-lingual (L2) errors, and their frequency.

Maruma (2017) used document review as a research method to assess errors committed in English first additional language (EFAL) essay writing of 15 Grade 10 students from Mmapadi Secondary School. The study revealed that students' use of technological devices is one of the major causes of spelling errors. The interference of mother tongue and partial learning in the target language, inability to differentiate between spoken and written language as well as not proofreading and carelessness were the other causes that were found.

It would seem that colloquialism is pertinent in quick-form communication platforms provided by technology and in a study by Perk and Coyle (2012), the impact of technological devices such as computers, SMS, Mixit, Facebook and Twitter on the written work of many university students were stressed. Perk and Coyle (2012) revealed that sources of spelling errors are the negative side of over-relying on technology for spell checks. Furthermore, they described writing as a way of using correct words in the correct order. They also defended their argument by highlighting the fact that spelling is about getting the words right. In line with this researcher, SMS lingo contributes to students' poor spelling since students are now used to writing words in shorthand and they fail to distinguish between writing for academic purposes and writing for casual and informal communicative purposes.

Yau Hau Tse (2014) analysed the spelling errors in Japanese classrooms following the constructs from Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA) with the assumption that these errors are neither coincidental nor randomly made. Contrastive analysis (CA) is the systematic study of a pair of languages with a view of identifying the differences and similarities between them. Whereas Error Analysis also studies the types and causes of language errors which occur as part of second language instruction. Yau Hau Tse (2014) further underscored that contrastive analysis is a good starting point to survey why second language students make systematic grammatical errors according to their linguistic backgrounds. Such a statement cements the fact that the majority of students' writing errors are closely linked to past experience and acquisition of first language.

## 2.4 Types of written errors

Many researchers have classified writing errors in various categories. Scholars such as Corder (1973, as cited by Wahyuni, 2016) classified errors in terms of the difference between the students' utterances and the reconstructed version. In that way, Corder's (1973) errors fall into four categories: omission of some required elements; addition of some unnecessary or incorrect elements; selection of an incorrect element; and ordering of the element. However, Corder (1973) further added that this classification is not enough to describe errors. That is why Corder (1973) includes the linguistic level of the errors under the sub-areas of morphology, syntax, and lexicon.

Likewise, Sermsook, Liamnimitr, and Pochakorn (2017) proposed five categories of writing errors which include: grammatical errors (adjectives, adverbs, articles, nouns, possession, pronouns, prepositions and verbs), substance errors (capitalisation, punctuation and spelling), lexical errors (word formation and word selection), syntactic errors (coordination or subordination, sentence structure and ordering), and semantic errors (ambiguous communication and miscommunication).

In another study by Hengwichitkul (2006), writing errors were classified into: subject-verb agreement, tenses, parts of speech, participial phrases, relative clauses, passive voice, parallel structure, punctuation, run-ons, and fragments. Equally, Runkati's (2013) study on organisational patterns and common mistakes in English research abstracts categorised errors found in the study into two main types. The first type dealt with errors at sentence level which were fragments, run-ons, subject-verb agreement, word order, tenses, capital letters, and punctuation. The second one was errors at the word level, such as articles, prepositions, word choices, nouns, and numbers.

Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013) concurs with Weireesh's (2003) analysis of writing errors as caused by the interference of a second language. These researchers discovered that the first language interference errors fell into 16 categories: verb tense, word choice, sentence structure, article, preposition, modal or auxiliary, singular or plural form, fragment, verb form, pronoun, run-on sentence, infinitive or gerund, transition, subject-verb agreement, parallel structure, and comparison structure, respectively. The number of frequent errors made in each type of written tasks was different.

Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013) substantiates this stance that in narration, the five most frequent errors found were; verb-tense, word choice, sentence structure, preposition, and modal

or auxiliary, whereas the five most frequent errors in description and comparison or contrast were article, sentence structure, word choice, singular or plural form, and subject-verb agreement, respectively. Interestingly, in the narrative and descriptive paragraphs, comparison structure was found to be the least frequent error, whereas it became the 10th frequent error in comparison or contrast writing. It was apparent that these genres affected the writing errors as different text types that require different structural features (Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013).

Similarly, Huang (2001, as cited in Seitova, 2016), investigated the nature and distribution of grammatical errors made by 46 English majors at the Taiwanese University, and identified writing errors that were categorised into 13 error types. The top six common errors were: (1) verb, (2) Noun, (3) Spelling, (4) Article, (5) Preposition and (6) Word choice. The study further revealed that overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, simplification, incomplete application of rules and L1 transfer were major causes of English first learners' (EFL) errors.

Khalid (2013) in examining spelling mistakes, analysed a total of 228 spelling errors that occurred in 43 written papers and subsequently classified them into four types: insertion, substitution, omission, and transposition. Khalid (2013) also determined the kinds and frequencies of errors that could occur in extended writing tasks. Such results indicated that most of the spelling errors were substitution and omission errors.

There are also other studies conducted on the errors of Bangladesh students who learn English as a foreign language from the very beginning of their academic life. Khan (2005) conducted a case study on some undergraduate students at a public university which explored students' errors in present and past tense usage in composition writing and pointed out the underlying reasons behind this problem. The author states that many educators are still unable to come out of their traditional outlook of the teaching-learning process. The researcher observed no writing errors in students' activities which match the Communicative Language Teaching Approach and it results in students' poor writing competence.

In another study, Saleheen (2005) identified fifteen types of recurrent and systematic errors made by tertiary level students and categorised them under the sources of inter-lingual and intra-lingual errors. The fifteen types of errors found are: (a) subject-verb agreement, (b) possessive case, (c) passive sentence, (d) choice of appropriate word, (e) parallelism, (f) double negative, (g) unfinished sentences, (h) pluralisation, (i) preposition, (j) adverb of place, (k) omission of that, (l) use of double infinitive, (m) misuse of verbs, and (n) omission of verbs. This work was aimed at

making students conscious of their errors so that they can rectify the errors and write “socially acceptable and academically correct English”.

According to Khanom (2014), of the researchers who have worked on adult L2 students' errors, Richards' (1971) study holds a prominent place. Khanom (2014) examined intra-lingual or developmental errors produced by speakers of Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese, and the major Indian and West African languages. Khanom (2014) found 6 types of intra-lingual errors which are: (a) errors in the production of verb groups (e.g. be+ verb stem for verb stem, wrong form after do, wrong form after modal verb etc.), (b) errors in the distribution of verb groups (e.g. be+ verb+ ing for be+ verb+ ed, etc.), (c) errors in the use of prepositions (e.g. omission of the, a, and use of the, a, an when no article is needed), (d) errors in the use of articles (e.g. omission of the, a, and use of the articles when not needed), (e) errors in the use of questions (e.g. omission of inversion, wrong form of auxiliary, omission or do, etc.), and (f) miscellaneous errors (e.g. wrong verb form in adverb clause of time, object omitted or included unnecessarily, errors in tenses sequence, confusion of too, do, very, etc.).

As the present study focuses on linguistic errors in English language sentences, therefore the analysis of errors at the syntactical level and word level is in order. The one regarding syntactical level errors includes fragments, subject-verb agreement, word order, tenses, capitalisation, and punctuation. The analysis of errors at the word level focuses on articles, prepositions, word choices, nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Other kinds of analyses, for example, addition and omission were also referred to as sub-categories of the sentential level errors and the word level errors.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

This study relies on the Error Analysis (EA) and document analysis (DA) as the theoretical framework. Darus and Subramanim (2009) define Error Analysis as “a type of linguistic study that focuses on the errors students make” (p. 487). It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language (TL) and within that TL itself and this is the framework for the present research. Furthermore, Corder is regarded as the “father” of Error Analysis (the EA with the “new look”). It was in the article entitled “The significance of students' errors” (1967) that EA took a new turn. Errors used to be “flaws” that needed to be eradicated. Corder (1967) then presented a completely different point of view as he contended that those errors are “important in and of themselves”. Corder (1967) opined that systematically analysing errors made by language students makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in instruction.

James (2001) points out that EA refers to “the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance”. For AbiSarma (2003), error analysis is defined as the kind of linguistic analysis that concentrates on errors performed by ESL/EFL students. Moreover, Ridha (2012) views EA as “the process to observe, analyse, and classify the deviation of the rules of the second languages and then to reveal the system operated by the learner” (p. 26).

Therefore, Hasyim (2002, p. 43) perceives error analysis as carried out in order to:

- a) Find out how well someone knows a language
- b) Find out how a person learns a language, and
- c) Obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.

Crystal (1999) in language teaching and learning defines error analysis as the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language. The present study thus focused on the Error Analysis paradigm. Making errors is one of the most unavoidable things in the world. Students in the process of learning language profit from the errors that they make by obtaining feedback to make new attempts that successively approximate their desired goal (AL-Khasawneh, 2014).

Furthermore, Corder (1974, as cited in Wu & Garza, 2014), points out that error analysis has two objectives. The theoretical objective concerns what and how students learn the language. The other is the practical one which is concerned with how to help students learn a language by making use of the knowledge they already have.

Al-Khresheh (2016) defended EA that despite the criticism that this theory has received, it still plays a fundamental role in investigating, identifying and describing second language students' errors and their causes. Most decisively, EA helps second language educators to find diverse sources of second language errors and taking some academic precautions towards them. Moreover, EA can provide a good methodology for investigating second language students' errors. Once the cause or sources are discovered, it is probable to conclude and decide on the remedy.

Equally, Richards and Schmidt (2002) allude that error analysis is an approach for the analysis of 'learner English'. Thus, error analysis compares 'learner English' with English as a second language itself and judges how learners are 'ignorant' of certain language rules.

In addition, Bowen (2009) explains document analysis as "a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic materials" (p. 27). More so, Atkinson and Coffey (1997) state that document analysis investigates 'social facts', which are produced, shared, and used in socially organised ways (p. 47).

By the same token, Corbin and Strauss (2008) state that like other analytical methods in qualitative investigation, document analysis necessitates data to be scrutinised and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. Documents comprise manuscripts (words) and images that have been recorded without the researcher's interference. Bowen (2009) further comments that in DA the researcher typically reviews prior literature as part of their studies and integrate that information in their reports. As a result, where a list of analysed documents is provided, it frequently does not include previous studies as they are purely sources of data necessitating the researcher to rely on the description and interpretation of data rather than having the raw data as a basis for analysis.

Labuschagne (2003) further narrates that the analytic procedure of DA requires finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in documents. Document analysis yields data extracts, quotations, or entire passages that are then structured into major themes, categories, and case examples specifically through content analysis.

The current study applied EA and DA for data analysis purposes in order to identify the types and causes of morphological, syntactical and semantic errors in LEP 2500 at UNAM, Southern Campus. Accordingly, such documents were reviewed in relation to Corder's (1974, as cited in James, 1998) five steps of error analysis, namely: (1) collection of a sample of learner language; (2) identification of errors; (3) description of errors; (4) explanation of errors; and (5) evaluation of errors.

## **2.6 Previous studies on error analysis**

A number of studies have been conducted in Namibia and other parts of the world such as in Asia, North Africa, Middle East and others to investigate the various writing errors committed by

students. The analysis of errors made by Namibian ESL researchers can be attested to in the study of Kapolo (2013). The study revealed that as many as four hundred essays from two secondary schools in the Omusati Region were analysed and errors were categorised into 16 types of errors. The most common errors identified were poor choice of words, spelling, punctuation, tenses, words omitted, singular/plural and capitalisation. Through qualitative analysis of the errors, the study further revealed that learners made many errors in the identified categories which were influenced by their first language. Intra-lingual transfer, fossilisation and overgeneralisation were further observed in their writing as other causes.

Additionally, Nghikembua (2014) conducted a study on error analysis in learners' corpus in relation to errors amongst grade 12 Oshiwambo speaking learners of English in Northern Namibia. In Nghikembua's (2014) study, errors were categorised according to Keshavarz's (2006) linguistic error taxonomy. Based on that taxonomy, the results revealed that learners largely made errors in the following categories: phonology/orthography, morpho-syntax, lexico-semantics, and discourse and technique punctuations. The study further concluded that these errors were most likely due to: first language interference, overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restriction and carelessness. Other proposed probable causes were the context of learning and lack of knowledge of English grammar.

Elsewhere, Zafar (2016) conducted an empirical study which used error analysis. Zafar (2016) first analysed errors that were frequently made by Business students, and verb tenses were found to be the most problematic ones. After a two-month writing training that focused on the accurate use of verb tenses, the students had an apparent improvement. In Thailand where English has been taught as a foreign language and writing in English is confirmed to be the most difficult skill for Thai students to master, error analysis has been an attractive area of study by a number of scholars to improve the writing skills of the Thai learners.

Bennui (2008) for example, analysed errors caused by the transfer of the subjects' mother tongue which was Thai. The findings showed that the Thai language negatively influenced the subjects' writing at all levels including lexical, syntactic and discourse levels. Bennui (2008) concluded that the differences between Thai and English should be taught to Thai EFL students.

Similarly, in the analysis of English sentences written by Thai undergraduate students, Jenwitheesuk (2009) also found that sentences contained errors such as: determiners, subject-verb agreement, tenses, and prepositions. Moreover, Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013)

studied errors caused by the interference of the first language. Their findings also pointed out that the students' first language had a strong influence on their writing. Other types of writing, such as paragraphs, essays and abstracts were also analysed. Bumroongthai's (2011) study was interested in the errors in English paragraphs. It was concluded that the Thai EFL students committed various types of errors regarding English grammar and the paragraph format.

Hengwichitkul (2006) also analysed errors in abstracts written by Thai graduate students. It was concluded that the differences between Thai and English was the complexity of English sentences that led to the errors. Rattanadilok Na Phuket and Othman (2015) found many types of errors, for example, tenses, prepositions, word choice and comma errors in narrative essays written by Thai undergraduate students. The analysis concluded that the negative transfer of the students' first language was the main cause of the errors.

Salebi (2004) conducted a study on Saudi college students' perception of their errors in written English. The study used two instruments: a test and students' comments on their errors. The results of this study revealed that the percentage of subject-verb agreement was 44.03%. It further disclosed that the percentage of errors caused during translation from Arabic was 18.75%. Furthermore, the study unveiled that the main reason for errors was the difficulty of the target language which resulted in the generalisation of rules. In the first 31 compositions it was 58% (in which omission = 5 times and misinformation = 21 times) and in the second 40 compositions, this was 62% (omission = 3 and misinformation = 16 times).

Sawalmeh (2013) likewise conducted a study that investigated writing errors in a corpus of 32 essays written by Arabic-speaking Saudi learners of English. All of the errors in these essays were identified and classified into different categorisations. Results revealed that the Arabic speakers in this study committed ten common errors. These errors were: (1) verb tense, (2) word order, (3) singular/plural form, (4) subject-verb agreement, (5) double negatives, (6) spellings, (7) capitalisation, (8) articles (9) sentence fragments and (10) prepositions. On the basis of these results, a group of recommendations for further research were suggested and some pedagogical implications which might assist ESL/EFL teachers with some helpful suggestions and teaching strategies that could reduce future problems regarding writing English essays among Arab learners.

Saputri (2017) studied the morphological and syntactical errors made by Indonesian students. The investigation classified errors into 9 categories of morphological errors. The types of morphological errors made by the students were: adverbs, adjectives, indefinite demonstratives,

adjectives, nouns, plurals, possessive adjectives, past formations, singulars and infinitives. Meanwhile, the syntactical errors made by these students were categorised based on the surface strategy taxonomy. The types of errors made were: omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering.

Another study was conducted by Usha and Kader (2016) where a survey method was used to investigate the syntactic and morphological errors made by students. The result of the study revealed that: concord in auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement (SVO) pattern, articles, prepositions, and tenses are the major types of syntactic errors, while affixation and compound related errors, failure to use the marker (-er) and conversion related errors were the major types of morphological errors. The attitude of students, intra-lingual and inter-lingual interference, method of teaching and teachers' factors were the major causes of errors as was gauged from the perceptions of the teachers. The investigators furthermore pinpointed certain suggestions to overcome the syntactic and morphological errors among secondary school students.

Gayo and Widodo (2018) similarly investigated the errors that occur in Indonesian students' English writing at the morphological and syntactical levels and the factors that cause these errors. This qualitative descriptive research described and investigated the errors and their origins. The result of the study showed that: firstly are morphological errors such as omission, addition, and mis-formation which include the derivational and inflectional morphemes, prepositions, articles, and personal pronouns, auxiliaries, and determiners. Secondly, syntactical errors that occurred were also omissions, addition, mis-formationss, and disordering which include the passive voice, tense, noun phrase, auxiliary, subject-verb agreement, and determiner. The two major sources of errors were the inter-lingual (first language interference) and intra-lingual factors.

Both Saputri (2017), and Gayo and Widodo's (2018) studies are relevant to the present investigation, as both studies evaluated the morphological and syntactical errors of students' written pieces. The two studies identified the types of errors and frequency of errors made. Both studies used the qualitative descriptive methodology. The notable distinction lies in the fact that Saputri's (2017) study recommend remedial teaching. However, the present study focuses on the morphological, syntactic and semantic errors, possible causes, and the most prevalent errors at UNAM, Southern Campus for students of LEP 2500, by investigating the examination scripts for the 2018 academic year.

Another study was done in Indonesia by Jumriana (2014). The study aimed to find out the types of syntactical errors made by the students in writing a thesis and to find out the most frequent

types of errors made by the students in writing a thesis. This study found that the errors made by students were in the noun phrase, verb, verb construction, and transformation. Then, the most frequent error found was in the noun phrase with 48.7%. The researcher suggested that the English teachers need to provide reinforcements for the students about the basic rules of constructing sentences.

Moreover, Omar and GulSher (2018) carried out a study that focused on the most common syntactic errors which Arabic speaking students in a Preparatory Year at Jazan University in Saudi Arabia made in learning English as a foreign language. The results of the study revealed that the most common syntactic errors made by the learners were in the sentence structure; subject-verb agreement, tense, auxiliary verb, number, use of conjunction, preposition, article, and others. Many students in this study were categorised as slow learners who were not even aware of the importance of writing skills. Non-seriousness and less concentration of students resulted in errors throughout their writings, the researchers concluded (Omar & GulSher, 2018).

In addition, the errors were hypothetically associated with the transfer of the mother tongue and over generalisation. The researchers further stressed that in the Arab context, writing is not an easy task; it is indeed, a challenging job for the lecturers therefore, traditional methodologies do not help. Unless the lecturers generated interest in writing skills in the minds of the students, the desired results cannot be achieved.

Al-Shaikhli's (2017) study investigated the salient syntactic and semantic errors made by Jordanian English foreign language students in written English. Writing poses a great challenge for both native and non-native speakers of English since writing involves employing most language sub-systems such as grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation.

Nevertheless, the results revealed that syntactic errors produced by the participants were diverse in that eleven types of syntactic errors were committed as follows; verb-tense, agreement, auxiliary, conjunctions, word order, presumptive pronouns, null-subject, double-subject, superlative, comparative and possessive pronouns. Amongst syntactic errors, verb tense errors were the most frequent with 33%. The results further revealed that two types of semantic errors were made; errors at the sentence level and errors at the word level. Errors at the word level were surpassed by far by errors at the sentence level, scoring 82% and 18% respectively. It can be concluded that the syntactic and semantic knowledge of Jordanian students of English is still insufficient.

Even so, Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani's (2012) research investigated the semantic errors from written essays by Yemeni University students. The study revealed that 1388 semantic errors were identified and also found that the omission of letters category scored the highest number of errors at 18.08%, while mis-selection of a prefix category was the lowest with only 0.68% of errors committed. A hierarchy of difficulty was established where the formal mis-formations category represented the highest extreme and formal mis-selection was the lowest one. It was also found that L1 sources include translating concepts, words and phrases literally from L1, i.e. Arabic into L2, and applying Arabic linguistic rules to English. Nevertheless, L2 sources include having false concepts about English, insufficient knowledge of the English semantic system and confusion about English vocabulary.

## **2.7 Research gap**

The area of error analysis has received sufficient attention amongst researchers. Krishnamurthy et al. (2011) revealed an inability amongst students to differentiate between spoken and written language, not proofreading and carelessness as attributed to writing errors. However, only very few scholars have attributed students' errors to technological devices such as SMS, Mixit and Facebook, Twitter as some of the contributing factors of students' errors in ESL. Subsequently, the paradigm shift in 21<sup>th</sup> Century on the usage of computers, laptop, smartphone, tablets, and PowerPoint presentations during lecturing, seminars, and workshops of students is observably attributed to the spelling errors of many students. Therefore, the study of this kind on morphological, semantic, and syntactical error analysis is deemed necessary at UNAM, Southern Campus and other tertiary institutions in Namibia.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Chapter two dealt with the reviews of various studies that have been conducted in different parts of the world on linguistic error analysis. It also looked at the differences between errors and mistakes, the causes of errors (for example, inter-lingual, intra-lingual), and technology as some of the significant causes of errors. The significance of written errors to researchers and different institutions, and the types of written errors such as morphology, syntax and semantics are also part of the present chapter. The previous studies that were done in Namibia, other parts of Africa and the rest of the world on error analysis, the study's theoretical framework and the research gap were the other components that were further detailed in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter describes the methods and procedures of collecting and analysing data in the study. It further deals with the research population of the study, and the research setting that dictates this study. It also includes the research design and, the sampling procedures and sampling size of the study. The validity and reliability, and ethical clearance are other important aspects discussed in this chapter.

#### **3.2 Research setting**

This research was conducted at the University of Namibia, Southern Campus, situated in Keetmanshoop, where the English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) examination answer scripts for the 2018 academic year were examined to extract the morphological, syntactical and semantic errors under investigation.

#### **3.3. Research design**

This study utilised the qualitative approach. The qualitative approach provides an in-depth understanding of the research problem under investigation. Bodgan and Becklein (1982) maintain that qualitative research is accepted by interpretivists to be an integral part of the quantitative method. Grix (2004) upholds that qualitative research methods allow for in-depth investigation in search of a better and more meaningful understanding of complex issues through the collection and examination of data from several perspectives and the focus on natural settings, which are flexible and sensitive to the social context. In addition, qualitative research takes into account historical or culturally significant phenomena, values participants' perspectives on their worlds, and often relies on the words of individuals as its primary data (Grix, 2004).

Creswell (2014), posits that qualitative researchers utilise inductive and deductive data analysis where they build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up by organising the data into increasingly more abstract units of evidence. Thus, the inductive process elucidates working back and forth between the themes and the data base until the investigators have established a compressive set of themes. With regards to the deductive process on the other hand, the

researchers look back at their data from the themes to determine if more evidence can support each theme or whether they need to gather additional data.

However, as the qualitative design dictated this study, the researcher utilised error analysis in conjunction with document analysis method to analyse the LEP 2500 examination scripts of UNAM, Southern Campus' students, concentrating on their morphological, syntactical and semantic errors that students made in their examination scripts for the 2018 academic year.

### **3.4 Population, sampling procedures, and sample size**

Burns and Grove (1993) state that a population is “all elements (individuals, objects and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study” (p.779). The population of this study is 72 students' answer scripts which are the total number of students who were enrolled for the English language and literacy module (LEP 2500) in 2018, at UNAM, Southern Campus. The researcher analysed the appropriate sample of these students' written scripts, and investigated selected morphological, syntactical and semantic forms of English language errors that the research sample produced in students' examination scripts for the 2018 academic year.

Mouton (1996) defines a sample as “elements selected with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken” (p. 132). Creswell (2014) adds that factors such as expenses, time, and accessibility often prevent researchers from the attainment of information from the whole group or subset of the whole population. Thus, they often need to be able to obtain data from a subset of the whole population and such knowledge obtained will then represent the total population.

Equally, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) elucidate that in purposive sampling, each member of the population under study has an equal chance of being selected and the probability of every member of the population being selected is unaffected by the selection of other members of such a population. Besides, LEP 2500 is taught by the researcher and this make it feasible to collect data.

In accordance Cohen et al. (2011, p. 147), with regards sample sizes confidence levels and confidence intervals for random samples, all 72 members of the population were randomly numbered, cut out and placed in the jar, then random selection technique was used to get the 56 samples that formed the sample size of this study.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009), research instruments are “tools that enable researchers to collect data” (p. 144). The instruments used for EA and DA are the LEP 2500 examination scripts of 2018, at UNAM, Southern Campus. Using the 2018 examination written scripts was an appropriate method for this study as this examination required students to write in full sentences in 95% of their answers during this examination. Furthermore, the significance of examining LEP 2500 examination scripts for the 2018 second year students was found appropriate as students have had adequate exposure to three different English language modules at this level thus far, and LEP 2500 is a year module.

The fact that the aforesaid instrument is produced during an examination ensured that all written samples used were non-revised first drafts. It is vital to note that the error analysis method used in this study focussed mainly on morphological, syntax and semantic errors regardless of students’ writing skills such as idea expression, organisation, and cohesion.

Furthermore, the other instrument which was used in this study is the prescribed marking guide for teachers (see Appendix 1). This guide was used as a tool to identify the written errors in students’ examination scripts. The researcher’s intention was to identify the written errors in students’ examination scripts, thus the researcher is fully convinced that the students’ examination scripts are the most appropriate tool to identify the types of written errors. This is believed to show reliable information because students are studying hard and they are eager to pass the module.

The other appropriate instrument used in this research is the checklist (see Appendix 2). This instrument was used by the researcher in order to classify and categorise the students’ written errors into their respective categories such as morphology, semantics and syntactical errors. This checklist was further used by the researcher to indicate the sources of the errors of students in relation to the data.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

Hart (2012) states that, “data can be whatever you deem necessary to address your research question. There are no types of data which are naturally better than the others, though some may be preferred, but not available, and therefore other data have to be used” (p. 354).

This research adopted the qualitative research approach which predominantly adopts a phenomenological design that seeks to describe the essence of the experiences of its participants, thus such an approach allows the researcher to collect data through interviews, document reviews and observations (Creswell, 2003). Subsequently, this research employed both error analysis and document analysis as appropriate research methods to analyse data.

Document analysis is a form of research in which documents are read, categorised and interpreted by the researcher (Creswell, 2009). In this case, written scripts were analysed to give essence and meaning around error types and sources of morphological, syntactical and semantic errors in examination answer scripts of LEP 2500 students at UNAM's Southern Campus. The data of this study was obtained from students' written responses in sentential constructions, answered under formal examination conditions of the University of Namibia.

According to Ellis (2002, p. 48), "error analysis is an appropriate starting point when studying student language errors in SLA". By making use of taxonomies (based on linguistic categories), specific errors are described in detail and a corpus of errors is quantified (Ellis, 1994). The skeleton of English clauses, the auxiliary system, passive sentences, temporal conjunctions, and sentential complements are examples of general linguistic categories. Each of the general categories was broken down further into subcategories. More general categories are morphology, syntax, and semantics.

James (1998) highlights Corder's (1974) five steps in error analysis research, namely: (1) collection of a sample of learners' language; (2) identification of errors; (3) description of errors; (4) explanation of errors; and (5) evaluation of errors. These are the steps that were followed to analyse the data of this research.

### **3.7 Reliability and validity of the study**

The study focused on the linguistic error analysis which was based on final examination scripts of the LEP 2500 students for the 2018 academic year at UNAM's Southern Campus. The following strategies were built into the study to ensure validity and reliability. Primarily, the research instrument was the examination scripts from the final examination of the LEP 2500 students where there was the expectation that the students tried their best in the final examination as they would be motivated to pass and proceed to the final year of study. The university examination requirements demand students to score more than 50% in examinations in order for them to pass any module at UNAM and thus proceed to the next module as all linguistic modules are

prerequisite modules. Then, the students' examination scripts were marked three times by two competent language markers in order to identify all students' written errors from their examination answer scripts. All the marking work was compared and moderated by the third person who is a native speaker of the English language and the third marker was all in agreement with the marking standard practiced. All these measures were put in place to guarantee high levels of validity and reliability of the research results.

### **3.8 Ethical issues**

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the National University of Science and Technology's Faculty Research and Publications Committee (FRPC) and the researcher adhered to the ethical clearance policy accordingly. The permission letter to collect data had been granted from the University of Namibia, Southern Campus research board. The anonymity of students' scripts was upheld at all times during the research.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the research design, and the qualitative approach was employed in this study. It also explained the research instruments that were used in the study and how the study's data were analysed. The population of the study, sampling procedures, and size used in the research and research setting were the other aspects of this chapter, as well as the ethical clearance that upholds participants' anonymity throughout the investigation. The reliability and validity of the research where the instruments were put to test further formed part of this chapter. Chapter four deals with the qualitative data presentation of the findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented and discussed. The findings obtained are presented in various themes as they appeared. The first section presents the types of errors and their probable sources as the purpose of this study was to investigate the morphological, syntactical and semantic errors made in English Language and Literacy (LEP 2500) examination answer scripts of 2018 by students at the University of Namibia, Southern Campus. The findings are presented in a qualitative analysis based on the collected data using the examination answer scripts of 2018 as stated above.

#### 4.2 Identification and analysis of syntactical errors

After the researcher analysed the data, syntactical errors were found throughout the students' examination scripts. Crystal (2009) defines the term syntax as "the study of the rules governing the way words are combined to form sentences" (p. 151). A number of syntactical errors found in the students' examination answer sheets are as follows: verb tense, subject verb agreement, pronouns, spellings, capitalisation, punctuation, and articles. These categories draw a parallel with previous studies such as that of Omar and GulSher (2018), Usha and Kader (2016), Sawalmeh (2013) and others. However, it should be noted that the analysis of errors in this chapter are presented in the tables that indicate: error classifications, error identifications and error corrections. Thereafter, the discussions follow.

##### 4.2.1 Verb tense errors

The qualitative observation indicated that students make verb tense errors in their analysed examination scripts of LEP 2500. The students mismatched the tenses and that caused inappropriateness in some of their fragments and sentences. The examples appear in Table 1.

**Table 1: Verb tense errors**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Verb tense	1. Children are expose to print	1. Children are exposed to the prints.
	2. the sound you have hear..	2. the sound you have heard.
	3. how their names were spelled	3. how their names were spelt.

The first example in the Table 1: *Children are expose to print*, indicates that the students have problems in expressing present perfect tense sentences. Thus, the main verb of the sentence was written in the present tense form of the verb instead of the past participle form of the verb in order to indicate the perfect tense of the sentence. Therefore, the correct sentence has to read: *Children are exposed to prints*, which is the present perfect tense of the sentence. In the second example, the fragment: *the sound you have hear*, is equally an error in terms of its tense appropriateness. Thus, the tense of the main verb *hear* has to be changed to the past participle form of the verb *heard*, because the auxiliary verb *have* indicates the present tense form of the verb. Therefore, the correct tense form of this fragment is: *the sound you have heard*. In the third example, the fragmented sentence: *...how their names were spelled*, is inappropriate in terms of the tense of the verb form used. This indicates that the student is not familiar with the irregular verb forms, thus the verb *spelled* is inappropriate in this instance because it falls under irregular verb forms. As a result, the correct participle form of the verb *spell* has to be *spelt* which is the most preferred participle form in British English than *spelled* which is the most favoured in American English, therefore this fragment has to be written as: *...how their names were spelt*. Thus, the research findings are in agreement with those of Richards and Simpson (1974, cited as cited in Kapolo, 2013) as they applauded found that the causes of linguistic errors such as tense errors are simply linked to the ignorance of rule restrictions such as students applying a particular tense rule to the contexts to which they do not apply, and the incomplete application of rules in relation to the rules of the tenses among students' utterances as indicated in the example in the table above.

#### **4.2.2 Errors in subject verb agreement**

Another syntactical error noted through the students' examination answer scripts was the use of the concord or subject verb agreement. This simply means that the subject and the verb of the sentence must agree with each other in numbers, both in plural and singular forms.

**Table 2: Errors in subject verb agreement**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
<b>Subject verb agreement</b>	1. This are sight words.	1. These are sight words.
	2. Every learners hears the teacher.	2. Every learner hears the teacher.
	3. Their brains does not function well,	3. Their brains do not function well.

The first example in Table 2: *This are sight words*, points out that the student does not know the difference between the demonstrative pronouns *this* and *these*. Thus, the pronoun *this* did not agree with the verb *are* in this sentence, since the pronoun *this* is a singular demonstrative pronoun, whereas the verb *are* is the plural verb form of *is*. However, the correct sentence had to be: *These are sight words*. In the second sentence: *Every learners hears the teacher*, indicates that students lack knowledge in the use of concord. The subject of this construction, *learners*, which is in plural form, did not agree with the verb *hears* of this utterance. The verb *hears* indicates the singular form that is used when the subject of the sentence is a 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, to indicate the simple present tense form. However, the correct sentence has to read: *Every learner hears the teacher*. The third example: *Their brains does not function well*, further indicates that the students who commit such errors do not understand the application rule of the verbs *does* and *do* in relation to the subject of the sentence where they are used. Therefore, in the third example, the subject of this sentence *brains* did not match with its verb *does*, since the subject *brains* indicates plural form, whereas its verb *does* works with the singular subject *brain*. Therefore, the correct sentence should read: *Their brains do not function well*. Nghikembua (2014) points out that these types of errors as outlined by Corder (1971b), are an end result of the inconsistent application of the language rule, that is, the rule of subject verb agreement. Furthermore, Nghikembua (2014) cited Keiko (2003), Srinon (1999), and Wissing (1988) who studied isiXhosa, Korean and Japanese students' language errors and they differed in their conclusions since from their studies they contended that the concord errors made by the respondents were a result of overgeneralisations, first language interference and a lack of knowledge of the English language. Thus, it can be argued that the students' inconsistent application of the concord rule is problematic, since students cannot differentiate when and where to apply the concord rule of English language, thus this proves to be the major basis of these errors.

### 4.2.3 Errors in pronouns

In relation to the qualitative analysis of the students' examination answer scripts of 2018, many of the students further committed errors related to the use of pronouns. In terms of English language rules, pronouns are used instead of nouns in sentences. Table 3 provides some examples of errors committed by students in relation to pronouns usage, for example, pronouns not agreeing in number (in plural and singular) with the constructions' nouns and their verbs.

**Table 3: Errors in pronouns**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Pronouns	1. This cards must be placed on wall,	1. These cards must be placed on walls.
	2. They is the early stages of development.	2. It is the early stage of development.
	3. This are sight words that are ..	3. These are sight words that are..

As per the researcher's observation, students committed errors in this category of pronouns. In relation to the first construction: *This cards must be place on the wall...*, this construction indicates that the student cannot differentiate between the two demonstrative pronouns *this* and *these*, since they are more or less pronounced the same, and thus this poses a problem to a number of students. The same problem is further related to the third sentence fragment: *This are sight words that are...* The correct version of such a sentence fragment has to be: *These cards must be placed on the wall...*, and *These are sight words that are....* This is because the demonstrative pronoun must agree with the verb of that sentence, and that is the same with the noun/s used in that sentence. Therefore, in examples 1 and 3, the demonstrative pronoun "*these*" should agree with the noun *cards* in the first sentence, and it should again agree with the verb *are* in the third sentence, since the demonstrative pronoun *these* indicates the plural of the singular of the demonstrative pronoun *this*.

In the second construction: *They is the early stages of development...*, the researcher observed that the personal pronoun *They* did not agree with the verb *is* in this construction, since the rule of pronoun requires that every pronoun should agree in numbers (plural and singular) with the verbs and the nouns in the sentence. Thus, it is evident that the student overgeneralises the pronoun rules in relation to the verbs, and similarly to the nouns of the sentence. Therefore, the

correct version of this sentence is: *It is the early stage of development...* The researcher is thus in agreement with James (1998), who labelled this type of error as one of the induced errors that emanates from the flaws of the materials, exercises, and pedagogical approaches, and that these are major aspects to students' errors in pronouns usage.

#### 4.2.4 Errors of capitalisation

Another notable error category observed by the researcher at UNAM's Southern Campus examination scripts of 2018, is the misuse or no use of capital letters throughout many students' sentences. Through qualitative observation, the researcher observed that many students did not either use capital letters to begin their sentences or wrongly capitalised some words in the middle of their sentences as noted in the examples in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Errors of capitalisation**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Capitalisation	1. the ability to write and read...	1. The ability to write and read...
	2. development process that begins...	2. Development process that begins...
	3 ...teach them Phonemic Awareness.	3 ...teach them phonemic awareness.

As for the first example: *the ability to write and read...*, the student did not start the sentence with the capital letter as required by the rules of capitalisation in English. The capitalisation rule stipulates that all sentences written must start with capital letters and end with appropriate punctuations that end sentences. Thus, this sentence should be written as follows: *The ability to write and read...* This is a similar case with the second example: *development process that begins...*, as the word development has to begin with the capital letter as it is the beginning of the sentence. Therefore, the correct sentence should be: *Development process that begins...* Furthermore, the researcher observed that the majority of students misuse capital letters. They write capital letters in the middle of sentences to begin words that are not classified as proper nouns, in contrast to the rule of capitalisation which stipulates that the capital letter should be used in the middle of the sentences only when a proper noun is appearing. However, the third example:

...*teach them Phonemic Awareness*, is inappropriate as the words phonemic and awareness are not proper nouns in this fragment. The correct fragment should be written as: *teach the phonemic awareness...*, with lower case letters ‘*p*’ and ‘*a*’ at the beginning of these words. The error in punctuations are attributed to the ignorance of the capitalisation rules and this is in line with the claim put forward by Maruma (2017), who attributed errors in punctuations to partial learning in the target language, inability to differentiate between spoken and written language, as well as not proofreading and carelessness.

#### 4.2.5 Error in punctuations

Another notable syntactical observation is the utilisation of punctuations in students’ written sentences. It is observed that a number of students’ sentences were either punctuated inappropriately or they were not punctuated at all. The following table indicates how students punctuated their sentences.

**Table 5: Error in punctuations**

<b>Error classification</b>	<b>Error identifications</b>	<b>Error corrections</b>
<b>Prepositions</b>	Learners have difficulty with reading	Learners have difficulty with reading.
	Parents can buy children toy’s	Parents can buy children toys.
	...monitor their children school work.	...monitor their children’s school work.

In relation to the first example: *Learners have difficulty with reading*; it is evident that the student did not punctuate this sentence at all. Such a sentence has to be punctuated with a full stop at the end in order to be considered as a complete sentence. Therefore, it has to be written as follows: *Learners have difficulty with reading.* With regards to the second example: *Parents can buy children toy’s*, such a sentence is syntactically inappropriate because the student misused the apostrophe on the word *toy’s*, instead of writing the word *toys* to indicate plural. The student used the apostrophe improperly in this case in order to indicate the plural form of the word *toys*, but instead the student used the apostrophe marker which indicates the possessiveness of the word *toy’s*. Furthermore, the sentence was not punctuated at the end with the correct punctuation mark

in order to make it a complete thought. Therefore, a full stop has to be used at the end of the sentence, thus the correct sentence has to be written as follows: *Parents can buy children toys.*

The third fragment in the table above indicates another example of a prepositional error found in the LEP 2500, 2018 examination scripts. With this example: *...monitor their children school work*, it is syntactically inappropriate in relation to punctuation usage. This is erroneous because the student did not place the apostrophe and morpheme ‘s’ at the end of the word children to indicate the possessiveness of the word *children’s*, since the school work mentioned in such a fragment belongs to children. Therefore, the appropriate fragment had to be written as follows: *...monitor their children’s school work*. The researcher observed that errors in punctuation could be attributed to students overgeneralising the utilisation of the possessive apostrophe to indicate the plural form of the noun *toys* and reduce the possessive apostrophe rule to the noun *children’s* to indicate the possessiveness. Thus, Al-Khresheh (2016) further ascertains that overgeneralisation occurs when students incorrectly widen the scope of the rule to a situation where the linguistic rule cannot be applied.

#### 4.2.6 Errors in articles

The usage of articles is another syntactical error that was observed in students’ examination scripts. It was observed that a number of students did not use articles appropriately. The table below gives some examples of error identifications in articles and error corrections.

**Table 6: Errors in articles**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
<b>Articles</b>	1. A sentences that do not make sense,	1. The sentences that do not make sense
	2. Mastering a certain subjects	2. Mastering certain subjects.
	3. It is a honour to learners...	3. It is an honour to learners...

As observed in Table 6, the first example of error identifications indicates a fragment: *a sentences that do not make sense..*, showed that such a fragment needs the definite article *the* in order to be appropriate. The indefinite article ‘a’ used at the beginning of the sentence did not agree with the plural noun *sentences*. Thus, the appropriate fragment is written as: *The sentences that do not make sense*. The second example: *Mastering a certain subjects* is also wrong because this sentence does not need an indefinite article ‘a’ because this article works with a singular subject

of any sentence, not with a plural subject of any sentence as the subject of the second example indicates a plural noun, *subjects*. Therefore, the correct sentence has to be: *Mastering certain subjects*. Thus, the researcher's perspective attributed omission and misuse of articles to ignorance of rules from the students' side.

The third example in the error identification column indicates that the student had used the indefinite article '*a*' instead of the other indefinite article '*an*'. Thus, the fragment: *It is a honour to learners..*, is syntactically inappropriate, because when pronouncing the word *honour*, the phoneme */h/* is regarded as a silent phoneme. As a result, when reading the word *honour*, we do not pronounce phoneme */h/*, but, pronounce it as */a:nər/*. Therefore, according to English grammar rules in relation to words that are pronounced with vowel sounds such as *hour*, one has to use an indefinite article '*an*' since the word *honour* is pronounced with */a:/* which is a vowel sound. Thus, the correct fragment had to be written as follows: *It is an honour to learners*. Yet, the researcher agreed with Wissing et al. (1988 as cited in Nghikembua, 2014), who attributed students' errors in relation to the category of phonology to the fact that Bantu languages 'do not have diphthongs'. Conversely, the majority of this study's respondents (if not all), were of Bantu languages origin. Nghikembua (2014) further alluded that students often write the sounds as they hear them using their known phonological route from the first language. This results in students making spelling errors of L1 transfer in relation to the article usage in most of their writings.

#### 4.2.7 Errors of singular and plural forms

It has also been observed that some students committed errors throughout their examination scripts in relation to singular and plural forms with regards to sentence construction as given in the table below.

**Table 7: Errors of singular and plural**

<b>Error classification</b>	<b>Error identifications</b>	<b>Error corrections</b>
<b>Singular/plural</b>	1. ...flash cards with many word	1. ...flash cards with many words
	2. ...reading is a skills	2. reading is a skill
	3. differences in letter and word	3. differences in letters and words

The examples above indicate how students omitted and added morpheme */s/* in order to indicate plurality or singularity of the particular nouns in various sentences. In the first example: *...flash*

*cards with many word*, the student omitted the /s/ morpheme on the term *word* to indicate the plural of the term *words* because the term *many* indicates that the preceding noun should be in plural in accordance with English language singular and plural rule by adding the morpheme /s/. Therefore, the correct form of such a fragment had to be written as: *flash cards with many words*. As for the second example: *...reading is a skills..*, the student inflected the word *skills* with /s/ morpheme which is inappropriate as in this fragment because such a noun is preceded by an indefinite article 'a', thus disqualified the noun *skill* to be in plural, because the article 'a' indicates an indefinite singular item. The appropriate fragment is: *...reading is a skill*. In the third example: *...difference in letter and word*, the student did not indicate the plural of the nouns in this fragment as intended to indicate the differences in letters and nouns. Once again, the student omitted the /s/ morpheme from the two nouns of the fragment which are; *letter* and *word*. The appropriate variety of that fragment should be: *...differences in letters and words*.

According to Omar and Gulsher (2018), non-seriousness and less concentration of students results in errors throughout their writings. One has to agree with Omar and Gulsher (2018) because in some instances students adhered to the rule of plural and singular when they wrote their first nouns in their sentences or fragment, but omitted the morpheme /s/ when they wrote the second nouns as it appears in the first and third examples in Table 7 in words such as *cards* and *differences*. On the other hand, the researcher agrees with Kapolo (2013) that students' errors in singular/plural forms is the result of overgeneralisation of the rule because the analysed examination scripts indicate that students inflected the morpheme /s/ to the noun such as *childrens*, as a result of not realising that the noun *child* is the singular form of the noun *children*. Thus, they generalised the singular/plural rule as applicable to all forms (regular and irregular nouns) by pluralising every noun with the morpheme /s/.

### **4.3 The identified morphological errors**

Crystal (2009) defines morphology "as the branch of grammar which studies the structure of words" (p.146). A number of morphological errors were found in the students' examination answer sheets, and the errors noted were as follows: inflection, article, colloquialism, and spelling. Likewise, morphological errors are indicated in the tables as error classifications, error identifications and error corrections.

### 4.3.1 Errors in inflection

A number of inflectional errors were observed throughout students' examination scripts. The researcher observed inflection errors in students' examination scripts and examples of some pertinent errors are given in the following table.

**Table 8: Errors in inflection**

<b>Errors classification</b>	<b>Error identifications</b>	<b>Error corrections</b>
<b>Inflection</b>	1. A teacher put-ups words.	1. A teacher puts up words.
	2. A sentence that includes semi-colones...	2. A sentence that includes semi-colons...
	3. Buying childrens books.	3. Buying children books.

As stipulated earlier, a number of inflectional errors was committed by many students, and in relation is the first example in Table 8: *A teacher put-ups words*. This sentence is erroneous because the student compounded the verb **put** with the preposition **up** and formulated the compound word *put-ups*. This is inappropriate because the student inflected the verb *put*, thus creating a different part of speech, which is a verb + a preposition. The student also inflected the coined compound word *put-ups* by adding a morpheme /s/ to the end of the term *put-ups* as a result of overgeneralising the rule of concord in relation to the singular noun *teacher* agreeing with the singular verb *puts up*. So, the appropriate sentence is: *A teacher puts up words*. As for the second example: *A sentence that includes semi-colones...*, the morphological error of inflection came on the compound noun *semi-colones*. The student has inflected the word *semi-colones* with morpheme /e/ perhaps, due to overgeneralisation of the English rules of adding 'es' to the end of some nouns such as: *class – classes*, *watch – watches* and others. The appropriate sentence fragment is: *A sentence that includes semi-colons...*. The third example: *Buying childrens books...* indicates that the student inflected the term *children* with morpheme /s/. According to the researcher, the student misapplied the language rule of pluralising regular nouns in English by adding the morpheme /s/ to the nouns such as the term: *noun – nouns*, *word – words* and others. Thus, the student applied the same rule to the irregular noun *children* to indicate the plural and not recognising that the word *child* is the singular of the word *children* in plural, hence the correct statement: *Buying children books....* Perk and Coyle (2012) revealed that the sources of inflection and spelling errors have resulted from the negative side of over-relying on technology such as computers, cell phones, and tablets for spell checks. Furthermore, Perk and Coyle (2012)

described writing as a way of using correct words in the correct order. Therefore, students find it difficult to spell various words correctly during examinations as they do not use computers to write but their own handwritings which do not spellcheck, nor correct, but they rely on their own linguistic ability.

### 4.3.2 Errors in the use of auxiliary

Another morphological errors identified by the researcher is errors in the omission of auxiliary verb forms as indicated in the table below.

**Table 9: Errors in the use of auxiliary**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Auxiliary	1. A child that a problem with reading.	1. A child that <i>has</i> a problem with reading.
	2. The words that displayed on a wall.	2. The words that <i>are</i> displayed on a wall.
	3. It the literacy that starts at early age.	3. It <i>is</i> the literacy that starts at early age.

A number of auxiliary errors occurred in the students' analysed examination scripts. For example: *A child that a problem with reading*. In this instance the student omitted the appropriate auxiliary *has* and as a result, this omission overlooked the tense of the sentence. However, the correct word to be inserted in this statement is *has*, which has to agree with the subject of the statement: *A child* and further pronounce the tense of the sentence as simple present tense. So the appropriate statement should read: *A child that has a problem with reading*. Furthermore, the researcher further discovered that students have only omitted auxiliaries in their examination scripts as it appeared in the other last two examples in Table 9 as: *The words that displayed on a wall*, where the auxiliary verb *are* was omitted as in the sentence construction: *It the literacy that starts at early age*, the auxiliary '*is*' is omitted too. This kind of omission is attributed to the ignorance of rule restriction by students as suggested by Gayo and Widodo (2018) that these sources of errors occur when the students cannot use the exception rules. These types of errors take place when a rule is not used in the context where it should have been used as it appeared in the examples in the table above.

### 4.3.3 Errors in spelling (inconsistency in spelling)

Errors in spelling are other types of morphological errors that are observed by the researcher in many students' examination scripts of 2018. Examples of these spelling errors are given in Table 10 below.

**Table 10: Errors in spelling**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Spelling	1. Difficulty in writting...	1. Difficulty in writing...
	2. Words are spelled wrong.	2. Words are spelt wrongly.
	3. Children write the shoping lists.	3. Children write the shopping lists.

As indicated in Table 10, the first example: *Difficulty in writting...*, shows that the student misspelt the word writing by doubling consonant 't' which indicates that the student had overgeneralised the rule of writing the past participle form of the word *written*. Therefore, the word *writing* is spelt with a single consonant 't' when it is written in continuous form. So the correct construction of this fragment is: *Difficulty in writing...* With regards to the second example: *Words are spelled wrong.*, the student spelt the word *spelled* in American English, however, students are expected to write in British English. Once again, the student misapplied the rule of regular verbs whereby these types of verbs are spelt by adding 'ed' at the end of these verbs in the present tense to change them into the past tense and past participle forms such as, *play – played – played*. Though, the irregular verb forms is different, the correct form of the verb *spell* in the past participle is *spelt* and the correct form of the sentence in relation to the word *spelled* should be: *Words are spelt wrongly*. With regards to the last example as it appeared in the table: *Children write the shoping lists.*, the student ignored the rule of doubling the consonant 'p' in writing the word shopping correctly. Thus, Usha and Kader (2016), further refer such types of errors as inconsistency in the English language where most ESL learners have problems in the acquisition of English morphology. Therefore, the correct form of the word *shoping* as written in the table is *shopping*, *Children write the shopping lists*. Maruma (2017) further revealed that students' use of technological devices is one of the major factors of spelling errors. The interference of mother tongue and fractional learning in the target language, failure to differentiate between spoken and written language as well as not proofreading and carelessness are some of the other factors.

#### 4.3.4 Errors of colloquialism (shorthand)

The elision of words and parts thereof in formal writing is another problem observed by the researcher from the students' examination scripts. The examples that students committed in relation to the use of colloquialism of some words are shown in Table 11.

**Table 11: Errors of colloquialism**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Colloquialism	1. A teacher is busy with <i>admin</i>	1. A teacher is busy with administration
	2. She <i>wanna</i> read...	2. She wants to read...
	3. To hear & manipulate sounds	3. To hear and manipulate sounds.

There are a number of colloquial errors that are found in students' examination scripts as given in Table 11. With regards to the first example: *A teacher is busy with admin...*, the term *admin* is a colloquial term, because it is written in a short form. Therefore, it has to be written in full as *administration*. In the second example: *She wanna read...*, the term *wanna* is another word written informally, which in English language is also known as colloquial language. The students are expected to write the word *wanna* as *want to*. Therefore, the appropriate fragment should be: *She wants to read*.

In relation to the last example: *To hear & manipulate sounds*, the student has used an ampersand '&' instead of writing the word '*and*' in full. Thus, in the English module LEP 2500, students are expected to write words in full in examinations, tests and exercises as formal language in formal discourses. According to the researcher, the main contributing factor to the usage of colloquial language in students' formal discourse is technology and ignorance of rules. Perk and Coyle (2012) accorded the impact of technological devices such as computers, SMS, Mixit, Facebook and Twitter to the colloquial wording and written work of many university students as highlighted. The SMS lingo contributes to students' shorthand writing as they fail to distinguish between writing for academic purposes and writing for casual and informal communicative purposes.

#### 4.3.5 Errors involving compounding words

Compounding is another problem that was investigated by the researcher, where some students either wrongly compounded words together or did not compound them correctly. The examples

of the fragments in Table 12 indicate either inappropriately compounded or not compounded words.

**Table 12: Errors involving of compounding words**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
<b>Compounding</b>	Read everyday to know	Read every day to know
	To under stand words	To understand words
	buy them small chalk boards	...buy them small chalkboards

Table 12 indicates some of the errors in compounding words that are found in some students' writings. These errors varied as indicated above. In the first instance: *Read everyday to know...*, the fragment is inappropriate as the student combined two distinctive words: *every* and *day*. The appropriate fragment should be: *Read every day to know...* The term *every* is an adjective whereas, *day* is a noun, thus compounding in relation to this case is incorrect as the fragment meant something else in its syntactical meaning. The second example: *to under stand words...*, is also inappropriate because the student alienated the term *understand* into two word classes as *under* – preposition, *stand* – verb, meaning something else with regards to what the student is syntactically and semantically trying to achieve. Therefore, the correct fragment is: *to understand words*. The third example: *buy them small chalk board...* The student in this case separated the term *chalkboard* into two terms at the end of the sentence as the dash punctuation was not used to connect the two words together and formulate the compound word *chalkboard*. Thus, the correct construction is: *...buy them small chalkboards*. As per the researcher's observation, students' errors in compounding came as a result of overgeneralising the rule of compounding words in English. Furthermore, the compounding word problem is attributed to pedagogical issues as some educators did not explain clearly to students when and how to compound various terms, and when to utilise a dash to compound various terms in the English language.

#### **4.4 The identified semantic errors**

A number of semantic errors were observed from many LEP 2500 examination scripts of 2018 at UNAM, Southern Campus, in the category that Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) termed distortion due to spelling and further narrated this category as when spelling a word wrongly then such a word will be semantically distorted, and this affects the production of a construction in

which such a word is used. Thus, the semantic errors category includes sub-themes such as the omission of letters, disordering of letters, over-inclusion of letters, mis-selection of letters and errors in sentences and paragraphs.

#### 4.4.1 Omission of letters

The researcher observed that some students committed spelling errors by omitting one or more letters from a particular word, and such omissions resulted in semantically deviant constructions. Such examples of omission of certain letter/s (vowels/consonants) in some words are presented in the following phrases in the table below.

**Table 13: Omission of letters**

<b>Error classification</b>	<b>Error identifications</b>	<b>Error corrections</b>
<b>Omission of letters</b>	1. verbs are writen	1. verbs are written
	2. hear the diffrence	2. hear the difference
	3. cannot nam any letter	3. can not name any letter

In the first example: *verbs are writen*, the student omitted a consonant letter ‘t’, thus the spelling of the word changed and that affected the meaning and the word class. The appropriate spelling of the word should be ‘*written*’ because of the English rule of doubling the consonants in some words to form the past participle of the verb such as the word *write*. In the second example: *hear the diffrence*, the student omitted the vowel letter ‘e’. This caused the deviation in the meaning of the fragment. Therefore, the correct spelling of the misspelt term *diffrence* is ‘*difference*’. The third example: *cannot nam any letter*, the student omitted the vowel letter ‘e’, and such omission brought a deviation in the meaning of the sentence fragment. Conversely, the correct spelling of the word ‘*nam*’ is ‘*name*’ to represent the main verb of the phrase. In relation to the researcher’s observation, some students committed these kinds of errors due to insufficient knowledge in the English spelling, and the influence of the technological gadgets such as computers, tablets and cell phones in relation to spellcheck tools in these gadgets, because students today type their exercises, assignments and other activities with these gadgets. This influences students to pay little attention to word spellings as technology does it automatically for the students.

#### 4.4.2 Over-inclusion of letters

Many students committed the over-inclusion error by inserting and adding letters in words as indicated in Table 14.

**Table 14: Over-inclusion of letters**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
<b>Over-inclusion of letters</b>	1. see different views	1. see different views
	2. tell differents	2. tell different
	3. show childrens	3. show children

As reflected in the first example, *see different views...*, the student inserted the inappropriate phoneme 'e' in the word 'views', and this insertion resulted in a distortion in the meaning of the phrase and the term itself in terms of spelling. The correct spelling phrase is: *see different views...* In the second example: *tell differents...*, the student added 's' at the end of the word 'differents', which caused a semantic and spelling error in the spelling and the meaning of the phrase. Therefore, the correct wording is 'different', which is an adjective as the word class in relation to the phrase aforementioned. With regards to the last example, *show childrens...*, the phrase is also incorrect because the student added consonant 's' at the end of the term 'childrens' to indicate plurality of the term children. Therefore, the correct spelling of such a term is 'children'. According to the researcher's observation, the students who committed the over inclusion of letters overgeneralised the English rule of forming the plural form and concord rule of the third person singular in the present tense form. Thus, students over included phonemes 's' and 'e' to nouns such as *children*, *views* and others. Equally, Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) reinforced that the overgeneralisation rule and students' false concepts about English as the probable sources of over-inclusion errors.

#### 4.4.3 Mis-selection of letters

Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) define mis-selection as a category where errors are committed in such a way that the students select an incorrect letter for one that could have been largely caused by students' inability to read properly. A number of these errors are observed through students' scripts as they appear in Table 15.

**Table 15: Errors in mis-selection**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
<b>Miss-election of letters</b>	1. cannot count, add or subtruct	1. cannot count, add or subtract
	2. to see diffirent views	2. to see different views
	3. to make dicesions	3. to make decisions

As observed in the first example: *cannot count, add or subtruct*, the student selected an incorrect vowel ‘*u*’ in the word *subtruct* instead of the correct vowel ‘*a*’, thus this caused a mis-selection error. The correct letter which the student was supposed to insert and spell the word correctly was the vowel ‘*a*’ and thus write the correct word ‘*subtract*’. With the second example: *to see diffirent views...*, the student spelt the word ‘*diffirent*’ with a vowel ‘*i*’ instead of the vowel ‘*e*’, which is the correct vowel to spell the term ‘*different*’ with. Thus, the second example phrase reads: *to see different views....*

In the third example: *to make dicesions...*, the student misspelt the word ‘*dicesions*’ by replacing vowel ‘*e*’ with ‘*i*’. Therefore, the correct spelling of such word is: ‘*decisions*’ and the phrase should read: *to make decisions....* Mis-selection errors are a result of students’ inability to read some terms properly.

Thus, Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) reiterate that such kinds of misspelling errors occur because unskilled second language writers “concentrate on the challenge of finding the right words and sentences to express their meaning instead of editing” (p. 247). Consequently, these errors result in some words which are non-existent in the target language, henceforth leading to semantically deviant sentences. Accordingly, the only source of such errors is the second language, i.e. English.

#### 4.4.4 Miss-ordering of letters

It has been observed that some students miss-order some letters in different words which causes spelling errors throughout their written work. These errors cause semantic errors as indicated in Table 16.

**Table 16: Miss-ordering of letters**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Miss-ordering of letters	1. children are progerssing...	1. children are progressing...
	2. an umberall term	2. an umbrella term
	3. comperehnsive report	3. comprehensive report

In the first example, *children are progerssing*, the student miss-ordered letter ‘*r*’ in the word *progressing* and that caused the incorrect spelling and semantic deviation of the word. The correct

spelling should be: *'progressing'* for it to be semantically correct, and the fragment should be: *children are progressing....* In the second example: *an umberall term..*, the student miss-ordered *'ll'* and *'r'* letters in the word *'umberall'* that further caused incorrect spelling that led to semantic deviance. Therefore, the correct spelling word is: *'umbrella'* for it to be semantically correct in relation to the phrase: *an umbrella term....*

Furthermore, with the third example: *comperehnsive report*, the student misspelt the word *'comperehnsive'* with the miss-ordered letter *'e'* in that word and this caused the word to be semantically incorrect, so as the phrase where it is used. The correct word is spelt as *'comprehensive'*. Miss-ordering errors resulted from students' overreliance on technological devices such as computers, tablets and cell phones to type much of their school work because these devices have spellcheck tools that automatically correct wrongly spelt words once activated. Contrarily, James (1998) established that miss-ordering errors are a result of "intralingual [influence] created without recourse to L1 resources. The outcomes are forms non-existent in the TL" (p.150).

Moreover, Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) state that miss-ordering errors are purely intralingual and they are caused by the developmental strategies that the students have undergone. Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) stress that Arabic students commit miss-ordering errors in the cardinal number *'two'* as *'tow'*. Al-Shormani and Al-Sohbani (2012) state that the source of such an error is not L1. In fact, Mohanty (2006) concurs that the source of the miss-ordering of *'two'* as *'tow'* is L2, i.e. English itself. Mohanty (2006) adds that the source of miss-ordering errors lies in the fact that the English words the Arabic speaking students are exposed to during their courses of study show that the consonant *'-w-o'* is an extremely rare sequence of letters vis-à-vis consonant *'-o-w'*, which is very common specially at the end of words. Mohanty (2006) produced a list of words such as *arrow, cow, how, mow, now, row...* etc and because of this, Arabic students become confused in the spelling of the word *'two'* and consequently they spell it as *'tow'*.

#### **4.4.5 Errors in sentences and paragraphs**

Even if students were required by the question paper to state, define, mention, discuss, and give much of their answers in words or phrases and in point forms, it has been observed that some errors in sentences and paragraphs are due to lack of conforming with the English language rules. Table 17 indicates some sentential errors made by students in their examination scripts.

**Table 17: Errors at sentence and paragraph levels**

Error classification	Error identifications	Error corrections
Errors in sentences	when a person has ....	When a person has .....
	Hear & manipulate...	Hear and manipulate...
	Teacher can provide ...	The teacher can provide ...

The first example in Table 17: *when a person has ...*, shows that the phrase does not start with the capital letter ‘**W**’, thus making it incorrect in terms of the rules of constructing sentences in English as all sentences have to start with capital letters. In the second example: *hear & manipulate...* such construction is incorrect because the student used an ampersand & instead of writing the word *and* in full, hence using words in short form as used above in formal writing is not allowed in formal English sentences construction.

However, in academic writing, English sentences start with articles, nouns and verbs when they are questions or with the prepositional phrases. The third example: *Teacher can provide...*, the starting of this sentence is incorrect because the student started it with the common noun ‘*teacher*’ instead of starting it with the definite article ‘*The*’ in order to construct the correct sentence in English. In other examples, many sentences did not end with correct punctuation marks, for instance students ended questions with full stops, whereas exclaimed sentences are ended with question marks and commas. In other instances, some sentences were not punctuated at all.

Equally, these sentential errors have further aggravated paragraph formulations and some students’ paragraphs were not appropriately separated and they lack topic and supporting sentences as required by English norms of paragraph constructions. However, all these errors compromised the formal construction of discourses in much of the students’ written work. The researcher agrees with Nghikembua (2014) that the errors made in this category are either as a result of ignorance of the academic discourse or carelessness from the students’ side. Hence, the MBESC (2003) language policy advocates students to be taught how to produce clear, fluent and well-structured pieces of writing.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the qualitative presentation of the data collected from the 56 examination scripts of the LEP 2500 students from UNAM, Southern Campus. A combination of error analysis and document analysis methods were used in the identification, description, explanation, and evaluation of linguistic errors based on Corder's (1974) five steps of error analysis. The findings revealed that a total number of 17 categories of different types of errors were analysed from the students' examination scripts of LEP 2500, of the year 2018.

These errors were first classified into three categories: morphological, syntactic and semantic errors. The observed subcategories of errors in students' examination scripts are; errors in verb tense, subject verb agreement, pronouns, capitalisation, punctuations, articles, singular and plural, inflection, use of auxiliary, spelling, colloquialism, compounding words, omission, over-inclusion, mis-selection, miss-ordering, and errors at sentence and paragraph levels.

These errors are attributed to: intra-lingual transfer, inter-lingual transfer, overgeneralisation, carelessness and the effects of modern technology. The next chapter is a discussion of the findings that are presented in Chapter four.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter five discusses the results as presented in Chapter four. In chapter five, possible explanations for the source of the students' errors that students committed in their examination scripts are given. In addition, further clarifications are made by comparing the findings with aspects as discussed in the literature review in relation to sources of errors and what previous studies have revealed.

From the information obtained, it can be concluded that many students committed various linguistic errors as deduced from the investigated examination scripts of LEP 2500, at UNAM, Southern Campus. Thus, such linguistic errors contributed to either failure of this module or may have been assimilated to other modules, and as a result to their professions when they graduated.

#### 5.2 Discussion of the sources of errors

In this study 17, categories were designed to investigate and provide a more comprehensive analysis of the diverse linguistic errors made by students. A number of examples of errors were recorded in different tables in Chapter four and some suggestions are given as to why the researcher thought these errors happened. In this section, the researcher attempts to establish, based on the literature, some possible sources of errors made by students in different 17 categories. This discussion is structured based on the main reasons for the occurrence of errors as pronounced in the literature and on the researcher's observations and experience. These are: intra-lingual transfer, inter-lingual transfer, overgeneralisation, carelessness and modern technology.

##### 5.2.1 Intra-lingual transfer

Intra-lingual errors are those errors which result from the incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions for rule application (Darus & Ching, 2009, as cited in Kapolo, 2013). Richards (1971), explained intra-lingual errors as another source of linguistic errors that happens as a result of the language being learned, independent of the native language. Richards (1971) further stressed that there are items that are produced by students which reflect not on the structure of

the mother tongue, but generalisations based on partial exposure to the target language. Therefore, students in this scenario try to derive the rules behind the data to which they have been exposed and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language (Richards, 1974).

The researcher observed students' examination scripts in relation to many written errors that students produced as a result of the intra-lingual errors as they are categorised into four subcategories such as; overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restriction, and incomplete application of the rule (Richards, 1974, as cited in Al-Khresheh, 2016). These categories are detailed as follows in relation to the examples extracted from the research data.

### **5.2.2.1 Overgeneralisation**

Overgeneralisation is when students assume that a certain rule is correct and this erroneously becomes a habit (Kapolo, 2013). Many students committed such errors in their writings as observed by the researcher as they made errors by overgeneralising the singular and plural rule of the English language. Here, students overgeneralised the English rule of plural by not pluralising the second nouns in some of the phrases. For example, *flash cards with many word, few learner*, as students assumed that the adjectives *many* and *few* had understandably been used here to indicate the plural form of the nouns *word* and *learner* in the constructions. As a consequence, the nouns such as *words*, *learners*, and *teachers* had to be inflected with the morpheme */s/* to indicate the plural forms of these nouns. Furthermore, students were observed to overgeneralise this rule as they wrote words such as, *childrens*, *viewes*, *differents*, *semi-colones*. This is an indication of overgeneralising the English grammar rule of concord and plural/singular forms.

### **5.2.2.2 Ignorance of rule restrictions**

It has been observed that students have committed some of the written errors due to ignorance of rule restrictions as (Richards, 1974, as cited in Al-khresheh, 2016) defined it as the inability to maintain the limit (borders) of present formation by overseeing the rules to inappropriate situations. It was also noted that many students showed ignorance of the rule restriction errors in relation to the usage of the capital letter throughout their writing. In some instances, students ignored to start sentences with capital letters as required. They further inappropriately capitilised some words (not proper nouns) in the middle of the sentences as indicated in Table 4 in Chapter four. Moreover, students ignored the placement of auxiliary verbs in the appropriate sentences to

indicate the correct tense of the phrase and sentences as indicated in Table 4, Chapter four. Here, students inappropriately used some auxiliary verbs such as, *has, are, is, was, will* to indicate the present, past, and future tense in the phrases and sentences.

### **5.2.2.3 Incomplete application of the rule**

Richards (1974, as cited in Al-Khresher, 2016), explained the incomplete application of rules by foreign language students tending to apply some rules and continuing to construct deviant forms in order to ease their learning. The researcher observed that many students committed these kinds of errors as they constructed deviant forms of constructions to ease their writing, and this was observed in their usage of punctuation marks. As in Table five, students started many of their sentences without capital letters, whereas others did not end their sentences with appropriate punctuation or no punctuation were used at all. In some instances, students derived some words with inappropriate punctuation marks such as using the apostrophes to indicate the plural of the words such as; *learners – learner’s, toys - toy’s* and others. In other examples, students eased their writings by not inflecting words like; *children – children’s, learners - learners’, and parents - parent’s* and many more to indicate the possessiveness to some nouns.

Equally, students committed some errors aligned to incomplete application of the rule as a source of errors through the use of verbs *to be*. As a result, many students omitted the auxiliary verbs in most of their constructions as was noted in Table 8, Chapter four. The students omitted auxiliary verbs such as, *has, are, and is*. In other instances, students omitted prepositions in some of their sentences such as, *to, from, on, in* to indicate the positions of particular objects in various sentences.

## **5.3 Inter-lingual**

It is observed that students have made a few errors that are related to inter-lingual cases. These errors are attributed to students’ first language/s or mother tongue interference. A notable example of an inter-lingual instance is found in the usage of articles, where a number of students were observed to have used inappropriate articles as in relation to Wissing (1988) and Nurse (2003, as cited in Nghikembua, 2014), who have remarked that Bantu languages do not have diphthongs thus this causes students to place an ‘**a**’ article before the words that are spelt with the ‘**h**’ letter such as *honour* and *hour* in contrast to words such as *house, horse* and many others, since the latter words are always preceded by the indefinite article ‘**a**’, contrary to the earlier

examples which are always preceded by an indefinite article '*an*'. The researcher further agrees with Brown (1994) that the early stages of language learning are characterised by a predominance of interference (inter-lingual transfer), but once students have begun to acquire parts of a new language system, more and more intra-lingual generalisation within the target language is manifested.

#### **5.4 Technology interference**

Another possible cause of errors in students' written responses is over-reliance on technology. The exposure of students to mobile phones, laptops, tablets as well as laziness to write words in full results in SMS language which intrudes in their formally written pieces. According to the researcher, this is the case because students over-rely on the use of technological apparatus to write their exercises and assignments because they are required to type their written exercises and assignments with the computers, laptops, or even with cellphones at UNAM Southern Campus.

To make matters worse, students receive lecture notes in the form of PowerPoint presentations. This contributes to students' difficulties to spell some English words correctly especially during examinations where they are expected to construct their answers through their own handwriting. Computers are equipped with spellcheck tools that automatically correct the wrongly spelt words in word documents and PowerPoint applications. Some of the examples of the commonly wrong spelt words are: "*exam - examination, admin – administration, & - and, writting – writing, shoping – shopping, litterecy - literacy*", *veggies – vegetables, hapens – happens, ment – meant, beginning - beginning* and many others as presented in Chapter four.

By the same token, researchers such as Perk and Coyle (2012), Kapolo (2013), and Maruma (2017) put emphasis on the paradigm shift in the use of technological devices in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as one of the major contributors to students' spelling errors. The rapid prominence in the use of computers, laptops, cell phones, SMS, Mixit, Facebook and Twitter and others immensely contributes to the colloquial wording and written work of many UNAM Southern Campus students as highlighted in Table 11, Chapter four. The use of SMS lingo further contributes to students' poor writing, the use of shorthand and their failure to distinguish between spoken language and writing for academic purposes, and also writing for casual and informal communicative purposes.

## 5.6 Conclusion

English is the official language for Namibia. It is the medium of instruction from Grade 4 to tertiary education and public domains. Likewise, it is also the most significant language that gives right of entry to the international community, information technology as well as information networks. From the findings, it is clear that many students made numerous written errors in LEP 2500 examination scripts. These errors are attributed to inter-lingual transfer, intra-lingual transfer, over-generalisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rule, and technology.

## 5.7 Recommendations

This study aimed at investigating the morpho-syntactic and semantic errors made by students at UNAM's Southern Campus in LEP 2500 examination scripts, investigating the causes of written errors as well as establishing better strategies to resolve these errors. In teaching ESL, the lecturers of English language at UNAM Southern Campus should be conscious of the difficulties their students have particularly in the area of writing. Lecturers of various English modules must make it clear to the students that certain rules in L1 are not appropriate in English. This will aid students to apply precise strategies in their ESL writing activities that will lessen writing errors of students at UNAM Southern Campus.

This study pointed out that intra-lingual, inter-lingual and technology interference are major causes of linguistic errors of students. Nevertheless, in order to implement effective and successful ESL instruction and reduce the students' errors as document analysis has indicated throughout the investigation, the researcher proposes the following recommendations that may address these issues:

- Students need to get appropriate feedback whenever they have written any exercise, especially their end of the semester examination scripts. The lecturers of English at UNAM Southern campus should return students' examination scripts each semester with written exclusive feedback outlining all the errors every student made with their possible corrections on the prevalent errors made by each student.
- The 21<sup>st</sup> century education is technologically driven, thus every English language lecturer at UNAM Southern campus needs to provide extensive online end-of-the semester examination reports that summarise errors and mistakes that students make in their examination scripts with possible causes, corrections and recommendations. This will help students to familiarise themselves with the errors and mistakes they

make during their examinations. These reports further need to be published on the UNAM portal, for different students and lecturers to access online reports and acquaint themselves with other lecturers' reports. This will enable lecturers and students to absorb and solicit other expertise from fellow language lecturers in relation to up-to-date and timely access to language trends, instructions and recommendations.

- English language instructions need to be much emphasised across all modules that are taught in all courses such as Economics, Geology, Auditing and Accounting and others. Lecturers need to comprehensively assess their students' level of language usage across all tasks, exercises and examinations for students to write and practice appropriate language usage, whenever they are executing their academic work. This will inform, help and spearhead all UNAM Southern Campus students to be competent in writing, spelling and other linguistic skills, and likewise address the factors of overgeneralisation of the L1 rules of students. This will prepare competent language usage students for both corporate and public workforce.
- UNAM Southern Campus lecturers' language forums in partnership with English L1 universities such as University of Cardiff, Cambridge and others need to be initiated and strengthened in order to keep modern, diverse and advanced language instructions in 2<sup>nd</sup> language teaching to improve ESL students' linguistic abilities, and keep them abreast with advanced linguistic trends that inform the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution students, and new linguistic educational practices. These forums will help English language lecturers to find better strategies to use technological apparatus such as computers, cell phones and other technological devices to advance students in the learning of English better and for them to become competent writers and speakers.
- Diverse English language teaching methodologies that emphasise the teaching of grammar in relation to other language skills in various language lectures need to be put into consideration at UNAM Southern Campus. The communicative language teaching approach that is widely used in the Namibian education system should be combined with methods such as the audio-lingual and the cognitive-code approaches in order to cater for the learning needs of the students (Ur, 1996, as cited in Nghikembua, 2014). Students need to be equipped with more comprehensive grammar based exercises to alleviate morphological, syntactic and semantic errors of students in their writing pieces.
- More writing and spelling activities need to be integrated in various English language lectures to help students with their handwriting as well as spelling of various words and

sentences, paragraphs and formal writings of students. Writing is a skill that is acquired through practice. It is, like dance and sport, an activity that can be improved through practice (Andrews, 1999, as cited Karahan, 2011), and through "exposure to written texts in a natural process of communication rather than grammatical and rhetorical rules on writing" (Leki, 1992, p. 17).

- There is a need for UNAM curriculum developers to consider English for Specific Purpose (ESP) in all courses. UNAM needs to revisit its English language curriculum and replace English for Academic Purposes with English for Specific Purposes in all courses. ESP is a specific English course which is entirely designed for a specific course such as English for Law, English for Accounting, English for Geology and other distinguished courses. ESP deals with the absolute needs of the students of a specific course, which is English required and streamlined for a specific profession.
- Lastly, there is a need to further consider the process approach to writing. According to Karahan (2011), the recent investigation on the process approach to EFL/ESL writing is very significant for instructors in order to make a shift in the description of writing and errors. Karahan (2011) states that when writing instructors follow the process approach, students will perhaps enjoy the interaction throughout the writing activities. "Unfortunately, many EFL/ESL instructors simply ignore this kind of interaction when it comes to writing. However, when students interact through writing activities, they benefit from each other through peer response or peer editing groups with the guidance of their instructors. In addition, it is believed that when students are exposed to more L2 and practice more EFL writing, many of their errors will naturally disappear" (Karahan, 2011, p. 70). This will help students in cases of overgeneralising some English language rules, incomplete application of the rule, ignorance of rule restrictions and others through process approach writing as students will be widely engaged in various writing activities.

### **5.7 Further research required**

Based on the results of this study, further investigations can be examined by comparing the first languages such as Khoekhoegowab, Afrikaans, Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga and Otjiherero to determine the kind of inter-lingual errors that influence ESL errors of LEP 2500 students at UNAM, Southern Campus. Furthermore, there is also a need to investigate whether it is the L1 or

technology interferences which most likely contribute to students' writing errors and mistakes in their written activities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### The checklist of error analysis

Errors Categories	Sources of Errors		
<p>1) <b>Linguistic Errors :</b>            A) Morphological Errors</p>	<p>A) Intralingual (Intral.)            Richards (1974: 12-22)            Developmental Error (DE)            or            Overgeneralization (OG)            Corder (1974:130)  <input type="checkbox"/> Ignorance of Rule Restriction  <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete Application of Rules  <b>Eg.</b> They work hardly.  <b>Eg.</b> I speaked to the manager..            (Richards 1971a in Ellis 2000: 59)  <input type="checkbox"/> Building of False Concepts  <input type="checkbox"/> False Analogy  <b>Eg.</b> Leafs  <input type="checkbox"/> Induced Errors: from classroom situation (the teacher/the designed material)  <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of incorrect elements  <b>Eg.</b> ..that's mean people who have jobs...  <input type="checkbox"/> Omission of required elements  <b>Eg.</b> ..possible that one has different skill  <input type="checkbox"/> Addition of unnecessary elements  <b>Eg.</b> ..but the big phenomenons are...            Corder (1973:277)</p> <p><b>B) Interlingual (Interl.)</b>            L1 Negative            Transfer/Interference            Weinreich (1953: 1)  <input type="checkbox"/> Overextension of Analogy            (Lott 1983 in Ellis 2000: 59)</p>		

	<p>A) Intralingual (Intral.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ignorance of Rule Restriction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete Application of Rules</li> </ul> <p>Eg. He asked me where did I get my diploma.</p> <p><b>Eg.</b> They already have applied for The job..</p>		
<p><b>B) Syntactic Errors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Induced Errors: from classroom situation (the teacher/the designed material)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Selection of incorrect elements</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> Immigration made of chronic...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Omission of required elements</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> Even who has no competence or not professional...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Addition of unnecessary elements</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> Responsables they do not...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Misordering of certain elements</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> The impacts growing of modern forms of economy... Corder (1973:277)</p> <p>B) Interlingual (Interl.)</p> <p>L1 Negative Transfer/Interference Weinreich (1953: 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overextension of Analogy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of Structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> ..from the companies responsables. (Lott 1983 in Ellis 2000: 59)</p>		

	<p><b>A) Intralingual (Intral.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confusables (Confusing) (James 1998: 145-147)</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> Many ways will open to young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Distortions (Nonexistent forms in TL)</li> </ul> <p>(James 1998: 150)</p>		
--	--	--	--

<p><b>3) Semantic Errors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meaning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Capitalization</li> </ul>	<p><b>Eg.</b> The job market gets more and more honest</p> <p><b>B) Interlingual (Interl.)</b> L1 negative transfer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> False friends</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deceptive Cognates</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> ..not qualified to earn a job</p> <p><b>A) Intralingual (Intral.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Relevance</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> ..to give the underpayment so as to get a job.</p> <p><b>Eg.</b> By most accounts...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coherence</li> </ul> <p><b>Eg.</b> Misuse of grammatical and lexical elements such as: later, finally, thus, however, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cohesion</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Value as a text /product (overall consistency of a text/product) Das, 1978 in James1998: 161)</li> <li>- Logical Progression</li> <li>- Flow of Ideas</li> <li>- Discourse / process</li> </ul> <p><b>B) Interlingual (Interl.)</b> L1 Negative Transfer / Interference</p>		
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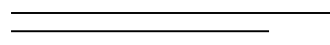
## Appendix 2

The prescribed marking guide for teachers

### MARKING OF SETWORK

1. All mistakes must be indicated, even if they are repeated several times.
2. Indicate the different mistakes-don't just underline!
3. Correct and precise indication of mistakes will lead to an accurate evaluation.

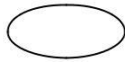
### SYMBOLS FOR MARKING



-Spelling



-Grammar



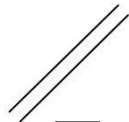
-Punctuation



-Word omitted



-Word order



-New sentence



-New paragraph



-Poor choice of words



-Not applicable



-Unclear

Appendix 3

<b>FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (F-REC)</b> <b>APPLICATION FORM FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE FOR</b> <b>RESEARCH/DATA COLLECTION</b>				
<p><b>NB:</b> This form should be prepared by the researcher and student researcher in consultation with supervisor/promotor) and attached to the actual research proposal, and submitted to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee</p>				
<p><b>Full name of researcher: Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms/Other: Jona Shaumana</b></p>				
<p><b>Department &amp; Faculty of Researcher: e.g. Human Science / Department of Communication</b></p>				
<p><b>Title of research project: A linguistic error analysis of examination scripts by students at the University of Namibia's Southern Campus</b></p>				
<p><b>If a registered NUST student, indicate degree programme: Master of English and Applied Linguistics</b></p>				
<p><b>NUST staff or student number: 201094002</b></p>				
<p><b>Supervisor/promotor (if applicable): Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms/other: Rewai Makamani</b></p>				
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	Yes	NS*	No	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>1. Familiarity with ethical codes of conduct</b>				
As researcher, I have familiarised myself with the professional code(s) of ethics and guidelines for ethically responsible research relevant to my field of study as specified in the list herewith attached, AND the policy for the assurance and promotion of ethically accountable research at NUST	Yes			<p>If YES: Continue with the checklist.</p> <p>If NS/NO: Researcher must do so before proceeding.</p>
<b>2. The proposed research: (Proceed with the whole of Section 2)</b>				
a) Involves gathering information directly from human subjects (individuals or groups) (e.g. by means of questionnaires, interviews, observation of subjects or working with personal data)	Yes	NS	No**	<p>If YES: Continue with the checklist.</p> <p>If NO: This checklist process does not apply to the proposed research, except if 2 (b) applies.</p>
b) Involves gathering information directly from companies, corporations, organisations, NGOs, government departments etc. that <u>is not</u> available in the public domain	Yes			<p>If YES: Continue with the checklist.</p> <p>If NO: This checklist process does</p>

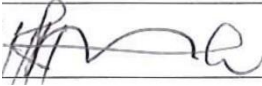
				not apply to the proposed research.																		
C 1) Is linked to or part of a bio-medical research project C2) Is linked to or part of nuclear/radio-active research project C3) Is linked to biotechnological research project e.g. GMOs, Environmental Nanotech research etc.			<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.																		
d) Involves gathering of information without consent/assent, i.e. will be conducted without the knowledge of the subjects of/participants in the research	Yes			If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.																		
e) Involves collection of identifiable information about people from available records/archival material to be collected on individuals/groups/lists with personal information			<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.																		
<p>** Please note: If the “No” option is selected it does not nullify the responsibility that rests on the researcher to ensure that ethical research practices are followed throughout the research process. The onus rests on the researcher to ensure that, should any ethical issues arise throughout the research process, the necessary steps are taken to minimise and report these risks to the supervisor/promotor of the study (where relevant/applicable), the Departmental Head , and the F-REC. Furthermore: If the “No” option is chosen it does not absolve the researcher to seriously consider the possible risk that the research can in some way wrongfully disadvantage research participants and/or stakeholders or deny them fundamental rights.</p>																						
<p><b>3. The proposed research involves the gathering of information from people in the following categories:</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>NS</th> <th>No</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a) Minors (persons under 18 years of age)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td rowspan="3">           If YES/NS for any of these categories (a-f): F-REC clearance will be required. The committee must screen the proposal/project and may seek further external clarification if the ethical risk is assessed as medium or high.             If NO for all of these categories: Continue with the checklist.         </td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) People with disabilities</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td><b>No</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) People living with/affected by HIV/AIDS</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td><b>No</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Yes	NS	No		a) Minors (persons under 18 years of age)				If YES/NS for any of these categories (a-f): F-REC clearance will be required. The committee must screen the proposal/project and may seek further external clarification if the ethical risk is assessed as medium or high.  If NO for all of these categories: Continue with the checklist.	b) People with disabilities			<b>No</b>	c) People living with/affected by HIV/AIDS			<b>No</b>
	Yes	NS	No																			
a) Minors (persons under 18 years of age)				If YES/NS for any of these categories (a-f): F-REC clearance will be required. The committee must screen the proposal/project and may seek further external clarification if the ethical risk is assessed as medium or high.  If NO for all of these categories: Continue with the checklist.																		
b) People with disabilities			<b>No</b>																			
c) People living with/affected by HIV/AIDS			<b>No</b>																			

d) Prisoners			<b>No</b>					
e) Other category deemed vulnerable; SPECIFY here:  [See Glossary of SOP for definitions.]			<b>No</b>					
f) NUST staff, students or alumni	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained. Complete the checklist and submit to the committee. If NO: Continue with the checklist.				
<b>4. Assessment of risk of potential harm as a result of the research (tick ONE appropriate YES or NS box)</b>								
a) <b>Minimal risk</b> (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Established ethical standards apply. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist.  If NO/NS: Proceed to 4b).				
b) <b>Low risk</b> (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: Established ethical standards apply; further assessment may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist.  If NO: Continue with the checklist.				
c) <b>Mediumrisk</b> (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained; further assessment/ clarification may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist.  If NO: continue with the checklist.				
d) <b>High risk</b> (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained; further assessment/clarification may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6				

				and 7 and completion of checklist. If NO: Continue with the checklist.				
<b>5. The proposed research involves processes regarding the selection of participants in the following categories:</b>								
a) Participants that are subordinate to the person doing the recruitment for the study	Yes	NS	No	If YES: REC clearance may be required. If NO: Continue with the checklist.				
b) Third parties are indirectly involved because of the person being studied (e.g. family members of HIV patients, parents or guardians of minors, friends)	Yes	NS	No	If YES: REC clearance may be required. If NO: Continue with the checklist.				
<b>6. Steps to ensure established ethical standards are applied ( regardless of risk assessment)</b>								
a) <b>Informed consent:</b> Appropriate provision has been/will be made for this (either written or oral)	Yes	NS	No	If YES: Provide evidence together with the submitted proposal. Continue with checklist. If NS/NO: Attach/provide justification for further assessment and advice.  This should be reflected in the evidence of 'informed consent' or as reflected in the research instrument				
b) <b>Voluntary participation:</b> Respondents/informants will be informed, inter alia, they have the right to refuse to answer questions and to withdraw from participation at any time		NS						
c) <b>Privacy:</b> Steps will be taken to ensure personal data of informants will be secured from improper access	Yes							
d) <b>Confidentiality and anonymity:</b> Confidentiality of information and anonymity of respondents/informants will be maintained unless explicitly waived by respondent.	Yes							
e) <b>Training:</b> research assistants/ fieldworkers will be used to collect data, and	Yes							

ethics awareness will be included in their training								
f) <b>Mitigation of potential risk:</b> Likelihood that mitigation of risk of harm to participants is required, is at medium/high, and appropriate steps have been/will be taken (e.g. referral for counselling)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: Develop protocols for submission to F-REC. Continue with checklist.  If NO: Proceed with checklist.				
g) <b>Access:</b> Institutional permission is required to gain access to participants and has been/will be secured. Specify here from whom: Ms. C. Mostert (HOD- UNAM)  [If the permission letter required is available, submit it to the DESC. If it is not available, apply for it immediately and indicate to the DESC when it will be expected.]	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Develop application for authorisation, clear with DESC & apply. Continue with checklist.  If NS: Refer proposal to DESC for assessment and advice. Continue to 6 (h).  If NO: Proceed to 6 (h).				
h) <b>Accountability research*:</b> Institutional permission to gain access to participants poses an obstacle to conduct the research.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: Refer proposal to F-REC for assessment and advice. Continue with checklist.  If NO: continue with checklist.				
i) <b>Public availability of instruments to gather data:</b> [When applicable] Are the instruments that will be used to gather data available in the public domain?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES or not applicable: proceed with checklist.  If NS/NO: Obtain permission to use the instrument(s) and submit letters of permission with the proposal to DESC for				

				assessment and advice Continue with checklist.			
j) <b>Use of psychological tests:</b> [When applicable] Are the instruments that will be used to gather data classified by law as psychological tests?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES/NS: Indicate who will administer these tests, and whether they are appropriately registered and adequately trained to do so. Provide registration number and professional body. Continue with checklist.  If NO or not applicable: Proceed with checklist.			
k) <b>Protecting data from unauthorised access:</b> Are appropriate measures in place to protect data from unauthorized access? If yes, specify what the measures are: Safely store in UNAM, Southern Campus storeroom.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Specify and proceed with checklist.  If NO/NS: Develop and put in place appropriate measures. Continue with checklist.			
<b>l) Unexpected information:</b> If unexpected, unsolicited data is revealed during	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Proceed with checklist.  If NO/NS: Consult on this			
m) Emergency situations: If an unexpected emergency situation is revealed	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Proceed with checklist.  If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-			
n) <b>Permission to use archival data:</b> [When applicable] Is permission granted	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>No</b>	If YES: Proceed with checklist.  If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-			

<p><b>o) The archive itself does not pose problems:</b> [When applicable] The initial</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>NS</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>If <b>YES</b>, proceed with checklist.  If <b>NO/NS</b>: Consult on this matter with F-</p>								
<p><b>7. Conflict of interest</b></p>												
<p>Is the researcher aware of any actual or potential conflict of interest in his/her proceeding with this research?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>NS</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>If YES/NS: Identify concerns, attach details of steps to manage them, and refer to F-REC for assessment and advice.  If NO: No further action required.</p>								
<p><b>DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER:</b></p>												
<p>I hereby declare that I will conduct my research in compliance with the professional code(s) of ethics and guidelines for ethically responsible research relevant to my field of study as specified in the list herewith</p>												
<p><b>Print name of Researcher: Mr. JonaShaumana</b></p>	<p><b>Signature of Researcher:</b> </p>											
<p><b>Date: 14/05/2019</b></p>												
<p><b>Print name of Supervisor (if applicable) Prof. Rewai Makamani</b></p>	<p><b>Signature of Supervisor</b></p>											
<p><b>Date:</b></p>												
<p><b>Print name of</b></p>												
<p><b>Date:</b></p>												
<p>Note: Faculty should provide staff members and students with a list of professional Code(s) of Ethics and Guidelines for ethically responsible research or refer them to appropriate online site where the information will be accessed.</p>												

## Appendix 4

Note: Red pen = The researcher  
Blue pen = Marker 2

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

- By having a cupboard with various reading materials.
- By having a reading space like a mat or tables and chairs.
- By decorating class with various colours as the best modes.
- Making sure to display all children's work or projects nearby.
- Having a word wall.
- Reading to learners as frequently.
- Letting learners choose own books and read aloud.
- Having questions and answers about book they read.
- Having reading sessions or periods or even a reading hour a day.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

- Parents can do this by listening to children.
- Rewarding efforts done for reading.
- Parents can involve children in writing grocery lists.
- Parents and caregivers can read to children.
- Play Have literacy related games at home for children e.g. maze, word puzzles.
- Monitor and review of homework.
- Encouraging children to read aloud each time they see a word in public.
- Having a reading area with variety of reading materials.
- Limiting television watching and encouraging reading.

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

- Model the skills *which skills?*
- use hands-on manipulative
- use group works when teaching
- playing games, children learn best when interacting with their peers.
- The teacher should make use of word walls and sight words so that learners can read and remember the words.
- Books made use of reading books created by the teacher and learners.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

- Bed time stories - parents must read stories to their children before they go to bed. It helps the children to develop the love of reading.
- Parents and care-givers must create a rich environment for their children by buying for them colouring books to keep their children busy after school.
- Parent should teach their children should help their children with their homeworks where necessary.
- Parents should allow their children to watch cartoons on television especially the ones in towns, that way the child's reading and writing skills will be develop.
- Gossip games, tell your child a word through whispering and ask him or her to write it on the piece of paper.

Note: Blue pen = Marker 2

P Red pen = Researcher

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

The good reading atmosphere <sup>SVA</sup> can be <sup>8</sup> created is the atmosphere that is created and <sup>2</sup> building their good Foundation of the learners by the teacher who is well qualified. A teacher who can create a word wall in the class and each week he/she must make sure they <sup>1</sup> touch on an individual word. A teacher who can involve parents and community by <sup>3</sup> motivate them to read story <sup>2</sup> with their children, and let the children go with their parents <sup>4</sup> at shopping to see different views. The class must be <sup>5</sup> prepare and ask the learners to make <sup>6</sup> discussions on the classroom arrangement. <sup>7</sup>

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

Parents can support reading and writing at home <sup>1</sup> by <sup>2</sup> parents can also create word wall in the room of the child. Parents can paste words <sup>3</sup> everywhere home in the fridge and other places that a child can reach. Parents can read story books to their children and let the child read story for them. Parents must play <sup>4</sup> games with their children and also let their children to play puzzle and other learning games with their children. Parent must go and visit at school for them to put <sup>5</sup> confidence in their child that they <sup>6</sup> are loved and cared. Parents must have <sup>7</sup> communication with the teachers at schools. Parents must let the children to go <sup>8</sup> on play with others. This can benefit a child <sup>9</sup> in communicating with other peers. <sup>10</sup>

Note: Blue pen = Marker 2

Red pen = The researcher

## Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

Word walls and sight words are very important since they help learners to attract learners to read. ~~to~~ having them in the classroom will create a good reading atmosphere for the learners. Teacher motivation is also one good way of improving the learners' reading atmosphere especially when the teacher motivates the learners on the importance of reading. Having a reading period every day will also promote a good reading atmosphere as well as having a library which is ~~class~~ and having interesting and fun books will promote reading. Having a classroom and a school full of colourful paintings to read will also attract learners' attention.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

Parents should read a story with their children. Parents should make time and take their children to their nearest library since it is important for the children to feel supported. Parents should also buy books which are of the child's level and let the child read independently but whenever reading the story to the parents. The parents should allow or let their children write what they have read or use any words they can remember. When parents go shopping they should bring along groceries lists or sales from the shops and let their children read and write down every item they want. Furthermore, the parents should also take their children with them in order for them to read the environmental print. The parents should also come together and create a group for their children in which they play reading games and writing.

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

By creating a print rich environment, display posters of words and pictures on the wall. The words should be big enough and can be clearly seen. Pictures must be colourful and bright enough, which can attract and pull the interest of the learners. Provide story books for the learners and let learners read at their free periods. Word wall can also help a good reading atmosphere, so paste words on the wall and paste the learners' names on the wall. Paste the names of the thing/objects in the classroom for example, windows, doors, chalkboards, boards etc, so they read and know how are they spelled.

8.2. Which other ways can parents support reading and writing at home? (11)

To provide print rich environment of their kids, by displaying posters with words and picture in their children's room. They can also do it by reading story books to their kids and ask them to re-tell the story after. Parents can also support the reading and writing at home by buying their kids story and writing word book which can help and boost the interest of the kids. Parents can also let their children to help them to write the shopping lists and let them to go to do the shopping with them and let them to read and pick the items that are written in the shopping list. They can help them as well by buying them small chalkboards and let them playing school by teaching each other.

Question 2

2.1. Discuss the difference between Auditory Discrimination and Phonemic Awareness with examples. (6)

Auditory discrimination is an ability to hear the ~~the~~ difference between sounds in words. Eg. ran, rat & mat. This thing are normally being heard by learners either in audios or videos. Here a teacher can differentiate that words being mention all end start with r ~~to~~ except mat.

while Phonemic Awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the sound in ~~comp~~ spoken word or speech. eg. thank-ful = 2 ~~phase~~ phonemes. The learner can segment break down those words and become ~~m~~ units. They can be counted.

2.2. Answer the following by filling in the table.

(12) 8

Word	Syllabification (segmentation)	Number of syllable(s)
Newspaper	News/pa/per ✓	3 ✓
Maize	Maize ✓	1 ✓
Encyclopaedia	Ency/clo/paedia ✓	6 ✓
International	Inter/national ✓	3 ✓
Computer	Compu/ter ✓	2 ✓
Thankful	Thank/ful ✓	2 ✓

[18]

4.2. Discuss any five ways in which a pre-primary teacher can promote a literacy-rich writing environment in his/her classroom. (10)

# Word walls → Teacher can do so through word walls by developing and putting up set of words in the class or even around the school. Example words that require directions like "Toilet, office and coffee".

# Teacher can provide learners with groups of letters then the learners build words from them.

# When one can discriminate between different sounds when hearing.

[16]

Question 5

Clearly explain why word walls are important

SVA SVA  
# Word walls are important because it helps learners get exposed to different types of words. Children learn how to find similar words from word walls. Example words that start with the same letter. Children also get to know how to form up sentences using words from word walls. Example. Ball → kick the ball. Word walls also help the learners to see and remember how words are written. Word walls improve the learners ability to read and write.

[5]

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

- Teacher should always read to <sup>short form</sup> with learners.
- Teacher can play reading games with the learners. (Fun reading game they can enjoy)
- Teacher must show <sup>APR</sup> exciting reading videos to the learners.
- Teacher must always let learners read also and make them feel positive about reading (give compliments)
- Read fun stories to the class which shows reading is fun
- Teacher can provide sweets for good readers.
- Teacher must/can use flashcards to create a word walk with sight words for a literature rich class
- # → Let learners write down their feelings when they are so
- Have a word wall for practiced words.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

- ① Parents can read bed time stories for learners.
- ② Parents can let learners visit the library often.
- ③ Parents should buy educational fun books for learners at home (for reading & writing)
- ④ Parents can let learners watch education channels (that includes reading and writing).
- ⑤ Parents must do homework with the learners
- ⑥ Parents must make sure learners play educational reading games with their friends.
- ⑦ Parents can take learners with to Sunday school church where they read bible stories.
- # ⑧ Parents can also let the learners read bed time stories to them (Parents) sometimes
- ⑨ Parents must help learners to practice writing the alphabet (from A → Z)
- ⑩ Let learners practice writing 0 to nine.

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

Creating a good atmosphere for reading especially for pre-primary learners you have to be creative. You have to make sure there is a word wall in the classroom which includes the learners birthdays, seasons, climate of the day etc. The foundation can be laid. You must have a reading corner in your classroom and sufficient reading material for the learners. Your classroom should be decorated with environmental prints and interesting posters related to reading. When your learners are reading or you reading to them there should be enough ventilation not too cold or hot and atmosphere should be quiet.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home?

(11)

Parents also play a vital role in a child development in reading and writing. Parents can assist the child with homework especially writing homeworks. They can read books to the child at night before he/she sleeps. Make the child's room a good reading atmosphere with different types of books related to school works. From an early age parents can help the child to write names on a piece of paper first his name and later his parents names etc. They can draw up a reading schedule for the child and give him/her intervals when they have to read or write and when the child complete a book he/she could get a reward. If the child develops a taste for reading and writing at home, there will not be much for the teacher to do.

Note: Blue pen = Marker 2

Red pen = The researcher

Question 8

8.1. Discuss briefly on how a good reading atmosphere for the learners can be created. (10)

- \* By teaching them the alphabetical letters first and teach them the <sup>name</sup> (different) between the letter and letter sound. Teach them how to (pronouncing) the letter and what is said, by reading them a story book <sup>every day</sup> for them to improve their reading and writing skills.
- \* Teach the new words for Vocabulary skills.
- \* Reading is a skill. The more you read the more you learn new words, improved reading skills.
- \* If she/he likes reading a lot provide (IE) with reading books.

8.2. Which other ways can parents' support reading and writing at home? (11)

- \* By telling their children / providing them <sup>with</sup> books to read <sup>and</sup> newspapers it (influencing) the reading <sup>at</sup> home.
- \* More games, parents should teach their kids during weekend by using flash card with different names and letters to promote alphabetical skills.
- \* Reading is the important skill which every parent should promote (it) by providing book to their children and spend some time with their children to read with them by <sup>improving</sup> reading skill they learn new words <sup>as</sup> by trying to talk with their learners in English as a home language is also other ways. <sup>stop</sup> using home language <sup>every day</sup>.





