



NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

**AN INTERLANGUAGE STUDY OF FOSSILISATION IN A MULTILINGUAL NAMIBIAN CLASSROOM:
A CASE STUDY OF KARUNDU SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OTJOZONDJUPA REGION**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the interlanguage fossilisation phenomenon in a multilingual Namibian classroom. English language performance has consistently been among the lowest in Namibia's National Senior Secondary School leaving examinations, highlighting persistent challenges. In multilingual classrooms, learners often develop an interlanguage that is transition linguistic system shaped by their first language(s) and the target language. However, this interlanguage can become fossilised, where certain linguistic errors persist despite exposure to and practice with the target language. The objectives of the study were to investigate the causes of lexical interlanguage fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual high school classroom, to analyse interlanguage fossilisation at the level of sentences as well as to examine grammatical interlanguage fossilisation in the high school learners' essays. The study adopted an explanatory research design, and data were collected through a Focus Group Discussion with English teachers, as well as through documentation by conducting an Error Analysis of the errors that the learners committed in the essays. Through the stratified sampling method 68 learners' essays were analysed for errors. Data was analysed qualitatively, and through a thematic analysis approach, as well as through explications of Corder's (1976) Error Analysis Theory. The study observes that lexical interlanguage fossilisation results from the mispronunciation of words, mother tongue influence, overgeneralisation of the target language rules, lack of appropriate feedback and lack of interest to learn appropriate language rules. The results from the Error Analysis (EA) conducted on the learners' essays evinced that learners fossilised errors of lexical, grammatical and syntactical aspects such as spelling, omission, auxiliaries, word order, verb tense, word choice, punctuation, concord, fragmentation, coherence, and cohesion. The study concludes by submitting that interferences from mother tongue, overgeneralisation of TL rules, developmental issues, ignorance of TL rules and limited vocabulary prompted error fossilisation in learners' writing. Therefore, these findings underscore the need for target instruction strategies to address fossilised errors in multilingual classrooms.

Key words: Interlanguage, fossilisation, multilingual(ism), writing, second language, error, error analysis

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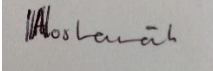
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to one special person, Priscilla Moshana. May this serve as a motivator for you to also pursue a post graduate degree.

DECLARATION

I, Anna Lineekela Moshana hereby declare that this research project, titled *An interlanguage study of fossilisation in a multilingual classroom: A case study of a selected secondary school in Otjozondjupa Region*, is my original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it to any university or other higher education institution for the award of a degree.

SIGNATURE



DATE 31 October 2024

AUTHENTICATION OF THE THESIS

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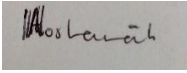
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EA	Error Analysis
EFL	English First Language
ESL	English Second Language
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CA	Contrastive Analysis
CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CCH	Creative Construction Hypothesis
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IL	Interlanguage
L1	First language
L2	Second language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TL	Target Language
MoEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
NSSCAS	Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Advanced Subsidiary Level
NSSCO	Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Background of study

Writing is a challenging skill that demands a high level of linguistic proficiency. It requires the mastery of grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraph organisation. The teaching of writing skills is equally complex, because it involves both mechanical language aspects and higher-order thinking skills, such as creativity and critical thinking. Learners often struggle with writing, particularly when it comes to grammar. They frequently make errors, especially in sentence construction, which can impede effective communication. These errors often persist until learners receive additional language input (through learning or acquisition) that allows them to recognise and correct their mistakes. In other words, learners need exposure to correct language usage patterns before they can independently identify and correct their own errors (Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017).

In addition, multilingualism, a phenomenon that is widely prevalent in the world, including in Africa (and for our purposes, in Namibia too) has been observed to be a contributing factor to such challenges in writing. Nordquist (2012) defines 'multilingualism' as the capability of an individual or a community to communicate proficiently in three or more languages. For Clyne (2017), the term 'multilingualism' is either the language use or competence that an individual possesses or the language situation in an entire nation, community for society. Due to globalisation, many nations recognise the need for citizens to be able to communicate in more than one language. Several scholars such as Buttler (2022) and Regoli (2019) have written about vast benefits of multilingualism.

Being multilingual is beneficial since it enhances one's cognitive abilities through sharpening minds, and it further increases memory. According to these scholars, being multilingual is also important because it strengthens and improves communication skills, and it makes learning across subjects easier. This observation arises from the observation that people who have the ability to speak many languages are able to navigate from one task to another with ease, as compared to those who are monolingual (Buttler, 2022). Multilingualism also enhances

communication skills (Regoli, 2019; Buttler, 2022). However, despite its cognitive and communicative benefits, multilingualism can also contribute to language interference, leading to persistent errors in second language writing.

According to Frydman (2011) as cited in Hamakali and Mbenzi (2016), there are about 14 nationally recognised languages spoken in Namibia. These languages encompass both African and European languages that are spoken by different ethnic groups across all 14 regions of the country (Sabao & Nauyoma, 2020). Therefore, due to this linguistic diversity, in 1990, after Namibia attained independence, a single official language had to be chosen, and the Namibian government opted for English (Simataa & Simataa, 2017). One of the reasons that prompted this decision was the observation that English is an international language, and it was believed to have the potential to help make the country part of the global village. The English language was also believed to have a unifying effect amongst Namibians, as it was not the first languages of any of the ethnolinguistic groups within the country – it would have potentially resulted in ethnic conflicts, if the government had chosen one of the indigenous or local languages (Sabao, Nauyoma & Zivenge, 2020). In addition, English was also chosen as the medium of instruction in Namibian schools (Ministry of Basic Education & Culture, 1993).

Therefore, concept of a multilingual nation references instances in which individuals within nations or even whole nations, need to acquire or learn other languages apart from their first languages. During the process of second language or Target Language (TL) acquisition or learning, a lot transpires. The individual trying to learn a language has already acquired a mother tongue or first language, thus he or she has already acquired that language's system(s). These individuals, therefore, are many at times, observed to be using incorrect linguistic structures for the target language, which reflect those from the language they have already initially acquired. This process is known as 'interlanguage fossilisation'. An interlanguage is a "linguistic system that an adult learner language produces during their attempt to communicate meaningfully when they use a target language, they are busy learning (Tarone, 2018, p. 1). An interlanguage is also defined as a "specific language system formed by second language learners in their second language learning" (Zhang et al., 2023, p. 109). Zhang et al. (2023) further describe an interlanguage as "a transitional language system between the first language and the target language" (p,110).

According to Selinker (1972) fossilisation includes “linguistic items, rules, and subsystems” (p.125) that speakers of a specific native language potentially retain in their interlanguage in the process of learning a specific target language, regardless of their age or the extent to which they have received instruction in the target language. In addition, fossilisation can be imagined as a situation that arises when a second language learner fails to become competent in the target language (Selinker, 1972). This means that the learner stops learning the target language when their first languages’ rule system has rules different from those of the target language that they are attempting to acquire or learn. Interlanguage fossilisation plays a significant role in how one acquires or learns a second language. Many a time, one tends to take rules from their native language and incorrectly apply them to the second language that they are learning. This application therefore hinders the full acquisition of the target language’s rule systems. This, ultimately, does not only hinder one’s full acquisition of the target language, but also affects one’s target language proficiency and one’s academic performance within the target language.

According to the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (2003, p. 4), children are to be taught in their mother tongues or in the pre-dominant local language from grades 0-3. A transition then happens from grade 4 upwards, where the English language is used as a medium of instructions in schools, as well as a promotional subject (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003, p.4). This language policy plays a significant role in the poor learning of the English language, right from the lower grades, and extends right up to tertiary education (Sibanda, 2016). Therefore, one of the causal factors for the commission of errors in the learners’ writing in the English language is presumed to be the interference of mother tongue. Sibanda (2016) further submits that learners on many occasions use their mother tongues or native languages to interact in social contexts, while the use of English is chiefly limited to the classroom setting. This ultimately contributes to the poor language learning and acquisition of the English language amongst the learners.

Mungungu (2010) observes that learners from a particular geographical location in Namibia frequently produce similar errors in their interlanguage. This subsequently results in interlanguage fossilisation, where the errors become habitual and hard to correct for the learners. This observation, therefore, ranks high amongst the reasons why the current researcher

sought to investigate the phenomena of interlanguage fossilisation, in a multilingual Namibian high school classroom context. Whilst some researchers have also studied language fossilisation, there seems to be a paucity of studies on the topic within the Namibian context. In addition, the researcher is a language teacher and a national marker(examiner) for the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level (NSSCO) Paper 1 English as a Second Language school leaving examinations. During the researcher's entire teaching as well as internal and national marking experience, the researcher made several observations reflective of instances in which most of the learners are potential victims of interlanguage errors which are fossilised.

1.2 Problem statement

Namibia is a multilingual nation, and with exposure to the linguistic diversity in the country, learners tend to be able to speak multiple languages. In a single Namibian classroom, multiple multilingual learners may be present. As a result, communication challenges arise due to differences in their mother tongues. These learners produce linguistic structures influenced by their first languages. In linguistics, this is called an interlanguage. Throughout the researcher's nearly 10 years' experience of teaching English Second Language (ESL), and 4 years of marking national examinations, the researcher has observed many instances of errors which are fossilised at phonological, lexical, syntactic, and grammatical levels. Fossilised linguistic forms at these levels often hinder effective communication between learners and teachers. Observations of these errors suggest that they may result from the fact that in some parts of the country, some learners are taught the English languages through the medium of their home/first languages or the dominant indigenous language in that area. This practice has the potential to hinder one's performance in English as a target language (TL) may be hindered by the application of mother tongue rules.

In addition, year in, year out, English has been one of subjects in which learners have performed the poorest in the NSSCO and Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Advanced Subsidiary Level (NSSCAS) end-of-year school leaving examinations (Frans, 2016; Ithindi, 2021; Kamati & Woldemariam, 2016; Kangira, 2022; Nkandi, 2015). In 2021, it was also observed that 57% of candidates were not graded for ESL (Kandovazu, 2022). Correspondingly, complaints about poor performance, particularly in the subject of English, have always made headlines, and are a source

of concern for the media, communities, schools, and the Ministry of Education as a whole. Iileka and Oliveira (2020) have observed that the learners' poor performance in the subject of English in 2019, prompted a call for education stakeholders to discuss and find solutions to the challenge of persistent poor performance in English as a subject.

By identifying the factors contributing to interlanguage fossilisation, this study aims to provide insight that may inform teaching strategies and policy interventions to improve English proficiency in Namibian schools.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to investigate interlanguage fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual classroom. The study focuses on Grade 11 learners at Karundu secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- investigate the root causes of interlanguage lexical fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual high school classroom;
- analyse interlanguage fossilisation at the level of sentences at Karundu secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia; and
- examine grammatical interlanguage fossilisation in the high school learners' essays at Karundu secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia.

1.4 Delimitation of the study

This research was delimited to the study of interlanguage fossilisation in a multilingual classroom at Karundu Secondary School in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia only. In addition, the study was restricted to only the Grade 11 learners and English teachers at the school, and specifically to their writing skills and not any other language skill.

1.5 Significance of the study

With regards to linguistic knowledge, this study is crucial because it has the potential to contribute to the further understanding of the concept of 'interlanguage fossilisation' in general, and specifically within the high school context in Namibia. For policymakers and curriculum

developers, it is envisaged that the study will assist in the planning of the curriculum in order to ensure that language fossilisation is alleviated as much as possible. It is also hoped that the study will also benefit language teachers, by guiding them towards selecting the most appropriate teaching strategies to combat language fossilisation or ensure that its occurrence is minimal. The current study also has the potential to be an eye opener for teachers, pointing them towards direction within which to make provision for remedial measures regarding this phenomenon within the Namibian educational context. Furthermore, it is envisioned that the results generated from the study will create awareness amongst learners regarding the factors that contribute to their commission of errors. The study assumes thus, that learners know about their problems, it becomes easier for them to be able to improve their English proficiency, school results and be able to be valuable citizens of Namibia, and the world at large.

1.6 Definition of technical terms

Error Analysis- “The study of errors made by language learners in the process of acquiring a second or foreign language.” (Selinker, 1972)

Fossilisation- Fossilisation is a system in which a speaker is inclined to maintain his interlanguage items, rules, and linguistic subsystems of his first language and transferring them to a target language (Baralo, 2005, cited in Reyes, 2019).

Interlanguage- Interlanguage exhibits several characteristics influenced by the learners’ native language and second language, which can be seen from the patterns occurring in all interlanguage systems, in in which function-words, and grammatical morphemes are omitted (Broad, 2020).

Language policy- In Namibia, language policy refers to the official guidelines and decisions concerning the use and status of languages within educational institutions (MBE,2003).

Mother tongue- Refers to “the language or languages that individuals are most familiar with and proficient in using: a child’s first language is the language(s) learned in the home from older family members. It is often imagined as an individual’s language of first socialisation” (The Open University, 2017).

Multilingual classroom - A classroom comprised of learners with capabilities of communicating through more than one of the languages at their disposal, irrespective of the level competencies.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) - Refers “to both the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as children, as well as to the process of learning a second language” (Saville-Troike 2016).

Target Language- “A language other than one's native language that is being learned.” Merriam-Webster (2024).

1.7 Summary of chapter

This chapter presented the background of the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study. The goal of the study is to gain an understanding of the concept of interlanguage fossilisation in general, and specifically within the high school context in Namibia. The study was delimited to the study of IL fossilisation in a multilingual high school classroom at Karundu Secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia. A further delimitation of the study is its specific focus on the Grade 11 learners and English teachers at the selected school, and with a specific focus on the learners’ writing skills. Technical terms were also defined.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter engages with relevant literature in order to locate the current study within the context of pre-existing scholarship. The review is important in that; it can be imagined as an attempt to establish gaps with extant literature that the current study attempts to fill. The review undertaken here includes engagements with scholarship that helps provide a brief overview of 'writing' as a language skill, an exploration of the phenomenon of 'interlanguage fossilisation', and 'error analysis' respectively. The chapter further endeavours to establish causal factors for lexical fossilisation and causes of syntactical and grammatical interlanguage fossilised errors in the learners' written work. Literature on how to avoid interlanguage fossilisation is also reviewed. Furthermore, this chapter presents the theoretical framework that guides this study. It explains the major theoretical explications within which the current study is couched.

2.2 Writing

Writing is crucial for effective communication, particularly in education (Mourtaga, 2004). It is also one of the prominent language skills, together with listening, speaking and reading. According to Burns and Siegel (2018), there is a connection between these skill areas as they all promote proficient speaking abilities, boost reading comprehension. Proficient listening abilities encourage speaking, and proficient reading instruction enhances writing (Amara, 2018). This indicates that these skills depend on one another, and that affinity improves communication.

Moreover, a sizeable number of educational institutions around the world evaluate learners through writing. As a result, learners are expected to communicate and share their ideas through written assignments such as day-to-day activities, tests and examinations. However, many researchers and even learners believe that writing is the most difficult language skill to learn, especially in a second or foreign language (Nunan, 2012). Additionally, ESL learners may find it difficult to write in English because they consistently use incorrect linguistic features, leading to the phenomenon known as interlanguage fossilisation.

2.3 The Namibian language policy

The Namibian language policy aims to create supplementary bilingual education by providing learners a strong foundation in their mother tongue, which should ideally be beneficial in their acquisition of English as the official language, as well as their ability to acquire permanent literacy and numeracy (MoEAC, 2015). Shortly after independence in 1990, there was a need to introduce a new language policy in Namibia. This was deemed significant in order to promote the indigenous languages (through mother tongue education) alongside the English language. A new language policy was then introduced between 1992-1996. This language policy attracted controversy as there was no clear indication as to how indigenous languages should be used in schools. Since the policy advocated for the use of English as a medium of instructions from grade 4 upwards, rather than teaching through mother tongue as a medium of instructions, discrepancies in the implementation of the policy were encountered (MoEAC, 2015). Despite the policy having stated that learners should be taught in their mother tongue in their early years of schooling, the implementation of the policy was not universally applied throughout the country, and most of the learners were not granted the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue.

Namibia being a multilingual society requires the use of mother tongue alongside English, the official language, to enable learners to effectively participate in society. Therefore, a new language policy was introduced in 2003 which prescribes the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction from Pre-Primary up to Grade 3, and that it be offered as a school subject in further education. On the other hand, English would be the medium of instruction and assessment from Grade 4 up to tertiary level, but only in state schools (MoEAC, 2015). The language policy undoubtedly reveals the significant role that mother tongue plays in the acquisition of a second language.

2.4 Interlanguage fossilisation in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Several scholars (Chen & Zhao, 2013; Vavilova & Broadbent, 2019; Li & Ren, 2023; & Li, 2024) explain that interlanguage fossilisation is an unavoidable and a commonly observed phenomenon when a second language learner is in the process of learning a second language. Similarly, Huang (2009) states that interlanguage fossilisation is normal in SLA.

2.4.1 Interlanguage

One cannot talk about fossilisation without first talking about interlanguage. Interlanguage was initially introduced to SLA by Larry Selinker in 1972. Thereafter, fossilisation came to life. Fossilisation was introduced to SLA because the ‘father of interlanguage’ (Selinker) believes that, during the process of learning a second language, L2 learners face numerous complex language difficulties. In line with these observations, Rajini & Krishnamoorthy (2020) identify seven significant types of difficulties encountered by L2 learners when they learn the English language – grammar, vocabulary knowledge, fluency, pronunciation, comprehension, mother tongue influence and anxiety.

Chen and Zhao (2013) believe that the language systems that exist in the L2’s interlanguage systems for quite some time become a challenge for learners to change. As a result, it leads to interlanguage fossilisation. Selinker (1972) further states that fossilisation is an ineradicable mental process in interlanguage. Furthermore, it is likely to happen at any stage during the period in which one learns a foreign language (Chen & Zhao, 2013). Selinker postulates that 95% of L2 learners fail to achieve the L1 competence at the same level as that of the language’s native speakers (Wei, 2008). It is largely because of the above observations that Selinker (1972) decided to coin the concept of ‘interlanguage’ to reference the language that adult second language learners produce to communicate meaning in the TL.

Several researchers have defined interlanguage. Interlanguage is regarded as a learner’s variant of the L2 (Kilfoil & Van der Walt, 1989, p. 424 as cited in Maliwa, 2009). Interlanguage in L2 is characterised by a proliferation of systematic errors, poor vocabulary, and hesitant speech. Deducing from the above information, it is safe to also assume that the learners studied in this study, also potentially exhibit ‘interlanguage’. The results of the study by Maliwa (2009), for example, demonstrates how the Xhosa native speakers borrowed and directly transferred linguistic forms and systems from their L1 (Xhosa) to their L2 (English). The learners’ error-prone language that they produced, and that can be categorised as an interlanguage, has been observed to have not only characteristics of their mother tongue, which is Xhosa, but also features of English (their TL). This erroneous language, however, indicates that these learners

might have reached a stage in their learning process where they can no longer advance their interlanguage any further because the errors might have fossilised.

According to Selinker (1972) as cited in Yang and Xu (2019), an interlanguage is a distinct and self-contained linguistic system in which second language learners identify the approach and outcome of the TL at a specific stage of the learning process. Huang (2009) posits that an interlanguage (a transition language) is a linguistic system that foreign language learners use to bridge the gap between their native language and target language. Wang and Fan (2020, p.31) submit that, an interlanguage varies from both the native and target language, however, it contains elements of both. According to Ceallaigh (2016, p. 388), an IL is a type of language with features that are “borrowed, transferred and generalised” from the speaker’s first language. It is therefore imagined that “an interlanguage begins with the native language and progresses to the target language gradually” (Wang & Fan, 2020, p.31). Tarone (2018) defines an interlanguage as the linguistic system that adult language learners produce when they attempt meaningful communication in a language different from their first language, which they are learning.

Betu and Travaux (2020, p. 60) state that in second language learning, the learner embodies a complex set of rules that are either schematic or systematic. This system of rules may differ from both the target and source language (Betu & Travaux, 2020). As such, the L2 speaker’s interlanguage is characterised by a linguistic system that is distinct from both the L1 and the TLs. To add on, Al-Khresheh (2015) says that interlanguage, in comparison to second language acquisition processes such as Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA), is not influenced by either the L1 or L2. However, Al-Khresheh (2015) believes that interlanguage is an independent linguistic system.

The above definitions, therefore, demonstrate the reasons why making mistakes when learning a second language is quite common, “because it is part of the process of language learning and acquisition” (Rustandi et al., 2023, p. 340). Further to that, in line with observations by Rustandi et al., (2023, p.340), Krashen (1982) explains the importance of language learners making mistakes, as this enables them to achieve second language competence. Therefore, errors are no longer considered as failures in this context, but instead as a necessary learning process that

learners must undergo in order to improve their proficiencies. Furthermore, Davies (1989), in Rustandi et al. (2023), acknowledges the learners' language to be a natural way in language development process, that helps in the attainment of the target language through systemic guess.

The mutual influence between the native language and the TL's two linguistic systems is thought to produce interlanguage. As can be inferred from the statement, interlanguage is generated as a result of the interaction between two linguistic systems; belonging to both the source language and the target language. Students who are learning a second or foreign language typically produce a 'language' that deviates from both source and target language standards. Additionally, Selinker (1972), cited in Fauziati (2011), submits that interlanguage (IL) designates the changing stages that a student's language goes through as it moves toward the TL. IL also describes how a person learns a TL over time. Selinker (1974) further observes that the first language and second language systems have an impact on a student's IL. The latter is highlighted by Brown (2001), who opines that, as second language learners advance toward full proficiency in the TL, they often go through a structured or quasi-systematic advancing process.

Therefore, employing exterior feedback is one factor in successful interlanguage learning (Richards et al., 2002). Maliwa (2009) explains that interlanguage hypothesis encompasses that the language the second language learner produces is systematic, just as the L1 performance is systematic. The study further notes that both the L1 and L2 show a set of rules that can be inferred and described when occurring in the TL. According to Maliwa (2009), it is therefore vital that a learner's IL is studied as a system on its own, but not as an incorrect form of the TL.

2.4.2 Characteristics of an interlanguage (IL)

Many scholars found that IL has features that characterise it as influenced by the systems of both the L1 and the TL. According to Broad (2020), IL displays numerous features influenced by both the learners' L1 and L2, further observing that this is highly visible within the forms occurring within all ILs. These forms present in all ILs evince omission of functional-words, and grammatical morphemes (Broad, 2020).

According to Saville-Troike (2006) cited in Fauziati and Maftuhin (2016, p. 73), there are four characteristics of interlanguage: 1) systematicity, 2) permeability, 3) dynamic, and 4) variability. Tarone (2012) further characterises IL into three other observable features which are stability, mutual intelligibility, and backsliding.

Scholars (Saville-Troike, 2006; Selinker, 1972; Tarone, 2012) posit that the first characteristic of IL is systematicity. The systematicity of an IL suggests that the IL structures that the learners form are internally consistent systems in rule and feature. Saville-Troike and Tarone posit that IL has a specified internally constant system of rules that establishes the L2 learner's internal grammar, and not just an unsystematic group of rules or entities. Song (2012), Wang and Fan (2020) and Shiddiq and Oktaviani (2022) all believe that a second language learner does not randomly choose from his storage of IL rules but does it in foreseeable manners. This study found that interlanguage is indeed systematic because, from the observation stand point, learners's essays have shown that learners produce systematic errors when they transfer rules from their L1 to the TL, when they overgeneralise TL rules and well as through their individual learning strategies which influences the development of their interlanguage system.

Due to the systematicity of IL, the learner centres his performance strategies of his already prevailing system of rules in a way similar to how a native speaker bases his performance strategies on his innate awareness of the L1 systems. Performance is thus, based on prevailing rule systems just as the native speaker bases his structures of the IL on his internalised knowledge of the L1 system. To be able to find those rules that govern a learner's IL, Saville-Troike (2006) suggests that there is a need to conduct an analysis of the language that a learner uses at a given moment. This entails looking at what an L2 learner is capable of putting into practice and elucidate correctly, despite any errors the learner may possibly make (Saville-Troike, 2006, cited in Fauziati & Maftuhin, 2016).

Suteerapongsit and Pongpaioj (2020) sought to test the hypothesis regarding evident systematicity in the production of L1 Thai learners' L2 English IL of 'wish-clauses'. The findings of the study conformed to the hypothesis of the study. Systematicity was present in the production of Thai learners' L2 English IL of 'wish-clauses'. According to the researchers, systematicity was

anticipated to be caused by language transfer and transfer of training. In contrast, systematicity is primarily affected by cross-linguistic stimuli and some cognitive methods.

Several scholars (Cheng, 2005; House, 2005 & 2009) as also is the case with Al-Khresheh (2015) criticise the systematicity characteristic of IL. These scholars argue that there is no clear indication that demonstrates how “internally consistent” L1 or L2 speech must be before seeing it as systematic. They further clarify that when a learner learns a L1, he uses little varieties of styles in contrast to the styles the L2 speakers of the language use. According to these scholars, the latter transpires because, in comparison to the L2 learner, the native speaker’s varieties of styles are considerably more. This occurs because the L2 learner has only developed a limited number of TL styles and knowledge at his disposal. To add on, the L2 learner tends to use a limited number of styles when they try to learn a language, since they have more styles in their native language which they have acquired first and are acquainted with.

Another property of IL is permeability (Saville-Troicke 2006, cited in Fauziati & Maftuhin, 2016). The permeability of IL refers to the ability of an IL to be open to L1 and L2 system influence. Therefore, where the learner’s TL system has not yet been developed, the learner may use the linguistic rules or elements of his native language or overgeneralise or simplify the rules of the TL in their effort to convey the intended meaning. This is seen as subverting the native and TL systems. Therefore, both the native-speaker transmissions and the overgeneralisation of inappropriate IL rules in second language context processes, point to the fundamental permeability of the IL. Song (2012) believes that the rules that consolidate the learner’s knowledge at each stage are not permanent but can be improved. In addition, mother tongue languages are generally penetrable. Song (2012) further claims that IL differs from other language systems only in the degree of permeability. From this it can be concluded that permeability is a special feature of an inter-linguistic system, distinct from the systems of natural languages. Wang and Fan (2020) affirm that permeability in IL has to do with rules (not fixed but open to change) that establish the learners’ knowledge at each stage.

IL is also characterised by dynamism. The dynamic feature of IL posits that the sets of rules that learners think of changes frequently or are always in a constant state of flux (Song, 2012). This

change is therefore interpreted by Selinker (1972) as a discontinuous transition from a fixed plateau to a stable plateau, rather than a gradual progression. In addition, the constant alteration in IL rules causes learners to learn the L2 systems, and as an outcome, their L2 competency changes. Moreover, Ellis (1994, p. 352, cited in Fauziati & Maftuhin, 2016, p. 73) states that these mental grammars are considered dynamic and prone to rapid change.

Therefore, all in all, in nature, the language system of learners is dynamic or approximate. In addition, a learner's IL does not automatically move from one stage to another. However, there are a number of intermediate grammars that L2 learners use when adapting new hypotheses to the TL system (Song, 2012). Wang and Fan (2020) conducted a study in which they analysed the IL characteristics in the learning of English. According to the authors, the dynamic nature of IL forms compared to other systems of language growth shows that ILs typically change relatively quickly in terms of development. This typical change is believed to occur because learners receive more input that causes them to rethink their assumptions about the L2 (Wang & Fan, 2020).

According to Saville-Troicke (2006, cited in Fauziati & Maftuhin, 2016, p. 74), IL is also variable. Variability in IL means that a learner uses IL systems that have different rules to perform comparable functions. The learner adopts "two or more linguistic variants to express the phenomenon, which have only one realisation in the TL" (Song, 2012, p. 779). According to Ellis (2004), learners' performance is varied. Learner performance does not work in identical ways. Hence, they generate different styles depending on scenario. These findings align with what this study found. According to English teachers at Karundu Secondary School, learners have demonstrated inconsistencies in applying either L1 or L2 forms. Moreover, this study observed that learners apply L2 rules inconsistently, sometimes producing correct forms and sometimes overgeneralised forms.

Mutual intelligibility is another observable trait of IL. Tarone (2001, cited in Al-Khresheh, 2015) observes that in IL, there is a link between different dialects or languages in which different language or dialect speakers can understand each other to some extent. Adjemian (1976, cited in Al-Khresheh, 2010) emphasises that IL shares the intent of communicating with natural languages. Additionally, the mutual intelligibility of IL involves the ability for native speakers to

communicate verbally with each other in languages other than their native language. This means that the FL speakers share an IL due to this capability. Apart from the speakers' potential to convey an IL and comprehend what each individual means, Tarone (2001, in Al-Khresheh, 2015) also submits that an IL is also stable. The stability of an IL means that someone who is currently learning an IL demonstrates consistency in the application of a rule or form over a period of time. The authors further state that when L2 learners begin to use similar forms more than once, their IL stabilises. Tarone (2001) also examines two types of IL users: 1) those whose IL is stabilised, and 2) whose IL is not stabilised. They state that they look at the learner's IL stability to decide who used which type of IL. Therefore, if there is sustained IL stabilisation, this demonstrates that fossilisation has occurred in the TL (Aini et al., 2020).

When learning L2, it sometimes happens that learners experience what is known as relapse. Scholars (Selinker, 1974 & Corder 1986, p. 74, cited in Saville-Troikke, 2012) define regressions in L2 learning. For Selinker (1974), relapse occurs when regression occurs in L2 learning. While Corder (1986) emphasises that there is a certain age at which a learner's IL stops developing. However, this only happens if the learner continues to be exposed to real TL data, which eventually causes errors to become permanent or stabilise.

According to Tarone (2001), L2 learning relapse occurs when a learner masters a TL and then loses mastery of the language. It also occurs when an L2 learner stops using the TL or when the learner tends to misuse the language (Butler-Tanaka, 2000). According to Selinker (1974), relapse can occur when an L2 learner's focus is on meaning, resulting in the production of already learned IL forms and rules. Selinker further observes that in the latter case, fossilised forms or rules are still visible, regardless of the degree of error correction of the TLs' grammar and other linguistic explanations. Ultimately, Ellis (1994) opines that, even if the fossilised forms are eliminated, there is always a greater chance that they will reappear unplanned. This study observed that two weeks later after learners have received correction on their errors, most of them still committed similar errors they were corrected on. These learners were given extensive feedback and were asked to work on their errors. Despite the correction, some errors still reoccurred. In addition, the subjects of this study are all second language speakers of English who speak different native languages, and are mostly only expose to English at school as they have indicated that most of

them rarely speak English outside the school grounds. Therefore, this lack thereof can be a contributing factor to the L2 learning relapse.

2.4.3 Fossilisation in Second Language Learning

Many ESL learners struggle to master the four language skills when learning the English language. Sadly, the acquisition of these four language skills in English is critical in order for one to become a proficient speaker. However, there are many challenges that ESL learners encounter when acquiring a second language. The fossilisation of language, a remarkable feature of an IL, is one of these challenges (Wei, 2008).

Many linguists and researchers agree that such fossilisation is inevitable, and will impair language learning (Han, 2004, Wei, 2008, Zhao, 2013). Therefore, a learner gets stuck in patterns of inappropriate language use during the SLA or learning process. In addition, the L2 learner's ungrammatical language becomes a pattern that cannot be easily corrected. The learner uses the same errors repeatedly (Wei, 2008). Without consistent feedback that would help learners distinguish between the IL and TL, fossilisation can be a major impediment to effective SLA or learning.

Rutherford (1982) defines fossilisation as an almost universal failure to achieve full TL proficiency. For Shapira (1978), fossilisation is a phenomenon of non-learning. Selinker and Lamendella (1979) on the other hand, consider fossilisation as language stabilisation. They further note that, because of this stabilisation, most learners cannot attain the competence required for elementary communication after completing their basic education. This is substantiated by poor performance in English exams. According to Savitri and Kadarisman (2019), error fossilisation in SLA refers to inflexibility of the mind and habits, induced by continuous incorrect input and systems. When learners are consistently exposed to incorrect language input and systems, learners' errors become reinforced.

On the other hand, Banerjee (2013) defines fossilisation as the "often-observed loss of improvements in the acquisition of a second language after a period of learning, despite constant exposure to and engagement with the TL (L2) and irrespective of learner motivation to continue" (p. 40). Nakuma (2005, cited in Maliwa, 2009) also emphasises that fossilisation refers to the

reemergence of L2 forms, a phenomenon that is both abnormal and constant in L2 learning, despite intensive exposure to the TL.

Han (2014) supports the above claims by postulating that, fossilisation turns out to be a mistake when the learner is so advanced that a language structure still does not have the same form as the TL. According to Han (2004), fossilisation is an aspect of non-progressive learning despite constant exposure to input, adequate desire to learn, and sufficient room for practice. Nakuma (1998, as cited in Han, 2004) explains that ‘fossilisation’ is a term used to signify a presumably “permanent state of failure” (p. 247) of an L2 learners in acquiring a TL.

2.5. Causal factors of interlanguage fossilisation

Several researchers have examined the factors that lead to fossilisation. Savitri and Kadarisman (2019) point out that errors fossilise when they are perpetually recognised in altered form in a second language learner’s interlanguage and continue to appear in performance despite additional exposure to the TL.

Therefore, despite corrective feedback and explanation of correct linguistic forms, fossilised errors still occur. According to Tarone (2001), cited in Al-Khresheh (2015), this is regarded as ‘backsliding’. Backsliding references cases where an L2 learner has mastered the language elements of a TL, loses it, stops using it, or abuses the TL’s linguistic forms. According to Selinker (1974), when an L2 learner focuses on meaning and produces previously learned IL forms, backsliding can occur. Selinker (1972) observes that an IL is a mental mechanism in SLA. In addition, Elmabruk (2010) opines that when L2 learners learn or communicate in a foreign or second language, they tend to unconsciously employ internal L1 forms when they have a hard time expressing themselves in that particular TL. As a result, as Elmabruk explains, lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonological forms of speech transmission errors are likely to occur primarily in the primary stages of learning.

Han (2004) discusses four main causes of fossilisation. According to Han, cognitive, neuro-biological, socio-affective and environmental factors contribute significantly to the fossilisation of language. Han (2004) also divides these factors into external and internal divisions. The first three factors are integrated in the internal factors, while the last, which is the environmental

factor, is deemed the only external factor that contributes to fossilisation. The cognitive factor covers knowledge representation, knowledge processing and psychological factors.

Alternatively, native language transfer has been another area of interest for researchers and has captured the attention of many scholars (Chen, 2020). In addition, many scholars note that native language transfers or mother tongue influence is one of the causal factors for IL fossilisation. Mahero et al. (2014) state that language transfer occurs when a second language learner uses their L1 as a resource during the second language learning process. Jabeen et al. (2015), on the other hand, define 'language transfer' as the position in which one language is filtered in the presence of another language. Language transfer often occurs in the early stages of language acquisition and is an important process in SLA, as it provides constructive data for learners who are in the process of learning an L2 (Jabeen et al., 2015). Therefore, IL can be both beneficial and detrimental to the learner's foreign or SLA.

Wei (2008) explores the causative factors for fossilisation, in order to help Chinese students better understand the phenomenon and avoid its influence. Wei (2008) discusses Selinker's (1972) five central processes leading to language fossilisation. According to Selinker (1972), language transfer is the first process that can lead to fossilisation. This happens when features of another language are applied to the TL. Mahmood and Murad (2018) agree and also opine that language transfer in IL occurs when learners' L1 rules and systems inhibit TL acquisition and when L1 knowledge is used for TL performance. As a result, the IL created this way is a combination of non-existent forms and a loan translation. Affirmatively, Brown (1994), cited in Rakab (2018, p. 19) observes that there are two factors that could lead to fossilisation: a) when students adopt structures from their native language and b) when they expand structures from the TL.

The transfer of language can have a positive or negative impact on the L2 learner's process of TL learning. This is supported by Kasap and Emamviridi, (2022), and Mubia et al. (2014) who affirms that mother tongue interference can be viewed as a transfer that equally influences learning both negatively and positively. Positive transfer promotes SLA, while negative transfer is when the native language or L1 interferes and obstructs the process of SLA (Chen, 2020). In agreement, Brown (2001) points out that a positive transfer is one that facilitates learning and when it

happens, the form of the TL and the native language becomes similar. In addition, Mubia et al. (2014) affirm that the positive influence makes learning easier, particularly when both the learner's L1 and TL share same forms.

On the other hand, negative transfer, sometimes known as interference, according to Brown (2001), is when second language learners use patterns or rules from their native languages which brings forth errors or ungrammatical forms in the TL. Aini et al. (2020) point out that negative transfer transpires when the learner uses his or her L1 first rules or patterns, motivating the learner to commit errors in the TL. Moreover, during negative transfer of learning, the L2 learner's existing knowledge of the L1 inhibits the process of L2 learning. To simplify, this means that when an L2 learner uses the L1 systems in the process of L2 learning, it may cause confusion which may eventually result in the production of negative transfer (Ling-nan, 2018). Therefore, it is vital that second language teachers are guided on how to teach the TL. Correspondingly, persons involved in second language learning should consider these developmental stages when designing curricula and syllabi in order to ensure that the teaching and learning process runs effectively and attains its desired goals and objectives.

Corder (1974), as cited in Puspita (2019), states that a learner's mother tongue may interfere with the learner's language acquisition. This, according to Corder (1974), is called inter-lingual interference. Regards this, Chen and Zhao (2013) observe that the learner's mother tongue interference is a causal factor of IL fossilisation. Eng et al. (2020) also note that students make errors when they write, and this is primarily due to mother tongue influence. The authors postulate that this happens because of the differences between the mother tongue and the TL. Therefore, the knowledge of the rules, the linguistic forms and thinking patterns that the learners possess in their native language have an effect on their learning of the TL. In addition, Denizer (2017) conducted a study to investigate the existence of mother tongue interferences in second-language learning amongst Turkish students, and believes that, indeed the mother tongue inhibits second language learning to a reasonably high extent. When the L1 influences affect the learning of L2, it also affects the mastery of the language skills. Denizer's study (2017) reveals that the most affected language skill was speaking, and as a result learners found it difficult to express themselves orally in the absence of preparation.

Thyab (2016) demonstrates how the differences between the Arabic and English languages, in terms of articles, cause Arabic L2 English learners to commit errors when learning English or make mistakes. The studied learners evinced facing challenges in using English articles due to the “differences between the article systems in both languages” (Thyab, 2016, p. 1). This is similar to Denizer (2017) who demonstrates how Turkish students had difficulties with the use of determiners, verb forms and articles due to the influence of their L1. Thyab (2016) also submits that the Arabic language has an article system that works differently, especially when it comes to the idea of definiteness and indefiniteness, which are programmed in opposite ways compared to the English language. The native language has proven to be problematic in L2 learning. Scholars such as Shen (2020), Selinker (1972), Tajeddin et al. (2017), Tajeddin and Tabatabaeian (2017) demonstrate that in the process of second language learning, learners have to contend with the influence of L1, the transfer of morphological and syntactic knowledge from L1 to support their L2 production, and these result in the fossilisation of errors.

Senowarsito and Nur Ardini, (2019) investigate phonological fossilisation in Javanese students and observed evidence of the occurrence of phonological interference between L1 and the English language when the native Javanese speakers are learning English as a foreign language. Senowarsito and Nur Ardini, (2019) submit that the main problem why the observed subjects make mistakes when learning the English language is due to the differences between the phonological system of the L1 (Javanese) and that of the English languages. According to Archvadze (2012), linguistic interference can occur in any linguistic situation when the second language learner does not have native-like proficiency in a language. Apeli and Ugwu (2013) explore the phonological impairment in Izon speaker's oral English performance and observe that phonological disorders occurred for three (3) reasons: 1) the individual's level of involvement in Izon, 2) the individual's level of education, and 3) the individual's oral English instruction.

Overgeneralisation is another factor that numerous scholars have blamed for fossilisation between languages (Aini et al., 2020; Brown, 1994; Fauziati, 2011; Selinker, 1972; Shen, 2020;). According to James (1998, p. 178), cited in Jabeen et al. (2015, p. 56), overgeneralisation refers to the excessive and inappropriate use of a rule or form of language over other forms or rules.

According to Richards and Simpson (1974), cited in Shaumana (2020, p. 174), overgeneralisation is associated with “redundancy reduction”. According to (Richards & Simpson, 1974), overgeneralisation deals with cases in which a learner produces a different structure based on existing knowledge about structures in a language that he or she is learning. This study established that due to the multilingualistic nature of Namibia, learners often transfer grammatical rules and patterns from their first languages to English which leads to overgeneralisation. For example, the differences in verb conjugation, pluralisation, and sentence structure between indigenous Namibian languages and English can cause learners to apply familiar L1 rules to English contexts where they do not fit.

As a result, this reduces the language burden on the learner. Fauziati (2011) in a study entitled “Interlanguage and error fossilisation: A Study of Indonesian Students Learning English as a Foreign Language” observes that some of the students' errors were as a result of overgeneralisation. Aini et al. (2020) also observe that learners are often influenced by the structures of their native language(s) when composing English sentences, and tend to overgeneralise rules from the TL material, especially syntax. The increasing use of exact forms is an overgeneralisation. This overuse of forms is one of the causes of errors in language learning (James, 1998).

Yossatorn et al. (2022) examine Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) university students' production of English past counterfactuals and their influences from interlanguage fossilisation. The study examined how Thai EFL students use the present tense and established that learners are more likely to overgeneralise and produce the TL using their L1, especially through direct translation from L1 to L2.

Form a pragmatic fossilisation point of view, Tajeddin et al. (2017) examine frequent errors in pragmatic routines committed by Persian-speaking learners of ESL and explore the sources of fossilisation. The study notes that, one of the reasons for the occurrence of pragmatic fossilisation is because learners overgeneralise the TL rules. According to Tajeddin et al. (2017), these findings are attributable to the simulated pedagogical environment characterised by poor input, and in which EFL learners are unable to acquire the relevant pragmatic practices.

A second process that leads to fossilisation is 'training transfer'. Selinker(1972) describes this as teacher-related errors. Aziez (2018) agrees that training transfer is caused by poor teaching, which then ultimately leads to poor language acquisition, learning and proficiency. The transfer of learning usually manifests itself in the development of incorrect language structures or an overproduction of the corresponding linguistic elements that result from unsuccessful learning processes, such as activities that are teacher-led or that the teacher adopts from textbooks.

Chen and Zhao (2013) examined the causal factors of fossilisation and their educational implications. The study, like Gao's (2020), examined the causes from both internal and external perspectives. The study established that the major internal factor that causes fossilisation is the ages of the learners. Gao explains that research has demonstrated that the age of foreign language learners can have a significant impact on their second language acquisition and can therefore have a positive or negative impact on fossilisation.

According to Gao, there is a critical period during which children can successfully learn a language. This is in line with Eric Lenneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis of SLA. Most of the learners in Namibia are only exposed to the English language at around the age of 9 or 10, when they get to Grade 4, and when the English language becomes the medium of instruction after having been taught in their mother tongue from Grade 0-3. This transition which happens at the age of 9 or 10 affects one's fluency in the TL, which eventually results in errors. Majority (53 out of 68) of the learners used in this study were all taught in their mother tongue as a Medium of Instruction (Moi) until Grade 4. Looking at the age at which one is exposed to the language, one can clearly tell that it is too late, and thus creates difficulties in the learning of ESL.

According to Lenneberg (1967), there is a critical period for learning a new language and acquiring native language skills. Lenneberg (1967) further claims that this critical period usually begins at the age of two and ends just before the transition to puberty. Learning a language becomes extremely difficult and challenging if this critical phase is missed, leading to fossilisation. Similarly, Han (2005) claims that fossilisation of interlanguage errors occurs during the SLA-critical period when second language learners do not reach the full TL grammatical level. Similarly, Huang (2009) observes that one of the causal factors of interlanguage fossilisation is the critical period of

language acquisition hypothesis. However, it is important to note here that according to White and Genesee (1996), Bialystok and Miller (1999), and Steinberg et al. (2004), there is no critical period for learning syntax.

Furthermore, Lennerberg (1976) and Lamendella (1977) claim that the best time for language acquisition is before puberty. According to the study, as we age, the brain's autonomic function, which is responsible for acquiring natural language, declines. Acquiring a second language becomes near impossible for the learner once he or she has passed the critical phase. Language learning does take place, but it is difficult and leads to the fossilisation of languages. According to Chen and Zhao (2013), external factors that can lead to language fossilisation include a lack of learning opportunities, strategies for learning a second language, communication strategies for a second language, and the influence of foreign language teachers on teaching a second language.

Gao (2020) used memetics to examine the lexical fossilisation of vocabulary in ESL students. According to the study, there are both internal and external causes for the fossilisation of languages. Some of the internal factors that cause interlanguage fossilisation have been identified as the role of the theory of language acquisition mechanism and native language transmission. Similarly, in a study on language fossilisation conducted on Indonesian students learning English as a foreign language, Fauziati (2011) claims that one of the factors leading to language fossilisation is native language interference. Alternatively, numerous scholars have proffered many factors as the causes of interlanguage fossilisation. Ellis (2008) and Larsen-Freeman and Long (2000) identify six possible causes of fossilisation. The six factors identified are: 1) a lack of corrective feedback, 2) L1-based teaching methods, 3) errors carried over from previous learning phases, 4) a lack of motivation for self-correction, 5) a lack of learning strategies, and 6) the complete dependence of students on correction by the teacher. This study established based on its findings that the first five factors mentioned above can cause fossilisation.

According to Huang (2009), learning tactics and intercommunication, cultural differences, positive and negative response methods, and cognitive process barriers can all be factors that

lead to interlanguage fossilisation. According to the study, different psychological mechanisms are involved in SLA and native language learning. In line with this, Shen (2020) examines fossilisation amongst college students in the Guangdong Province and its causes. Shen presents the following factors as causes of fossilisation: a) native language transmission, b) student attitudes, c) negative transmission of learning, d) frequency of language use.

Furthermore, Qian and Xiao (2010) in a study entitled “Strategies for preventing and resolving temporary fossilisation in SLA” examine fossilisation and the causes of transient fossilisation in SLA. The results of the study demonstrate that the plateau phenomenon, attitude towards the teacher and course materials, and individual learning techniques are the factors that can lead to the fossilisation of errors. Selinker (1972), cited in Aziez (2018) speaks of five main psychological processes that lead to fossilisation. Selinker identifies these factors as native language migration, overgeneralisation of linguistic rules, training migration, learning strategies, and communication strategies.

Apart from the above causal factors for IL fossilisation, the study by Gao (2020) highlights the following external factors that contribute to fossilisation between languages: the impact of feedback, lack of self-motivation, and insufficient input on the quality of vocabulary learning. According Aini et al., 2020, the causal factor for inter-lingual fossilisation in students' writing is the students' lack of command of the TL (English). Manrique (2013), cited in Kasap and Emamviridi (2022) claims that pronunciation errors and grammatical errors are the most common type of interference that occurs between the native language and the TL. Manrique (2013) therefore suggests that this interference between the native language and the TL results in fossilisation of errors. Due to Namibia's diverse linguistic landscape, this study found that learners encounter significant differences between their L1 and English (L2). These differences range from variation in syntax that includes sentence structure and order, morphology which includes differences in verb conjugation, noun pluralisation and the use of articles, and phonology which entails variations in pronunciation and intonation .

2.4 Classes of interlanguage fossilisation

Fossilisation manifests in numerous ways and can be divided into categories. Selinker (1972), cited in Wei (2008) classifies fossilisation into two main groups: individual and group fossilisation, and temporary and permanent fossilisation. According to Selinker (1972), individual fossilisation is further divided into the following aspects: reappearance of errors and fossilisation of language skills. Similarly, Yang and Xu (2019) identify two subtypes of individual fossilisation, which they identify as; 1) error fossilisation and 2) language ability fossilisation. These authors are essentially talking about a similar thing. The only difference is that the subtypes have different names.

According to Selinker (1972) as well as Yang and Xu (2019), error reappearance is when there is a reoccurrence of errors that have been repeatedly corrected, and believed to have been cleared. The second subtype, according to Selinker (1978), occurs when there is a fossilisation of pronunciation, syntactic structures and vocabulary in the interlanguage. In support of this, Yang and Xu (2019) submit that individual fossilisation occurs when there is an IL fossilisation of speaking, grammatical structures as well as vocabulary. In addition, Prafitrasari and Ashadi (2023) observe that individual fossilisation occurs when there is an error in language structures that are not correct but are considered appropriate. Prafitrasari and Ashadi further state that learners, in their IL phase with low skills, generally manifest confusion with regards to language structures.

Group fossilisation, on the other hand, means that fossilisation has become a normal process for the entire society, and has thus resulted in the emergence of a new dialect (Selinker, 1978). This is consistent with Yang and Xu's (2019) that the phenomenon occurs when fossilised foreign language skills are universal.

Fossilisation is further classified as temporary or permanent. The latter refers to a stagnation of non-target factors that causes them to become fixated in the TL at a certain point in time (Qian & Xiao, 2010). Qian and Xiao (2010) examine the aspect of temporary fossilisation, focusing on an exploration of the causal factors, and then offered possible strategies to avert and overcome the phenomenon.

Another study (Sims, 1989, cited in Wei, 2008) explicates that temporary fossilisation is also referred to as stabilisation. Stabilisation, which is also one of the characteristics of interlanguage,

evinces that fossilised IL exhibits learning plateaus. For Sims (1989), stabilisation or temporary fossilisation occurs when the further development of features of the TL is prevented or suppressed for a shorter or longer period of time. In contrast, permanent fossilisation occurs as a result of “social, psychological and interactive variables” (Wei, 2008, p. 128).

2.6 Previous studies on error fossilisation in learners’ writing

Numerous studies (Lumbu, & Smit, 2015; Owusu Tabiri & Jones-Mensah, 2021; Albelihi & Al-Ahdal, 2024) have been conducted on error fossilisation, and a large number of fossilised errors were observed. Therefore, this section reviews different studies on EA from various corners of the world, including Namibia and relates them to the Namibian context.

According to Aini et al. (2020), students commit more syntactic fossilised errors than morphological fossilised errors. Aini et al., observe that syntactic errors included incorrect word order, articles, agreement, singular nouns, conditional nouns, and verbs. In contrast, fossilised morphological errors included inflection and derivation. Shen (2020) argues that fossilisation can take many forms, including pronunciation, lexical usage, and grammar. Moreover, Onwuta and Ndimele (2015) identify articles, uncountable nouns, passive voice, pluralisation, irregular nouns, and subject-verb agreement (SVA) as sources of syntactical fossilisation.

Huang (2018) indicates that auxiliary verbs were identified as a syntactical fossilisation error, while Mufid (2017) reports errors in tenses, articles, voice, SVA and word order as types of syntactical fossilised errors. In addition, Muliati et al. (2017) contend that errors such as singular and plural marking, voice, tenses, and agreement are syntactically fossilised in writing. Similarly, Talosa and Maguddayao (2018) assert that syntactical errors reflect in sentence structures, including tense, parallelism and verb agreements. Collectively, these studies specify verb tense, SVA, passive voice, articles, word order, and omission of verb as common types of fossilised syntactic errors that hinder the development of second language writing.

Shen (2020) explores the fossilisation of Cantonese college students' English learning and its causes and establishes that fossilisation occurred in vocabulary use, grammar, and pronunciation. Furthermore, spelling, articles, prepositions, and nouns have also become fossilised in terms of vocabulary usage (Shen, 2020). Shen also observes that grammar,

morphological errors, syntactic errors, and cohesive errors are all fossilised. According to Shen, several consonants are also gradually replaced by others, resulting in pronunciation fossilisation.

Puspita (2019) conducted a learner inter- and intra-language error analysis with two adolescent students who have been learning English since primary school age. Through interviews with the two subjects, Puspita observes that both IL and intra-language have an impact on the students' English. Overall, the study concluded that interlanguage influences errors more than intra-language. In another instance, Wu and Garza (2014) conducted an error analysis study on college students. The result of the study evinces that the college students under study made inter- and intra-lingual errors when writing.

Similarly, Bennis (2016) examined students' errors in written texts for third-year English minors. According to Bennis, the students under study made literal translations of Thai words into English. Additionally, the features of L1 lexical influence were also observed to be prevalent in the students' writings. Another study (Taher, 2011) examines errors that occurred in Swedish middle school students' writings. The researcher conducted a comparative study, comparing free writing and controlled writing. The results of the study demonstrated that grammatical errors were made in both writings, although in different aspects. The study revealed that prepositional errors occurred more frequently in free writing, while a large number of SVA were the main errors that occurred in controlled writing. Hmouma (2014) conducted an EA on third-grade high school students and established that these students made errors of overgeneralisation and interference with their L1.

In contrast, Phoocharoensil (2011) examined collocation errors in EFL learners. The study sought to examine errors that Thai EFL learners make when learning English collocations. The test was conducted by analysing essays from two groups of participants with different levels of L2 proficiency. The study observes the proliferation of errors based on first language transfer such as omitting prepositions, adding prepositions, inappropriate word choice and collocational redundancy. Furthermore, the study also establishes that learners with high proficiency levels strongly depend on the mother tongue, while learners with low proficiency levels are prone to rely on their mother tongue. It has also been noted that overgeneralisation and synonymy lead

to learners' collocation errors. Maqsudah et al. (2022) conclude that misinformation errors that were prevalent in writing recount texts in secondary schools were caused by three inter-lingual processes: 1) overgeneralisation, 2) second language learning strategies, and 3) language transfer among students.

Karimnia and Abbasis (2011) observe that corpus errors, such as lexical-semantic and syntactic-morphological errors, are the most common grammatical errors made by Iranian translation students. The purpose of this study was to examine a series of grammatical errors made by Iranian students when translating, comparing the errors of junior and senior students to identify any common errors that were not corrected during their university years. This study also notes that the translation students' grammatical errors were more likely to be inter-lingual, indicating the influence of the L1.

Keshavarz (2012) examines a sample of 200 Jordanian secondary school students in order to identify and categorise grammatical errors in the students' writing. The study identified six types of errors amongst the students: singular/plural, verb tense, prepositions, word order, articles, and word choice. The most common causes of errors were observed to be due to the lack of knowledge about rule restrictions, inter-lingual interference, and intra-lingual interference. The goals of Keshavarz's (2012) study align with objective number 3 of this study, which seeks to examine grammatical errors for fossilisation. Altowity (2021) conducted an error analysis of the academic writing of Saudi undergraduate EFL learners and notes that their recurrent errors became in-built and difficult to correct regardless of continuous instruction and feedback. Similarly, Khan (2022) investigates the writing errors of undergraduate Saudi EFL learners and found that both groups of participants made various grammatical error such as incorrect word order and incorrect use of articles. This study, in contrast to the two studies (Altowity, 2021., Khan, 2022) on EFL learners, focuses on ESL high school learners, and as a result, due to differences in demographic variables, the findings of the two studies (the former and latter) may be distinct.

Eng et al. (2020) studied Chinese undergraduate students' English grammatical errors in China and Malaysia. The study sought to examine grammatical errors in IELTS essays. A total of sixteen

participants were chosen to participate in the study, and they were divided into two groups: international Chinese and Malaysian Chinese. This was accomplished using three theories: The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), the Creative Construction Hypothesis (CCH), and the Information Theory (IT). The study established that grammar forms such as omission, misuse, misinformation, vocabulary, repetition, structure, coherence and cohesion, disordering, and expression were used.

Al-Badawi (2012) investigated errors in English essays written by Grade 10 students. This study examined phonetic, morphological, and syntactic errors in English amongst Saudi students. The research observes that the majority of syntactic errors committed by these students were caused by a lack of adequate L2 knowledge and overgeneralisation. Similarly, Maqsudah et al. (2022) identified four categories of errors, according to the surface strategy taxonomy: omission, addition, misinformation, and disorder. In essence, the study established that the International Chinese participants produced more grammatical errors than the Malaysian Chinese participants. Furthermore, L1 influence, which includes L1 interference and L1 transfer errors, was observed to be responsible for the grammatical errors that occurred. According to Eng et al. (2020), participants exhibited a tendency to directly translate from their native language to the TL when writing in English.

Another scholar, Kavaliauskiene (2009), reports that learners tend to transfer errors from L1 to L2 due to lack of resources. Therefore, when learning the L2, the learner resorts to their native language structures to keep a conversation going in the L2. This becomes a problem because every language has unique structures. A descriptive qualitative study (Hikmaharyanti & Wisudayanti, 2021) was conducted to examine the types of IL errors in English writing tasks of 2nd semester students at STKIP Agama Hindu Singaraja in Bali. The results from the 33 students studied evinces that 70 errors were made. These errors were divided into three main groups: morphological, syntactic and discursive. The study showed that morphological errors in spelling were common. According to Hikmaharyanti and Wisudayanti, the main cause of these errors was inter-lingual transmission, which is influenced by native language structures. In contrast, Handayani et al. (2019) conducted an IL analysis of syntax and diction errors that occur in the

Masters' students' theses. The study shows that syntactic errors and lexical errors were the most common errors that resulted from intra-lingual interference.

According to Richard (1973), cited in Abdullah and Mashoor (2020), there are two sources of error: inter-lingual errors, also called transmission or interference errors, and developmental errors. Richard believes that inter-lingual errors include phonological, morphological and grammatical errors caused by the influence of L1 elements on L2. Richards also adds that these types of errors usually occur in the first phase of second language learning. Developmental errors, on the other hand, occur when an L2 learner attempts to hypothesise about a new language, based on their inadequate knowledge. Richard(1973) reports that developmental errors occur for numerous reasons. For example, the incomplete application of rules, overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule limitations, and incorrect hypotheses.

Al-Sobhi (2018) examined language problems among Arabic students and observes that Arabic students encounter many problems in speaking English because they lack English proficiency, lack motivation, and the teachers' teaching methods and techniques are ineffective. Another study (Hind, 2018) also examined factors affecting Arabic students' English proficiency. The main result of the study was the establishment of the fact that the students experience difficulties in speaking skills due to L1 influence. In addition, Hind notes that Arab students face challenges in speaking English due to the cultural differences between them and the English. Hind also notes that the inefficient teaching methods used by teachers also contributes to these students' problems in speaking English.

Additionally, Abdullar and Mashoor (2020) examined the structural errors that occur in the spoken English of Jordanian secondary school students. The results of the study reveal that several factors are responsible for the difficulties that Jordanian secondary school students encounter in their speaking of English. The factors identified include shyness, lack of motivation and lack of practice in speaking English (as these students always speak Arabic, their L1). The study also submits that the teaching techniques and lack of vocabulary are also important factors contributing to the difficulties encountered by these Jordanian students in their spoken English. English is taught as a second language for the participants in the present study, and as such, it is

also a foreign language to them. The lack of vocabulary observed in Abdullar and Mashoor (2020) aligns with challenges second language learners encounter during the process of learning a foreign language (Kohli, 2016).

In another study, Sermskook et al. (2017) examined language errors in Thai university students' writing with a focus on sentences. This is because researchers found that sentence construction errors made by Thai EFL learners can lead to misunderstandings. Sermskook et al., also examined the sources of the error. The findings of the study were that sentence construction errors in Thai EFL students' writings were due to intra-lingual and inter-lingual interference, limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, and student negligence.

According to Al Tameemy and Daradkeh (2019), punctuation errors outweigh all writing errors, followed by spelling errors, errors in capital letters and sentence fragments, and other linguistic errors such as verb form, SVA, articles, plurality, and parts of speech. In the same study, the lowest form of errors was found in negation at the sentence level. In another study, Liu (2015) discovered that spelling was the most common grammatical error made by authors. These two studies are relevant to the present study in terms of similarities in levels of errors studied, such as syntactical and grammatical, which this study endeavours to examine.

From the Namibian context, Mungungu (2010) conducted an EA of 360 Grade 12 ESL learners' writings. The study identified tenses, articles, prepositions and spelling as the most common types of errors that learners made. In addition, Kapolo (2013) examined writing errors among Namibian Grade 11 learners in ESL. Four hundred essay scripts from two schools in the Omusati Region of Namibia were studied for EA. The study found that errors of incorrect word choice, spelling, tenses, omitting words, singular/plural, and capitalisation were commonly prevalent. These studies attributed the errors made to factors such as mother tongue influence, overgeneralisation and fossilisation. The present study also seeks to study error fossilisation.

Simasiku et al. (2015) also conducted a study that sought to investigate the reasons for the poor performance of Grade 12 learners in the Zambezi region in the English written task. The study submits that the teachers were inadequately trained and not competent enough to teach in English. Moreover, Nghikembua (2014) studied EA in the writings of Grade 12 Oshiwambo-

speaking English learners in Northern Namibia. Nghikembua classified errors based on Kesharvarz's (2006) Linguistic Taxonomy. Grounded within that taxonomy, the findings reveal that the learners predominantly made errors of phonology/orthography, morpho-syntax, lexico-semantic, and discourse and technique punctuations. The study indicates that the errors made were most likely resulting from first language interference, overgeneralisation, lack of awareness of rule restrictions, and negligence. Other possible sources of errors include the learning environment and a lack of understanding of English grammar. The current study examined interlanguage error fossilisation in a multilingual classroom, in an Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab languages dominated environment.

Another study explored the linguistic errors that 2018 UNAM students at the Southern campus made in the final examination answer scripts for the English Language and Literacy (LEP2500) year module (Shaumana, 2020). The analysis focused on morphological, semantic and syntactical errors. The study observes that learners made the following errors: verb tense, use of pronouns, concord, punctuation, capitalisation, 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. These errors are caused by inter-lingual and intra-lingual transfer, overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete rule application, and the interference of technology (Shaumana, 2020).

All these studies conducted in Namibia all conducted EA, focusing on students at either primary, secondary or tertiary levels of education. This study focused on secondary school learners, but with a distinction of looking at interlanguage fossilisation. This distinction shows the necessity for the present study. This will help with the exploration of the potential existence of the interlanguage fossilisation phenomenon in Namibia.

2.7 Strategies to overcome Interlanguage Fossilisation

Chen and Zhao (2013) provide potential strategies for avoiding fossilisation. The first strategy is adopting appropriate learning strategies. According to the study, whether or not the learning approach is appropriate is a significant factor that influences the formation of fossilisation. That is to say, if learners successfully adopt an appropriate learning strategy, they will be able to

identify their own limitations and make significant progress in improving their second language competence. The study further highlights that fossilisation will occur if an inaccurate and inappropriate learning approach is used. Students should learn how to employ diverse learning strategies that are appropriate for their learning stages while formulating learning strategies that are appropriate for them under the supervision of teachers.

In addition, Chen and Zhao (2013) also suggest that, in order to avoid interlanguage fossilisation, teachers should use the appropriate teaching strategies for students at different stages of second language learning. Interlanguage, as is well known, is a continuum. Teachers should advise students in the early stages of learning a foreign language to pay special attention to the features of the TL and emphasise its accuracy. Teachers should encourage advanced language learners to use new and advanced utterances. Meanwhile, teachers should familiarise students with the culture and society of the TL, so that students will take the initiative to approach the TL through interlanguage. As a result of this, fossilisation can be reduced to some extent.

Another solution suggested in Chen and Zhao (2013) is that of guiding the learners' communicative strategies. According to Chen and Zhao, a communicative strategy refers to a set of skills used by ESL students with limited TL knowledge to accomplish communication goals. Simply put, language learners can use communicative strategies to communicate effectively. However, learners cannot improve their linguistic competence if they overuse communicative strategies (avoidance, paraphrase, etc.). When teaching a foreign language, the teacher should not only emphasise correct form and grammar, but also direct students to use suitable communicative approaches. Only in this manner can the learners' linguistic competence be improved to a higher level.

In addition, Chen and Zhao (2013), suggested that there is a need to arouse learners' intrinsic motivation to overcome fossilisation. Chen and Zhao believe that the learners' emotional factors, particularly motivation, are critical in foreign language learning. Positive learning motivation can lead to successful learning, strengthening the learners' learning attitudes, whereas negative motivation can lead to ineffective learning, creating a vicious cycle. Chen and Zhao further state

that there are intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. As the names suggest, the former is an internal force to explore and learn something, whereas the latter comes from external sources.

Lastly, Chen and Zhao (2013) submit that, in order to overcome fossilisation, the quality of teachers should be improved. Chen and Zhao explain that it is well known fact that the teacher is critical to the teaching process. Teachers' incorrect or inadequate language input can prompt students to commit language mistakes, eventually resulting in fossilisation. Since foreign language teachers are also non-native speakers, the languages they use are also interlanguage. Students' foreign language learning can be hampered if the teachers' interlanguage is not standard and/or incorrect. For example, if an English teacher's pronunciation is incorrect, his or her students will not be able to use standard pronunciation. As a result, teachers should focus on improving their language skills, including correct pronunciation and a broad range of knowledge. Simultaneously, education ministries should make greater efforts to train teachers and equip them with proper qualifications to teach foreign languages.

In addition, Selinker (2011) affirms that to overcome fossilisation, some errors can be stabilised after being simplified. In this study, for example, earlier fossilised learners' errors were also observed in the use of verbal inflections, regardless of the fact that the learners continued to write simpler forms of stabilised verbs. Nonetheless, Corder (1981) claims that simplification cannot occur except if learners have already acquired linguistic forms. On the other hand, L2 writing will benefit from communicative competence strategies that include functional practice in L2. According to Richards (2008), fossilisation is triggered by a lack of communication in the classroom, where fluency is valued over accuracy. As a result, rather than being grammatically correct, learners should be encouraged to speak and write meaningfully. Corder (1978) proposes aspiring writers to read more articles and to examine the usage of words and sentences in context in order to reduce transfer from L1. It has also been argued that exposure to the culture of the second language has the potential to also enhance L2 learning, in the process, reducing the learners' interlanguage fossilised forms.

In terms of incorporating techniques in the classroom to combat against IL fossilised errors, Richards (2008) proposes three main techniques: first, incorporating explicit grammar

instruction; second, conscious raising mechanisms for discovering grammatical elements through review processes; and third, expanding techniques through intensified communicative tasks as well as in view of linguistic form.

2.8 Error Analysis in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

2.8.1 Error Analysis (EA) definition

EA is one of the prominent branches of applied linguistics. EA is about identifying the incident, type, causes and consequences of an ungrammatical language forms.

EA is an important source of information for tutors. It is also one of the important theories of SLA. EA is a concept in SLA coined by Corder (1974). According to Brown (2004, p. 258), “error analysis highlights the importance of errors in the learners' inter-lingual systems”. Therefore, EA is another way for researchers to study IL. As such, EA can provide information about difficulties that learners encounter in L2 acquisition and also about how a learner learns and develops their language learning.

Khansir (2012, p. 1029) defines EA as “a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors that learners make”. EA involves a contrast between the errors committed in the TL and the TL (Khansir, 2012). Crystal (1999) describes EA as the study of the awkward forms someone uses during the process of learning a language, particularly a foreign language. For James (2001) EA is the study of linguistic ignorance. He goes on to say that EA is about examining what you don't know and how you try to deal with your ignorance. Richards et.al. (1984), cited in Mungungu (2010) states that EA involves the study of errors that second and foreign language learners make when learning a second language.

2.8.2 Models for Error Analysis

Corder (1981) first identified the process of EA. Afterwards, other authors (Ellis, 1994, Gass & Selinker, 2008) also expanded the EA model. Corder (1974), cited in Wu and Garza (2014) identified five phases that make up the EA process: a) collection of errors, b) identification of errors, c) description of errors, d) explanation of errors, and e) evaluation of errors. This study will therefore use this EA model during the EA phase of the learners' essays.

2.8.3 Importance of Error Analysis

EA shows the significance of the learner's mistakes in the second language. Therefore, EA has numerous advantages such as providing information about the learners' errors, which helps teachers in correcting the learners' errors and improve the effectiveness of their teaching. Several researchers such as Corder (1975), James (1998), Hinnon (2014), and Rattanadilok Na Phuket and Othman (2015), have written about the importance of errors and EA. According to MUIA (2015), errors are crucial because they provide insight into how language is learned. They also serve as an indication that learning is taking place. EA also plays an important role in education because it serves an educational purpose by teaching teachers what learners have learned. MUIA (2015) also states that mistakes help teachers and learners become aware of what they have not yet mastered. They also inform teachers about the effectiveness of the lessons. Additionally, Yilmaz Virlan (2022) notes that errors can help learners become more aware of their confusion, suggesting that they are going through a developmental process. In addition, educators can identify ways to enhance the students' abilities through the development of effective teaching methods (2022). The findings of this study acknowledges the significance of studying EA. In the Namibian context, studying EA holds significant importance for several reasons, particularly in the context of improving proficiency and performance in English as a medium of instruction, official language of communication and as a subject. In addition, it is also imperative as it provides room for addressing linguistic challenges faced by learners.

In addition to the educational importance of EA, EA is also crucial in the research field. Wang (2008) opines that errors provide researchers with a methodology for studying the learners' language. EA is of central importance when learning languages. Some researchers (Corder, 1975; James, 1998) have pointed out that errors made by learners are very important because they serve as an indicator of how learners acquire the language. Corder (1975) further states that, errors made by learners are beneficial to teachers, learners and researchers. For teachers, errors are evidence of student progress. Therefore, teachers can resort to it to help students improve their writing skills. Similarly, Xie and Jiang (2007) note that when teachers are aware of the learner's progress and what they still need to learn, thi's can better help them prepare appropriate remedial lessons.

2.9 Research gap

Although much has been done on interlanguage fossilisation in other parts of the world, observation has proven that little research has been conducted on the interlanguage fossilisation phenomenon, specifically in a multilingual classroom in the Namibian context. The current study fills that gap.

2.10 Theoretical framework

This study employs Larry Selinker's (1972) Interlanguage Theory with a particular focus on the phenomenon Fossilisation. The term 'fossilisation' was introduced in 1972 within SLA. According to Han (2013), 'fossilisation' is a phenomenon that occurs when learning does not progress even with continuous exposure to input, sufficient encouragement to learn, and sufficient potential for practice. Selinker (1972) notes that learners achieve very different levels of language proficiency.

Selinker (1972) further submits that, only a few individuals seem to achieve native speaker language proficiency, while others begin to fossilise or stop acquiring language proficiency at a very basic level. Furthermore, Selinker asserts that fossilisation is a cognitive and metacognitive process that manifests itself as linguistic elements, principles, and subsystems that speakers of a given native language are likely to retain in their IL compared to a given TL, regardless of the learner's age or the extent of explanation and instruction in the TL.

The Interlanguage theory has been studied by several scholars (Hikmahanyanti & Wisudayanti, 2021; Maqsudah et al., 2022; Albelihi & Al-Ahdal, 2024; Chidi-Onwuta, 2024). These scholars sought to investigate the interlanguage fossilisation phenomenon in various angles such as on English first language students, English second language students, at high school and university or college levels, pronunciation, writing, academic writing and different first language speakers.

The interlanguage theory has been influential in shifting the focus of SLA research from error correction to understanding the learner's internal linguistic system. The theory highlights the complexity of L2 acquisition and acknowledges that complete mastery of the TL is not always achievable. In addition, the Interlanguage theory is still relevant today as it emphasises on the learner's dynamic and evolving linguistic system. In multilingual contexts, such as Namibia, where

learners navigate a complex interplay of language, understanding the interlanguage process is crucial because it helps with the understanding of how language learning works. As a result, language education and communication improves.

Despite the theory's relevance in the study of Second Language Acquisition, the theory faced criticisms. The definition of fossilisation has been considered vague, and the theory has been accused of overemphasising the 'failure' aspect of L2 learning (Han, 2004). In addition, the theory's explanatory power regarding the exact causes of fossilisation has been questioned. Han (2004) further argues that the phenomenon of fossilisation has limiting factors such as that it is difficult to differentiate between permanent fossilisation, temporally stabilisation or plateaus.

In defiance of these criticism, the Interlanguage (IL) theory remains a foundational concept in SLA, providing a framework for understanding the developmental processes involved in L2 acquisition. Selinker's interlanguage theory (1972) is complemented by several other theories in SLA. These theories help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of interlanguage development and fossilisation. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) addresses that learners acquire language through comprehensible input ($i+1$). This explains why some learners may fossilise due to lack of sufficient or appropriate input. The input hypothesis (1982) further provides a mechanism for how interlanguage might continue to develop or fail to develop. Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis theories also complement the IL theory. The former was established in the 1960s by Stephen Corder. Error Analysis (EA) aims to examine errors learners make in order to understand their underlying linguistic systems. Interlanguage theory uses EA as a tool to investigate the nature of interlanguage and how it evolves.

Error Analysis has five steps (Corder, 1974). These steps includes a) collection, identification, description, explanation, and evaluation. These steps were employed in this study through the analysis of errors in essays. The latter, on the other hand, was established in 1957 by Robert Lado. The theory focuses on comparing the learner's first language (L1) and the target language (L2) to predict areas of difficulty. The interlanguage theory expands on this by recognising that L2 learning is not simply a matter of L1 interference, but a complex process of hypothesis testing.

Another theory that complements Selinker's IL theory is the Sociocultural theory (1978) by Vygotsky . The sociocultural theory (1978) posits the role social interaction and mediation has in language learning. It further explains that a lack of social interaction or limited access to expert guidance can contribute to fossilisation, which highlights the significance of the learning environment.

Selinker (1972) attributed fossilisation to five main processes such as: 1) Language transfer which deals with the influence of the L1 on the L2. 2) Transfer of training which encompasses the impact instructional methods have on the learner's interlanguage. 3) Strategies of Second Language communication which entails the learner's attempts to convey meaning in the L2. 4) Strategies of Second Language learning which looks at the learner's approaches to acquiring the L2. 5) Overgeneralisation of target language materials which involves the learner's application of TL rules in inappropriate contexts. Selinker's five processes highlights the causal factors to interlanguage fossilisation which is exactly what the objectives of this study sought to investigate.

English teachers took part in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to discuss the types of interlanguage errors learners fossilise as well as the causes of these errors. Learners were also asked to write two essays that were used to identify root causes and types of lexical, syntactical and grammatical fossilisation. Essays were used as they provide tangible representation of learners' interlanguage which allows the identification of systematic patterns and potential fossilised errors. The results were then triangulated to test the consistency of the findings and help validate data collected through both FGD and Error Analysis of essays. The conclusion that a particular learner had actually become fossilised could only be drawn if the remission of even more (interlanguage) learning continued despite the learner's abilities, potential and the desire to learn the TL and adapt to the target society fail.

2.11 Chapter summary

This chapter presented in brief the importance of writing and how challenging the writing skill is for learners. Thereafter, the chapter looked at Namibia's language policy, the history of interlanguage fossilisation in second language learning, and previous studies on interlanguage

fossilisation. Scholarship on EA in second language learning in varied contexts was also reviewed. The chapter also provides rationalisation for the selection of the theoretical framework within which the study is couched and concludes by identifying the research gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research methodology and procedures that were used in this study. In doing this, the study explains the study's research design, research setting, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Design

Mcombes (2022) defines 'research design' as a strategy for using empirical data to answer your research question. Mcombes further states that it is important that a research design is well planned to ensure that the methodologies used match the research objectives of the study, which will then also enable one to use the appropriate data analysis tools. Thakur (2021) defines 'research design' as an overall plan one chooses that incorporates various components of the study in a coherent and convincing manner, to ensure that the research problem is efficaciously addressed. Thakur further adds that a research design serves as master plan for data collection, measurement, and analysis.

This study employed an explanatory research design. According to Longe (2022), explanatory research involves gathering data with the aim of clarifying or explaining a specific phenomenon. In addition, explanatory research seeks to identify causes and reasons, providing evidence to either support or challenge an explanation or prediction. It aims to uncover and document relationships among various aspects of the phenomenon being studied (Boru, 2018).

The study adopted an explanatory research design because it is deemed most appropriate for this study. This is because the study first sought to explore the phenomenon of interlanguage fossilisation. The exploration of the phenomenon was done in order to help better understand the existence of it through empirical statistical data. When there is a clear understanding of the presence of the phenomenon, it becomes easier to delve into the nuances of it at a deeper level. Data was thus collected through qualitative instruments and methodologies, from which

the analysis and interpretation of the results involved exploring the views of participants in depth, and through the explications of the tenets of the adopted theories.

3.3. Research Paradigm

“A research paradigm is an underlying philosophical view of what constitutes knowledge or reality as the researcher seeks to gain an understanding of a particular topic” (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015, p.15). The paradigm guides researchers to collect data that can be viewed as “valid, legitimate, or trustworthy” (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015, p.16).

The study adopted a constructivism paradigm. The paradigm was believed to be the most suitable one because of its emphasis on understanding the manners in which individuals actively construct their own understanding of reality through experience. The study sought to unpack and interpret the realities of the manners in which interlanguage fossilisation occurs in a multilingual Namibian classroom, through an understanding of the academic experiences of the learners. The study further sought to explore the types of errors fossilised by these learners, as well as to come up with possible interventions on how to prevent or reduce error fossilisation. This paradigm was also appropriate because interlanguage fossilisation is a social behaviour that reflects real experiences of the learners, and the aim of the study was to explicate the impact the social phenomenon of interlanguage fossilisation has on the lives of the study population. In addition, the paradigm was deemed the most suitable because the paradigm view language as an active and individualised process which sheds light on the persistence of linguistic errors. Constructivism emphasises that learners actively construct their knowledge based on prior experiences and language exposure. Errors, including fossilised ones, are often a result of learners developing and internalising hypotheses about the target language. These hypotheses may persist if they are reinforced through repeated use or lack of corrective feedback.

In addition, learners bring their first language(s) and linguistic frameworks into the learning process. Constructivism explains how these prior experiences shape interlanguage development, sometimes leading to fossilisation when first language rules interfere with the target language. Moreover, the constructivist approaches highlight the significance of scaffolding in assisting

learners refine their language skill. When adequate or effective guidance or feedback to challenge and modify persistent linguistic errors is not provided, fossilisation can occur.

Additionally, constructivism is a research philosophy that considers social realities, such as cultures, cultural objects, institutions, and values, to be multiple and contingent on who is involved, what is being studied, and the context in which a study is conducted. Reality is commonly viewed as a social construct (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). The interpretivist or constructivist researcher, according to Creswell (2014), relies on the participants' perspective on the phenomenon under study. Furthermore, Creswell claims that constructivist or interpretivist researchers attempt to recognise the impact of their background experiences on their research. According to Mertens (2015), reality is socially shaped, therefore interpretivist or constructivist research approaches aim to capture the world of human experiences. By adopting a constructivist lens, teachers can better understand error persistence as a natural part of language development and create teaching approaches that support learners in overcoming these challenges through ways like being active participants in their language development journeys, interaction with peers and teachers in learning and receiving personalised constructive feedback.

3.4. Research setting

Karundu secondary school is a government school in Otjiwarongo, in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia. The school enrolls learners in Grades 8 to 11, from various ethnolinguistic groups.

3.5. Study population, sampling, and sample size

The study comprised 68 Grade 11 learners, as well as 5 English teachers at the school. The study used the stratified random sampling method to select participants for essay writing. Stratified random sampling involves selecting subgroups from a specific population. Samples are then created for each of these subgroups, and these are called strata (Wagner & Stehman, 2015). In stratified random sampling, strata are formed based on similar attributes or characteristics that members have in common. When comparing with the total population, a random sample is drawn from each stratum, the number of which is proportional to the size of the stratum. The subsets of the strata are then summarised from a random sample.

In the study, the strata are 11th grade learners who are multilingual. A sample of +/-6 learners per language spoken in the classroom were selected from each of the three Grade 11 classes, giving a total of 23, 23 and 22 participants per class giving a total of 68 participants. In total the study used 18 Otjiherero, Oshiwambo and Khoekhoegowab L1 speakers per each language group, 8 Rukwangali L1 speakers and 5 Subiya L1 speakers and 1 Shona L1 speaker. This was done to ensure that all language groups at the school are accounted for, and that accurate data is guaranteed since the study endeavoured to study interlanguage fossilisation in a multilingual classroom. Due to a minimal enrolment of learners in the L1 language groups (Shona and Subiya), all the available L1 speakers of the languages were selected.

For the FGDs with the teachers, a purposive sampling method was used to select participants. A targeted random sample was used as only English teachers were selected. This is because they have the ability to provide quality and empirical evidence and a variety of perspectives that speaks to the concerns research questions, since they are the ones that teach the learners selected for this study. As such, they are deemed relevant as they have experience of the learners' English language usage, and their writings in particular.

3.6 Description of participants

This study employed 68 learners from Karundu Secondary School in the Otjozondjupa region. The 68 learners are all grade 11 learners and their ages range from 17-19. 18 of the 68 learners have been exposed to English as a Medium of Instruction (Moi) and English as a subject since Grade 1 while the remaining 53 learners have only been exposed to English as a subject since grade 1 and mother tongue instruction. This gives a total of +/- 13 years of exposure to English, as some learners had indicated that they had failed and repeated some grades for at least two times in their years of schooling. Of the 68 learners, 18 are first language speakers of Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, and Khoekhoegowab respectively. The number 18 represents 9 boys and 9 girls for each language mentioned above. 8 learners (5 girls and 3 boys) are from the Kavango ethnic group who are first language speakers of Rukwangali, 5 Caprivians (4 girls and 1 boy) who are native speakers of Subiya and 1 Zimbabwewan national whose first language is Shona.

The study also used all five English teachers at the school for a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Four of the five teachers hold a Bachelor's degree honours in English and Khoekhoegowab, Oshiwambo and Biology respectively. Teacher number five holds a Bachelor of Education degree in English and Afrikaans. The five teachers have a teaching experience range of 5-13 years in English as a Second Language at junior and secondary phases (Grades 8-11). In addition, their age ranges from 26-38. The number of English teachers comprised of a 60/40 representation of gender. Two teachers, one male and one female, are first language speakers of Khoekhoegowab. In addition, two teachers were native speakers of Oshiwambo; one female and one male while the other male teacher is a first language speaker of Otjiherero.

3.7. Research instruments/Data collection tools

In this study, data was collected through FGDs with the teachers, and the EA of the learners' written essays. Two essays per learner were analysed for error fossilisation.

3.7.1 Error Analysis Checklist

An EA checklist (see Annexure C) was employed to categorise the errors observed in the learners' essays into categories such as syntactic and grammatical errors. It was further used to locate the sources of the errors in the learners' essays.

3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion

The study used FGD to collect qualitative data from the teachers. The research finds the FGD useful for the verification of data collected through the EA analysis of the learners' essays. They provide the researcher with the opportunity to elicit some new and in-depth information that could not have reflected through the EA. A total of five English teachers participated in the FGD (see Annexure A).

3.7.3 Learner's essays

To identify the types of fossilised errors the learners make, the learners were asked to write a 200-word essay test narrating about the day they will never forget (see Annexure B). The essays were marked using a marking grid (see Annexure G) to identify errors, an EA was conducted on the essays using Corder (1974) five steps to Error Analysis, and feedback was given. Learners were

again asked to write another essay on the same topic after a period of two weeks. This was done to see whether learners' errors committed in the first essay were fossilised. This gave a total of two (2) essays analysed per learner due to time constraints. In addition, learners were only asked to write two essays because they were awaiting to write their NSSCO national examinations, and the researcher being an educator did not want to disturb the completion of the syllabuses on time, revision and preparation thereof for these examinations. The stratified random sampling method was used to select a total of 68 essays that were subjected for EA as per the description in 3.5.

3.8. Data analysis

According to Merriam (2009) data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data, and this involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read; it is the process of making meaning. The data collected through the FGD were analysed and discussed using a thematic approach of data analysis through thematic coding which involved a critical analysis of words and sentences respondents used to identify patterns and themes based on the findings. The learners' essays were analysed using Corder's (1974) five steps in EA: (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. Further to that, a descriptive approach using error pattern analysis to identify and categorise fossilised errors was conducted. Responses from FGD and data from EA of essays were compared to identify consistent themes to enhance validity and reliability of the findings of this study. In addition to the EA five steps, the essays were analysed in conjunction with the IL theory key principles as stipulated in 2.10 to help provide alternative interpretations and enhance the depth of this study. Conclusion were then drawn from the data presented and recommendations generated.

3.9. Ethical considerations

A letter of request permission to conduct research at the school was written to the Regional Director of Education for Otjozondjupa Region, the region within which the school is situated. Permission was granted (see Annexure E). In addition, instructions were explained to the

participants before commencing with the data collection process. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Code numbers to represent participants were used to keep track of what information came from which participant without revealing their real identities. Participants were also guaranteed that their responses would only be used for research purposes and no shared with any other persons outside of the bounds of the research. Participants also signed consent forms agreeing to voluntarily participating in the research. Participants were informed of their right to decline or withdraw from the study any time without prejudice. Ethical clearance was also applied for by the researcher from the Namibia University of Science and Technology and this was granted (see Annexure D).

3.10 Summary of chapter

This chapter explained the research design, the research paradigm, and the research setting. In addition, the chapter explained the study population, sampling procedures and sample size employed in the study, and the research instruments. The methods used to analyse data such as the Thematic Approach, Corder's five steps for EA, and a descriptive approach using themes were discussed. Finally, ethical issues related to consent and confidentiality were explained.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the findings of the study, in a manner that responds to the research objectives that guided the study as established in Chapter 1. The results are presented thematically and mostly through tables. The first part of the analysis presents result from the three questions dealt with in the FGD, followed by a presentation of the results from the EA of the learners' essays.

To ensure that the collected data addresses the study's objectives on interlanguage fossilisation at Karundu Secondary School, a FGD were conducted with English teachers, alongside an Error Analysis (EA) of learners' essays . The learners were tasked with writing an essay titled 'The day I will never forget'. The word limit for the said essay was 200 words.

4.2 Data presentation

4.2.1 Analysis of data from Focus Group Discussion

This section presents the main themes that emerged from the data collected from the FGD with English teachers at Karundu Secondary School. The discussion sought to elicit the teachers' opinions with regards to the root cause(s) of lexical fossilisation at the level of sentence to examine grammatical fossilisation. The FGD questions were open-ended and follow up questions were asked to gather as much information as possible. Respondents were given coded numbers in order to protect their identities. The following questions helped guide the FGD (see Appendix A):

1. What is/are the root cause (s) of lexical error fossilisation?
2. Which types / errors are fossilised in learners' writing at the sentence level?
3. Which type of errors are fossilised in learners' writing at grammatical level?

The data collected from FGD was analysed question by question using the thematic approach to data analysis. For each question, the data collected was recorded and transcribed for easier

analysis. Thereafter, the data was coded to help create themes for analysis. After the themes were created, data was analysed to develop appropriate insights.

4.2.1.1 Root causes of lexical fossilisation

Written language can be scrutinised through the analysis of the lexical items that learners use when they construct sentences. This stresses the importance of lexis in the effective production and comprehension of texts.

Richards and Schmidt (2014) define lexis as having to do with how the words of a language can be utilised. Furthermore, Aguilera and Filologia (2012) define lexis as a single word or a collection of words that have a distinct meaning. Kolanchery (2015), on the other hand, defines lexis as a mental dictionary of words and common phrases that we can instantly access and use without having to think about grammar rules. It allows us to communicate quickly and efficiently.

For context, it is critical to reiterate the definition of ‘lexical fossilisation’. Lexical fossilisation occurs when a language's lexical components are statically mastered (Han et al., 2021). This stagnation leads to the inappropriate and ungrammatical use of word forms, forms which eventually become embedded in the learner's TL and become fossilised. In essence, lexical error fossilisation occurs when learners inadvertently select incorrect word and grammatical forms and use them in their writings.

Teachers expressed varied views on the causes of lexical fossilisation. The majority cited inadequate feedback, mother tongue influence, and disregard for language rules. Some also mentioned a lack of interest in learning correct language rules. Their responses are summated in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Causes of lexical fossilisation

<i>Theme</i>	Respondent’s responses
<i>Lack of appropriate feedback</i>	<p>“Teachers sometimes do not give the relevant feedback.”</p> <p>“There are also teachers who do not give feedback at all.”</p>

	<p>“Lack of appropriate corrective feedback makes learners to believe that they are applying the target language rules correctly.”</p>
<i>Ignoring feedback given</i>	<p>“Learners have a tendency of ignoring the feedback given. Especially that which is given in writing. All they do is look at how much they have gotten in the written piece and ignore everything in red.”</p>
<i>Ignoring of language rules</i>	<p>“Learners in most cases have their errors fossilised because they ignore language rules.”</p> <p>“Some learners do not apply correct language rules, despite having been taught the correct language rules.”</p>
<i>Lack of interest in learning correct language rules</i>	<p>“Sometimes you find learners who just do not have interest in learning the appropriate language rules.”</p>
<i>Early stages of language learning</i>	<p>“Many a time, the foundation is the problem because some teachers do not correct and drill the correct rules of the English language unto learners.”</p>
<i>Wrong pronunciation of words from teachers</i>	<p>“You will find teachers who mispronounce words. For example, a teacher would pronounce ‘that’ as ‘Zat’</p>
<i>Mother tongue influence</i>	<p>“At times learners’ errors fossilise due to the influence of their mother tongues. For example, an Oshiwambo speaking learner is likely to substitute the ‘r’ for ‘l’. This is because there is no ‘r’ in Oshiwambo. For example: Shoprite for ‘Shoplite’.”</p> <p>“Herero speaking learners like to put an -m before letter b in words that begins with b, for example; mbread instead of bread.”</p>

4.2.1.2 Discussion of themes from FGD with teachers

Based on the responses presented in Table 1 above, several themes emerged from the FGD with English teachers at Karundu Secondary School. Below is a discussion of the root causes of lexical interlanguage fossilisation as evinced from the FGD.

4.2.1.3 Lack of appropriate error feedback

One of the most notable causes of lexical interlanguage fossilisation was identified as the lack of appropriate error feedback from teachers. The evidence from the FDG with English teachers at the school indicates that without appropriate feedback on errors committed, learners feel that their writing is correct and grammatically well-formed, because they have not been told that it is not. In addition, when teachers fail to provide appropriate error correction, learners become inclined to believe that they are correct and therefore, continue to commit similar errors, which as a result leads to error fossilisation and eventually reflects in poor writing. One of the respondents argued that there are some teachers who do not give learners feedback on the errors that they would have committed. This causes learners to habitually make the same errors, as the errors have now become the forms that a learner knows and continues to use subconsciously as the correct language form. Corrective feedback is imperative because it enhances the learners' writing proficiency, which is seen as the most crucial, yet challenging task in a classroom (Amara, 2015).

4.2.1.4 Ignoring of feedback given

The findings of this study also point to the fact that the respondents (teachers), from time to time, come across learners who ignore, and opt to not care about the feedback they receive. Based on the data collected for this study, it was observed that learners ignore the feedback they get from their teachers. The teachers further disclosed that this occurs because learners have no interest to learn. The findings of this study align with the conclusions made by Saadat et al. (2017) that students neglect the feedback when they do not have the desire to learn. This implies that the learners' proficiency in a target language is affected by the learner's desire and interest, or lack of them thereof, to learn. As a result, without the zeal to learn, learners ignore the feedback

provided and continue to present the same errors until these errors become fossilised and difficult to correct.

Another study, (Shen, 2020), supports this observation. Shen (2020) submits that student attitudes towards the feedback contributes to errors. In addition, Huang (2009) reiterates that negative response to correction may cause error fossilisation. This study relates to conclusions in Huang (2009) that the ignoring of language rules signifies a negative response towards the feedback provided. Feedback is given to encourage change and improvement in the commission of errors. This signifies the criticality of corrective feedback to language learning. Therefore, learners should be motivated to not ignore the feedback they get, as it is clearly meant to help them improve their proficiency in writing.

4.2.1.5 Ignorance of language rules

When one lacks knowledge of their TL, they become prone to committing errors. This study found that learners' errors become fossilised due to the ignorance of language rules. Richards (1971, 1974) mentioned that errors of development are caused by extreme ignorance of language rules, which is exactly what this study found. Teachers pointed out that this could be because learners have not yet acquired the necessary command of that particular language. Every language has its set rules and systems that every person ought to use when they communicate within the language. Therefore, when one is in a process of learning a second language or TL, one needs to be aware of and follow these rules in spoken and written forms of the language. Considering that an individual trying to learn a language is a not the TLs' native speaker, one might not fully pay attention to or completely ignore the TL rules.

When this happens, the learner instead, uses the knowledge they already have of their mother tongue and apply those (which many a time, are different from the TL's rules) to the TL when they speak and write. Consequently, this leads to errors, and as time goes and the errors are not corrected and worked on, the learner reaches a plateau and continues to use the incorrect language rules which results in error fossilisation. The findings above are supported by Mertosono and Erniwati (2023), who attributed errors made by English language learners to lack of appropriate knowledge in the language they are busy learning, which causes them to fail to

use the correct rules and systems of that particular language, English in this case. The findings of this study are also in sync with Dissanayake and Dissanayake (2019), who opine that the learners' ignorance of language rules was evident in their study.

4.2.1.6 Lack of interest in learning correct language rules

Interest is the desire that one has to learn or understand something new, driven by curiosity. In addition, it significantly impacts the learning process (Djamarah, 2008, as cited in Shanty, 2019, p.135). Although English is the official language of communication in Namibia, it is still not an indigenous language in Namibia. Given this fact, most of the learners of English struggle with being competent in the four language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) due to the language' complex nature and because it is not their native language, which results in poor performance in English national examinations (MoEAC, 2010). Therefore, there often tends to be some negative attitudes, and rejection of some sort, towards it because it is not a local language. In agreement with this Sam (2024) believes that students' poor English language skills are due to it being a foreign language which as a result breeds a lack of interest in learning it, since students feel that they are not going to use it anytime soon.

Furthermore, because of the language's complex nature, it also becomes difficult to cultivate interest amongst second language learners of English. Data collected for this study indicates that these SL speakers of English, many a time, lack the necessary interest in learning correct English language rules. Hence, when these learners receive corrective feedback on their errors, they turn a blind eye to the corrections because they are not interested in knowing and applying the correct rules of the English language reflected in the feedback received from teachers. In support of the findings of this study, Saadat et al. (2017) submits that when one does not have the desire to learn, they are prone to committing errors. Further to that, Dissanayake and Dissanayake, (2019) also established that students' hesitance to change their existing habits of producing incorrect forms in the process of learning English resulted in error fossilisation.

4.2.1.7 Poor foundation at early stages of language learning

Learning a second language helps one to gain communicative skills required to interact with other people, to expand one's cognitive abilities as well as to be able to appreciate different cultures.

As such, it is imperative that one's early stages of language learning are rigorous enough. The current study also observed that a not good foundation is one of the causes of lexical error fossilisation. This is because teachers seem to fail to correct the learners' errors while they are still in primary school and also fail to drill the correct English language rules into the learners. It is therefore, critical that correct English language rules and systems are drilled into the learners' minds when they are still younger. This is significant as, according to the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lennerberg, 1967), there is a cut-off point, known as the critical period, up until which learning a language like a native speaker is possible. As a result, if an individual has already surpassed the crucial phase for learning a language, they tend to unknowingly apply various aspects of their native language to the rules of the new language during second language learning, which ultimately results in fossilisation. After this period, achieving native-like mastery of a second language becomes nearly impossible. As a result, children have a greater advantage over adults or adolescents when it comes to first and second language acquisition (Penfield & Roberts, 1959, cited in Hu, 2016).

4.2.1.8 Mispronunciation of words from teachers

The findings of this study also note that part of the reason why the learners become prone to error fossilisation is results from the teachers' mispronunciation of words. When one is in the primary stages of acquiring or learning a language, one learns through stimuli and stimuli response. Therefore, if the stimuli being given (mispronounced word) is wrong, then the stimuli response will also be incorrect. When this happens, it becomes a habit and the learner, in the process of acquiring or learning a second language, takes in the wrong pronunciation of the word. In the absence of correct pronunciation, the vocabulary that one knows becomes less effective when communicating, be it orally or in writing.

This study notes that some teachers mispronounce words such as *that* as *zat*, which affects the spelling of the words since word formation is somehow linked to phonology (Madu & Njoku, 2020). Similar to this study's findings, Apeli and Ugwu (2013) conclude that an individual's level of English instruction causes errors. This means that, when learners receive poor instructions, they are at a great risk of producing errors. These pronunciation errors are caused by differences

between NL and TL in phonemes, tongue placement, stress, and the movement and placement of lips and teeth during pronunciation. In addition, the lack of corrective feedback or language training contribute to these errors. In line with the findings of the current study, Manrique (2013), cited in Kasap and Emamviridi (2022) claims that pronunciation errors are the most common type of interference between the NL and the TL. Manrique (2013) therefore, argues that this interference between the NL and the TL results in the fossilisation of errors. This study thus recommends that words be pronounced correctly to ensure that learners do not learn/acquire wrong forms of language, in the process, militate against the commission of errors.

4.1.2.9 Mother tongue influence

By the time they embark on the journey to learn a foreign language, the learner has already largely acquired their mother tongue. Therefore, the learner tends to transfer language systems from their mother tongue to the TL. In many instances, this transfer does not work in their favour since the mother tongue and the TL may have different language systems and rules. This is referred to as negative transfer or influence (Gao, 2020). Mother tongue influence is when the NL of a person affects the effective acquisition or learning of a TL that the person is in the process of learning.

This study also establishes that mother tongue influence has had a negative effect on the learners' writing. In many instances, one's mother tongue has been seen to affect sentence structure and grammar usage in English. Consequently, this can result in errors such as incorrect verb tenses, concord issues and ungrammatical sentence formation. From the results in Table 1 above, teachers indicated that they constantly encounter errors caused by the learners' mother tongue influence. For example, Oshikwanyama speaking learners may write 'Shoprite' as 'Shoplite', or 'soplite', or security as 'shecurity'. This is because there is no sound /r/ in the Oshiwambo dialect-Oshikwanyama (Hamakali & Mbenzi, 2016). Therefore, the /r/ sound is likely to be substituted with the other liquid sound /l/ as in the example above. These findings strengthen the conclusions of Bennui (2016); Puspita (2019) and Lin et al. (2020) that the nature of an L1 and its interference is an obstacle to lexical knowledge and proficiency.

The teachers have also highlighted that most Otjiherero speaking learners insert the consonant [m] before words that begins with consonant [b]. According to (Gunnink & Sands, 2019), pre-nasalised stops such as /mb/ and /nd/ are prevalent in many African native languages, particularly those within the Niger-Congo family such as Kiswahili, Zulu, Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, and Bemba, just to mention a few. Unlike similar phonetic sequences in English, these stops can occur at the start of words and do not combine with a preceding vowel to form a syllable. For instance, in Oshiwambo, the word "embo" (meaning 'book') syllabifies as /e.mbo/, whereas the English word "tempo" syllabifies as /tɛm.po/.

In addition, according to the Otjiherero language dictionary, consonant *m* always precedes consonant *b*, which forms inflection *-mb* (Viljoen & Kamupingene, 1983). For example, ‘*Mbi ri nawa*’ which translates ‘I am doing well’, or ‘*Ami mba za kOkakarara*’ which translates ‘I am from Okakarara’. Also, there is no letter or sound [b] in the language, as used in English. Furthermore, Otjiherero, just like most Niger-Congo languages use *mb* which is used as a merged sound of *m* and *b*, but pronounced as one sound. As /m/ and /b/ share the same place of articulation, they sound very similar, except that /m/, which is bilabial nasal sound, is added. These findings are supported by (Krishnamurthy et al., 2011) who highlights that there is a tendency to pronounce the English /b/ as /mb/, which then influences the writing. Moreover, the pattern also applies to /nd/, where /n/ precedes /d/ in the native language pronunciation and is carried over to English pronunciation and subsequently to spelling (Krishnamurthy et al., 2011).

4.2.2. Syntactical errors fossilised in learners’ writing

This section presents the findings from question 2 of the FGDs (see Annexure A). In addition, the sub-section presents the discussion of the findings. The discussion sought to establish detailed explanations of the types of errors fossilised in the learners’ writings.

Table 4.2: Types of fossilised syntactical errors

<i>Error type</i>	Respondents’ responses
<i>Verb Tense</i>	“Learners use incorrect verb tenses in sentences.”

<i>Word choice</i>	“Using ‘cause’ for ‘because’, ‘this’ and ‘these’, ‘there’ and ‘their’, ‘were’ and ‘where’.”
<i>Punctuation</i>	“They frequently make errors of punctuation like capital letters, comma, full stop.”
<i>Conjunctions</i>	“Learners like to use conjunctions: ‘and’, ‘but’ and ‘because’ to begin sentences.”
<i>Misinterpreting language rules/ overgeneralisation of language rules</i>	<p>“Inconsistencies when it comes to applying correct language rules. Example, a learner sometimes writes a certain word correctly and sometimes misspells it. In addition, they are in essence not consistent when applying language rules.”</p> <p>“Regarding overgeneralisation, learners misapply some language rules especially the rule of forming the past tense by adding <i>-ed</i>, and that of forming plurals.” Another respondent added that “An apostrophe is also used in appropriately. Sometimes learners use an apostrophe for plural nouns, or sometimes they misplace it in a contraction or even when they show possession.”</p>
<i>Proper nouns</i>	“Not capitalising pronoun, I, thinking that the letter ‘i’ should always be capital. Fail to differentiate between pronoun ‘I’ and letter ‘i’.”
<i>Concord</i>	“Sometimes learners write but the subject and verb are not in agreement. For example, ‘ <i>The boy which is next door or the boys is sick</i> ’.

Or '*I knows her*'. Another error of concord learners make is for example in '*the cities has many cars*' or '*the woman have a baby*'.

Articles

"Learners do not know when to use 'a' or 'an' for example '*A animal*'. Sometimes they overuse article '*the*' say '*the people were waiting for me.*'

4.2.2.1 Discussion of findings from FGDs

The discussion will be based on the themes that developed from question two of the FGD (Annexure A).

4.2.2.2 Errors of verb tense

The current study observes that the incorrect use of verbal tense is one of the errors that are fossilised in the learners' writing. The English teachers at the school highlighted that errors in verb tenses are fossilised in learners, as they consistently use verb tenses incorrectly, for example, referring to an activity that happened in the past using present verbs, despite several lessons of drilling and practice, resulting in error fossilisation. This supports the conclusion from Al-Tameemy and Daradkeh (2019), and Krishnamurthy et al. (2010) who submit that, verb tenses form part of the errors that learners makes when they write. The same finding can also be used to validate the evidence in Mungungu (2010), that verb tense errors are amongst the errors committed by the learners that were surveyed in that study. However, despite the fact that verb tense errors form part of the errors learners made in the two studies (Al-Tameemy & Daradkeh, 2011; Krishnamurthy et al. (2010)), this study focused on error fossilisation. As such the current study argues that the recurrence of these verb tense errors points towards the being fossilised. Moreover, these research findings align with Richards and Simpson's (1974), as cited in Kapolo (2013), who notes that linguistic errors, such as tense errors, are largely due to the learners' ignorance of rule restrictions. Learners often apply a specific tense rule to contexts where it does not apply and fail to fully apply the rules related to tenses in their statements.

4.2.2.3 Errors of word choice

According to the English teachers at the school, learners have word choice fossilised errors. This means that learners habitually choose incorrect words when they write. These words are deemed incorrect because they do not fit the context in which they are used. In most cases, learners use incorrect words, especially when it comes to homophones (words that have a similar sound but have a different meaning and are spelled differently). English teachers at the school highlighted that the noun *cause* is often mistaken for conjunction *because*. Based on the findings of the study, the teachers explained that learners believe that the noun *cause* and conjunction *because* have the same meaning.

Another example provided was the confusion between *where* and *were*. Learners often confuse these two words when they write. The data revealed that when this happens, it totally changes the meaning of the sentence. In addition, teachers also indicated that sometimes learners also make word choice errors between '*its*' and '*it is*' (*it's*), resulting in the learners also fossilising error by continuously selecting the wrong variant. In a manner that speaks to these findings, Pratiwi (2016) also concludes that students' difficulties with writing in English may stem from insufficient vocabulary. Furthermore, Al-Khasawneh and Maher (2010) observes that incorrect vocabulary choices result in word choice fossilised errors.

4.2.2.4 Errors of punctuation

English teachers at the school also explained that the learners make numerous errors of punctuation. According to the BBC (2019), a sentence needs a capital letter at the beginning and an appropriate punctuation mark such as a full stop, exclamation mark or a question mark, depending on the nature of sentence it is, at the end. For example, a completed statement ends with a full stop, an interrogative with a question mark while an exclamatory end with an exclamation mark. The last two punctuation marks are significant as they help define the purpose of a sentence. Furthermore, punctuation is the backbone of writing which ensures that a sentence is expressive and meaningful. In addition, punctuation elucidates written text mainly by approximating the rhythms and tone substitutions in spoken sentences.

Despite the fact that learners are aware of this definition, they fail to end sentences with either of the said punctuation marks. Not ending a question with a punctuation mark makes it difficult for the readers to estimate how the sentence should be interpreted. This study notes that learner fail to use end punctuation marks when they write sentences. When this occurs, the reader finds it difficult to tell what type of sentence it is, and also whether the sentence is complete or not. The respondents further indicated that this practice hinders cohesion, coherence and the smooth flow of information when one reads the learners' written work. As a result, teachers frequently have to insert these punctuation marks for learners so that the sentence can denote complete thoughts. In line with the above finding. Azeez (2024) also observes that students have problem using punctuation correctly. The study differs from the current one in that it studied fossilisation among university students, and the present study focuses on high school learners who might still have the potential and opportunity to de-fossilise some errors.

4.2.2.5 Conjunction

Conjunctions are building blocks of a great communication in writing. Without conjunction, a phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph and a text is often not clear and understandable. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that cohesive devices and discourse markers are employed in writing to unify a written piece. Regardless of the unity that these devices and markers create in a sentence, learners fail to use them effectively, when they write. This is one of the concerns raised by the English teachers at the school.

Errors of conjunction occur when a learner either does not use a conjunction where it is necessary or when the learner uses a wrong conjunction. This study observes that the learners have made a habit of using conjunctions such as *and*, *but* and *because* to begin sentences in formal or academic writing. The teachers further indicated that, despite the fact that learners are taught about parts of speech and their definitions, of which conjunctions form a part of that, they still fail to use conjunctions *and*, *but* and *because* as linking words, to create links between words and groups of words. When this occurs, it creates grammatically incorrect sentences.

There are four types of conjunctions in the English language; the subordinating, coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions and conjunctive adverb (Dalia, 2022). Coordinating

conjunctions; *and*, *but*, including others, can be used at the beginning of an independent clause that can stand alone as a simple sentence. Moreover, they are also used to join compound sentences. Therefore, when two independent clauses are logically closely related, the conjunctions mentioned above are often used to combine the clauses into a compound sentence with the assistance of a comma in some cases. For example:

The boy has not been feeling well lately, but he is slowly recovering.

We should get ready for netball practice, drink some water and watch the boys play soccer.

In the first example provided above '*The boy has not been feeling well lately, but he is slowly recovering.*' The coordinating conjunction '*and*' is utilised to show contrasting ideas. A comma precedes the conjunction '*but*' because the conjunction '*but*' joins two independent clauses. In the second example '*We should get ready for netball practice, drink some water, and watch the boys play soccer*', the coordinating conjunction '*and*' is used to show addition.

The subordination conjunction '*because*', on the other hand, is used to explain why something has happened. In addition, '*because*' is also used to introduce clauses of cause and reason. For example:

Tulonga wore a jersey because it was cold outside.

She usually plays tennis, because she enjoys playing it.

In the examples provided above, the subordinating conjunction '*because*' is used to connect a dependent (subordinating) clause to an independent (main) clause. A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought. Therefore, because it does not express a complete thought, it does not qualify to be called a sentence. An independent clause, on the other hand, has a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. Therefore, when a sentence is made up of a subordinating clause and an independent clause, a subordinating conjunction introduces that subordinating clause. Arabi and El Sayed (2015, p.111) observe that, because students were observed to be applying conventions of Arabic discourse such as double-marked subordination to English, where such a practice is

considered incorrect. For example, conjunctions like *'because'*, *'and'*, *'so'*, *'although'* and *'but'* were used incorrectly, which results in poor communication in the students' writing. Similar to the findings of this study, Geraldine (2018, p.97) concluded that, after a thorough examination of EA of students' writings, the "adversative (but), additive (and), and causal (because, so) are used in students' writing" were the most frequent conjunction error in vocational state school students' writing assignments." There was also the observed misuse of conjunction such as *'and'*, *'but'* and *'because'* proves to be an issue in the learners' writing, resulting from their ignoring rule restriction.

4.2.2.6 Misinterpretation of language rules/overgeneralisation of rules

It is said that English is a crazy language (Lederer, 2010). This is because the language has so many rules that are not always applicable to all situations though familiar, in most instances English languages rules have exceptions (Piontek, 2022). For example, when forming the past tense, inflectional suffixes such as */-s/*, */-ing/*, */-ed/*, */-en/* are added to the end of a word for example *play+ ed = played*. Therefore, because of this rule, learners tend to apply the same rule to irregular verbs such as *'speak'*, *'wear'*, *'wrote'* etc. to form the past tense forms of these words. Irregular verbs are verbs that do not form the past tense or past participle forms in the usual way of adding *'-ed'*, or *'-d'* to the base form of the word. Instead, they take on an alternative pattern such as *'speak'* (Base form) – *'spoke'* (past tense form) – *'spoken'* (past participle form).

English teachers at the school furthermore explained that learners commit error of overgeneralisation through the application of the wrong language rules, such as adding inflection */-s/* to words that do not require it. For example, the word *'man'*. Learners sometimes add */-s/* at the end of the word to pluralise it. However, the word *'man'* in its plural form is *'men'*. This implies that learners believe that in order to form the plurals, */-s/* must always be added to the end of the words. However, this rule does not apply to all English words.

An apostrophe is also wrongly used in the learners' written work. The teachers indicated that learners use an apostrophe for plurals. For example, *"She has two apple's."* Another case of apostrophe error occurs when the learners frequently misplace the apostrophe either to show ownership or when they use contractions. For example, *"This is Veronas' book."*, and *"I didn't see*

him today.”. The examples provided above demonstrate how the function of the apostrophe is often confused. An apostrophe is not necessary when forming plurals. Therefore, the first example shown ‘*She has two apple’s*’ is incorrect since the apostrophe is not needed in the word ‘apple’s’. It should therefore have been ‘*She has two apples*’.

Also, an apostrophe is used to show possession or ownership. When it is used to show possession or ownership, it is put between the last letter of the noun and an ‘s’ as in ‘*This is Verona’s book*’. However, there is an exception to this rule. When the noun ends with an ‘s’ as in ‘*Silas*’, the apostrophe is placed at the end of the last letter of the noun and an ‘s’ may be added thereafter or it may be left as such. For example, ‘*Silas’ car broke down.*’, or ‘*Silas’s car broke down.*’. In the examples, ‘*I didn’t see him today*’, the apostrophe is misplaced. It should have been placed between letters ‘n and t’. This is because the apostrophe indicates omission of vowel ‘o’, therefore the apostrophe should be placed where the letter is missing. Hence, the sentence should have been ‘*I didn’t see him today.*’.

4.2.2.7 Errors of pronouns

The results from the FGDs show that learners also commit syntactical errors with regards to the use of pronouns. According to Grammarly (2024), pronouns are words that one can use to substitute nouns when the noun in referral is already known. For example, ‘*I have a puppy. She is black and white*’. In the example given, pronoun *she* is used in the second sentence to refer to the puppy. By using the pronoun ‘*she*’, one can avoid repeating the word ‘puppy’, which would represent repetition often considered monotonous in reading.

There are various types of pronouns such as personal pronouns e.g., relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns, and so on. According to the English teachers at the school, the most fossilised errors of pronouns are when learners want to express an idea about people in general. For instance, the writer may wish to give advice or state a fact in a formal situation. Therefore, the formal way to do it is to use pronoun ‘one’, which means a person. For example, ‘*If one wants to succeed, one should work smarter*’.

However, the respondents report that learners always opt to use pronoun *you* in formal settings. When pronoun ‘*you*’ is used in formal settings, it can be rude as it may seem like the writer is

pointing a finger. In addition, the pronoun 'you' is indefinite and lacks precision. It is too ambiguous and informal for academic writing, while replacing 'you' with 'one' enhances clarity. For example, *when you do not work smarter, you would not succeed*. It was also highlighted that learners fail to punctuate the first-person pronoun *I*. Pronoun *I* must always be capitalised. However, learners often make the error of writing the first-person pronoun 'I' as 'i'. In contrast, because pronoun *I* should always be capitalised, learners feel that every letter *i* should be capitalised. As a result, they make errors of pronoun which affects learners' language proficiency. This form of error fossilisation that this study has established, which reflects the manner in which learners have fossilised the impolite usage of pronoun *you*, is not accounted for in the literature that the study has reviewed, and thus seems unique to the study context

4.2.2.8 Errors of Concord

Concord, also known as Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA) denotes that the subject and the verb should agree in number, person and gender (Wegerbauer, 2022). The basic rule of concord states that singular subjects take singular verbs, and plural subjects take plural verbs ("Subject-verb agreement," n.d.). Furthermore, when the subject has an /-s/ at the end, then the verb should not have an '-s' at the end. Errors of concord are very common amongst non-native speakers of English. While these errors do not hinder communication, they are often seen as reflecting a lack of language skills.

From the result of this FGDs, it is observed that learners commit errors of concord such as the subject or subjects not agreeing with its or their verbs. This argument was substantiated by these examples, "*The boy which is next door*" or "*The boys is sick*" or "*I knows her*". Another error of concord that learners make is, for example, in "*The cities has many cars*" or "*The woman have a baby*" as demonstrated in the table above.

4.2.3. What type of grammatical errors are fossilised?

This subsection presents themes that emerged from Question 3 of the FGDs. The results of the FGDs evince that learners commit grammar errors of spelling, verb tense omission, subject-verb agreement, word order and overgeneralisation of language rules.

4.2.3.1 Errors of spelling

Spelling is one of the key elements of appropriate writing. Despite this importance, this study revealed that learners misspell some English words. The table below shows the fossilised errors of spelling teachers encounter in learners' writing.

Table 4.3: Errors of spelling

Error type	Respondents' responses
<i>Spelling</i>	recieve for receive
	Becouse for because
	Writting for writing
	Wich for which

As demonstrated in the table above, with the first example recieve, learners have challenges with positioning the /i/ and /e/ when spelling words such as 'receive', 'conceive', 'deceive', 'conceit' and so on. There is a mnemonic spelling rule, well known, especially by native speakers of the English language, that helps one to spell words with digraphs 'ei' or 'ie' when one is uncertain of which one to use. This mnemonic spelling rule is 'e after i, except after c'. Which means that in a word without letter c, the vowel 'i' will almost always come before 'e' as in 'believe', 'relieve' etc., expect when the word has letter c in it, then the arrangement of vowels changes from *ie* to *ei*. However, there are situations where this rule does not apply, and as such, it is considered to be an inconsistent rule and should therefore not be regarded as solid. For example, in words such as 'weird', 'seize', 'deficient', 'conscience' and all other words with consonant c that are pronounced with the [s] or [sh] sounds.

One observes, in the example provided above that the *i* comes before the *e*, which is against the general rule. Thus, the correct spelling of the word is 'receive', where the *e* comes before the *i* which is the correct vowels order in this case. In the second example, the word 'because' is often misspelled as 'becouse'. Learners often replace letter the *a* with *o*. However, there is no letter *o* in the word 'because'. Therefore, writing it with letter the /o/ in it makes the spelling incorrect. The teachers have indicated that the replacement of the two letters mentioned above is

prompted by the vowel digraph ‘*au*’ which is pronounced as the *o* sound. As a result, learners have a habit of substituting the letter ‘*a*’ with ‘*o*’ due to the stated reason. The third example provided is ‘*wich*’. The findings of the FGDs with teachers indicated that learners often omit the first /-h/ in the word *which*. Leaving out this letter /-h/ makes the spelling of the word incorrect. Therefore, it is imperative that a spelling check is done upon completion of a written piece (Ali et al.,2022). Another explanation given was that the learners commit spelling errors due to various factors such as omission, substitution, insertion, or the misplacement of a letter during the process of composing a particular word. This is similar to what Altamimi and Ab Rashid (2019) conclude when they observe that the spelling errors made by Saudi university students are because of the negative effects of their education system and curriculum. They highlight that the curriculum neglects the significance of spelling rules and techniques, and also because students rely on their native language when writing in English. English is taught from Grade 4 as a language and further used as a language of instructions in most Namibian government school (MoEAC, 2015). Which means, from Grade 0-3, they are taught in their mother tongue. Therefore, one can link the conclusions by Altamimi and Ab Rashid (2019) to the Namibian context and make a similar conclusion that learners also have errors fossilised due to a poor education system of using mother tongue instruction in the early stages of the learners’ education, and only transition to the use of English later on when they are in Grade 4.

4.2.3.2 Errors of verb tense

According to the findings of this study, verb tense is one of the errors fossilised in the learners writing. Errors of verb tense occur either due to a tense misuse, using an incorrect verb tense or due to inconsistencies in verb tenses. Table 4.4 below presents the errors of verb tense teachers come across often in the learners’ writings.

Table 4.4: Errors of verb tense

ERROR TYPE	RESPONDENTS’ RESPONSES
VERB TENSE	Learners would sometimes write sentences like “I am having a class.”

Using double past is a big problem. For example: "I didn't wanted to tell you" or "I did not saw him".

Sometimes learners mix up tenses in one sentence. For example, the past simple and present perfect tenses. i.e I have seen her last night.

The table above shows some of the interlanguage fossilised errors that the learners make. The first example '*I am having a class.*' Shows how a wrong verb tense '*am having*' was employed to describe an action that happened in the past. '*Am having*' is present continuous tense, which is used to describe an action or event that is currently happening at the time of speaking or around the present time. However, the event being describe happened in the past, which is why the chosen verb tense does not fit the given context.

Another point presented was that learners frequently use double past tense in one sentence. For example, '*I didn't wanted to tell you*'. In this sentence, both '*did*' and '*wanted*' indicate the past tense. The is also similar to the third example, '*I did not saw him*'. Again, in this sentence, two verbs in the past tense are used; *did* and *saw*.

If we look at example four, '*I have seen her last night*', where a mixture of verb tenses is observed, one can clearly see that there is a confusion between the two tenses: present perfect tense and past simple tense, as they attempt to emphasise the recentness of the action. However, they overuse the present perfect tense, which is a common error for English second language learners. Errors of this nature come about because the writer is a non-native speaker of English and is still learning the system of English tenses. Therefore, to assist someone who makes this mistake, it is important to explain the difference between the two tenses and provide clear examples. These individuals can also be encouraged to practice using the correct tense in different contexts.

As a result, the past simple tense is correct because it specifically refers to an action that happened at a particular point in the past, which in this case is "*last night.*" The past simple tense

is used to describe completed actions that occurred at a definite time in the past. The present perfect tense, on the other hand, is used for actions that happened at an unspecified time in the past, often with a connection to the present. For example, "*I have seen her*" implies that I saw her at some point in the past, and that experience is still relevant now. However, when we specify a time like "*last night,*" we are referring to a completed action in the past, and the past simple tense is the appropriate choice.

To validate the findings of this study, Kesharvaz (2012) notes that verb tense was a common error in 200 Jordanian secondary school students. Kesharvaz (2012) further concludes that errors of verb tenses were due to limited knowledge of correct rules by the students, as well as due to inter- and intra-lingual interferences from NL and TL. The use of incorrect verb tenses as evinced by the findings of this study signifies that the learners think in their native language and translate their thoughts into English. However, this does not work since the two languages; NL and TL do not operate the same when it comes to verb tense.

4.2.3.3 Errors of omission

Omission errors happen when learners lack knowledge of form of grammar necessary to construct a correct sentence. This occurs either through leaving out the necessary form or grammar or by deleting the form or grammar completely from the sentence making it erroneous. The table below presents the errors of omission that the English teachers at the school come across in learners written pieces.

Table 4.5 Errors of omission

<i>Error classification</i>	Respondents' responses
<i>Omission</i>	Learners sometimes omit a necessary word or letter from a sentence.
	Sometimes because they are still trying to learn a language, they leave out some important details such as auxiliaries due to

lack of literacy in that particular language they are trying to learn.
You will even find learners who omits out verbs
Suffix –ing is also one of the omitted parts when the present continuous tense is used

The table above shows in the first response that learners like to omit necessary words or letters from words in sentences. The common words omitted are articles, pronouns or helping verbs. Personal pronoun ‘I’ is commonly omitted in sentences for example, a learner would write: ‘*Am excited to be here*’. Apart from the omission of pronouns, inflections such as suffixes to form pluralisation are also often left out. For example, sometimes the word requires the inflection /-s/ at the end to indicate plurality but the learner leaves it out. For example:

“There is a variety of way one can learn a language.”, (Respondent 3)

“He always stay home.” (Respondent 1)

“She eat porridge.” (Respondent 5)

The first example provided shows that the word ‘variety’ signals that the number of the noun is more than one, therefore, inflection –s must be used at the end of the countable noun ‘way’. The above sentence in its correct form will be ‘*There are a variety of ways one can learn a language*’. When errors of this kind occur, the error committed changes the syntactical quality of the sentence. In example 2, the subject ‘he’ is singular, thus it requires a singular verb as per the rules of concord (subject and verb must agree in number). Therefore, the verb should be *stays*. Similarly, the subject in the third example ‘she’ is also singular, thus it should attract a singular verb so that they agree in number. Hence, the verb should be ‘eats’. Examples 2 and 3 demonstrate the omission of the singular verb maker /-s/. When these errors occur, the sentence becomes grammatically incorrect, which also shows how the writer lacks knowledge of the correct language structures and forms needed to form correct words, or meaningful

sentences when writing in the English language. Rustandi et al. (2023) determined that the omission of verbs appeared as temporary fossilisation errors. To reiterate, this study also established that errors of omission were temporarily fossilised as there was no consistency in committing them.

In addition, one of the respondents narrated that errors of omission are common in learners' writings due to the fact that they failed to master the appropriate grammatical structures during the process of language acquisition or language learning. This then indicates a lack of literacy in the TL that they are still learning as foreign language speakers of the language. From the table above, auxiliaries were also observed to be at risk of omission when the learners write. For example, a learner would write:

'I living in Otavi.' (Respondent 2)

From the example above, the auxiliary verb 'am' was left out. Thus, the sentence should have been '*I am living in Otavi.*'. Auxiliary verbs are important in sentences with main verbs in the continuous form. When omission is encountered, the omission of verbs is no exception. The English teachers at the school also explained that learners frequently omit verbs when they produce sentences in nominal forms. For example:

"She a beautiful girl."

4.2.3.4 Errors of word choice

Choosing appropriate words when writing sentences is important for effective communication. This is because when a writer chooses inappropriate words and uses them, the writing becomes awkward or clumsy. Awkward writing due to the use of wrong words is not only erroneous, but it also indicates one's lack of competence in the TL.

Table 4.6: Errors of word choice

Error type	Respondents' responses
Word choice	"Many a time, learners write awkwardly. In a sense that they write in an incorrect or weird manner."

	<p>Learners mistake homophones and thus tend to choose the inappropriate word amongst the group of homophones. For example: Learners lack awareness of when to use ‘than and then’, ‘where and were’ or ‘its and it’s’.</p>
	<p>Most learners lack awareness of the type of English used in Namibia; which is British English. As a result, one would find learners using the American type of spelling as opposed to the British version. For instance: A learner would write the word ‘realise’ as ‘realize’.</p> <p>In addition, some learners even use the American version of words such as ‘cab for taxi’, ‘apartment for flat’ or ‘soccer for football’.</p>

As indicated in the table above, the learners sometimes write clumsily. This kind of writing occurs when a learner chooses too many words, inappropriate words or when they use them with incorrect sentence structures (Barton et al., 1998). Furthermore, this also occurs when a learner attempts to manage multiple ideas, particularly when introducing new ones or prioritising one over the other. The results above further indicate that the learners do not use homophones correctly. The findings evince that the learners have little awareness of when to use words like *‘than’* and *‘then’*, *‘where’* and *‘were’*, *‘its’* and *‘it’s’*.

Consequently, it was observed that although the Namibian system uses British English, the learners have little to no awareness of that information. Hence, learners constantly use the American version of English rather than the British one that Namibia uses. For example, *‘realise’* is commonly replaced with *‘realize’*. The British version of English generally uses ‘s’ to spell words such as *‘realise’* and *‘recognise’*.

It was also noted that learners commit errors of word choice by using the American versions of words such as in the examples provided in table 6 above: ‘cab’ for ‘taxi’, ‘apartment’ for ‘flat’, ‘soccer’ for ‘football’. Although these words are similar in terms of meaning, learners are supposed to use the British version of English as it is the version used in Namibia, and Namibian schools.

4.2.3.5 Errors of overgeneralisation

Overgeneralisation is considered as one of the types of errors that occurs in the process of language acquisition. Overgeneralisation of grammatical structures refers to the application of a regular grammatical rule in an irregular situation or the application of a grammatical rule where it does not apply. The current study observes that the learners overgeneralise grammar rules such as through applying suffixes used to form simple past tense /-ed/ to the stems of the irregular verbs.

Table 4.7: Errors of overgeneralisation

<i>Error type</i>	Respondents’ responses
Overgeneralisation	Learners like to overgeneralise the language rules. For example, the rule that requires adding -s or -es to the end of a word to form its plural.
	There are learners who add -ed to the stem of irregular verbs to form past forms. For instance, ‘I goed to the village’, ‘They speaked to me’ or ‘He bought a toy’ instead of ‘I went to the village’, ‘They spoke to me’ or ‘He bought a toy’. This means that learners overgeneralise the addition of suffix -ed to the stems of regular verbs when forming the simple past tense to stems of irregular verbs.

The evidence in Table 4.7 above demonstrates that the teachers observed that they often come across fossilised grammatical overgeneralisation errors such as in the first example: “Learners like to overgeneralise language rules”. To substantiate the observation, several examples were

presented. English nouns only have two forms: singular and plural. In the ordinary cases, one generates plural forms through the addition of an ‘-s’ or ‘-es’ at the end of some noun stems, which is also the singular form of the noun (Al-Jarf, 2022).

For example: Learners add ‘-s’ or ‘-es’ to nouns to make them plural even where it is wrong, especially when it comes to irregular plurals. This is an overgeneralisation of the morphological rule for plural nouns (Matiini, 2016), since irregular plurals are an exception to this rule. For example, the singular noun ‘mouse’ becomes ‘mice’ in its plural form. However, it is observed that some learners are either not aware of this change or they ignore it. Thus, they tend to add ‘-s’ to the end of the word, crating the word ‘mouses’, which then becomes an error. Another example is ‘foot’. ‘Foot’ is a singular noun and when they are more than one, they are ‘*feet*’. However, learners occasionally add ‘-s’ to the end of this word, forming the word ‘foots’ which is incorrect. Apart from adding ‘-s’ to the end of words, ‘-es’ is also added to irregular nouns resulting in errors. For example, ‘calfes’ for ‘calves’, ‘leafes’ for ‘leaves’ and so on.

The second example of such fossilisation is when: ‘Learners add ‘-ed’ to irregular verbs when they try to change irregular verbs into the past tense. For example: ‘*I goed to the village*’ instead of ‘*I went to the village*’, ‘*they speaked to me*’ for ‘*they spoke to me*’, or ‘*he buyed a toy*’ instead of ‘*he bought a toy*’. The incorrect application of this rule as demonstrated in the examples above resulted in a change in the intended meaning of the sentences. It is a common rule that ‘-ed’ is added at the end of words to form the past tense. However, this rule only applies to regular verbs. Irregular verbs on the other hand are an exception to this rule and they have their unique past tense forming rule. The incorrect application of these rules, as also confirmed by Al-Khresheh (2016) who observes that overgeneralisation happens when students incorrectly extend the application of a rule to contexts where it does not apply causes grammar errors, limits comprehension and leads to confusion. Therefore, it is critical that the rules are not overgeneralised, as they do not apply in all situations.

4.3 Error Analysis of learners’ essays

This study endeavoured to explore interlanguage fossilised errors within the written essays of ESL learners in a multilingual classroom at Karundu Secondary School. The EA of learners’ essays

sought to establish the possible existence of the fossilisation of errors at the syntactical and grammatical levels. After learners had written two essays on the topic “*The day I will never forget*”, at two varying times, several fossilised errors were identified. Table 4.8 indicates the overall number of fossilised errors that the learners committed in the two instances in which they wrote essays on the same topic.

Firstly, error fossilisation is examined here from a syntactical point of view, thereafter, the grammatical errors that the learners committed will be discussed. Both syntactical and grammatical fossilisation errors identified in the learners’ essays will be explained through Corder (1976)’s theory of Error Analysis. An EA through Corder (1976)’ theory of EA follows the following steps:

Step 1: Collection of a sample of learner language

Step 2: Identification of errors

Step 3: Description of errors

Step 4: Explanation of errors

Step 5: Evaluation of errors

4.3.1 Interlanguage fossilisation at the level of sentence in essays

Sentence construction is fundamentally a reflection of concord, which forms the foundation of English grammar. Literacy in English requires the ability to write properly. As a result, failing to follow the fundamental rules that govern proper English writing demonstrates a low level of English proficiency. Syntax is defined as “a system of rules and categories that underlies sentence formation in human language” (O’Grady, 1996, p. 181). Speakers of a language have the ability to combine words in novel ways, forming sentences that they have neither seen nor heard before. Despite this ability, not just any combination of words will generate a grammatically well-formed sentence. According to O’Grady (1996), it is a fundamental fact that words in all human languages can be grouped together into a relatively small number of classes which he called “syntactic categories”. O’Grady further adds that the classification of words into smaller groups

reflects various factors such as the type of meaning the word expresses, the type of affixes they take, as well as the type of structures in which they can occur.

4.3.2 Identification and analysis of syntactical errors

When both versions of the individual essays were analysed, several syntactical errors of spelling, SVA, punctuation, verb tense, word ordering, capitalisation, prepositions, articles, pronouns and sentence fragmentation amongst others were identified.

4.3.2.1 Errors of spelling

Learners make spelling errors either by using an incorrect letter, omitting a letter or adding a letter when it is not necessary to do so. The misspelling of words has an impact on the learners' academic performance because it creates inconsistencies and vagueness in their work (Al-Saudi, 2020). Table 4.8 below displays the errors of spelling that the learners committed, and which were identified in the essays.

Table 4.8: Syntactical errors of spelling

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Spelling</i>	1. ... and did not believe them telling us that he was ok because I knew...	1. ... and I did not believe when they told us that he was ok because I knew...
	2. It was my first time in the suraunding .	2. It was my first time in the surrounding.
	3. We hearded to our first period,	3. We headed to our first period.
	4. It was a 10 minuet walk hearding to the location.	4. It is a 10 minutes' walk to the location.

As demonstrated in Table 4.8, the first example: *and did not believe them telling us that he was ok becouse I knew*, shows that the learner misspelt the word 'because' by using an incorrect letter 'o' instead of using the correct letter which is 'a'. This indicates that learners confuse the spoken form of the word 'because' as per the phonetic transcription /bɪ'koz/. However, there is no letter 'o' in the word 'because'. Kapolo (2013) and Shaumana (2020) state that people often make spelling mistakes because they do not recognise the difference between how words are pronounced and how they are written. Moreover, Kapolo indicates that learners make spelling errors because they tend to spell words based on their sounds but still could not distinguish between spellings of homophones. These findings are consistent with those of the current study. In addition, Kapolo (2013) believes that learners make errors of spelling because they do not have the necessary skills of "fitting phonemes (sound) and graphemes (letters)" (p.54).

The second example: *It was my first time in the suraunding*. displays how the word 'surrounding' is misspelt by using an incorrect letter and by the further omission of another letter. The incorrect letter used is the letter 'a' after the letter 'r'. The appropriate letter to be used should be letter 'o'. In addition, the word was further misspelt due to the omission of letter 'r'. The word 'surrounding' has double 'r' in it. Therefore, the correct spelling of the word should be 'surrounding'. The third example: *'We hearded to our first period'*, shows how the learner misspelt the word by adding an 'r'. Therefore, the word should be spelt as 'headed'.

In essence, the results presented in table 4.8 above demonstrate that the learners make spelling errors because they omit or add letters, or because learners substitute incorrect letters for correct ones. The analysis notes that the cause of spelling errors was the learners' limited knowledge of the English vocabulary. Another possible reason was imagined to be carelessness and not proofreading written work. When the researcher compared the essays of each learner, the comparison revealed that the majority of learners are very careless with their writing. They write for as long as they write (Haimbodi & Woldemariam, 2019). This study believes that spelling errors were the most fossilised syntactical errors. The same was also observed by Hmouma

(2013), Kapolo (2013), Mungungu (2010), and Shen (2020). This signifies that spelling is quite problematic to the effective use of the English language.

4.3.2.2 Errors of concord (Subject Verb Agreement)

The verb is considered the central element of a sentence. Because of this, the verb has to agree grammatically with the subject it relates to. In addition, Vannestål and Lindquist (2007) submit that, the subject and verb are the two most significant items in a sentence. Thus, it is imperative for the subject and verb to always agree in number, be it in singular or plural forms. This study observes that learners have a problem with the SVA in their written work. Table 4.9 below indicates the examples of concord errors learners made.

Table 4.9: Syntactical of errors of concord

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Concord</i>	1. there is a lot of trees	1. There are a lot of trees.
	2. A certain women that I liked has die	2. A certain woman that I liked has died.
	3. it was for a men	3. it was for a man
	4. it was two room	4. it was two rooms

In the table above, example one '*there is a lot of tree*' indicates how the subject '*trees*' and the verb '*is*' do not agree in number. Again, as per the rule of concord, plural subject attracts plural verbs. The subject '*trees*' in the example provided in the table is plural, thus a plural verb '*are*' should be used with it. Therefore, the correct form of the sentence is '*There are a lot of trees.*'

Another example presented is '*A certain women that I liked had die*'. In the example given, the adjective 'a certain' which is singular, does not agree in number with the subject *women*, which is plural. The correct form of the phrase should be '*A certain woman*' because according to the basic rule of concord, singular subjects attract singular verbs. In addition, this sentence is

erroneous because the article ‘a’ and the subject ‘women’ do not agree in number. Thus, the need to use the appropriate ‘a’ with the correct noun ‘woman’ since only one woman died.

In example 3, article ‘a’ was used in relation to more than one man. However, according to the context in which the word ‘men’ is used, it refers to a man (one). It is therefore because of this that the sentence should be ‘it was for a man’ so that the sentence aligns with the rules of concord as indicated above. In addition, the sentence was changed to ‘it was for a man’ because according to the story, the sentence indicated that something belongs to ‘a man’. Similarly, this rule of concord was violated in example 4 ‘it was two room’. The numerical adjective ‘two’ does not agree with the noun ‘room’. The correct rendition of the sentence is ‘it was two rooms’ so that the number ‘two’ agrees with the plural noun ‘rooms’. Talosa and Maguddayao (2018) assert that syntactical errors include verb agreements. As observed by the researcher, syntactical errors occurred with more frequency compared to grammatical errors. These findings resonate with those of Aini et al. (2020) who also observe that learners make more syntactic fossilised errors compared to other types of errors, such as those of concord. This is because of first language transfer and overgeneralisation of TL rules, and this is exactly what was observed in this study.

4.3.2.3 Errors of punctuation

Punctuation errors occur either through the wrong usage of punctuation markers such as the full stop, comma etc., or in failing to make use of punctuation (Syed et al., 2020). This study established that learners often do not use punctuation appropriately in their written work. Table 4.10 below illustrates some of errors in punctuation identified.

Table 4.10: Syntactical errors of punctuation

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Punctuation</i>	1. Oh! Its the birthday girl screamed Anna, “Thanks” I replied.	1. Oh! It’s the birthday girl, screamed Anna. “Thanks,” I replied.
	2. Early that day around 08h30 I went to town	2. Earlier that day around 08h30, my

with my mom for shopping, when we came back my brother...	mom and I went to town for shopping. When we came back, my brother...
3. Wow what a day I had	3. Wow! What a day I had!
4. It was Friday the 13 th , It was dark cloudy day.	4. It was Friday the 13 th , and it was a dark and cloudy day. Or It was Friday the 13 th ; it was a dark, cloudy day'

Table 4.10 above illustrates the types of errors of punctuation that the learners made. From the given examples, it is observed, specifically in example 1, how the learner left out an apostrophe in the word 'its'. The omission of the apostrophe in the specified word changed the intended meaning of the word. The word 'its' as used signifies possession. Hence it is a possessive pronoun, which indicated ownership or belongingness. The sentence 'Its the birthday girl' can be translated as 'belonging the birthday girl' in terms of meaning. In addition, an apostrophe is imperative in the word 'its' since the learner was trying to write 'it's' which is a contracted or shortened form of 'it is' in this context. Therefore, the correct form would be 'it's' so that the sentence is grammatical.

In the same example, an exclamation is missing in the direct speech "Oh! It's the birthday girl!" screamed Anna.'. Every section of direct speech ends with a punctuation. Hence, an exclamation mark would be apt since we are told that this was a scream' as in 'Oh! It's the birthday girl!' screamed Anna. This is because, according to the rules of direct speech, an appropriate punctuation such as an exclamation mark or question mark should be used inside the quotation marks. In this case, an exclamation mark should have been used.

Example 2: "Early that day around 08h30 I went to town with my mom for shopping, when we came back my brother..." contains errors of punctuation, such as omission and wrong use of punctuation. Regarding omission of punctuation, a comma is missing after '08h30'. The English language rules of punctuation stipulates that a comma should be used after an introductory clause, phrase or after words that precedes the main clause. Apart from the errors of omission of a comma, it is also important to note that a comma was further wrongly used after the word 'shopping'. The reason is that a full stop should have been used instead, since the phrase "Early that day around 08h30 I went to town with my mom for shopping." carries a different idea as opposed to the phrase "when we came back my brother...". As a result, a full stop should have been placed at the end of the word 'shopping' to signal that an idea ends.

Example 3 'Wow what a day I had' contains errors of punctuation omission. An exclamation mark should have been added after 'Wow' to signal a pause and excitement, and as a result emphasising the exclamation. This pause is necessary as it signals taking a breath to underscore how intense one's day was. In addition, an exclamation mark should have been used at the end of the sentence to heighten the emotion, making it clear that it was no ordinary day. The use of the stated exclamation marks helps convey how one would naturally say it. Therefore, the sentence, in its correct form, should be: 'Wow! What a day I had!'.

The last example: *It was Friday the 13th, It was dark cloudy day* evinces the wrong use of a punctuation after the number '13' to join these independent clauses. Either a coordinating conjunction or a full stop was necessary in this case to join the two independent clauses. A coordinating conjunction to help create a compound sentence 'It was Friday the 13th, and it was a dark, cloudy day' or a full stop to two connect these two independent clauses that are closely related 'It was Friday the 13th. It was a dark, cloudy day'. This study establishes that errors of punctuation fossilisation of omission and wrong use were present in the learners' writing, an observation also reiterated by Oktaviani et al. (2022, p. 68). In addition, these findings partly agree with Al Tameemy and Daradkeh (2019) whose study notes that, punctuation errors outweigh all errors of writing. Despite the similarity in findings, in the current study, errors of punctuation do not outweigh all writing errors in learners' essays.

4.3.2.4 Errors of verb tense

Verb tense plays a vital role in presenting time in a narrative (Sanders & Van Krieken, 2018). The learners were asked to write an essay about an account that occurred in the past. Therefore, it was deemed important that the learners employ the appropriate verb tenses in their essays – the past tense. However, it was observed that learners made errors of verb tense in their essays which demonstrates that they do not know how to use the correct forms of verbs. Table 4.11 illustrates some of the errors of verb tense committed by the learners.

Table 4.11: Syntactical errors of verb tense

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Verb tense</i>	1. I told the girl that it's my first time in town.	1. I told the girl that it was my first time in town.
	2. I was the one having the money in my hands.	2. I was the one who had the money in my hands.
	3. I thought that am lost.	3. I thought that I was lost.
	4. We were also having different meat.	4. We also had different kinds of meat.

From the table above, the first sentence: '*I told the girl that it's my first time in town*' is erroneous because '*it's*' indicates the present tense. However, considering that learners were asked about a day that has already passed, the correct version of the sentence should be '*I told the girl that it was my first time in town*'. In example 2: ... '*I was the one having the money in my hands*'. In this example, the learner used the past continuous tense. The past continuous tense is used to talk about an event or action that began in the past and is still on going. However, in the context of the task requirement, this tense is wrong because it signals that there is an ongoing action. However, this does not fit well because holding money is a state and not an action in progress. Ultimately, the sentence should be '*I was the one who had the money in my hands*' to indicate that the action is completed, and it happened in the past. The verbs: '*was*' and '*had*' both indicate actions that have already happened, making them the right verbs to use in this situation.

Example 3 *'That I am lost'* is erroneous because the essay was to be written in the past, and as per the sentence, auxiliary verb *'am'* was used instead of *'was'* since the event happened in the past. In addition, there is a mixture of tenses; the past *'thought'* and present *'am'* which makes the sentence grammatically wrong. As a result, the correct version of the sentence is *'That I was lost'* as the tense is maintained. This consistency in the usage of tense is imperative since it helps the with the sentence flow, allowing sentences to flow logically and clearly, making the sentence comprehensible. Talosa and Maguddayao (2018) stress that verb tense errors are a type of syntactical fossilisation error that students make, and they result from the learners' reliance on the NL to help express their ideas.

4.3.2.5 Errors of word order

Word order errors occur when constituents of a sentence are not used in their correct order. Word order determines how different kinds of sentences are formed. The wrong word order will result in confusion, ambiguous sentences and incorrect meanings. In addition, incorrect word order affects the meaning of sentences.

Table 4.12: Syntactical errors of word order

Error Classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Word order</i>	1. I and Tashiya went...	1. Tashiya and I went...
	2. I have never imagined seeing myself on the top of stage,...	2. I have never imagined seeing myself on top of the stage
	3. I wasn't know where was the house...	3. I did not know where the house was

In example 1: *I and Tashiya went* is incorrect due to errors in word ordering. According to the English language rule of subject-object order as presented in (Wegerbauer, 2022), when listing people, it is appropriate to put oneself last as a sign of politeness. Therefore, the word order in the sentence should be *'Tashiya and I'*.

Sentence two: *'I have never imagined seeing myself on the top of stage'* is grammatically incorrect because of the error of word order. Words in the phrase *'on the top of stage'* are not in the correct order. The preposition 'on' should be followed by a noun phrase, not an adjective. When it comes word order in English, prepositions such as 'on' usually precede a noun phrase. Therefore, the preposition 'on' should be followed by a noun phrase as in *'on top of the stage'*. Thus, the sentence should be *'I have never imagined seeing myself on top of the stage'*.

The negative form of 'to know' is 'did not know' but if we look at the words in the third example, *'I wasn't know where was the house'*, they are not ordered correctly. The phrase *'I wasn't know'* was incorrectly used. The word was incorrectly spelled. The learner should have written the word as *'wasn't'*. However, even with the correct spelling, the chosen word was wrong because of the reason mentioned above. The word order in the subordinate clause *'where was the house'* is inappropriate. The correct word order is *'where the house was'*. The finding is consistent with that of Dissanayake and Dissanayake (2019) who demonstrate how word order or sentence structure fossilised errors were present in Sri Lankan undergraduate students' writings, and whose native language is Sinhala. Most students transferred the subject-object-verb (SOV) order of Sinhala into English. It is evident that they struggle with the differences between Sinhala and English structures. Consequently, they apply Sinhala sentence structures to English, leading to syntactic errors (Dissanayake & Dissanayake, 2019).

4.3.2.6 Errors of capitalisation

Errors of capitalisation occur when the writer either capitalises a letter that does not need to be capitalised or when the writer does not capitalise a letter that needs to be capitalised. Errors of capitalisation make it difficult for the reader to understand the writing with ease. In addition, these errors are ungrammatical and have an effect on a learner's performance.

Table 4.13: Syntactical errors of capitalisation

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
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Capitalisation

1. On a monday morning...	1. On a Monday morning...
2. I stayed In my room.../and It was not going through.	2. I stayed in my room.../ and it was not going through .
3. It was an early Winter Morning.	3. It was an early winter morning.
4. in conclusion, my scar reminds me of that day everyday'	4. In conclusion, my scar reminds me of that day every day.

As evident in table 4.13 above, the first example displays how the word 'monday' is erroneously written because of an oversight in capitalisation. The word '*monday*' is a proper noun. Proper nouns are specific names of person, place or thing (Caulfield, 2023). In this instance the word 'monday' is a day of the week. According to the English rules of capitalisation, the first letter of proper nouns should be capitalised, no matter where they are located in a sentence. Therefore, the word should have been written as '*Monday*'. Writing the proper noun '*Monday*' beginning with a small letter violates the rules of the language resulting in an error of capitalisation.

The pronoun 'I' is always capital, and because of this, example 3: '*I stayed In my room... and It was not going through*' indicates a confusion pertaining to this rule. The example presented shows how the word '*In*' was begun with capital '*I*'. Similarly, in the same phrase, the word '*It*' was also begun with a capital letter. These two words are not proper nouns and do not need to begin with a capital letter, and they are not at the beginning of a sentence either. These words are in the middle of sentence therefore the first letter should not be capitalised. As a result, the sentence should be '*I stayed in my room.../ and it was not going through*'.

In sentence 3, '*It was an early Winter Morning.*' errors of capitalisation are visible. The words 'Winter' and 'Morning' were not supposed to be capitalised since they are not proper nouns and they

are not the first words of the sentence. Therefore, the sentence should be *'It was an early winter morning'* for it to be grammatical. Example four *'in conclusion, my scar reminds me of that day everyday'* is incorrect because according to English rules of capitalisation (Stankovic, 2023), the first word of every sentence should always begin with a capital letter. However, in the example give, the first word *'in'* is not capitalised, which makes the sentence erroneous. Thus, the sentence should be *'In conclusion, my scar reminds me of that day everyday'*.

This study observes that capitalisation, which is a punctuation error occurs as a result of an insufficiency in understanding how capitalisation works. This aligns with Maruma's (2017) claim that punctuation errors result from partial learning of the TL and difficulties in distinguishing between spoken and written language. This was also noted in Salomo (2023), who submits from their study that Grade 2 teachers did not effectively teach punctuation marks and their use, which resulted in the learners lacking knowledge on how to effectively use punctuation marks. Therefore, teachers should effectively teach punctuation marks and their use to help prevent errors of punctuation.

4.3.2.7 Errors of word choice

A variety of words and phrases are commonly confused and misused in writing. Misusing them can change the meaning of the sentence or basically reveal negligence by the writer. Errors of word choice stem from the undeniable fact that English has words that sound the same (homophones), or words that are written the same (homonyms) but have different meanings.

Table 14: Syntactical errors of word choice

Error classification	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Word choice</i>	1. I thinks thinks are very cheap cause I bout so many thinks...	1. I bought so many things because I thought things were very cheap.

2. ...he told me not to cause we will be live for town.	2. He told me not to because we will be leaving for town.
3. ...I dont know were our home is...	3. I didn't know where our home was...
4. Its was a beautiful girl	4. It was a beautiful girl
5. I can't just not take it out of my brain	5. I couldn't just take it out of my mind.

The first example: *'I thinks thinks are very cheap cause I bout so many thinks'* shows how the word *'think'* is erroneously used in place of the word *'things'*. This is because, the error was committed over again. The sentence in its whole is grammatically incorrect. The learner added inflection /-s/ to the first *'think'* to make it *'thinks'* which is wrong because the verb *'think'* should not have been pluralised because the subject of the sentence is *'I'* referring to one person, therefore the verb *'think'* should have been used as per verb conjugation (Citation machine, 2021). Not only that the word was pluralised, but also that the word used was wrong in relation to the time that the event was supposed to have happened. The learner was asked to write an essay narrating about the day they will never forget. This essay was supposed to be an account of an event that had already happened, thus it should have been written in the past tense.

In addition, the second *'think'* in the sentence is the wrong word. The appropriate word in the given context would be *'things'*. Furthermore, the sentence is in the present tense as demonstrated by words such as *'thinks'* and auxiliary verb *'are'*. In essence, the sentence should be *'I bought so many things because I thought things were very cheap'*. In addition, both the first and second examples illustrate how the learner has fossilised the use of the word *'cause'* in place of *'because'*. This is because many times learners feel these two words are similar in terms of meaning, which is not the case. The word *'cause'* refers to the underlying factor or root of a

problem or situation. The word *'because'* on the other hand is used to explain why something is the case.

In reference to sentence 3 *'I dont know were our home is'*, errors of word choice are apparent. Wrong words *'were'* and *'is'* were used. These words are incorrect because the word *'were'* used in the example is the past tense of *'be'*. In the given context, it is evident that the learner wanted to use the conjunction *'where'* to refer to a place or position of their house. Similarly, given that the story should have been written in the past tense, since it happened in the past, an incorrect word *'is'* was also utilised.

Example 4, *'Its was a beautiful girl'*, is ungrammatical because a wrong possessive pronoun *'its'* was used instead of the correct one *'It'* to identify the girl in question. However, in reference to the context, *'It'* should have been used as it refers to the beautiful girl being spoken about. Therefore, the correct sentence should be *'It was a beautiful girl'*.

4.3.2.8 Errors of pronouns

Errors of pronouns occur when a learner uses a wrong pronoun, using a pronoun without a noun, using the wrong case of a pronoun. Using pronouns that do not agree with their antecedents. This is often reflected in instances in which the pronoun does not agree in number with the noun to which it refers, which results in pronoun errors.

Table 4.15: Syntactical errors of pronouns

<i>Error classification</i>	<i>Error identification</i>	<i>Error correction</i>
<i>Pronouns</i>	1. I love them because their my friends	1. I love them because they are my friends.
	2. ... "I noticed that they were flowers on the floor."	2. ..."I noticed that there were flowers on the floor."
	3. It was to late the...	3. It was too late there.
	4. I realised that am lost...	4. I realised that I was lost...

As demonstrated in the table above, in sentence 1: *'I love them because their my friends'*, pronoun *'their'* is not the right pronoun to use in this case. Pronoun *'their'* is a possessive pronoun, which shows that something belongs to someone else. However, the context dictates that it should be *'they are'* and not *'their'* because the writer is referring to their friends, and stating that they love them. In addition, the pronoun *'they'* is appropriate in this context because it being a personal pronoun it is substituting the specific names of these friends. Pronoun *'they'* alone is not complete in the sentence, a plural verb *'are'* needs to be used so that the subject and the verb agree. Thus, the sentence should be *'I love them because they are my friends'*.

Another case of pronoun errors is shown in example 2 in the table above: *'I have noticed that they were flowers on the floor.'* This sentence is incorrect due to a wrong pronoun *'they'* used. *'They'* is a subject pronoun, used to refer to a group of people or things. However, in the given example, there is no reference to flowers but rather a state of being (flowers being on the floor). Therefore, the sentence should be *'I have noticed that there were flowers on the floor'* to correctly convey the idea that the flowers were on the floor.

In the third example: *'It was to late the...'*, the learners used preposition *'to'* instead of adverb *'too'*, to indicate the degree of how *'late'* it was at that specified time. In addition, article *'the'* was employed instead of adverb *'there'* which makes the sentence ungrammatical. The adverb *'there'* should have been used in place of the pronoun *they*. This is because adverb *'there'* specifies the location where it was *'too late'*.

Lastly, example 4: *'I realised that am lost'* is erroneous because the subject is missing in the subordinate clause. Therefore, it is imperative that the pronoun *'I'* is used before the auxiliary verb *'am'* to give clarity on who was lost. As a result, the sentence should be *'I realised that I was lost'*.

4.3.2.9 Errors of fragmentation

A simple sentence has a subject (doer of the action/under goer of a state) and a verb (the action or state of occurrence or being). In addition, a simple sentence should make up a complete

thought. When either the subject or verb or sometimes both the subject and the verb are missing, or there is no complete thought, whatever is written fails to qualify to be called a sentence, but it becomes a sentence-fragment.

Table 4.16: Syntactical errors of fragmentation

<i>Error classification</i>	Error identification	Error correction
<i>Fragmentation</i>	1. Turned my back and saw my mom.	1. I turned my back and saw my mom.
	2. Never thought it was gonna happen to me at this age...	2. I never thought it would happen to me at this age...
	3. "As we got to spure"	3. As we got to Spar...
	4. And I was sleeping outside so that I can get some fresh air, because it was very much hot than ever before	4. I slept outside so that I could get some fresh air since it was hotter than ever before.
	5. And finally on my way to school.	5. Finally, I was on my way to school.

In the first example presented in table 4.16 above '*Turned my back and saw my mom*', an error of fragmentation is evident because the subject is missing in the sentence fragment, making it incomplete and erroneous. Therefore, to make it complete, the subject '*I*' should be inserted to clarify who turned their back, and thus, the correct version of the sentence should be '*I turned my back and saw my mom*'.

Similarly, in example two: '*Never thought it was gonna happen to me at this age*', a subject is also omitted just like in the first example. An informal/slang word '*gonna*' was also incorporated in the sentence fragment. This is deemed inappropriate because even though the essay required

learners to write an account of the day they will never forget; the essay was written in a formal setting, a school, for formal reasons (this thesis).

In example 3, *'As we got to spure'*, there is an error in fragmentation because the idea presented is not clear, making it difficult to comprehend. One would ask what happened when they got to 'spure'. In sentence four *'And I was sleeping outside so that I can get some fresh air, because it was very much hot than ever before'* ungrammatical because there is a mixture of verb tenses which causes misunderstanding.

As a result, the grammatical version of the sentence would be *'I slept outside so that I could get some fresh air since it was hotter than ever before'*. 'Could' instead of 'can' so that the verb matches the tense used in *'I slept'*. Moreover, 'hotter than ever before' is clearer and more concise as opposed to 'very much hot than ever before' as it is redundant.

The final example provided in table 4.16, *'And finally on my way to school'* is a fragment since it lacks a subject and a verb to express a complete thought. Therefore, the sentence in its grammatical form should be: *Finally, I was on my way to school.* The sentence now has a subject 'I' and a verb 'was.'

4.5. An Error Analysis of grammatical fossilisation

After the essays were analysed, a variety of grammar fossilised errors were observed. The grammatical fossilised errors observed included omission, coherence and cohesion, spelling, prepositions, and word order.

4.5.1 Errors of omission

Even though learners were given corrective feedback on the grammatical errors they had committed in the first essay, they still committed the same errors of omission in the second attempt. Table 4.17 below shows the grammatical errors of omission learners have fossilised.

Table 4.17: Grammatical errors of omission

Error Classification	Error fossilised	Error correction
<i>Omission</i>	1. "... that am lost"	1. ...that <i>I</i> was lost
	2. "...that time I was at farm with my parents".	2. I was at the farm with my parents that time.
	3. 'On the top of stage'	3. On top of the stage
	4. "I realise that the house is empty and just me in it".	4. I realised that the house was empty and it was just me in it.

From table 4.17 above, example 1 '*...that am lost*' indicates an error of omission as pronoun '*I*' is missing before the word '*am*'. In spoken English one would speak like '*I'm lost*'. Thus, some learners continue to confuse '*I'm lost*' which is a shorter form of '*I am lost*' with '*am lost*' which lacks a subject. Therefore, the correct sentence should be '*that I was lost*' with subject '*I*' before the verb '*was*' and not '*am*' since the story being told happened in the past. If we look at example 2, '*...that time I was at farm with my parents*', the article '*the*' was left out after preposition '*at*'. The inclusion of article '*the*' at the specified position is significant as it implies that this person was not just at any farm, but at a specific one, in this case, the family farm. Thus, the sentence should be '*I was at the farm with my parents that time*'.

Example 3: '*I went back into my room deciding to sleep the whole day*' is faulty because there are two ideas in the same sentence. These should be written separately. This separation can be brought forth by using the conjunction '*and*'. Therefore, the sentence should be '*I went back into*

my room and decided to sleep the whole day'. In the last example, *'I realise that the house is empty and just me in it'* is erroneous because there is an omission of conjunctions 'and' to join the two clauses. Apart from the missing conjunction, the verb tense should also be changed to past tense since the event happened in the past. Thus, the sentence should be *'I realised that the house was empty and that it was just me in it'*. The findings of this study align with Eng et al. (2020) who found that learners commit numerous grammatical errors including omission.

4.5.2 Errors of cohesion and coherence

It has been observed that some learners fossilise errors of coherence and cohesion. Coherence, in simpler terms, deals with how a paragraph is organised and how clear it is. Cohesion, on the other hand, deals with how ideas are connected within a paragraph. In addition, Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that a text is regarded as good if there is a presence of two key qualities: cohesion and coherence. The table below presents the errors of cohesion and coherence in the learners' writing.

Table 4.18: Grammatical errors of cohesion and coherence

<i>Error type</i>		<i>Error fossilised</i>	<i>Error correction</i>
<i>Coherence and cohesion</i>		1. I can't just not take it out of my brain.	1. I couldn't just take it out of my mind.
		2. She was an amazing person I ever found.	2. She was the most amazing person I have ever met.
		3. ...which was a very very bad feeling.	3. ...which was a very bad feeling

From the table, sentence one, *'I can't just not take it out of my brain'* is grammatically incorrect because the sentence lacks cohesion due to the usage of double negative forms and wrong choice of words. 'Can't' and 'not' used in sentence one are both negative forms, and this is incorrect as

it violates the language rule. A sentence can only have double past tenses if the verb tenses are used in different clauses for example, *'I walked to the shop and bought bread'*.

In sentence two, *'She was an amazing person I ever found'* is erroneous because of two things; the verb tense used and the structure of the second clause. The verb tense in *'I ever found'* is simple past tense which implies that the action was completed in the past. However, the word *'ever'* proposes a broader time frame, including all of the speaker's past experiences. Similarly, *'She was an amazing person'* is also in the simple past tense. This implies that the speaker is referring to a specific time in the past when the speaker first encountered this person and formed this opinion. However, there is a mismatch because the two clauses refer to different time frames, but they are expressed using inconsistent tenses which creates confusion. Therefore, the sentence should be *'She was the most amazing person I have ever met'* as this clearly conveys the intended meaning and prevents the tense mismatch.

Similar to the findings of this study, Eng et al. (2020) observes that learners fossilised errors of coherence and cohesion. Ellis (2008), Brown (2007), and Hyland (2004) also note that learners commit errors of cohesion and coherence due to factors such as developmental issues and the lack of practice of the systems of the TL that they are trying to learn. These findings are similar to what was highlighted by the English teachers at the school, who observed that learners lack adequate and appropriate vocabulary, and this affects how they write. For example, if a learner has limited vocabulary, they may struggle to use appropriate transitional words and phrases, which are essential for cohesion. Without these, their writing can seem incoherent and hard to comprehend. In addition, proficiency in grammar and syntax is crucial for coherence. Thus, learners who are still mastering these aspects of the language may produce sentences that are grammatically correct but lack logical connections, leading to coherence problems.

4.5.3 Errors of spelling

It has been observed that some learners make spelling errors, and these seems to be fossilised. This ultimately leads to erroneous writing, which has a negative effect on the academic performance of the learners. Table 4.19 below presents the types of fossilised spelling errors identified within the learners' writing.

Table 4.19: Grammatical errors of spelling

<i>Error classification</i>	<i>Error fossilised</i>	<i>Error correction</i>
<i>Spelling</i>	1. vist/visted	visit/visited
	2. beutiful	beautiful
	3. hugged	hugged
	4. droped	Dropped
	5. wonderfull	Wonderful
	6. Weird	Weird
	7. A lot	A lot

The first example shows how the learners misspell the words ‘*visit*’ and ‘*visited*’ as ‘*vist*’ and ‘*visted*’, respectively. The learner omitted the letter ‘*i*’ in both instances. In the second example: ‘*beutiful*’ is also misspelt. Most of the learners misspell the word ‘*beautiful*’ by omitting the letter ‘*a*’ before the vowel ‘*u*’ before consonant ‘*t*’. The third example ‘*huged*’ also shows erroneous spelling. The word ‘*hugged*’ follows the spelling rule of doubling the last consonant when changing the word from its base form to its past tense. The same spelling rule is violated in example four: ‘*droped*’ which is supposed to be spelt as ‘*dropped*’ with double consonant /-p/. This error is caused by either the lack of knowledge that these words in examples three and four are one syllable words that ends with a single vowel before a single consonant. The rule of doubling the consonant in cases like this means that when adding the suffix *-ed* to a one syllable verb that ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, you double the final consonant. Example five, ‘*wonderfull*’ too is incorrectly spelled because the learner doubled the last consonant. This indicates that the rule of doubling the last consonant is overgeneralised. Words like ‘*wonderful*’ and any other word that ends in suffix *-ful* ends with a single consonant because the rules of standard English dictates so. In addition, suffix *-ful* is added to nouns to form adjectives that describe a quality or characteristic. In the case of ‘*wonderful*’, the noun *wonder* is combined with the suffix *-ful* to create an adjective that means ‘inspiring delight, pleasure, or admiration; extremely good; marvelous’. Therefore, the word ‘*wonderfull*’ as in example 5 is

incorrectly spelled and does not adhere to the established English rules of spelling. Misspellings can negatively impact the reader's perception of the writer's intelligence, education, and attention to detail. This is especially true in formal contexts such as academic writing. Thus, it is imperative that one maintains correct spelling of words.

As demonstrated in example 6 on the table, the word 'weird' is misspelled as 'wierd'. The misspelling of the word is an overgeneralisation of the spelling rule 'i before e, except after c'. However, the word weird is an exception to this rule. In the last example provided in the table, the word 'alot' is written as one word which makes the spelling incorrect. The words 'a lot' when spoken, sound like one word. However, the word phrase is made up of two words; the article *a* and the noun *lot* hence the spelling. In relation to findings of (Hmouma, 2014; Shen, 2020), this study also notes that learners mostly evince fossilised errors of spelling. The reasons why learners fossilise spelling errors is because they lack knowledge about the correct spelling for a particular word, they overgeneralise the rules of spelling, they get confused about how to use a word, due to NL influence since the two languages have different systems and rules regards spelling, and because English has a vast number of similar words, either in terms of meaning or spelling, which cause confusion when the learners write.

4.5.4 Errors of preposition

Errors of preposition occur when a learner uses wrong prepositions. In addition, these types of errors occur when prepositions are either used in a context in which it is not needed or due to failure to use a preposition where it is obligatory. Table 4.20 below presents errors of prepositions learners made in their essays.

Table 4.20: Grammatical errors of preposition

Error classification	Error fossilised	Error correction
<i>Prepositions</i>	1. ...went at Spar... 2. I was in my way there...	1. ...went to Spar... 2. I was on my way there...

3. I was called in the office...	3. I was called to the office...
4. After I while my parents told me to go in my room.	4. After a while, my parents told me to go to my room.

As indicated in table 4.20 in example one, '*went at Spar*' an incorrect preposition '*at*' was used. The preposition '*at*' is used to indicate a specific location where someone or something is. Preposition '*to*' would be the most suitable one in the given context as it shows movement towards a specific destination or place. In this case to '*Spar*', a shop in town. In sentence two, an incorrect preposition '*in*' was employed. This is because preposition '*in*' denotes being within or enclosed by something, which is not the case here. Thus, the preposition is inappropriate since '*on my way*' implies travelling along a path. Therefore, the correct preposition to use should be '*on*'. This is because the learner intends to show that he was progressing along a route toward a destination. In sentence three '*I was called in the office*' contains a preposition error as an incorrect preposition '*in*' was used. This preposition is incorrect because the phrase '*called in the office*' suggests that the act of calling happened inside the office, which is not the intended meaning.

Furthermore, the preposition '*to*' (a directional preposition) should be used when someone or something is being directed to a place while the preposition '*in*' (a locative preposition). Therefore, the correct preposition to use should be '*to*' because it shows that the individual was directed or summoned to the office to be reprimanded for the offence committed as narrated in the essay. As a result, the sentence should then be '*I was called to the office*'. In example 4, '*after a while, my parents told me to go in my room*' is also erroneous because the locative preposition '*in*' used does not befit the given context due to similar reasons given for example three. The correct sentence should thus be '*after a while, my parents told me to go to my room*'. Shen (2020) studies fossilisation and observes that 63% of students continuously produce preposition errors. However, in contrast to this, the current study observes that the learners committed more errors

of spelling, which signals that it is more problematic, and that preposition fossilisation errors were not permanent. Albelihi and Al-Ahdal (2024) support the findings of this study as they also opine that preposition fossilisation errors in the academic writing of Saudi EFL undergraduate students declined with time. This could mean the preposition errors made were not permanent errors but mere mistakes.

4.5.5 Errors of word order

English is highly reliant on word order to convey meaning. The standard word order of sentences in English is Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). While the SVO word order is the most common, there are other word orders in the English language such as the subject-verb-adverbial phrase, subject-verb-indirect object-direct object, subject-verb- subject complement, just to mention a few. Despite these stipulated word orders, learners still use incorrect word orders when they write. Table 4.21 below presents errors of word order learners made.

Table 4.21: Grammatical errors of word order

Error classification	Error fossilised	Error correction
<i>Word order</i>	1. 'me and my family'	1. My family and I
	2. 'I was expecting my family to wish for me happy birthday.'	2. I was expecting my family to wish me a happy birthday.
	3. 'I wasn't know where was the house.'	3. I didn't know where the house was.

Learners committed errors of word order as illustrated in the examples appearing in the table above. The first example: '*me and my family*' is incorrect in terms of word order because of the standard English rules that surrounds pronoun order and politeness. It is also a basic norm in the English to put others before you hence the order; '*my family and I*'.

Words in sentence two, '*I was expecting my family to wish for me happy birthday*' are not properly arranged. The phrase '*to wish for me happy birthday*' is incorrectly ordered. For

example, *'to wish for me'* is redundant. This is because when one wishes someone something, one is directly wishing them and not wishing 'for' them. Also, the phrase *'a happy birthday'* is the right wording because it is used as a single unit to express the wish for someone to have a joyful birthday. The correct sentence should therefore be *'I was expecting my family to wish me a happy birthday'*.

In sentence three *'I wasn't know where was the house'*, an incorrect verb form 'wasn't' was employed. To indicate past tense negation with the verb 'to know', the auxiliary verb *'didn't'* is used. In addition, wrong word order for the subordinate clause *'where was the house'* was used. Thus, for the clause to be comprehensible it should be 'where the house was'. In essence, the sentence should be *'I didn't know where the house was'*. In a related study, it was observed that students have fossilised the use of incorrect word order (Aini et al., 2020). Thus, the findings of the that study agree with the findings of the current study.

4.6 Discussions

An EA of learners' essays was conducted based on two of the three objectives of the study: 1) to analyse interlanguage fossilisation at the level of sentences in the essays of high school learners and 2) to examine grammatical interlanguage fossilisation in the essays of high school learners.

4.6.1 Syntactical interlanguage fossilised errors in essays

Syntax, a branch of linguistics, focuses on the study of sentence structures and formation. It explains the arrangement of words and phrases to create coherent sentences. This field examines the principles and processes involved in the construction sentences in specific languages. According to Noam Chomsky (1971), the aim of syntactic investigation in a given language is to develop a grammar that can be seen as a mechanism for generating sentences in the language being analysed. Therefore, a syntactic error occurs when the syntax or grammar rules of a language are violated. Ramlan (1983) explains that syntax is a branch of linguistics that discusses discourse, sentences, clauses, and phrases.

This study established that the learners evince fossilised spelling errors in their interlanguage. Spelling errors result from using the incorrect letters as in *'becouse'*, or by omission of letters

such as in 'suraunding'. Several studies have attributed spelling errors to the lack of knowledge about homophones (Kapolo, 2013; Shaumana, 2020). In addition, this study notes that the learners habitually make errors of spelling because they substitute incorrect letters for correct ones, which process is also linked to limited vocabulary. These findings are consistent with those of Mungungu (2010), Hmouma (2013), Kapolo (2013), Haludilu and Woldemariam (2019), and Shen (2020) who claim that errors of spelling occur due to omission, addition or exchange of letters - and these mostly result from the interference from ones' L1.

With regard to concord, the subject and the verb which are key components of a sentence, must always agree in number (be it singular or plural) to ensure that sentences are grammatical and are clear to understand. This study notes that the learners make fossilised concord errors as indicated in table 4.9 in this chapter. The errors of concord are fossilised because of the learners' overgeneralisation of TL rules (Aini et al.,2020), as well as because of developmental issues, which reflect that the learner has not yet internalised the rules of concord (Mensah, 2024). Therefore, it is imperative that the subject and its verb agree in number to eradicate or mitigated concord error fossilisation.

This study also established that punctuation fossilisation errors were present in the learners' writings. Punctuation marks such as apostrophe, comma and full stop were evidently incorrectly used or omitted. The findings of this study are in sync with Oktaviani et al. (2022), who conclude that tenth grade students at MAN 2 Lubuklinggau frequently made errors of punctuation omission. The frequency of occurrence of this, signals that correct punctuation use is a challenge in most students' writing, which in essence could mean they are fossilised. These observations suggest that learners probably do not have the knowledge on how to use punctuation marks correctly, or that they are careless about what and how punctuation marks should be employed in formal writing.

Based on the findings of this study, verb tense errors were also identified as fossilised. The study established that these errors are attributed to mother tongue influence and developmental issues. In agreement with these findings is Kinabalu and Penampang (2016) who submit that syntactical errors are often a result of mother tongue interference and developmental errors,

amongst other causes. The current study also notes that syntactical errors such as word choice and verb tense are probable because of lack of vocabulary. From the researcher's observation, learners do not like to read. Lack of reading inhibits adequate vocabulary development and promotes failure to attain better proficiency in English. In addition, there is a reading period in Namibian public schools, however the researcher observes that the reading period is not used for as planned. Teachers use the period to teach instead of using it for reading for pleasure as primarily for it.

This aligns with previous research by Aini et al. (2020), who explains that one of the causes of syntactic error fossilisation is incorrect tense usage. Similarly, Talosa and Maguddayao (2018) also observe the same for Indonesian students, who find it challenging to use tenses because such tenses do not exist in their mother tongue. Therefore, these students go through confusion when they attempt to use verb tenses in the TL, English. The subjects of this study all speak Bantu languages as their L1, and according to several studies (Gibson, 2019; Shatepa, 2020; Stell, 2023) Bantu languages such as Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Khoekhoegowab use diverse morphological markers and auxiliary forms to show tense, all of which are different systems from that of the English language.

Another finding worth mentioning is that word order, capitalisation, word choice, pronouns, and sentence fragmentation were also observed errors within the learners' writings. Regarding word order, based on the researchers' observation from EA, the study established that learners failed immensely to adopt the correct word order rules such as placement of noun-preposition, word order in subordinate clause, and that of politeness marking when listing subjects. With regards to capitalisation, capital letters were either not used where they were supposed to be, or they were used where they were not supposed to be used. Errors of this nature result in confusion and inhibit clarity. These errors were found to have occurred because learners ignore the rules of capitalisation and also due to the influence from SMS language, where they either capitalise all words or do not capitalise the first letter of proper noun or at the beginning of sentences. Kapolo (2013) and Farrah et al. (2016) support these findings as they conclude that capitalisation was one of the most frequent errors they observed.

In addition, it was also established that limited vocabulary, the lack of homophone knowledge and failure to distinguish between classes of words resulted in word choice fossilisation errors. Pronouns were also found to be a challenge, as learners constantly demonstrated a lack of knowledge on the difference between the pronoun 'I' and letter 'i'. Confusion with the two was observed in several instances, and instead of only capitalising the first-person pronoun 'I', learners capitalised almost every letter 'i' despite having been taught to not do so. Another syntactical fossilisation error that was observed in the learners' IL was sentence fragmentation. A sentence has a subject and a verb. However, a fragment lacks either a subject or verb resulting in ungrammatical and incomplete structures. This study observes that learners in many instances leave out subjects for example, *'Turned my back, and saw my mom'* in table 4.16 above. One could hardly tell who did what in this example. Errors of this kind confuses readers (Aini et al., 2020; Maruma, 2017; Salome, 2023).

4.6.2 Grammatical interlanguage fossilisation in essays

Grammar is defined as the functional command of sentence structure that enables us to comprehend and produce language (Freeman & Freeman, 2004). According to Weaver (1996), grammar entails the rhetorical effective use of syntactical features. Grammatical errors are common in the learners' writings and hinders effective communication to a certain degree. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that they are studied to establish the most problematic grammar errors and establish preventative measures to help address these problems.

This study observed omission fossilisation errors of pronoun, auxiliary verbs, article, and conjunction 'and'. This study notes that the personal pronoun 'I' was omitted in the learners' writing as demonstrated by the examples in table 4.17 in this chapter. In support of this finding is Ling et al. (2020), whose study concludes that the omission of subjects was a problem in international Chinese ESL students, because they showed a habit of translating from their L1 when writing in English. This study however found that learners omit the subject pronoun 'I' due to carelessness.

Regarding copula deletion, it was observed that learners write sentences without the auxiliary verbs. When this happens, it becomes difficult for one to recognise the number as well tense in

reference. Gulö and Rahmawelly, (2019) agree with the findings of this study as they too also found that omission of grammatical items causes grammatical errors in writing. Another finding of this study was that the article 'the' was mostly omitted. When the definite article 'the' is left out, it makes it challenging for one to understand definiteness in TL and apply it, especially if there is no definite article in ones' L1. In addition, errors of the coordinating conjunction '*and*' was also habitually made. Learners evinced that they lack the skills to use coordinating conjunction '*and*' where necessary to present coordinating idea as it was omitted.

Cohesion and coherence errors were also produced largely because of the use of double negative forms, in violation of the rules that a grammatical sentence should only have one past tense form. Moreover, this study established that spelling fossilisation errors occurred. Errors of spelling presented in the form of letter omission, doubling of consonant when not necessary and not doubling consonant when they are required. The word '*beautiful*' was for example spelled as '*beutiful*' with vowel 'a' missing. In addition, the spelling rule of doubling the last consonant when changing a word from its base form to its past tense was constantly violated as demonstrated in Table 4.19 in this chapter.

This study attributes this error to the lack of knowledge, that when there is a one syllable word that ends with a single vowel before a single consonant, the last consonant is doubled when the word is changed to the past tense. The latter rule is also applied when it not necessary. For example, the study established that when there are words like 'wonderful' with three syllables, the last consonant is not doubled. Example five given in table 4.19 shows that the rule of doubling consonants when a monosyllabic word ends with a single vowel, then a single consonant is overgeneralised.

It is also important to discuss that this study found that learners misspelled the word '*weird*' by writing it as '*wierd*'. This is clearly a misinterpretation of the spelling rule 'i before e, except after c. The word 'weird' is however an exception to this rule. Lastly, the study found that the error of misspelling 'a lot' is fossilised. When 'a lot' is spoken it sounds as one word. However, they are two words; article 'a' and noun 'lot'. In alignment with the findings of this study is (Hmouma, 2014; Shen, 2020; Maqsudah et al., 2022) who found that spelling errors were the mostly errors

committed. This study, too, established that spelling errors were the common IL fossilised errors in learners' written pieces.

This study further observes that directional and locative preposition errors were fossilised. Learners lack the knowledge on when to use either a directional or locative preposition, as a result this yields errors and inhibits writing proficiency, and performance thereafter. Shen, (2020) observed that 63% of the errors encountered were of prepositions. This observation signals that the use of prepositions is an obstacle to the effective learning of the English language. Another noteworthy observation was of wrong word order errors. Table 4.21 illustrates how the practice of pronoun order and politeness was not used well, in addition, word order in subordinate clauses was also observed.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter presented data from FGDs which sought to answer the objectives of the study. The root causes of lexical fossilisation in learners' writing were identified as including the lack of appropriate feedback, ignoring of feedback given, lack of interest in learning correct language rules, ineffective early stages of language learning, mother tongue influence as well as the mispronunciation of words from teachers. Apart from exploring the causes lexical fossilisation, the FGD also examined the types of syntactical and grammatical errors that the learners fossilised. The study also presented an analysis of syntactical and grammatical errors fossilised in learners' essays as established through an EA undertaken of them.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the objectives of the study that guide the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter furthermore draws conclusions and suggest some recommendations with regards to the study findings, and finally suggestions for further research are provided.

5.2 Objectives of the study

This study was guided by the following objectives. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in conjunction with these objectives

- 5.2.1 investigate the root causes of interlanguage lexical fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual high school classroom;
- 5.2.2 analyse interlanguage fossilisation at the level of sentences at Karundu secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia; and
- 5.2.3 examine grammatical interlanguage fossilisation in the high school learners' essays at Karundu secondary school in the Otjozondjupa Region of Namibia.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Lexical errors

Lexis is important in all aspects of literacy learning, and words are essential for constructing meaning from texts. Furthermore, a large vocabulary improves a student's ability to express themselves when speaking and writing. Lexis is also important because it forms the foundation of the four language skills. English teachers responded to a question that sought to establish the causes of lexical interlanguage fossilisation. This study identifies several factors contributing to lexical interlanguage fossilisation, including inadequate feedback, disregard for corrective feedback, ignorance of language rules, overgeneralisation, limited early exposure to the target language, mother tongue influence, and teacher mispronunciation.

According to the English teachers, mispronunciation of words, mother tongue influence, overgeneralisation of the TL rules, lack of appropriate feedback and lack of interest to learn

correct language rules as the most contributing factors to lexical errors. This study concludes that the teaching and learning strategies, interference from NL, lack of motivation to learn, and overgeneralisation of TL rules as key contributing factors to lexical interlanguage fossilisation amongst the learners. These findings concur with studies done by several scholars (Chen, 2020; Denizer, 2017; Kasap & Emamvirdi, 2020; Mahero, 2014, Mubia et al., 2014; Selinker, 1972; Wei, 2008) who found factors such as overgeneralisation of TL rules, interference of mother tongue, lack of motivation, teaching and learning strategies to be the major contributing factors to lexical fossilisation.

5.3.2 Syntactical errors

English teachers at the school were asked to provide examples of the errors of syntax that they come across more often, despite having provided learners with corrective feedback for the errors. The English teachers revealed that errors of spelling, verb tense, word choice, the use of punctuation, conjunctions, misinterpretation of language TL rules/overgeneralisation of language rules, the use of proper nouns, SVA and articles as syntactical errors they encounter in the learners' written work. The teachers also explained that amongst the types of errors mentioned above, they always come across syntactical errors of spelling, articles, concord, word choice, punctuation, proper nouns, verb tense and overgeneralisation of TL rules. This study's conclusions here are in agreement with other scholars (Aini et al., 2020; Hmouma, 2014; Maqsudah et al., 2022; Tajeddin et al., 2017) who found that learners overgeneralise TL rules, use incorrect verb tenses, and occasionally produce errors of syntax such as word choice, articles, agreement, personal pronouns, wrong usage or omission of articles as well as errors of punctuation.

In addition, learners were asked to write an essay about the day they will never forget. The essay was written in two attempts. After both the attempts, this present study observes that learners continue to commit errors of spelling, concord, punctuation, verb tense, word order, capitalisation, word choice, and sentence fragmentation. When the errors were rated, it was established that errors of spelling were the most fossilised, followed by punctuation, verb tense,

concord, word choice and word order. The least fossilised were sentence fragmentation, capitalisation and pronouns.

5.3.3 Grammatical errors

Grammatical interlanguage fossilisation was also looked at in this current study. The teachers, through FGDs, were asked to converse on errors of grammar they frequently encounter in the learners' writings. The teachers disclosed that learners mostly commit grammar errors. The teachers observed that learners make grammatical errors of overgeneralisation, word choice, omission, verb tense, and spelling. The findings of the study strongly resonate with the findings by Handayani et al. (2019) and Kadek et al. (2021), who believe that these errors were committed due to inter-lingual transfers and intra-lingual interferences were the main cause of error fossilisation.

The findings from the EA of the learners' essays evince that learners commit errors of spelling, preposition, omission, auxiliaries, word order, fragmentation, coherence and cohesion. The results showed that interlanguage fossilisation errors of grammar were a result of intra-language errors. In addition, the study reveals that these errors were committed due to interferences from mother tongue, overgeneralisation of TL rules, developmental issues, ignorance of TL rules and limited vocabulary. In support, studies by Butler-Tanaka (2000), Fauziati (2011), Nozadze (2012), Nurhayati (2015), Zhang and Xie (2014) and Benati (2018) indicate that grammatical errors like omission, addition, using incorrect forms, and word order can occur during writing. These errors result from systematicity, language transfer permeability, second language learning strategies, and overgeneralisation. Therefore, fossilisation errors can manifest in grammar through writing due to various causes. Finally, due to limited literature, most of this study's findings are new and could not be compared or contrasted to any previous studies. This, therefore, signifies how important it was to carry out this study.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the above conclusions, it is essential to understand the linkage between error correction and writing proficiency. The two work hand in hand. Understanding these factors can help teachers identify key areas to focus on when teaching writing.

Therefore, the study recommends the following:

- Teachers should provide corrective feedback on errors, especially during the primary phase of a learners' language acquisition or learning, in order to eliminate developmental error issues.
- Learners should be exposed to more reading items in the TL to help familiarise themselves with the language
- Teachers should employ appropriate teaching strategies suitable for every individual learner.
- Teachers and parents should motivate learners to take corrective feedback seriously. They should also make them understand the positive aspects of feedback and the impact it has on their performance.
- Teachers should teach appropriate language rules, and their exceptions.
- Teachers should teach more vocabulary as this provides a range of words at one's disposal which as a result makes it less likely for one to rely on incorrect forms or structures that have become fossilised.
- Teachers should advance their knowledge and skills in the content of the English language. Times change, curricula evolve – therefore, teachers must also adapt.
- The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should make provisions for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers.
- The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should reconsider the issue of using mother tongue as a medium of instructions in some state primary school as the use of it can lead to a lack of standardisation and quality control of the English language produced.

5.5 Recommendation for further research

This study endeavoured to study interlanguage fossilisation in a Namibia multilingual classroom, and it focused on one secondary school in the country, thus, further research may study the phenomenon comparatively. The study employed an explanatory research design and used documentation in terms of essays from learners, and FGDs for teacher. Therefore, future research may adopt other research designs as well as employ other tools for data collection.

Therefore, the study recommends that further research should explore this phenomenon using a larger and more diverse sample across different regions of Namibia.

- Teachers should start using error correction strategies preferred by learners of different writing proficiencies.
- Teachers should also provide extensive correction since the results indicated that teachers primarily use the red pen to mark learners' work, and their involvement ends there without further explanation of what and why those errors were corrected.
- In addition, teachers should pay more attention to teaching grammar, as it contributes to most errors in writing.
- Finally, teachers should analyse whether the corrective feedback they give is effective and whether learners are applying it in practice.

For further study, this study suggests that since the population of this study was limited to just a few learners of one grade, a much populated and diverse study may be explored for error analysis to help determine the impact teachers' correction has on learners' writing proficiency.

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Research Instruments: Annexure

Annexure A: Focus Group Discussion for teachers

This focus group discussion aims to find out how teachers' error correction impacts learners' writing proficiency, and learners' perspectives towards teachers' correction, and about learners' perspectives towards teachers' correction. Your answers will be treated confidentially. In addition, please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

1. What is/are the root cause (s) of lexical fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual classroom?
2. Which types / errors are fossilised in the interlanguage of learners' writing at sentence level?
3. which type of errors are fossilised in learners' writing?

Annexure B: Learners' essays

Write an essay of 200 words in length about **the day you will never forget.**

Annexure C: Error Analysis checklist

Types of Errors	Sources of Errors
<p>1. Lexical Errors</p> <p>-Vocabulary and word usage in a sentence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-lingual errors - Wrong verb tense - Incorrect word order - Omission (of punctuation) - Addition (-s to irregular plural nouns) - Wrong pronouns, modals • Intra-lingual errors <p>-Overgeneralisation (Applying a rule too broadly (e.g., adding “-s” to uncountable nouns like “furnitures”).</p> <p>-Misinformation (Creating non-standard forms (e.g., inventing a word).</p> <p>-confusion (Mixing up similar words (e.g., “accept” vs. “except”))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategy <p>- These errors occur when learners use strategies to compensate for gaps in their language knowledge. For instance, using a synonym or circumlocution to express an idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induced errors <p>-These errors result from external factors such as unclear instructions, faulty materials, or teacher influence.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic confusion <p>-When the learner confounds two words which are semantically related in the L2. For example, in 'My uncle's name is Ana' (for aunt) or in 'In my city there are very shops' (for many)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction errors <p>-for instance, choice of prepositions, reflexivity, transitivity</p>
<p>2. Syntactical errors</p> <p>- Organisation of word and sentence formation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-lingual errors (Developmental errors) <p>-Developmental stages of language learning</p> <p>-Inconsistencies in applying syntactical rules</p> <p>-Omission of necessary item</p> <p>-Addition of unnecessary item</p> <p>-Misordering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-lingual errors (First language interference) <p>-Word order</p> <p>-sentence formation/ structures</p> <p>-Negative transfer of language</p>
<p>3. Grammatical errors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-lingual <p>-interference of first language</p>

<p>-Deviation from correct grammar rules</p>	<p>- negative transfer of learners' first language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developmental stages <p>-Overgeneralisation of irregular verbs (e.g 'goed' instead of 'went')</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Misunderstanding rules (e.g. confusing 'affect' verb with 'effect' noun or using 'who' instead of 'whom')• Lack of exposure• Communication strategies• Context of learning• limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary• Carelessness
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Annexure D: Marking grid symbols and meaning

SP: wrong spelling

VT: wrong verb tense

//: New paragraph

WW: Wrong word

∧: Add (Omission of word)

?: Not clear


WO: word order(wrong)

_____ : not clear

l: separate words

P: Punctuation error

Annexure E: Ethical Clearance Certification letter

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11 October 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Namibia University of Science and Technology offers its compliments to your esteemed organisation and would like to avail the following to your kind attention:


Ms. Anna L Moshana student number: **216050332** is a Masters of English and Applied Linguistics student studying at Namibia University of Science and Technology. The students are required to undertake a research project as partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master's degree programme. She intends to carry out research on the following topic under the supervision of **Prof Haileleul Z Woldemariam**.

An interlanguage study of fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual classroom: A case study of Karundu High School

On behalf of the Department of Communication and Languages, I humbly request your good offices to assist the bearer in enhancing her academic endeavors. I wish to assure you that the information/data provided by your offices will only be for academic purposes and in strict confidence.

I thank you in advance for your usual cooperation. Please be assured of my highest consideration.

Scholarly yours,



Dr Aletta M. Hautemo
Masters of English and Applied Linguistics Programme Coordinator
Department of Communication and Languages
Namibia University of Science and Technology

Annexure F: Letter of permission to conduct research

Page 1 of 1



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
OTJOZONDJUPA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE



DIVISION: PROGRAMMES AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (PQA)

Tel no: 264 67 308000
Fax no: 264 67 304871
Enq: U.C Tjivikua

Private Bag 2618
Erf. 280, Sonweg Street
Otjiwarongo
Namibia

06 March 2024

To: Ms. Anna L. Moshana
NUST Student Researcher

Dear Ms. Moshana

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A MASTER STUDY IN OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 16 February 2024, regarding your request for permission to conduct a research study at Karundu High School.

I am pleased to inform you that the Otjozondjupa Directorate of Education, Arts, and Culture has taken note of your intention to carry out this study, and we appreciate your commitment to addressing a significant challenge in the education sector.

Given the importance of your research and its potential to contribute to the improvement of our educational system, I am pleased to inform you that your request for permission to conduct the study at Karundu High School is hereby granted.

However, take note that your study should not have any disruption whatsoever to the curricular and/or extra-curricular programmes of the school.

Sincerely,

U.C Tjivikua
Acting Director of Education, Arts and Culture



06.03.2024
Date

Cc: Inspector of Education
Otjiwarongo Circuit



RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

Annexure G: Draft Consent Form



Namibia University of Science and Technology

[Informed Consent Form for learners]

This informed consent form is for learners at a selected secondary school in Otjozondjupa region who are being invited to participate in research study titled “An interlanguage study of fossilisation in a multilingual classroom: A case study of a selected secondary school in Otjozondjupa region

You may provide the following information either as a running paragraph or under headings as shown below.

Name of Principle Investigator: Anna L Moshana

Name of Organisation: The Namibia University of Science and Technology

Name of Sponsor: Self sponsored

Name of Project and Version: Master of English and Applied Linguistics Degree

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)
- Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form

Part I: Information Sheet

Introduction

I am Anna L Moshana, and I am an employee in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture as a Language teacher. I am currently teaching English at Negumbo Secondary School, in the Omusati region. I am doing research on Interlanguage Fossilisation in a multilingual classroom in Namibia. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher.)

Purpose of the research

Interlanguage Fossilisation plays a significant role on how one acquires or learns a language. This study strives to find out the root causes of Interlanguage Fossilisation in a multilingual classroom, the study also seeks to identify Interlanguage Fossilised errors in learner's writing and find possible solution to Interlanguage Fossilisation. I trust that you are able to help provide information about what you know about Interlanguage Fossilisation.

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve your participation in a focus group discussion that will take about one and a half hour (for teachers only), as well as an Error Analysis of learner's essays.

Participant Selection

You are being invited to partake in this research because I believe that your expertise and experience in the English language can contribute much to our understanding and knowledge of the use of English as a language.

Voluntary Participation

Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Therefore, you have a choice to either let him/her participate or not. The child may withdraw anytime s/he feels like.

Procedures

A. Provide a brief introduction to the format of the research study.

Your child is requested to assist the researcher to find out how error correction on types of errors made can help learners to improve their writing proficiency in English. Therefore, your child is kindly invited to participate in this study.

B. Explain the type of questions that the participants are likely to be asked in the focus group, the interviews, or the survey. If the research involves questions or discussion which may be sensitive or potentially cause embarrassment, inform the participant of this.

For focus group discussions

Take part in a discussion with +- 5 other people with similar expertise. The discussion will be guided by myself.

You are ensured comfortability during the focus group discussion. During the discussion, you will be asked about your knowledge of Interlanguage fossilisation and how to minimise or eradicate language fossilisation.

The discussion will take place at Karundu High School, and no one else but the participants and I will be present during this discussion. The entire discussion will be voice recorded, but no one will be identified by name on the recorder. The voice recorder will be kept safe and the data recorded will only be used for this study. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except Ms. Anna L Moshana will have access to the records. The data recorded will be destroyed after a period of 6 months.

Benefits

Your child will not receive any direct benefit from participating in this study, but this study will help find out more about what can be done to prevent or reduce Interlanguage Fossilisation amongst learners, thereby improving learners' writing proficiency in English.

Reimbursements

Your child's participation is voluntary. Therefore, he/she will not receive any form of payment.

Confidentiality

Every information your child will provide in the questionnaires will be treated privately. However, during group discussions, anonymity and confidentiality will not be certain since there will be

other participants in the same group who will also participate in this study. Code numbers will be used instead of your name and only the researcher and the supervisor will know about the number.

Sharing the Results

No information that your child will provide for this study will be attributed to your child's name publicly or in any document. However, the data will be shared broadly through publication.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You have a right to not allow your child to participate in this study if you do not wish to. Your child may also stop participating or decline to answer questions at any time.

Who to Contact

You may contact my supervisor Prof. Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam at hwoldemariam@nust.na or 061 207 2999. I can be contacted @ peyavalim@gmail.com or 0852002962.

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by [name of the F-REC], which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find about more about the

REC, contact _____.)

You can ask me any more questions about any part of the research study, if you wish to. Do you have any questions?

Part II: Certificate of Consent

I have been invited to participate in an Interlanguage study of fossilisation in a Namibian multilingual classroom.

(This section is mandatory)

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Print Name of Participant _____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

Day/month/year

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Print name of witness _____ Thumb print of participant

Signature of witness _____

Date _____

Day/month/year

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

A literate witness must sign (if possible, this person should be selected by the participant and should have no connection to the research team). Participants who are illiterate should include their thumb print as well.

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. A focus group discussion of about +- 5 other people
2. Analysis of learners' written essays

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent: Ms. Anna L Moshana

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent

Date _____

Day/month/year

Annexure H: Language Editor Certificate



The Language Experts

**PROOFREADING, COPYEDITING, LANGUAGE RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY,
TRANSLATIONS**

12 Andromeda Court
Dorado Park, Windhoek

25 November 2024

CERTIFICATION AND SUMMARY REPORT ON PROOFREADING OF MA THESIS SUBMITTED BY ANNA LINEEKELA MOSHANA (216050332)

A. CERTIFICATION

This serves to certify that the referred thesis has undergone professional proofreading by a competent and qualified language expert.

B. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The document is a MA of English and Applied Linguistics thesis prepared for Namibia University of Science and Technology. The dissertation is largely succinct and intertexts well. The scope and breadth of content and context of the thesis is succinct and for the greater part, clearly enunciated. There were observed instances of substantive grammatical errors, largely those of concordial and syntactic agreements. These have been addressed in the proofreading process.

C. MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN

The major areas that needed attention were regards to cohesion/coherence, concordial and syntactic agreements, as well as paraphrasing. Referencing issues while quite few and these have also been addressed.

Regards,

Prof. Collen Sabao, PhD

Associate Professor of Linguistics, Literature and Language - [BA Hon English and Communication, MPhil Linguistics, PhD Linguistics, PGDHE, American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellow, African Humanities Program (AHP) Fellow] Tel: +264803050871 Email: sabaocol@gmail.com