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ANALYSIS OF ERRORS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY TANZANIAN STUDENTS

by

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend
to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a
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Students submitted by Mutashubilwa Emanzi Kabuhaya Lukendakenda in
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
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# ABSTRACT

Tanzania is committed to developing the national language, Swahili, to replace English in important areas of national life., However, the practical problems of facilitating international communication and of access to the vast knowledge accumulated in English offer grounds for its retention in an auxiliary function to Swahili. On this understanding the investigator thought it worthwhile to explore the students' difficulties in English language learning.

This study was devised to look for English morphological units, function words, lexical items, and syntactic structures which Tanzanian secondary school students find difficult at Form Two and Form Four levels.

The identification and assessment of the nature of writing problems, it was hoped, would yield information germane to the complex process of rearticulation of an English language program.

The data, collected with the co-operation of the Headmasters and English language teachers at Mkwawa and Lugalo Secondary Schools, both in Tanzania, consisted of written compositions, on suggested topics, by Form Two and Form Four students drawn from the above-mentioned schools. A stratified sample of forty-two out of the one hundred and ninety-five of the compositions was marked for errors by a panel of three independent judges, all of whom are native speakers and teachers of English. A structural feature which was marked by any two of the native speakers was counted an error.

The errors were taxonomized under four major headings:

morphology, function words, lexis and sentence structure. From an error frequency count the percentage of error in relation to total occurrences of each item, correct and incorrect, was counted for each Form. Further calculation was done for both Forms using their combined scores. Since Form Four students wrote longer compositions than Form Two students, the percentage of errors in relation to the total number of words was likewise computed, yielding a second frequency figure for each item.

The results, according to the percentage of errors in relation to total sample showed both Forms to have inflectional problems, in descending order, with: Tense, Concordance, Noun Number, Participle and Genitive Construction. They showed derivational problems with: Noun formation and Adverb formation. Errors with Adjective formation and Verb formation were recorded for either Form.

The same formula revealed students of both Forms to have difficulties, in declining order, with the following function words: Preposition, Article, Pronoun, Auxiliary, Conjunction, and Qualifier. Lexical problems were indicated in the order: Wrong word, Verb, Adverb, Imprecise word, Noun, and Adjective.

By the same method, the sum total of percentages showed both Forms to have problems, in decreasing order, with: Morphology, Function Words and Lexis. Although the study was strictly not comparative between two Form levels, the observation was made that the frequency of errors appeared lower at Form Four level than it was at Form Two.

For the majority of morphological and syntactic problems a causal relationship was detectable between the source and the target language. As for lexical difficulties, according to the result of the

study, the opinion was reached that some of the sources of trouble were perhaps various kinds of interference: lexico-conceptual, phonic, orthographic, syntactic, negative and semantic.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM

### Background to the Problem

## Introduction

'You cannot feel very comfortable in a borrowed suit' is an

African saying. About a decade and a half ago Tanzania was declared

independent of British rule. The declaration of independence was a

landmark in Tanzania's history. To preclude any confusion that might

arise with the use of the names 'Tanganyika'[1] and 'Tanzania' in the

present study it is appropriate to mention that 'Tanzania' refers to the

United Republic that was born on April 26, 1964 between two independent

nations, the Republic of Tanganyika and the People's Republic of

Zanzibar. Tordoff (1967:58) writes,

> The Articles of Union between the Republic of
> Tanganyika and the People's Republic of Zanzibar were
> ratified by the Acts of Union of Tanganyika and
> Zanzibar which took effect on April 26, 1964.

While the rule of the colonizer has gone, his language, English,

is still used in certain vital areas of national life. As Tanzania does

not feel comfortable with a borrowed language she is reconsidering her

language policy.

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[1]See Cole, J. S. R., and L. N. Denison, "Tanganyika, the
Development of its Laws and Constitution", Stevens and Sons Ltd. (1964);
Cole and Denison cite the Act of Independence, "Tanganyika Independence
Act, 1961 (10-11 Eliz. 2 C.1): an Act to make provision for, and in
connection with, the attainment by Tanganyika of fully responsible status
within the Commonwealth. . ." (1969:9).

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Efforts are being made to develop and promote her own language, Swahili, to take over most of the tasks which, in the past, were done in English. The move is commendable; nevertheless, for practical reasons, there are areas from which English will not be dislodged for many years to come. In particular there are types of employment where proficiency in English will remain a necessary qualification. Consequently, there is a need to pay attention to its instructional program.

One way of maintaining the quality of English instruction could be to enrich the teacher's ability to cope with the ever-increasing demands of improved language instruction. Clinchy and Rosenthal (1971: 90-129) contend that the best source of information on which the teacher needs to act in the here-and-now of the classroom is the students themselves. These authors would like :

> . . . to help teachers understand the messages implicit in
> their students' behavior, specifically the messages contained
> in children's errors. . . .because errors are more informa-
> tive than right answers.

The message is clear; it inspired the investigator to look at secondary school students' errors in written English compositions to see if he could derive some information useful to the teacher in his day-to-day activities.

In Tanzania's multilingual society, teaching is influenced by historical, ethnological, sociological, educational and political factors. Although the focus is on students' errors, the study examines some of these factors in order to clarify Tanzania's overall language learning climate.

## Language and Independence

The wind of independence in emerging nations which have been for

a certain period under foreign rule, brings with it far-reaching
implications in the formulation of language policies. Spencer (1963:
25-39) holds the view that language is a factor in, and is acted upon
by, the mechanisms of political pressures, economic development,
social change or cultural patterning. It operates at all these levels
in the complex life of a society, a fact which indicates how crucial the
language issue is in the life of a nation. In the emergence of a
developing multilingual nation, as for instance the Greek and Turkish
Empires (Brosnahan 1964:7-24), language is considered the criterion
for defining nationhood. Hertzler (1965) says that for a long time,
language has been recognized as one of the most essential elements of
nationhood, if not the most essential. She says that historically

> . . .each nation however diverse as to component
> nationality, regions with their dialects and social
> strata, has desired to have a national language not
> only as a symbol of unity, but also as a means of
> maintaining social and cultural harmony and
> stability. (Hertzler 1965:240)

The rise of Hebrew in the building of the state of Israel
(Herman 1968:492-511), the question of a national language in France
and the part played by German in the developmental stage of the German
nation (Guxman 1968:766-779), Norway's interesting experiment in
linguistic engineering to get a language expressive of its national
individuality (Haugen 1968:673-687) and the Soviet grand design to
reshape a national language (Goodman 1968:717-736) are but a few
examples to illustrate the importance of a national language to an
independent nation. Deutsch (1968:598) supports his study on the
effect of the language factor in the trend of European nationalism
with the evidence that the number of modern sovereign states founded on

language phenomena in Europe grew from fifteen in 1871 to twenty-one in 1914 and to twenty-nine in 1937.

This means, therefore, that linguistic demands and conflicts rank as a major problem that a multilingual nation has to solve at the beginning of a post-colonial era. Fishman (1968:3-16) contends that in the absence of a common, nation-wide ethnic and cultural identity, a new nation frequently invokes a national language as a symbol.

## Language Situation in Tanzania

Tanzania's mainland (formerly Tanganyika) is made up of over one hundred ethnic groups and each has its own language (Kitchen 1962:145, Kaula 1963:29).[2] Kaula calls these ethnic groups tribes while Abdulaziz (1971:161) refers to them as mother-tongue groups. These terms could be used interchangeably.[3]

Most of these indigenous languages, not only of Tanzania but of the whole of Africa south of the Sahara, belong to one family, the

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[2]See the map, page 5.

[3]Radcliffe-Brown (1958) offers a definition of the term 'tribe'. He defines it as a number of clans who have similar customs. They, therefore, form a linguistic community. See Radcliffe-Brown 'Social Structure' in Method in Social Anthropology, Selected Essays by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (Ed.), M. N. Srinivas, University of Chicago Press (1958:171).
Abdulaziz (1971) defined mother-tongue groups as "a group of people who presently consider themselves, and are considered by others, as speakers of the same mother tongue or first language. A mother-tongue group is normally associated with a particular geographical area and is thought to comprise members of the same ethnocultural origin.
See Abdulaziz 'Tanzania's National Language Policy' in W. H. Whiteley (Ed.) Language Use and Social Change, International African Institute, London (1971:161).

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**TANZANIA ETHNIC COMPOSITION**

MILES 0 100 200 300

--- International Boundaries

☐ Bantu Tribal Areas

Source - Atlas of Tanganyika. 1956.

Source: Tordoff, W., Government and Politics in Tanzania, East African Publishing House, Nairobi (1967: VIII).

Bantu.[4] They are very closely related with comparable structural organization at all linguistic levels. They have, moreover, the advantage of a large core of a common basic vocabulary.

Greenberg (1955) maintains that all Bantu languages are a sub-group of the Central Branch of the great Niger-Congo family of languages. The Niger-Congo family is most diverse in West Africa, with numerous languages, Fon, Font, Twi, Mandingo, etc. The Bantu sub-group which dominates most of East, Central and Southern Africa, features far less internal diversity.[5]

## The National Language Question

With the dawn of independence, the need to weld together the over one hundred ethnic groups in one course of national development made the choice of a national language imperative. It had to be a language understandable and acceptable to the majority of the people. Unlike other developing countries where the selection of a national language could be decided by stiff competition among several strong contenders, Tanzania was fortunate in having Swahili as an obvious choice. What made it an obvious choice?

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[4]Other families are Hamitic, Nilotic and Nilo-Hamitic, but they are not as big as the Bantu family.

It is recorded in the Africa Digest Guide No. 13, Vol. 21, February 1974, (no pagination) with respect to Tanzania. "There are usually said to be more than one hundred and twenty tribes and languages in Tanzania (mainland), but most are part of the Bantu language group with only a small number of the Nilotic or Nilo-Hamitic origin and language.

[5]J. H. Greenberg, Studies in African Linguistics Classification, Columbia University and North Western University Press, (1955).

It had proved to be Nyerere's valuable instrument as a unifying force in his efforts to mobilize the diverse ethnic groups to fight for independence in the name of one nation (Kitchen 1962, Nyerere 1971).[6] Ten years after independence, Nyerere, looking back at the factors which were favourable to Tanganyika's independence movement, writes,

> Tanganyika had other advantages. Its ten million people consisted of many different tribes, 123 African and a few Asian. But almost everywhere Swahili was understood, and the vast majority, at least of the men, could speak it. This common language was of inestimable value, both for the independence struggle and for the unity of the new nation. (Nyerere 1971:5)

## National Culture

The point has been made that Tanzania, as a nation, evolved from diverse tribes. The new nation required a symbol for the society's enduring cohesion. That something was obviously the language, Swahili.[7] It was considered not only the expression of the newly-created African culture but also an important medium for achieving the new culture (Harries 1969:276). Swahili afforded Tanganyika, in the words of Fishman (1968:39-51), "a successful integrative process of transformation from diverse and tradition-bound ethnicities to the building of an independent nation." It was declared the national language soon after

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[6]J. K. Nyerere is the founder and President of the ruling political party The Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) as well as the President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

[7]Abdulaziz (1971:165) emphasizes this point when he writes, "It has been the policy of TANU, the present ruling party, right from the start to encourage the use and spread of Swahili. . . . The policy of the Party and the government has consistently been one of making Swahili an essential component of Tanzanian identity and culture."

self government in 1961 (Abdulaziz 1971:165).[8]

I have dwelt upon Tanzania's linguistic situation and the factors behind the national language question because the diversity of languages in African and Asian countries is perplexing. Denny (1963:40) believes that there is a higher proportion of languages in Africa when compared to population than in any other comparable region on earth. While the question of language planning is a big challenge to policy makers, the complexity of linguistic demands in education is a great paradox to the mind that has no experience with the multilingualisms of the African pattern. It is almost impossible for such a mind to register a clear picture of the implications of language planning in Tanzania if the nation's linguistic background is not elaborated upon.

## Post-Independence Language Attitude

Having accorded Swahili the status of a national language, it

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[8]It is appropriate here to pay attention to the warning of Fishman (1971) that there is so much variation from country to country in the use of terms such as 'national' language and 'official' language that it is no longer possible to use them without some ambiguity as to just what they imply. A distinction is sometimes made between them, such that more languages are recognized for 'official' use (in courts, government agencies, schools, mass media, etc.) than are accorded the honorific status of being 'national'. Thus while the designation 'national' tends to stand for past, present or hoped for socio-cultural authenticity in the ethnic realm (nationality being a broader level of integration growing out of coalescences between earlier and more localized ethnicities) the designation 'official' tends to be associated primarily with current political-operational needs. (Fishman, in W. H. Whitely, 1971:32, footnote 1). As for Tanzania, Swahili was designated a national language on the one hand as a symbol of the historical foundation of the emerging nation. On the other hand it was considered a means of furthering the nation's political operational needs.

became imperative for the government to take practical steps to develop it and extend the areas in which it operated. The best area that could offer a good base for its furtherance was education. However, there were two languages in the educational system, Swahili, the language of instruction in the early years of the primary cycle and English, the language of higher education. Therefore, the promotion of Swahili implied a shift in attitude towards English which, by virtue of its functions during the colonial period, enjoyed some air of superiority. After independence English lost the privileged status.

## Primary School English

The present study is addressed to the pupil's problems in learning English at the secondary level. However, as the root of his problems lies in the kind of English he was exposed to in the primary school, it is probably worthwhile to examine briefly what happens in the pre-secondary cycle.

The investigator knows from experience that the majority of teachers of English at the primary level are not professionally trained to teach English as a second language nor do they have a 'sufficient command' of the language they are assigned to teach (Brumfit 1972:82).[9] Apart from the teachers' hesitating control of the material taught it is

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[9] What is meant by a 'sufficient command of the language' could be described in the words of Strevens (1974:21) as

. . . 'error-free in the classroom', leaving out of judgement any greater command that the teacher may display in his private life. This is a minimum, but it is at least more capable of being achieved than many broader statements of ability.

suspected that the subject syllabuses do not provide them with the necessary assistance. Looking at, for example, the primary school English language syllabus published in 1963, one could be tempted to wonder whether it should not have contained more details on aims, objectives, teaching techniques and procedures.[10] The main points outlined in two paragraphs on page four of the syllabus did not contain much more information than instructions to the teacher to follow the course book closely and set a good example of spoken English. How could the teacher determine the actual items, skills and level of the language to teach a particular class? What guidance was given to him concerning the mode of assessment of the knowledge and skills acquired in light of the desired outcome of instruction? From an historical point of view, the failure of the 1963 English syllabus to provide adequate linguistic guidance to the teacher as to what items, skills and level of language he was required to teach a certain class could possibly be assumed to be the seed-bed of the problem I am trying to investigate in this study.

The English language syllabus, 1969 edition, goes at least a step further than the 1963 version to provide requisite information.[11] It expresses the overall aim of the course as giving primary school learners a permanent reading knowledge of English. The reading knowledge is intended to allow them access, after they have left school, to ideas and information available in English and useful to

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[10]See Appendix A.

[11]See Appendix B.

Tanzania. It is suggested that the method applied in the course would be the kind that would foster in the children the independent use of English. The target of the course is clear but the directions the teacher is asked to follow in order to hit it are inadequate.

In the name of a course guide to a teacher the information does not seem much help. It would probably be considered useful to a curriculum specialist who is charged with the task of developing an English program for Tanzanian schools. Even this would further demand:

- an exact analysis of the target language -- English

- a precise ordering of the items to be presented

- meticulous planning of the material for each level with rigorous control of the structure and vocabulary used at each stage.

A course in a language involves reception of ideas through listening and reading as well as expression of ideas through speaking and writing. Listening, speaking, reading and writing involve skills that are so closely interrelated in practice that formal artificial separation tends to be ineffectual. While specific reading should be necessary for developing and maintaining the children's ability in reading, the reading skill cannot be developed independent of the other three, listening, speaking and writing. The information about English language skills which should be developed in primary school English is less than adequate.

Given the circumstances in which English is taught in Tanzanian primary schools, the point that the teacher requires more help to interpret the aims of the syllabuses needs no belabouring. He needs

more exact information concerning the content requisite to the development of the above mentioned four major skills in language learning. Parallel to this there should be some information about activities and experiences through which pupils may develop and extend their skills. The observation of Perren (1971:133) is relevant here.

> Course writers, teachers and teacher trainers often
> have to interpret the aims of the syllabus without help,
> and sometimes must do so arbitrarily in order to decide
> what precisely to teach. As a result, we may find an
> unnecessary and confusing variety of interpretations
> co-existing within a single educational system; a good
> deal of irrelevant teaching is a common side-effect, as
> well as general looseness and vagueness about training
> teachers of English, because no one is quite sure
> exactly what these teachers are going to teach.

English language program development for primary schools is a case that should be further re-examined in light of the current theories of second language learning.

## Secondary School English

The teacher of English in a secondary school is not any happier than the primary school teacher. The Form One teacher, for instance, is assigned to teach students whose English background depends on the kind of school they came from and the kind of teacher from whom they received instruction. He does not have sufficient prerequisite information on which to base his development of lesson plans. How does he cater to their differences in background knowledge? (How well a child is prepared to operate in English by the secondary school stage would be a good subject for research.) Brumfit (1972:81-82) is of the view that,

> . . .one of the basic problems in the secondary school is
> the fact that Form I pupils are already fairly well able

to use a language which closely resembles[12] English but which is full of interference errors from the first language. Such errors may be further reinforced unwittingly by primary school teachers and the pupils themselves in conversations. Eradication of these errors is vital as they are very firmly ingrained.

This means, therefore, that the teacher of secondary school English has first to make up the child's language deficit, a necessary condition in his preparation to meet the challenges of secondary education. Unless remedial work is well done, the teacher's road to successful instruction can hardly be smooth, as the child will still be lacking appropriate language skills for reasonable participation in the classroom.

The teachers of other subjects such as Geography, History, Mathematics, etc. would be indirectly bound to contribute to the teaching of the English language per se despite their training in different areas. The inadequate language proficiency of the child limits his operational power in these other subjects. Perren (1968:164) succinctly expressed this point:

> To every great extent, perhaps to an educationally dangerous extent, English is being used as a teaching medium in classes where pupils have a far from secure knowledge of the language and have been ill-prepared for the transition from learning English as an isolated 'subject' to using it as a 'medium'. It is often used as a medium by teachers whose own English is inadequate.

In the circumstances where English is the language of instruction it is almost impossible to tell how far poor performance in a subject is the result of a specific weakness in English.

There is no quick solution to the problems which plague English language teaching in secondary schools, as the students' mastery of

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[12]My underlining.

English is very much dependent on the quality of instruction in

primary schools. It would be unrealistic to expect the primary school,

because of the size of its classes (forty-five to fifty pupils) and

the level of its teaching cadre, to lay a firm foundation for the child.

This idea is supported by Brumfit (1972:82) when he declares,

> There simply are not enough teachers to provide all
> primary school pupils with completely fluent and accurate
> English. As the schools expand so the problem will, and
> in secondary schools we must accept the real situation
> and therefore use a remedial course.

Similar to their counterparts in primary schools, it is uncertain

whether secondary school English teachers receive sufficiently precise

guidelines. The objectives of the English Language syllabus for

secondary schools (Forms One through Four) are indicative of the

pluralistic purpose of the English language program insofar as it is

intended to serve both pragmatic and vocational ideals.[13] One of the

objectives is to foster intellectual literary pursuits.

The syllabus does not mention what is done to provide linkage

between English language instruction in the primary cycle and the

secondary school stage. It is subject to doubt whether the secondary

school English teacher knows exactly what his primary school counterpart

did and it is not clear either whether the primary school English

teacher has an idea of what form of instruction his pupil will receive

at the secondary school stage. Lack of co-ordination between the two

levels must adversely affect higher level instruction.

The syllabus makes mention of what to do in the teaching of

basic structures, reading and writing programs, but in an unprecise

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[13]See Appendix C.

fashion. However, it would relieve the teacher of the impossible burden of having to think out for himself all the nuances of program implementation if there were an attempt at precision on inquiries such as what to teach, how to teach, with what and when, as well as clear suggestions on how to organize, evaluate and improve instruction.

Banathy (1968:33-40) offers an example of objective specificity in the process of designing a program to develop speaking proficiency by considering factors such as

(i)  the context in which the student is expected to operate
(ii)  the kinds of language features to be acquired
(iii)  the degree of accuracy and fluency and
(iv)  the types of tasks the learner is expected to perform.

## English in Tanzania Today

The government's concern over the language question in education was mentioned elsewhere. It was further expressed in Tanzania's Second Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan, July 1969 to June 1974, in the following paragraphs:[14]

> We are moving towards an educational system in which the primary level is conducted in Swahili, while secondary and advanced courses will be conducted in English. The decision to shift to Swahili as a medium of instruction in the primary schools was necessary, since only 10 per cent of standard VII leavers go on to secondary education, while the rest require skills appropriate for the working world they enter--primarily in the rural areas.

> However the new situation gives rise to education problems and serious social dangers. The educational problems will arise because children, on entering Secondary School will now have to shift to study in a new language at the same time as taking on a more difficult set of subjects.

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[14]Tanzania Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1st July, 1969 - 30th June, 1974. Vol. I, General Analysis, Government. Printer, Dar-es-Salaam (1969), pp. 152-153.

. . . .as government moves over to the complete use of
Swahili it will become more and more inappropriate to
have the secondary and higher educational system operate
in English.

By the end of the Second Plan almost all Secondary
School teachers will be Tanzanian. The major barrier to
a shift to Swahili medium Secondary education will be
the lack of teaching materials in Swahili. As this lack
cannot be made up overnight; it will require a systematic
programme of translation and creative writing over some
years. Therefore, there must be long-term planning for
such a shift, with adequate commitment of resources to
prepare for the change ahead of the intended implementa-
tion, so that adequate materials will be available in
Swahili for the student at that time.

Tanzania is now in her Third Five-Year Economic and Social

Development Plan, July 1974 - June 1979. How much was achieved in the

last Five-Year Plan should be in the process of analysis. Nevertheless

the English language has a place in the school curriculum for many

years to come. It might sooner or later relinquish its position as a

language of instruction in all phases of education, but its position

as a language of wider and international communication offers strong

grounds for its retention in the school system as, at least, a subject.

Tanzania's situation is similar to Zaire's. In Zaire, French

is considered a great monument of the colonial past that eludes forces

aimed at its quick elimination (Ellington 1973:20-22). Similar to

the reminder Ellington gave to Zaire, Tanzanian language policy makers

would be advised that in their quest to go local linguistically, they

should not lose sight of the fact that a foreign language is not as

easy to dismantle as colonial monuments of metal and stone. Prior to

any practical steps to remove a foreign language there should be an

immediate and adequate replacement.[15]

## Summary

In summary, this statement on the background to the problem has tried to give a picture of the social, cultural, economic and political factors that play a part in the development of a language program in an emerging nation's ambitions for rapid self-actualization. The discussion of such forces which are involved in the formulation of Tanzania's language policy was necessary in order to explore the source of the problems which plague English language teaching. The source of trouble is not just in the form of classroom procedure. What goes on in the classroom is conditioned by the overall socio-economic, cultural and political pressures of a nation at a certain period of time. Moreover, while the government's policy to play down the prestige of English is legitimate and commendable, the point that the de-emphasis of a subject is not synonymous with haphazard teaching of the same subject should be remembered. Such a phenomenon would be ironic since, up to now, English is one of the subjects which are allotted more time

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[15]Changes in language are neither so immediately obvious as improvements nor so easily accomplished. Neither a language as a whole nor any part of it is replaceable like a spare part in a machine; it is not to be discarded like an old coat and it cannot be bought at the store like a new one (Haugen 1975:285).

than others in the curriculum.[16]

It is against this background that the present study is set. English, while being culturally de-emphasised, remains crucial to the educational system, and it behooves the educator to give all possible assistance to its being adequately taught.

## Need for the Study

The need for this study can be viewed from several vantage points.

### The Teachers

The teacher is the central figure in the instructional process. Of all the variables which bear on educational processes, policy makers, curriculum developers, program co-ordinators and what have you, Crosby (1970) refers to him as a CONSTANT in the scene. No matter what is done in other quarters, in the final analysis his way of instructional organization and implementation determines, to a great extent, the students' learning as expressed in their change of behavior. He requires an understanding of the elements of language, both English and Swahili. He ought to know more about the problems confronting his

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[16]According to a weekly program, time is allotted to subjects in terms of a 40-minute class, to the following: Mathematics 8 periods, English 7 periods, Swahili 3 periods, Geography 3 periods, Biology 3 periods, History 3 periods, Political Science 2 periods, Religious Knowledge 2 periods and Agriculture or other vocational subjects 3 periods./ The number of periods in certain cases differs from one school to another, depending on the kind of teaching staff, school area of specialization, etc.

Source: This information was obtained from (1) Mrs. E. Mhehe nee Ringo. She was a member of the panel which prepared the Secondary School English Language Syllabus, 1973 edition. She is at present a student at the University of Alberta. (2) T. Mteleka who, prior to his admission to the University of Alberta, was a secondary school teacher.

students, and, to be on the safe side, have ideas as to the sources of the difficulties. No doubt many experienced teachers pay attention to the mistakes made by their pupils and if they have the interest, time and training, they may even make note of the structures which pupils find complex. Of what value are the compiled lists? If they had some insight into the possible causes of the stumbling blocks they would be better equipped to remove these causes and thus improve the level of teaching. In essence, this is the form of knowledge that the present study has set out to explore. If this information reaches the conscientious teacher, it should be useful in restructuring his lessons and improve his teaching, as it may point out to him some of the roots of the weaknesses of his pupils.

Specifically, this study is concerned with errors made in written English; findings may or may not be transferable to other language skills. The writing program for secondary schools, according to the 1973 English syllabus, attempts to provide meaningful writing opportunities which are progressively challenging to students and close to real life situations in Tanzania.

The accomplishment of these tasks is dependent upon the learner's power to engage in the problem-solving processes which, in the words of Burns and Brooks (1974:42-43), involve:

> . . . .problem-solving skills, concept formation skills, data-processing skills, the ability to make judgements and discriminate, the ability to relate causes to effects, the ability to analyze, the ability to summarize and the ability to form valid conclusions.

The objectives that the secondary school English teacher sets out to achieve are thus defined. How well cultivated are the students'

abilities associated with the processing behavior by the time they complete Form Four? An analysis of the errors in Form Four students' samples of writing can answer this question, and most certainly the answer should be of interest to teachers. The kind of error analysis which the present study carries out has, by Bigg's (1973:2-13) definition, an essentially formative function, directed to the assessment of the on-going quality of learning.

At the same time, the error committed by the student certainly indicates to the teacher that instruction is necessary. Clinchy and Rosenthal (1971:93) suggest that

> A common use of error is to count the number of
> mistakes a child makes on a test and, on the basis of the
> sum, assign him to a particular ability group; however,
> the sheer quantity of errors the child makes -- in
> reading, for example, does not tell us how much to teach
> him to read. We need to know what it is that prevents
> him from reading well, and to find out, we must examine
> the nature, as well as the number, of his errors. For
> just as there are many correct and incorrect paths to
> success, there are many different routes to failure.
> If we treat all errors alike, we do not come to grips
> with the child's specific source of difficulty.

What Clinchy and Rosenthal are saying is applicable to an analysis of children's errors in written work. The analysis of errors should reveal not only what the students fail to do but also what they do in the process of assembling their information in sentences. With this information the teacher should be in a better position to help them or to revise his methods of teaching.

## Instructional Program

In a study, not very different from the present one, Blair (1956) comments on the work of a ninth grade English teaching in Quincy, Illinois. The teacher analyzed all the themes which were written by a

class in an eight week period. He checked and analyzed the errors. He discovered the characteristic errors of his pupils. The data obtained in such a survey, Blair contends, can be used to good advantage in planning the program of instruction. Likewise, it is anticipated that the data gathered in this study could be of some advantage in the revision of the secondary school English syllabus if the need arises.

## Researchers

To the researchers of today and tomorrow, the present investigation could provide a point of departure in the search for appropriate methods of teaching English in Tanzania considering the forces revolving around language instruction as well as national projections. From a research standpoint, Robinson (1973:190-199) suggests that it would be reasonable to evaluate the learner's competence to speak and write from what he actually speaks and writes; and from his language production to construct a picture of his competence to use the language and of his knowledge of the language. Linguists need data of the kind discussed in this study in theorizing about the principles of second language acquisition.

## Statement of the Problem

What basic English morphological units, function words, lexical items and sentence structures do Tanzanian students find difficult at Form Two and Form Four levels?[17]

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[17]Tanzania's Form Two and Form Four are roughly equivalent to North America's Grade Ten and Grade Twelve respectively. But, while a successful North American student can opt for university admission as a next stage, his Tanzanian counterpart would have to do two more years in Forms Five and Six before going to university.

(1) What kind of morphological errors do they frequently make in writing?

(2) What kind of syntactical errors both in function words and sentence structure are common in their written work?

(3) What kind of lexical errors do they frequently make in their writing?

(4) What inter- or intra-language factors may be postulated as sources for these errors?

## Purpose of the Study

In an attempt to grapple with problems of English teachers for primary schools in Baht er Ruda, Sudan, Bright (1968) and his assistants made the classroom their centre. From there they made forays in search for what was needed. They would find a problem, analyze it, devise a plan of attack and devise a technique or two to implement it. Similar t ____ ne of action, the purpose of this study is to examine the m____ syntactic and lexical error content in secondary school stu____ positions. The examination and analysis of error content, it i____ can help the investigator to determine the answers to the probl____ tated above.

____ e overall aim of the study is to derive information which can enric____ e teacher's awareness of the problematic areas of English for Tanza____ students and of possible sources of errors. It is hoped that this will lead to further individual exploration of difficulties and to the adjustment of instructional practices. Hocking (1973:87) stresses this point, saying that a teacher who knows why a particular mistake is made is in a better position to correct it, or even to forestall it

altogether, than one who doesn't.

## Scope of the Study

This study is focused on student errors in written composition and the way in which students handle the mechanics of the English language in the areas of morphology, syntax and lexis. Particular attention is paid to basic structural patterns of English.

The domain of style, punctuation, argument, organization of material, coherence and the like are considered outside the scope of this study.

## Definition of Terms

Agreement - correspondence in form or grammatical category of two or more items which indicates a specific syntactic relationship, for example in noun number, 'The boys are here/The boy is here'.

Aspect - a grammatical category of the verb indicating the action expressed; e.g. in English, whether it is progressive/non-progressive or perfective/non-perfective.

Auxiliary verb - a word used in a verb phrase to support another verb to form tense or aspect of a full verb.

Content word or Contentive - a noun, verb, adjective or adverb having semantic content and conveying information (Cazden 1972: Glossary).

Contrastive Analysis - an examination of any two languages to discover similarities and dissimilarities; also referred to as inter-linguistic analysis (Salmon 1972:24).

Corpus - a sample of data gathered for linguistic analysis.

Count noun - a noun that _can_ be pluralized.

Derivation - in descriptive linguistics, the process or result of forming a word by adding an affix to a base (or root). A derivational affix may or may not change the class of a word (Hartmann and Stork 1972:62).

Error - Politzer and Ramirez (1973:59) define error as a failure to observe a systematic rule. In this study an error is considered as a feature in a written form of utterance which violates the morphological, syntactic or semantic rules of English language diction. In this study, an error is operationally defined as an item so classified by at least two of three English teachers for whom English is their first language.

Error Analysis - a technique of measuring progress by recording and classifying the mistakes made by an individual or a group of students.

Frequency - the number of times an error has occurred in the sample of corpus under analysis.

Function Word - a word belonging to a small closed class of words which are necessary to the interpretation of meaning of the sentence, but do not have referential meaning themselves.

Grammar - in its widest sense, the term refers to generalized statements of the regularities and irregularities found in language (Hartmann and Stork 1972:98).

Hybrid Structure - awkward or clumsy arrangement of linguistic elements in which the intended meaning is not clear.

Inflection - the addition of certain endings to the base of a

word for such meanings as number and tense.

Intra-linguistic Analysis - an examination of students' usage to detect inappropriate transfers from knowledge previously acquired in the foreign language; weaknesses arising from the complexity of the internal structure of the target language.

Lexical Error - use of a content word which conveys semantic meaning other than required by context.

Mass Noun - a noun that cannot be pluralized because its meaning refers to an extended substance.

Modal - an auxiliary verb used to show mood.

Modifier - in syntax, a class of a word which limits or qualifies a head word in a noun or verb phrase.

Mother Tongue - the first language a child picks up in his socio-cultural milieu in the course of his growth.

Morphological Error - a deviation from the paradigmatic element necessary to effect the intended meaning in a linguistic expression (Salmon 1972:24).

Morphology - that part of grammar which consists of the rules for combining morphemes into words.

National Language - a term which is used to designate that language which is viewed as furthering both the socio-cultural integration at the nation-wide (hence 'national') level and the political operational needs (Fishman 1971:40-41).

Syntactic Error - a deviation from that arrangement of words forming the correct structure of the language.

Syntax - the study of the arrangement of words in structures and

of the means by which syntactic relationships are shown through word order or inflection.

Word - a minimum free form, an utterance that can stand sensibly in isolation.

Word Class - a category into which a word is placed because of similarities in form and/or function with other members of the class.

Assumptions

Brumfit (1972), a man who played a key role in designing A Handbook for Secondary School English Teachers, was well-informed as to the kind of English children learn in primary schools. He admits that with the size of primary school classes and the level of English, as well as the training of its teaching cadre, the primary school cannot do more than lay a shaky foundation in English for students who go to secondary schools. On the basis of this observation, and the writer's experience in teaching at the primary and secondary school levels, the assumption is made that pupils are admitted to the secondary school cycle inadequately prepared for the level of English instruction expected at that stage.

To date, research in the acquisition of a second language suggests that the learner's errors provide evidence of the system of language that he is using (Corder, 1967); approximative systems (Sampson and Richards, 1973) or the subject's area of difficulty (Scott and Tucker, 1974). In considering these conclusions a plausible assumption could be arrived at that the nature of the student's morphological, syntactical and lexical problems can be determined by

a linguistic analysis of the errors he makes in his written work.

The collected data is examinable and relevant to the questions to which the study is addressed on the assumption that:

(i) the compositions were administered by teachers in the normal classroom situation and were written in one sitting.

(ii) each student wrote the composition on his/her own without assistance from any other source;

(iii) the requirements of the composition topics, according to the secondary school English Language Syllabus, could be met by the skills anticipated to have been developed by Form Four level in free writing, but might have been too high for Form Two students who should still be doing much controlled situational writing;

(iv) the directions to write the compositions were clear to every student.

Only a sample of the available scripts were marked. The marking was done on the understanding that students in one Form have, up to the time of writing the compositions, received the same amount of English instruction and could be assumed to have about the same level of proficiency in the art of writing.

## Limitations

The question of inter-language interference is always considered in terms of how features of the first language, being the first learning experience of the learner, affect the learning of a second language. In this study Swahili will be treated as the first language for every subject, despite the possibility of a few cases in which a student's

mother tongue, the local language other than Swahili, could cause

some interference problems in the learning of English. The present

study will not discuss such cases.

The views of Carroll (1963) and George (1972) that teacher and

methodological variables are not easy to control are very applicable

to language instruction. Hence, although the study attempts to trace

sources of difficulties in students' learning of English there is no

one sure defensible way of pinning down particular causes of certain

problems.

As the available data was collected from only two secondary

schools as compared to the total number of over 115 schools in Tanzania

the results of this study must be generalized with caution to the

overall Tanzanian situation.

# CHAPTER II

## A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Principles of Linguistics

Teachers of English require some grasp of linguistic theory and linguistic structure to enrich their knowledge of the English language. Since the frequency of errors is presumed to be in direct relationship with the degree of difficulty of the task being performed (Salmon 1972:5), the foreign language teacher ought to be aware of the extreme difficulty of the task confronting his students. Corder (1968: 74) maintains that it is only a more profound understanding of the theoretical framework of a language on which the teacher can rely in order to undertake his tasks with confidence. He says, in a nutshell:

> . . .a teacher cannot teach a language by any of the
> current techniques without linguistic knowledge --
> and that he does make constant use of what are
> basically linguistic concepts in his teaching.

We are in an age when foreign language teaching programs the world over are expected to take the shape directed by the contributions of scientific research. Practice, devoid of theoretical knowledge, may breed chaos in any form of instruction, and particularly so with language teaching. If teachers of English have sufficient knowledge of applied linguistics to uncover the difficulties behind particular English structures, they will be in a better position to help students.

### Applied Linguistics

The last decade has seen increased professional interest by linguists in the area of language pedagogy in an effort to contribute

substantially to the improvement in language teaching. This interest

was probably engendered in part by the necessity for language training

to take cognisance of the new requirements and techniques of

communication (Eggleston 1973:377-394). The heavier the responsibility

language is called upon to shoulder, the stiffer the challenge to the

language scientist to make extensive explorations in the mysteries of

language teaching. As the discoveries he makes from his research need

to be translated in many ways into improved teaching procedures, he

must appeal to the teachers' personal commitment to use new techniques

in their instructional strategies (Hoyle 1969:386). However, the

teacher's conscientiousness to serve, per se, is not enough to ensure

success. He requires knowledge and skills to effectively carry out the

desired innovations, a course which is served by the domain of applied

linguistics. This is the branch of linguistics which embraces empirical

studies such as error analysis which forms the basis of the present

study. In this investigation the term 'Applied Linguistics' will be

used to mean,

> . . . .simply the application of any of the insights,
> methods or findings of linguistic science to practical
> language problems, in particular -- to the problems
> of the acquisition of language in educational
> institutions (Ferguson 1972:135).

To Malmberg (1971:6) the same term means the theories and

analysis of those theoretical aspects of language and of linguistic

communication which are basic to such activities as teaching, speech,

glosso-politics, to name just a few examples; and to Politzer (1972:5)

it means a way of using linguistic conceptualizations to define and

solve pedagogical problems. He stresses that it is a 'how' not a 'what'

type of subject. It can readily be seen from the descriptions of Ferguson, Malmberg and Politzer that studies in applied linguistics are intended to give help to the teacher, reinforce the understanding of the linguistic theoreticians and, in a way, provide some feedback into the area of pure linguistics. This characteristic, in one way or another, was basic in the foundation of contrastive linguistics two decades ago.

## Contrastive Linguistics

Contrastive linguistics was an offshoot of the applied branch evolved to deal with problems which persistently plague the teaching profession. The school of contrastive linguistics was founded on the notion of interference since it appeared to account for the problems of second language learning (Weinreich 1954). The chief proponents of contrastive analysis believe that problems in language learning are to be identified totally with areas of language contrast (Wilkins 1968:101). They claim, for example, that the teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students gains insight into the linguistic problems involved that cannot be easily achieved otherwise (Lado 1957:2); the basic problems of a second language learner arise out of his/her first language habits (Fries, in Lado 1957:v); teaching problems are those units and patterns that show structural differences between the first language and the second (Lado, 1964:52). While the writings of the strong supporters of contrastive analysis are challenged, propositions such as that language teaching should pay particular attention to mother tongue interference (Kirkwood 1966:176), and that contrastive analysis has important implications for

language teaching (Ferguson 1971:233) are justifiable. Their theories, in general, however, claimed too much to their credit in second language instruction; the materials to be learned in a second language consist of more than the differences between the first language ($L_1$) and the second ($L_2$).

The power of contrastive analysis to predict most, if not all, of the problems of a second language learner was questioned. It was argued that contrastive analysis cannot predict with any degree of certainty what errors do occur, and that, as a matter of fact, it cannot even predict the relative frequency of errors or a hierarchy of difficulties. The utility of contrastive analysis in foreign language teaching is subject to considerable argument and dispute (Politzer 1972:87; Wardhaugh 1970:123-130). Errors produced by contrastive studies of Hebrew speakers learning English point to the opinion that contrastive analysis of the two languages is non-predictive (Levenston 1966:200). Levenston's opinion was later supported by the practice of teaching French to Dutch speakers (Sciarone 1970:116), the practice of teaching French to English speakers (Bateau 1970:139); and the studies by Jakobovits (1971:74) as well as Whitman and Jackson (1972). The last mentioned administered two tests of English syntax to a large number of Japanese learners of English. They compared the results with the predictions of the relative difficulty that Japanese students should have in English. The predictions of relative difficulty of the test items were derived from contrastive studies by Kleinjans (1959); Jackson (1970); Hashimoto (1966); and Stockwell, Bowen and Martin

into what some linguists refer to as error analysis
(Sampson and Richards 1973:18).

## Error Analysis

How does error analysis differ from contrastive analysis?
Contrastive analysis operates on the premise that problems of second
language learners can be predicted by comparing and contrasting the
learners' first language and the target language systems. One of the
advantages of comparing and contrasting features of the two language
systems, it is assumed, is to gain insight into the problems that
learners are bound to face. Lado (1957:2) believes that a priori
contrastive analysis can predict the learner's difficulties since those
elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him
and those elements that are different will be difficult. Lado's
assumption has been found lacking by Briere (1968), Nemser (1971),
Richards (1971) and Schachter (1974), to mention a few more researchers
who have assessed the claims of contrastive analysis apart from the
names which were mentioned earlier.

Contrary to contrastive analysis' predictive approach, error
analysis looks at the learner's actual language product, what he has
spoken or what he has written, to examine the kinds of errors he makes.
The nature and frequency of a learner's errors in a recorded speech or
written text should give a clear picture of his difficulties. The main
assumption underlying the error-analysis approach is, according to
Schachter, that it will,

> reveal to the investigator just what difficulties the
> learners in fact have: the difficulties in the target
> language will show up as errors in production. The
> second assumption is that the frequency of occurrence

of specific errors will give evidence of their relative
difficulty (Schachter 1974:206-207).

A corollary to the discovery of difficult areas is the develop-
ment of awareness of features in a second language which students find
easy to learn. The acquired knowledge concerning the relative
difficulty of a target language constitutes a solid empirical basis
on which to build new convictions in the process of restructuring and
rearticulation of the learning experience.

## First Language Acquisition

An examination of error analysis studies in first language
situations should not be considered irrelevant to observations in a
second language situation. Studies of errors in the first language
situation may, in some respects, throw some light on second language
problems.

Studies in the function of errors in first language acquisition
are viewed as being potentially valuable for insight into understanding
a child's development of grammar (Brown and Belugi 1964:131-161; Brown
and Frazer 1964:43-79; Miller and Ervin 1964:9-34; S. M. Ervin 1964:
163-189). Along this line of thought, Corder (1967) contends that some
of the strategies adopted by the learner of a second language are
substantially the same as those by which the first language is acquired.
He suggests the use of error analysis in the discovery of a learner's
strategies in first language learning. The studies of Corder provided
some inspiration to linguists to explore further the role of errors in
the theory of second language acquisition with reference to first
language acquisition.

Clinchy and Rosenthal (1971:94) contend that error analysis

is a way of uncovering the rules that the child actually uses in

information processing. In their recommendation,

> . . .the analysis of errors is an important guide to
> educational practice. The nature of the errors indicates
> to the teacher that the child is using rules inappropriate
> to the successful solution of the problem and that
> instruction is necessary.

In considering the conditions for a learner in a first language

context and those for someone in a second language situation, it is

beyond doubt that the young child's experience of the language is

usually rich and diverse in contrast to the second language learner.

The latter has little to go by in respect of exposure to the language,

reinforcement and encouragement. Despite the odds which a second

language learner has to put up with as compared to the favourable

conditions which surround his first language counterpart, Lee (1973:241)

makes the point that,

> . . . .he, however, also undoubtedly forms and tests his own
> hypotheses and in so doing makes errors, whatever the
> teaching method adopted. A detailed study of these would
> make clearer how he was learning.

This means, therefore, that error analysis studies in first

language acquisition could have something to contribute to the

instructional processes of second language teaching. In research

conducted by a method which is not untypical of error analyses in

first language procedures, Brann (1972) got insight into a technique of

ordering and interpreting facts from the day-to-day work of the

classroom on orthography and how it can be used to improve the teaching

process. "From an identification of individual errors," he suggests,

"you make some generalizations on common difficulties and point to

remedial exercises of orthography." (Brann 1972:368)

## Informal ██████ quage Acquisition (Children)

██████ Brown and Belugi (1964), Brown and Frazer (1964) and █████ ████ ook at the type of errors which children make in th█ ███ tur████ ss of acquisition of a first language. It is pro█ ███ ll ████ ating to look also at the strategies children emplo█ their ███ ██ ion of a second language in a natural setting.

████ ludy by Berko (1961) on the child's learning of English morphol████ nd that of Klima and Bellugi (1966:183-208) concerning the overall ████ matical capacity of children, as well as other related studies, ████ ired some linguists to carry out error-based research regarding ████ ond language acquisition of prepubescent children. Second language ac█ sition in this case refers to the addition of another language afte██ having acquired the basics of the mother tongue. This is different ███ bilingual acquisition which is a process in which two languages ████ quired simultaneously.

Nat█icio and Natalicio (1971:1302) conducted a comparative study of English pluralization by native and non-native English speaking children in an English environment. The children were presented a randomized list of nonsense syllables designed to elicit the plural forms of the given pseudo-nouns. The results of their first study indicated that the pattern of acquisition of noun plurals in English is comparable for both children having English as their language and those acquiring English as a second language.

Dulay and Burt (1972) carried out extensive studies on the question of how children in a foreign country acquire the language of

the natives, a phenomenon that encompasses all the aspects of language structure and all the subprocesses that comprise language acquisition. In their experiments they focus on the production of syntax in a second language, acquisition by children from the viewpoint of 'goofs' children make during the acquisition process.[2] For the sake of uniformity in this presentation the first language will be referred to as $L_1$ and the second language will be called $L_2$. Dulay and Burt state that,

> The $L_2=L_1$ hypothesis holds that children actively organize the $L_2$ speech they hear and make generalizations about its structure as children learning their first language. Therefore, the goofs expected in any particular $L_2$ production would be similar to those by children learning the same language as their first language (Dulay and Burt 1972:236).

In order to test the strength of the stated hypothesis, Dulay and Burt collected tape recorded speech data from English as a Second Language (ESL) classes of first grade children. Some of the subjects spoke Spanish as their $L_1$ and others spoke Norwegian. From the analysis of the data, Dulay and Burt got evidence to the effect that the child's organization of $L_2$ does not include transfer (positive or negative) or comparison with his native language. He relies on his dealing with $L_2$ syntax as a system.

In a series of attempts to discover how children learn the syntax of the second language, Dulay and Burt carried out further error-based investigations (Dulay and Burt 1973:245-258; 1974a:129-136; 1974b: 37-53; and 1974c:253-278). They used varying numbers of subjects and,

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[2] Dulay and Burt define a 'goof' as a productive error made during the language learning process (Dulay and Burt 1972:235).

in certain cases, collected their data from children of differing linguistic backgrounds. Underlying their studies were questions such as "Should we teach children syntax?", "Is there a natural sequence of $L_2$ acquisition common to children of diverse backgrounds exposed to natural English peer speech?" and "What is the specific nature of the creative construction process, that is, what characterizes universal language processing strategies?" They collected a considerable amount of evidence to support the hypothesis that there exist second language learning strategies common to all children. Dulay and Burt advance the view that,

> . . .from the second language acquisition research
> studies that have been conducted to date, a rough
> framework seems to be emerging. There is general
> consensus that the second language learner (the child
> in particular) gradually reconstructs the target
> language system using certain cognitive strategies
> that remain as yet unspecified. The crucial assumption
> in this view is that the learner is active in the
> learning process, not a passive receptacle of
> knowledge. Precisely how the learner acts upon
> language data is the question this framework
> addresses (Dulay and Burt 1974:276).

Apart from the extensive studies of Dulay and Burt, Milton (1974: 137-143) had something to contribute from his study of the development of negation in English by a seven year old Japanese boy. His method of observation was rather similar to that of Berko (1961:359-375) and Klima and Bellugi (1966:183-208). Like Dulay and Burt, he worked in light of the hypothesis that,

> . . .non-native speakers, if they are well below the age
> of puberty, will acquire the grammatical structures if
> negation in English in the same developmental sequence
> which has been described for the acquisition of those
> structures by native speakers (p. 137).

Milton learnt from his observations that his subject acquired the

rules of negation in English by making use of what is assumed to be a universal set of language learning heuristics. It was in a manner closely analogous to the way in which he would have acquired it as a native speaker.

## Formal Second Language Acquisition (Students)

Cook (1971:99-109) notes areas of divergence between the theory of first language acquisition and that of second language acquisition. She stresses that the second language differs from first language acquisition in the manner of language development, the phenomenon of errors, and the process of grading the material of language supposed to be learned. However, despite Cook's observations, growing findings concerning the creative construction process which characterizes second language acquisition encourage further examination of correspondence between first and second language learning strategies. Studies by Corder (1967, 1971a, 1971b); Nemser (1969); Selinker (1969); Richards (1971, 1972); Sampson and Richards (1973); and Rubin (1975), to mention only a few, point to the relevancy of research on the differential success of second/foreign language learners.

The analysis of errors in first language and children's second language acquisition deals with the data which is collected from an informal language learning situation. The studies which the investigator has in mind are for example those mentioned elsewhere in which the corpus is collected from children who do not receive any formal language instruction. They pick up the language from a natural setting. However, such studies are not without implications for researchers whose concern is error analysis in formal second language

learning.

It is an undeniable truism that error analysis is as old as the art of teaching. Good teaching demands that the conscientious teacher know, as he proceeds with his instruction, the extent to which what he sets out to teach his students has been understood. In normal teaching procedures evaluation is part and parcel of any instructional process, a fact which reflects the unavoidability of error concerns in whatever form an instructional program is instituted.

Santos (1934) conducted a study of written English expressions of Filipino children in the public schools from the third grade through to the seventh grade. His subjects came from eight major linguistic regions. Santos' study and the present investigation have much in common in that portion dealing with grammatical analysis. He taxonomized grammatical errors as follows:

| 1. Verbs | G 1 | Disagreement of verb with its subject in person and number. |
|---|---|---|
| | G 2 | Wrong use of tense in form. |
| | G 3 | Use of past for the present or vice versa. |
| | G 4 | Wrong past participle. |
| | G 5 | Wrong form of infinitive. |
| | G 6 | Miscellaneous. |
| 2. Pronouns and Nouns | G 13 | Object of preposition not in objective case. |
| | G 14 | Object of verb not in objective case. |
| | G 15 | Other wrong uses of cases. |
| | G 16 | Disagreement of pronoun with its antecedent. |
| | G 17 | Wrong use of which and who. |
| | G 18 | Miscellaneous. |
| 3. Adjectives and Adverbs | G 23 | Use of Adverbs for Adjectives and Copulative Verbs. |
| | G 24 | Only misplaced in a sentence. |
| | G 25 | Wrong use of demonstrative adjectives. |
| | G 26 | Incorrect comparison. |
| | G 27 | Miscellaneous. |

4. **Nouns**      G 33   Those with changing or unchanging forms.
   (Number)     G 34   Those adding -s and -es.

5. **Propositions**  G 41   Use of superfluous preposition.
    **and**       G 42   Use of wrong preposition.
  **Conjunctions**  G 43   Use of wrong conjunction.
               G 44   Miscellaneous.

The study by Santos indicated that errors in the use of verbs constituted approximately 75 to 80 per cent of the total grammatical errors, followed in rank order by errors in noun and pronoun usage, adjectives and adverbs, plus a few cases of errors in the use of prepositions and conjunctions. Furthermore, the findings of the study by Santos showed that there are certain peculiar errors which are more prevalent among the Filipinos than among native speakers -- in his particular study, the Americans. Conversely, he observed that "the American children have certain types of errors which are not found in large amount in the compositions of the Filipino children" (p. 106).

The fact that native and second/foreign language speakers stand the chance of making similar mistakes in a language, except in a few particular aspects, came to be supported by the observation of French (1949). French collected examples of English language errors from English speakers in China, Burma, Japan, India, Ghana, Tanzania, Hawaii, the Phillipines and Malta. In his list of common errors are the following examples:

* I did all my works.
* This is the man you married his daughter.
* I didn't laugh, only I smiled.
* The man whom you wounded him was died.
* It will rain when the wind will blow.
* The man which he stole it has been found.
* I spoke to the man who I don't think you know him.
* He is much tired by walking.

The above examples of errors reveal trouble with structural words,

inserted where they are not required or wrongly used as well as

pattern failures.

French collected more examples of errors from exercises given to

native speakers of English on whose basis he made the generalization

that,

> . . .If sets of those exercises could be interchanged
> between classes at home and abroad, neither side would
> find much novel with them for American, British and
> foreign students have 'common errors' in common.
> (French 1949:11).

French makes the points that the sorts of errors he found were

fairly regular no matter what the student's $L_1$, and that many of these

errors are also common to English $L_1$-students. He infers that,

> A few errors, of course, are purely regional and do
> in fact arise from the cause advanced by linguistic
> authority. But errors far more numerious than the
> sample and far more varied in type are found to be
> common all over the world without regard to vernacular,
> social and domestic environment or methods of teaching
> (French 1949:7).

The error samples collected by French prompted the present

investigator to look at examples of errors made by speakers of English

as a second language whose first language is German.[3] The examples of

mistakes included:

> * I belled the door but it didn't make.
> * It wonders me.
> * It contraries me so.
> * These seats are so near for me -- I sit broad.
> * You keep here a while while I keep around.

The five deviant sentence patterns reveal not only trouble with

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[3]These examples were taken from a text of English utterances of
a community of native speakers of German living in the Province of
Alberta, Canada. I got it from Dr. L. Stewart, University of Alberta.

structural words and incongruous patterning but also problems with lexical items.' In contrast to French's collections the lexical errors in the above examples result from direct transition from German. They are caused by inter-language interference.

The collection of common errors proves that the source of errors which exasperate teachers of English is not uniquely either $L_1$-interference or $L_2$-structure. It can be either or both.

On the subject of interference, Nickel and Wagner (1968:233-255) believe that differences between the rule system of the source and target language could themselves cause manifold interferences. As a point of caution they suggest that

> . . .these potential sources of errors must be given
> special consideration in language instruction. One
> possibility of obviating such interferences is the
> systematic analysis and classification of errors.
> This can be of considerable utility in predicting
> errors due to interference (Nickel and Wagner
> 1968:237).

Duskova (1969:11-36) carried out an investigation of errors made by a homogenous sample of Czech adult learners of English. The study was on a written exercise involving fifty post-graduate students who had sufficient knowledge of English to be able to read scientific literature and to converse on subjects related to their work.

Examples of errors from Duskova's study in order of increasing deviation (starting from the normal form):

> (a)  * We travelled home by a train (by train).
>      * I went there for a business (on business).
>      * This is also reason why (the reason why).
>
> (b)  * I'll not speak (I shan't or won't speak).
>      * I'll be wait for it a long time (I'll wait for it).
>
> (c)  * I should be very like (glad).

* The journey liked me (I liked the journey).

(d) * My last going abroad (journey).
   * I write with two workers from this institute (correspond).

These examples display deviances such as misuse of the article, the problem with future tense, improper use of 'like' and gross distortions of English structure as in *'I'll be wait for a long time'. Duskova advances the opinion that,

> . . .an error analysis should be based primarily on recurrent, systematic errors that are made by a number of learners and that can be readily traced to their sources, no matter whether they reflect defects in knowledge or whether they result from inadequate habit formation (p. 18).

The results of Duskova's project in general indicated that to some extent the subjects faced interference problems from their $L_1$ in word order and sentence construction, but this was not the only interfering factor. There were also cases of intra-lingual interference from the English language system and, in addition, on a minor scale, interfering factors from another foreign language that might have been learnt before.

According to the results of the study, Duskova concluded that contrastive analysis might be profitably supplemented by the results of error-based analysis, particularly in the preparation of teaching materials.

Like other language scientists in the applied branch, Reyes (1969:87-97) examined the English grammar problem with native speakers of Tagalog. Reyes' diagnosis indicated that an educated Tagalog's tendency to overlook English tense distinctions between past and non-past forms of auxiliaries and between (have + en) and (be + ing) forms

could be attributed to the absence in Tagalog speech of inflectional verb endings like (-s), (-ed), (-en) and (-ing) which in English mark tense and aspect.

Strevens (1969) attempts to amplify the legitimacy of the new school of thought of error analysis in his discussion of two ways to look at this empirical innovation in the context of teaching languages. He recognizes it as a reliable technique in applied linguistics, with a valuable function in the preparation of new and improved teaching materials. Strevens writes that error analysis,

> . . .has become a vital source of information about the
> progress of a learner towards his eventual competence
> in the language and a crucial component in the search
> for adequate theories of language learning and language
> teaching.

It is common knowledge that teachers, in normal language instruction, note and correct errors. But the technical sense behind the new theory of error analysis is the detailed collection of errors and their categorization in an effort to assess the effect of instruction. At the same time, however, the errors reveal the nature of the problems individual students are facing, a step which could provide a basis for selection of worthwhile strategic techniques to help the students in their problem-solving processes.

Bateau (1970:133-145) carried out an enquiry about the errors made in a French grammar test by 124 first-year college entrants with ages ranging from sixteen to twenty. He divided the subjects into four groups according to different linguistic backgrounds, but one of the groups comprised students of various linguistic origins that were put together due to their small numbers. His findings confirmed the

view that errors in a second language reflect partly interference principles of the first language and partly intra-structural problems in the language under study. The results, moreover, contrary to the view held by the stout defenders of contrastive linguistic analysis, proved that,

> French sentences that correspond literally to their English equivalents are not necessarily the easiest to learn -- that the probability of errors could not be assessed only from the degree of divergence of the two linguistic structures . . . . and consequently other factors of difficulty must be hypothesized (Bateau 1970: 139).

In conclusion, Bateau recommends more concern for error-based analyses in that they are not only fruitful, but also necessary to work out and test hypotheses concerning detrimental factors in second language learning.

Richards (1971:208-219) carried out an error analysis research focussed on structural difficulties which impede a second language learner's progress. He was particularly concerned with errors in learning English which do not derive from transfers from another language and which cannot be predicted by contrastive analysis.

Richards' investigation involved students of English language drawn from areas of different linguistic backgrounds: Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese and major Indian and West African languages. Among the common errors made by speakers of the above mentioned languages were errors such as *"did he comed"; *"what she is doing?"; *"he coming from Israel"; *"make him to do it"; *"I can to speak French", etc. Such errors, he observed, were frequent, regardless of the learner's linguistic background.

The non-contrastive approach to error analysis by Richards examines errors whose cause is not the confusion between first and second language principles, that is, inter-lingual interference. It looks at errors whose source is suspected to be in the internal structure of the target language. Such errors according to him are caused by intra-lingual interference. They reflect not the learner's inability to separate two language systems, but his competence at a particular stage in the acquisition of a second language. Within the category of intra-lingual errors, Richards identifies a sub-category he refers to as developmental errors.

He described intra-lingual errors as those which reveal failure in rule application such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply.

Developmental errors, according to his definition, illustrate the learner attempting to build up hypotheses about the English language from his limited experience of it in the classroom or text book.

If generalization could be taken to mean the use of previously available strategies in new situations in second language learning some of these strategies would prove helpful in organizing the facts about target language acquisition. But others, perhaps due to superficial similarities, could be said to be a source of errors of over-generalization.

In conclusion, therefore, Richards says,

> An analysis of the major types of intralingual and
> developmental errors -- over-generalization, ignorance
> of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules,
> and the building of false systems or concepts -- may

> lead us to examine our teaching materials for evidence
> of the language-learning assumptions that underlie
> them. . . . Teaching techniques and procedures should
> take account of the structural and developmental
> conflicts that can come about in language learning
> (pp. 213-214).

In his second investigation, Richards (1971:12-22) defined the field of error analysis as dealing with the differences between the way people learning a language speak and the way adult native speakers of the language use the language. He was concerned particularly with the role ideas on errors in $L_2$ learning can play in illuminating the experience of second language teachers. He indicated that some ideas from first language learning theories could be applicable in second language teaching since crucial elements in $L_1$ acquisition are observable as well in second language learning. With a child's question *"Why he is doing it?" taken from Bellugi (1968) and, for instance, a second language learner's question structure "Why you went?", cited from Richard's (1971a) collection of errors, it could be argued that in the acquisition of both $L_1$ and $L_2$ the learners employ closely related strategies in their way of tackling intra-structural problems of a language. Richards gave an account of typical errors in English reflected in the speech elicited from two speakers, one a native speaker of French and the other a Czech speaker. Some of his samples of speech are:

The French Speaker: *'the development of new techniques has allowed to capitalist man[1] to invest *the money'[2] --- 'It's *this is occurs[3] in Australia'.

Richards' analysis of errors demonstrated errors he assigned for numbers 1 and 2 to French interference; 1 from French 'a permis au

capitaliste de', 2 from 'l'argent'. He considered mistake number 3 as a case of overgeneralization.

The Czech Speaker: 'The reason for' . . . '*to invest in this regions[1] is . . . new technology which' '*permits to connected'[2] . . . '*in short time'[3].

Richards considered the root of errors number 1 and number 2 to lie in overgeneralization and number 3 a result of interference.

Richards (1972:159-188) observes distinctions among the following in performance errors; the errors anyone is likely to make speaking under normal circumstances; markers of transitional competence, representative of developmental sequences by means of which the learner masters the rules of the English grammatical system; and errors demonstrating a phenomenon of interference which, unlike the interlingual and intrastructural, has to do with contrasts between styles across languages. Richards says that this form of interference is common in language communities where there exist two distinct varieties of a language with each variety having a definite role to play, a case of diglossia in the term of Ferguson (1971:71-86). Particular functions are assigned to each variety resulting in High and Low uses of a language. What happens, then, in learning a second language is that a student from language communities with diglossia faces problems of drawing parallels in the target language register (Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens 1964:75-110). This results in Richards' example of a model of a personal letter written by an Asian with a diglossic mother tongue in the style:

With the warm and fragrant breath of Spring, here approaches the bliss of Eastertide. May it shower joy

and happiness upon you all. The tide brings . . . .

It is likely, according to the given example, that the student was trying to use the English equivalent to the High variety in his vernacular.

In an earlier study on Tanzanian students' errors in English, Cooper (1971:73) analyzed the results of an objective Diagnostic Test on English structure administered to students in Form One, first year of secondary education. He offered the explanation that the analysis of errors revealed that inevitably the common stumbling blocks are: mother tongue interference, new structural features in the language, (e.g. articles) and perhaps most important, conceptual differences. In connection with conceptual difficulties he says, for example, that

> The little word "too" contains an idea which is very
> difficult to grasp. The structure may, indeed, be learnt
> but the concept is often not. . . . Conceptual
> difficulties are also often at the root of irregularities
> with articles, tenses, and clauses, with 'although',
> 'more than'; 'so' -- 'that', and 'if'.

Some of the difficulties which Cooper pointed out in the students' English at Form One appear to be persistent throughout the secondary cycle. It would not come as a surprise to note mistakes with such structures in the English of students who are already in the level of post-secondary education in Tanzania. However, the opinion that the results of the test revealed mother tongue interference as opposed to Swahili needs further investigation through rigorous research. Since the students speak different mother tongues, and they acquire Swahili in most cases before English, the present investigator wonders whether it would not be safer to look for the root of inter- ference in Swahili structure rather than the first language. Any

contrastive studies between English and the mother tongue in Tanzania would require knowledge of all the language systems from which students come, a prerequisite which I doubt whether Cooper satisfied.

Studies by Greenland (1971:200-210), Olu-Tomori (1971:211-221) and Wyatt (1973:177-186) were conducted on almost similar lines to Cooper's. While Cooper used a diagnostic test in his study, Greenland, Olu-Tomori and Wyatt examined students' written English compositions. On the likelihood that the first language of the students who were involved in the above-mentioned three studies is Bantu in form,[4] as is 95 per cent of Tanzania's languages, including Swahili,[5] their findings could have some relevancy to the present study.

Greenland asked Form I A pupils at Makerere College School, Kampala, Uganda, to write an English composition in one hour. The pupils had received no advance notice of the composition, and there was no opportunity for discussion before or during the actual time of writing. He corrected the compositions, looked at the nature of mistakes,

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[4]This assumption is made on the premise that the majority of languages in Uganda, as well as Yoruba in Nigeria, according to Greenberg's (1955) map showing language families of Africa, belong to the Bantu family. The languages which are classified under one family would not exhibit great diversity genetically. Greenberg contends that "Bantu is. . .one among twenty-four genetic sub-groupings within the sub-family of the Niger-Congo languages which I call the central branch on geographical grounds " (Greenberg 1955:38).

[5]Tanzania's ethnic composition was earlier given according to Africa Digest Guide No. 13, Vol. 21, 1974.
The fact that Swahili belongs to the family of Bantu languages is supported by Whiteley (1969) and Mwangomango (1970). Whiteley, one of the few people who have done comprehensive studies on the various aspects of Swahili languages writes, "It must be clearly stated that Swahili is a Bantu language, one of several hundred spoken across the southern half of Africa" (Whiteley 1969:8).

assessed their significance and drew some tentative conclusions.

In the area of grammar, the results of Greenland's study revealed

an average of 7.5 grammatical mistakes in each composition. One of

the troublesome areas of grammar was tense. Greenland confirms,

> By far the most common mistake in the essays is the
> failure to distinguish between the simple past and the
> past perfect as denoting two separated actions in past
> time. . . . A tentative explanation may be that the
> writers' own languages do not make this same mistake
> . . . . An alternative explanation for this and other
> similar mistakes is that the writer becomes caught
> up in his sentence and re-enacts the scene in his
> mind as if it were happening at that very moment
> (Greenland 1971:203).

Related to mistakes with tense were errors which involved the

misuse of modal verbs. Greenland reports that many of the examples of

errors suggested that the writer had a vague idea that some sort of

modal verb sounded correct in that particular context, but he chose the

first one that came into his head.

The largest number of grammatical mistakes, Greenland maintains,

concerned the use of deictics. Errors of high frequency involved

confusion between the demonstrative and the definite pronoun, and the

omission of the definite article. He accounts the pupils' problems

with the definite article to first language interference. The remark

Greenland made in connection with the omission of the definite article

was the fact that Bantu languages do not have articles and therefore

the pupils lapsed from time to time into the 'translation' method of

composition.

As for grammatical mistakes involving prepositions, Greenland

reports that a large number of them were wrongly used in expressions

of place and time. He presumes,

>When one looks a little more closely at these
>'mistakes' one sees that if a child has been taught to
>use 'in' with 'states' and 'into' with movement, he
>could justify the examples quoted above (p. 206).[6]

In certain cases prepositions were used with wrong forms of

verbs. Greenland felt that such failures were perhaps due to the

possibility that the pupils were taught the different kinds of verbs

without any practice in how to apply them in sentence patterns.

Prepositions were omitted in certain positions where the

context required them. Greenland gives the examples:

"They were tying my father." (up)

"He could not wake." (up)

Greenland advances the source of the problem in such distortions.

>Whereas English multiplies its supply of verbs by
>all manner of combinations using verbs and prepositions
>together, Bantu languages rely on the prepositional
>form of the basic verbs. If one is accustomed to
>juxtaposing verbs and objects and then tacking on a
>suffix to the verbs which serves as a preposition,
>it is a big step to become fluent in a language
>which revels in its prepositions (p. 206).

Olu-Tomori asked pupils in twenty-five classes from fifteen

grammar schools in Western Nigeria to write a thirty-minute composition

on "Saturdays and Sundays". He corrected the compositions and assessed

the significance of errors. Apart from the frequency count of sentence

patterns used, Olu-Tomori looked at the sentence patterns considering

the function of different elements in a sentence: subject, predicator

and adjunct types. In his categorization of errors, Olu-Tomori included

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[6]Greenland's examples:
". . . . to hide myself into the cupboard."
"Hidden the things into a thick bush."

types such as syntactical errors occurring within sentence or group ranks; syntactical errors occurring within a word/lexical item, and lexical errors.

Olu-Tomori observed that the most frequent errors of redundancy and omission were prepositions, pronouns and articles. He advanced possible causes of failures.

> . . .The redundant use of the Article is most probably
> a reaction against its omission usually due to $L_1$
> interference: the Articles are not used in Yoruba
> in the same way as they are in English. . . .The
> omission of Pronouns appears to be $L_1$-based. The
> literal translation of "He is my friend" into Yoruba
> is "Friend my is." . . . . The omission of Preposi-
> tions and Articles is clearly $L_1$-based. The
> structure of Yoruba allows both "I went Lagos" and
> "I went to Lagos" (Olu-Tomori 1971:214-215).

Other forms of grammatical errors of high frequency included: verbs wrongly marked for person, misapplication of syntactic devices and wrong use of adverbs and modals. Olu-Tomori writes,

> The highest individual frequency in the list is that
> of the misuse of the shall/will + V form; this is due to
> $L_1$ interference. In Yoruba, habitual actions can be
> expressed with the same collocations as are used in the
> form "I shall see tomorrow." Hence the high frequency
> of the form as in this citation: "On Saturday we shall
> wash our clothes . . . and we will iron our clothes
> in the afternoon." The first verb form is correctly
> used, but after that the pupil lapsed into the wrong
> $L_1$-based use (Olu-Tomori 1971:217).

Wyatt made an analysis of errors in composition writing of a Form Four class in a Ugandan school. He collected all composition books the pupils had used in four terms of an academic year. He then recorded and classified all the errors. Wyatt's classification of errors that bears relevance to the present study is indicated in Table I.

The approaches of Greenland, Olu-Tomori and Wyatt provide

TABLE I

WYATT'S CLASSIFICATION OF ERRORS

|  | No. of Errors |
|---|---|
| 1. Sentence structure | |
|    a. Concord | 313 |
|    b. Sentences linked by commas | 81 |
|    c. Conjunctive adverbs v. conjunctions | 61 |
|    d. Subordinate clauses treated as sentences | 40 |
|    e. Omission of essential components | 133 |
|    f. Other errors in sentence structure | 67 |
| 2. Verb groups | |
|    a. Wrong choice of tense | 262 |
|    b. Wrong verb constructions | 199 |
|    c. Infinitive for past participle | 68 |
|    d. Past participle for infinitive | 35 |
|    e. Wrong conjugation of irregular verbs | 28 |
|    f. Other verb group errors | 43 |
| 3. Noun groups | |
|    a. Articles | 494 |
|    b. Other determinatives | 94 |
|    c. Countables v. uncountables | 80 |
|    d. Other non-group errors | 11 |
| 4. Pronouns | 67 |
| 5. Adjectives | 101 |
| 6. Prepositions | 173 |
| 7. Intensifiers | 26 |
| 8. Confusion or misuse of words and idioms | 197 |
| 9. Contractions, abbreviations and informalities | |
| 10. Repetition and circumlocution | |
|    a. Repetition | 100 |
|    b. Unnecessary circumlocutions | 55 |
| 11. Clumsy or virtually meaningless expressions | 99 |
| 12. Carelessness | 152 |

feedback information to a language teacher.

## Significance of Errors in Language Instruction

Corder (1971:158) finds justification for an error analysis
exercise, among other things, if the results could be used by the
teachers to enable the learner to learn more effectively. He maintains
that,

> . . .there could be no reason to engage in error-analysis
> unless it served one or both of two objects; firstly, to
> elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies
> a second language; secondly, the applied object of
> enabling the learner to learn more efficiently by
> exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical
> purposes. The second objective is clearly dependent
> on the first. We cannot make any principled use of his
> idiosyncratic sentences to improve teaching unless we
> understand how and why they occur.

Corder's view is shared by Bruner (1966). Bruner recommends
that teachers should make systematic observational studies in order to
obtain information sufficiently detailed to allow them to discern how
the student grasps what has been presented to him. He realizes that
the nature of the systematic errors and the strategies of correction
the teacher employs, enables him to vary systematically the conditions
that may be affecting learning. A follow-up to the discovery of
conditions which could be affecting learning would be the adjustment of
curriculum practice.

Besides the systematic observation of errors revealing how the
student grasps what has been presented to him, Bloom (1971:117-138)
suggests that such an exercise would provide the student with some
information about which ideas he still needs to learn or review. The
systematic observation of errors would help to locate the student's

difficulties, and if a further step is taken to analyze the causes of the difficulties, a complete picture of the student's problems and their causes could be obtained.

The need to pinpoint not only the mistakes which learners make but also their cause, underlies the work of George (1972). He advances the argument that when the learner's English includes deviant forms, many teachers assume the responsibility lies with the learner. But this is not always true. The source of error could be in the selection and organization of content by the course designer or teacher or in the teacher's methodology. However, from the psychological point of view, it may be that the child's strategy is totally or partially independent of the methods by which he is being taught (Daikin 1969:107-111). According to the view of George (1972:4, 7),

> A learner is exposed to experience of English from his teacher and from his course book; that is the input to the learner. The learner produces spoken or written English; this is the output from the learner. . . . The teacher/ course designer may himself use the learner's output as a source of information leading to modification of his own output to the learner, or to subsequent learners.

As suggested by George, the present study uses the learner's output in the form of written English to identify problems and attempts to describe their causes. The process to be investigated in the study is represented schematically in George's Black Box Model shown in Figure 1, page 59.

According to the Black Box Model the learner's written English is compared to normal English language bearing in mind the ground that should be covered in the English language course of Tanzanian secondary schools. The teacher, curriculum specialist and researcher, represented

Figure 1

THE BLACK BOX MODEL
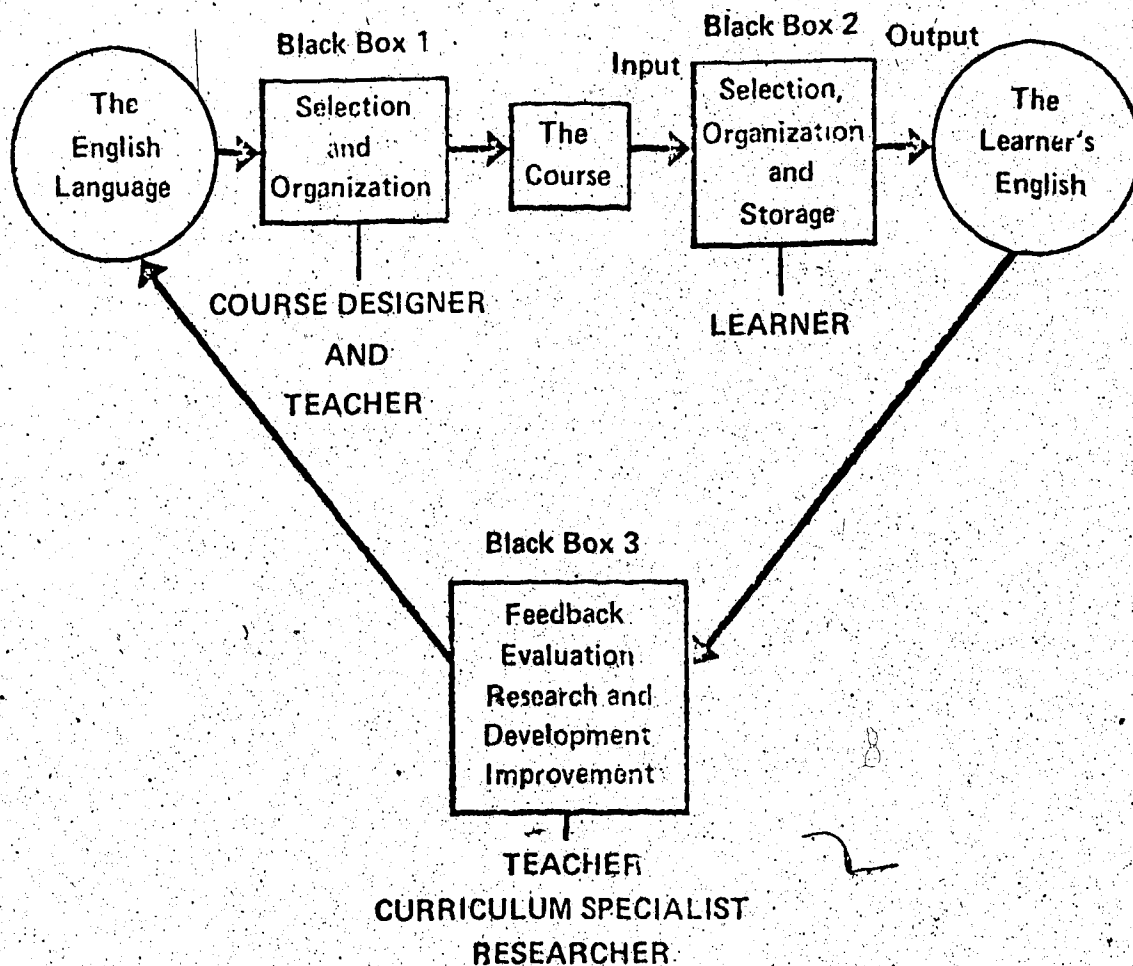


N.B. The idea behind the use of the words 'Black Box' is that it is not possible to describe exactly the nature and efficiency of the devices involved in the processing of information in a 'Black Box'. As in a computer, you feed it with material and observe what comes out of it.

Source: This model has been adopted from the figures of George (1972) p 6 and 7.

in Black Box Three, assess the class and individual pupil's needs from the language produced. They get insight into the extent of an existing problem, and once they have it identified they can work out the best method and time to solve it. The information drawn from the pupil's needs could be useful to all of them in their continuous process of curriculum revitalization.

## Summary

To draw together some of the points which the review of literature has covered, it has established the advantages of the language teacher's understanding of principles of linguistics in order to undertake his task confidently. The view is taken that linguistic studies relevant to pedagogical practice should preferably be classroom oriented, in the sense that they ought to provide requisite knowledge to the teacher in his day-to-day activities. In this way the area of applied linguistics can contribute substantially to improvement in language teaching. Applied linguistics bridges the gulf between theory and practice in language courses.

Attention was further given to the part played by contrastive linguistics, particularly considering the impetus language teaching has drawn from this area in the last two decades. While the approach of contrastive analysis studies has not played an insignificant role in the teaching of modern languages it has sometimes been criticized because it makes demands on linguistic theory that our present knowledge about language acquisition is simply not ready to meet (Richards 1971:14). At the same time languages are so unique that it is not possible to come across two different languages whose isolated elements are comparable on

a one-to-one basis. Even for those languages which might have many features in common, the predictive power of easy and difficult areas through contrastive analyses of their systems has been challenged. Error analysis evolved to deal with some of the questions which could not be answered by contrastive analysis. Unlike contrastive analysis, which is supposed to predict the nature of difficulties of the language learner by looking at parallel and contrastive structures of the source and the target language, error analysis concerns itself with the kind of weaknesses a language learner has revealed in his language production, whether in spoken or written form. In this way the nature of the difficulties can be assessed, and where possible, some description of their sources can be given. The recent proliferation of error-analysis-based studies could be indicative of how relevant error analysis is in instructional practice.

Corder's (1967) contention that errors in second language learning reveal a systematic attempt by the learner to deal with the second language data provided some justification for looking at error studies in children's $L_1$ and $L_2$ acquisition. The reviews included in the literature on children's first or second language, in most cases, are about language learning in an informal situation. The learners were not exposed to formally organized language instruction except in the case of the study by Clincy and Rosenthal (1971). However, such findings, the investigator maintains, are not without correlation to the formal second language training in the classroom environment.

Studies of language learner systems such as those by Corder (1971a, 1971b); Nemser (1969); Selinker (1969); Sampson and Richards

(1973); Schumann (1974:145-152); Dulay and Burt (1974c); etc. provide
background knowledge in the theory of error analysis. Error analysis
studies involving speakers of diverse languages, learning one target
language, for example, the ones undertaken by French (1949) and Richards
(1971), enrich the teacher's knowledge of possible causes of errors in
general. But the studies by Greenland (1971), Olu-Tomori (1971), Wyatt
(1973), etc. explore in detail the problems of a homogenous group of
students learning the same target language. The present study is
addressed to similar objectives.

CHAPTER III

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

It has been stated that the overall purpose of this study is to derive information that could enrich the teacher's knowledge of the causes of students' errors in the English language. Such information, it is believed, could be useful to the teacher and researcher in their quest to explore the difficulties the students face in the learning process. Once the problems have been located, an English language instructional program could be articulated on a firmer ground so that the teacher would be better placed to respond diagnostically to the ad hoc evidence of writing problems in the classroom.

Motivation

Summarized in this section is material of a kind presented more extensively in the opening chapter. In essence the present investigation was motivated by considerations such as these:

(1) The allegation of declining standards of education in Tanzania. In the supplement to the Tanzania Education Journal, No. 5, Vol. 2, (September, 1973),[1] it was reported that the Minister of National Education, Rev. Simon Chiwanga, appointed a committee to look into the public allegation that the standard of education was not satisfactory. The first meeting of the appointed committee was held on

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[1]The Tanzania Education Journal is the Ministry of National Education's official organ.

June 11, 1973 at the Ministry of National Education Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam.

(2) The government's intention to make Swahili the language of instruction in secondary schools. It was mentioned elsewhere that Tanzania's Second Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan (July 1969 - June 1974:153) called for a long term planning shift from English as the language of instruction in secondary schools to Swahili. Kiimbila (1969:111) quotes the statement in a letter from Mr. R. S. Seme, then the Assistant Director of National Education, Secondary Department, addressed to secondary schools suggesting that the changeover to Swahili as the language of instruction in secondary schools would have been possible for certain subjects as early as the academic year 1970/71. But to date, according to the investigator's knowledge, Swahili has not yet assumed the role of the language of instruction for subjects other than 'Elimu ya Siasa' and, obviously, the Swahili language itself.

Although the discussion of Tanzania's present day educational standard is outside the scope of this study, the point conceived by the Minister of Education as a topic deserving examination by a special committee offers grounds to hazard a guess that it must have been felt a problem for national concern. In these circumstances, therefore, it is legitimate to hypothesize that the quality of the language instruction affects the general standards of education. This was one of the good points made earlier by the students of Swahili of the University of Dar-es-Salaam on the subject "Uanzishaji wa Kufundisha Masomo Kwa Lugha

ya Kiswahili[2] Katika Shule za Sekondari, Tanzania" (Introduction of

Kiswahili as a Language of Instruction in Secondary Schools, Tanzania).

In a discussion recorded by Mwakabonga (1960:117-118) the students

remind the planners of the transitional phase from English to Swahili

medium of instruction to see to it that the transition does not affect

the standard of education.

Language is intimately tied with the intellectual growth of an

individual (Malmberg 1971:17); it permeates all that man does (Greene

and Petty 1971:1) and it occupies a central position in any discussion

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[2]The names Swahili and Kiswahili refer to the same national
language of Tanzania.
The origin of the Swahili language has for a long time been a
controversial issue among different schools of Oriental languages and
scholars who have attempted some research on the evolution of Swahili.
However, the investigator takes the theory represented by the school of
thought of Bishop E. Steere and supported by Dr. R. Reusch to be more
convincing. Bishop Steere played a prominent role in the standardization
of Swahili. It is believed that the Swahili language developed from a
mixture of different coastal Bantu languages and Arabic. As a result
of Arabic influence the coastal Bantu tribes became Islamized. To quote
Reusch, "As Muhamadans they became estranged from the other (pagan)
tribes and associated with their co-religionists, the Arabs and Persians.
Into their Bantu languages they introduced, during the centuries in which
they were living together, Arabic, Persian and Indian words. Thus
appeared a very elastic language called Kiswahili, i.e. the language
of the coast. . . . The Arabic word Sahil, plural Swahil, means coast. The
Wa indicates the plural. Hence Waswahili means the coast people."
(Reusch 1953:21).
Since the Arabic word Waswahili means the coastal people it could
be argued that in the course of standardization of the language,
standardized orthography adopted the same Swahili in reference to the
language the Waswahili speak. Kiswahili should be the Bantuized form
of the same name and Reusch (1953:21) maintains that the prefix Ki-
indicates the language. It follows, therefore, that the names Swahili
and Kiswahili can be used interchangeably.
See (1) R. Reusch, 'How the Swahili People and Language Came
Into Existence, Tanganyika Notes and Records, No. 34 (1953), pp. 20-27.
(2) G. W. Broomfield, 'The Re-Bantuization of the Swahili
Language', AFRICA, Journal of the Institute of African Languages and
Cultures, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1931), pp. 77-85.

of communication (Flower 1966:6). If particular attention is not paid to the language of instruction in an educational system it can adversely affect the quality of education offered. In the light of the hypothesis that deficiency in the language of instruction might constitute a handicap to progress in general education, the investigator assigned himself the task of assessing secondary school students' English composition skills at Form Two and Form Four levels. Such an examination, it is hoped, sheds light upon the students' level of proficiency in the written form of the language of instruction.

## Basis for the Study

Opinions expressed in the literature on error analysis in second language learning point to the diagnostic value of error location, since such analysis provides the teacher with specific insights into the linguistic difficulties of the learner. Inspired by this observation the investigator chose as the basis for his study to examine errors in English compositions written by students at Form Two and Form Four levels. He would thus be able to identify the students' persistent problems and, in the process of quantifying their linguistic sources, he would provide guidelines which could then be used by the teacher to improve language teaching strategies. The study is confined to errors in the areas of morphology, syntax and lexis.

## Collection of the Data

Under the circumstances in which this study was conducted, it was deemed almost impossible to successfully involve a fairly representative sample of all secondary schools in Tanzania. The factor

of distance and the complexity of the home administrative machinery

proved to be insurmountable. Hence the present piece of research must

be regarded as exploratory, since the investigator considered

information drawn from two schools as insufficiently representative at

this level of the problems which plague English language instruction in

Tanzanian secondary schools.

The co-operation of English language teachers at Mkwawa

Secondary School and Lugalo Secondary School, both in Iringa Region,

Tanzania, was sought in a letter asking them to organize the writing of

compositions by students on suggested topics. The teachers were

advised to give the assignment in one hour during normal school time.

For Form Two students the composition would be at least one and one-

half pages in length, whereas Form Four Students were asked to write at

least two pages. It was assumed that each Form would be in three

streams[3] and each stream would write a composition on one of two given

topics.

The composition topics were:

Stream One:    Either 'What I would like to do When I complete school'

or 'What I would do if I knew I would be blind in three

days'.

Stream Two:    Either 'What I did on 'Union Day', April 26th, 1974'

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[3]A stream is one division out of two or several which together
make a Form in big secondary schools in Tanzania. An ordinary secondary
school Form is supposed to be made up of thirty-five students. On the
one hand in lower Forms, Forms One and Two, if a school is big enough to
admit more than thirty-five students for one Form, the students would be
divided into streams depending on the number of candidates who are
available. On the other hand, in upper Forms, Forms Three and Four,
students for one Form are, in most cases, divided into streams in order
of orientation of their vocational pursuits, Social Sciences, Physical
Sciences, Commercial, etc.

or 'An interesting dream I once had'.

Stream Three: Either 'The importance of Saba Saba Day to Tanzania' or 'What I always do after school'.

## Basic English Structures

In the selection of composition topics the scheme to be followed in teaching basic English structures in secondary schools was borne in mind. In A Handbook for English Teachers[4] the structures which are considered necessary to students for the understanding of other subjects are given in some order of priority for teaching in three years of secondary education, Forms One to Three, in the following sequence.

### Stages:

1. The Standard Sentence
2. The Article
3.-7. Tenses
8. Direct Speech
9. Relative Clauses
10. Uncountable Nouns
11. Result Drills
12. Purpose Drills
13. Comparatives
14. Conditionals
15. Concessions
16. Participle Phrases

17. Reported Speech
18. More Comparatives (continued from Stage 13)
19. Punctuations
20. Conditionals (continued from Stage 14)
21. Passive Voice
22. Co-ordinators
23. Conjunction of Time and Condition
24. Relative Clauses (continued from Stage 9)
25. Exclamation Patterns
26. Wishes - e.g. I wish I had/was

_____

[4] Pp. 18-24.

27. Conversation Tags

28. Reported Speech (continued from Stage 17)

*29. Inversion - e.g. No sooner had I . . . . than I . . . .

By the end of Form Three the ground work is supposed to have been covered. In Form Four the whole year is spent on revision and practice using the above sentence patterns.

The assignment was designed to elicit from the students as many as possible of the basic English structures which are supposed to have been taught by the completion of Form Three.

In all 195 composition scripts were collected. They were arranged by topic, as shown in Table 2. Form Two students wrote an average of 242.5 words per composition, whereas for Form Four students the average was 438.8 words per composition.

## Selection Procedure

Out of 195 composition scripts, a stratified sample of forty-two scripts were selected, employing Kish's sampling technique. Stratified sampling here refers to separated selections from partitions or strata of population (Kish 1965:20). The size of the sample was arrived at in light of the following factors:

(1) The degree to which the sample would represent the available corpus, that is, the probability of the sample's exemplifying the characteristics of the population relevant to the research in question (Kerlinger, 1973); 42 was conceived the minimum number possible above which, under the sampling technique used, I would cease to find many new errors. In the opinion of Kerlinger (1973:119),

When we draw a random sample we hope that it will be representative, that the relevant characteristics of the population will be present in the sample in

## TABLE 2
## COMPOSITION TOPICS

| COMPOSITION TOPICS | Mkwawa FORM II | Lugalo FORM II | FORM II TOTAL | Mkwawa FORM IV | Lugalo FORM IV | FORM IV TOTAL | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. What I would like to do when I complete school. | 14 | 8 | 22 | 18 | 30 | 48 | 70 |
| 2. The importance of Saba Saba to Tanzania. | 20 | 10 | 30 | 15 | 10 | 25 | 55 |
| 3. An interesting dream I once had. | 3 | 14 | 17 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 32 |
| 4. What I always do after school. | 8 | 6 | 14 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 20 |
| 5. What I did on 'Union Day', April 26, 1974. | - | 10 | 10 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 16 |
| 6. What I would do if I knew I would be blind in three days. | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | 2 |
| TOTAL | 45 | 50 | 95 | 40 | 60 | 100 | 195 |

approximately the same way they are present in the population.

(2) The contribution of the study to curricular decision-making. Bearing in mind the purpose of this study, the investigator was convinced that the sample was sufficiently representative for its results to be precise enough to make an appreciable contribution to decisions (Kish 1965:25).

(3) The rater variable. The tendency of a rater to vary in his own standards of evaluation particularly because of fatigue and perhaps personal feelings (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones and Schoer 1963:10). Braddock and his colleagues are of the opinion that fatigue may lead a rater to become severe, lenient or erratic in his evaluation. Though the committee of raters was made up of experienced native English teachers and the task was more mechanical than the judgments of quality which Braddock was discussing, the high frequency of errors nevertheless confronted them with a time-consuming assignment, in which fatigue or even annoyance might impair judgment. In minimizing this hazard, the size of forty-two scripts seemed reasonable for not taxing the raters beyond their tolerance of the task.

All 195 scripts were classified according to Form and composition topic. It was felt necessary to examine at least several compositions under each topic to assess students' skills on different English structures. Categories which numbered four or fewer papers for a given Form were directly pulled out for corrections, without having to employ the sampling procedure.

For the rest of the data, all the scripts collected on a topic from each Form were listed in the alphabetical order of the candidates'

names and were assigned numbers. Out of the total number of scripts on each topic four scripts were pulled out for corrections by non-replacive technique using tables of random numbers.[5]

## Identification of Errors

As for the question concerning what sentence was well formed or not well formed, the decision was made in accordance with the judgment of any two of the three members on the rating committee.[6] For all three raters English is the first language. The employment of the intuition of native speakers of English concerning the well formedness of sentences seemed preferable to invoking some theory of grammar since, to date, the investigator has no knowledge of a theory of grammar that is flawless. Marckwardt (1963:15-22), for instance, doubts whether there exists a satisfactory grammar that is capable of offering independently a full description of the English language. Neither is there a grammar that would be considered to be as good at generating well formed and acceptable sentences in a language as the intuitions of

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[5] Kish defines the non-replacive method using tables of random numbers in the words, "From a table of random digits select with equal probability n different selection numbers corresponding to n of the N listing numbers of the population elements. The n listings selected from the list on which each of the N population elements is represented by exactly one listing, must identify uniquely n different elements. At each of the successive drawings, every unselected element has an equal probability of selection, but previously selected numbers are disregarded" (Kish op. cit. 36-37; Kish 1965:622-623).

[6] In an investigation of the relative validity of different approaches to the measurement of English composition skills, Godshalk, Swineford and Coffman report that to avoid problems of reading reliability the judgment was established by having three readers rate selected papers independently (Godshalk, Swineford and Coffman 1966:1-2).

a native speaker. The decision to go by the reactions of two out of three raters on the error checking committee was reached on the grounds that there is no one particular way of looking at an error. There is always a tendency of several raters to differ in their evaluation of a given text of written composition. The research reported by Braddock, Lloyd-Jones and Schoer (1963) supports the practice of using several raters in judging the quality of students' written compositions. Likewise, according to the nature of this study it was considered reasonable to accept the majority opinion of three English teachers in corrections of students' written compositions.

Consequently, if some feature in a running text is checked as an error by two independent raters, it would be strong evidence that the feature so marked probably violated a certain constraint in English sentence structure. Errors thus marked were analyzed and categorized by the investigator.

## Analysis of Errors

An investigator attempting to describe a natural language finds no obvious and precise criterion for the establishment of grammatical categories on which to base the analysis process. The traditional school of grammar worked on eight parts of speech, but its approach to classification by definition is unsatisfactory because it does not settle the problem of overlapping categorization and structural ambiguity. Fries (1952:65-86) and Sledd (1959:60-68) criticize the traditional definitions in that they do not enable us to classify words as belonging to one part of speech rather than another. In the words of Sledd, "The familiar definitions are definitions that do not define."

Furthermore, the point is made that the traditional school lacks consistency in its criteria of classification of parts of speech. Fries cites the difficulty that the definition of the noun which states that a noun is a 'name' is framed according to the lexical meaning criterion; while the one for the adjective, that an adjective is a word that modifies a noun or a pronoun, attempts to classify the words according to their function in a particular sentence. Since English, like many languages, signals meaning partly by means of word order and partly by means of function words, the linguists, Fries, Sledd, Strang (1968) and many others thought they would avoid most of the problems of traditional grammar concerning the classification of words by turning to the positional technique. This is a process of dividing words into nominals, adjectives, verbals, adverbials, etc. based not on meaning but on morphophonemic characteristics. This suggestion vitiates some of the discomforts with traditional grammar. This does not mean that it is flawless. Strang (1968:137) observes that in the group of words 'a little white house' the word 'little' is an adjective of size, but it is not or not necessarily in the group 'a dim little old man'. It would not be easy to devise a series of mutually exclusive part-of-speech classifications which would solve the problem of overlapping categories as suggested by Marckwardt (1963:17-18). In grammatical concepts, while different languages recognize the same grammatical categories, they may have divergent realization of them (Kadler 1970:68). At the same time it should be borne in mind that the fluid, complex and dynamic nature of language, and our lack of knowledge about the correlation between the actual language process and any surface taxonomy, makes it

almost impossible to conceive of one independent rule-governed system that can adequately describe the structure and usage of a natural language. In view of the lack of some existing conventional school grammar that is capable of solving this descriptive problem, for the purpose of this study the investigator fell back on the notion of double classification of different classes of word forms in English advocated by the school of grammar of Fries, Sledd, Strang, and Roberts (1956). The double classification technique distinguishes parts of speech either by suffixes or by position in an utterance, depending on which method is considered convenient. For cases which could not be treated by the double classification method I turned to Long and Long (1971).

## Form and Structural Classes

The position technique of describing the internal patterns of English is basically substitutional. It involves the recognition of all those places in English utterances where there is a meaningful choice among a number of items. In some places, the choice is made from a very large number of possibilities. The number of items is indefinite. Items in this category are classified in what Roberts (1956:288) calls form classes. These are Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives and Adverbs. They are signalled by features of form, mostly suffixes and prefixes. In other places the choice is made among a very small number of possibilities. They are units which serve as joints in the way in which words pattern with each other. Roberts (1956:29) calls them structure groups. Fries, Sledd and Strang call them function words. They are not meaning carriers, but rather serve to signal syntactic,

structure. Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964:21-22) refer to structural words as grammatical items. Nichols (1965:7) calls the same words syntactic classes. There is no difference in label as regards form classes.

Linguists hold the view that form classes belong to the domain of lexis in an 'open set'. The range of items in a set is inexhaustible. To them, units which signify the relationship between form classes belong to a closed system. Within the system there is a clear line between what is possible and what is not. The grammatical items in the system are, in other words, called function words or functors presumably because they provide the premise on which structural sense is built into an utterance. Nevertheless, the way in which a language is internally structured offers no basis for classifying all items as belonging to either form classes or function words. It is convenient to say that,

> . . .what we find is really a gradient or 'cline':
> that is, there is a continuous gradation in the
> patterns of formal choice in language (Halliday,
> McIntosh and Strevens 1964:22).

## Error Recording

On the basis of both morphophonemic characteristics of words and their position in an utterance, errors were recorded under four major groups: morphology, syntax, lexis and sentence. Each group was further examined under several sub-headings.

As an illustration of the classification system used, the following discussion treats the distinction made between derivational and inflectional items. Strang (1968:101) defines morphological change as change in form, normally at the level of the word. She calls it

inflectional if it involves relatively few variables in a closed system and derivational if it involves variables, possibly numerous, in an open class. Identifiable among morphological categories are inflectional changes which function within a noun phrase such as: noun number, count/non-count, genitive case and gender. The derivational level is concerned with noun affixation using, in most cases, prefixes, suffixes or compound formation of words. Within the verb phrase there are marked inflectional changes such as tense, person, number and aspect. Similarly with noun formation by derivational affixation, an analogous process takes place in the formation of some verbs. When a suffix (-ize) is added to an adjective as in national-nationalize, formal-formalize, or in the pairs of words fright-frighten, length-lengthen, the added suffixes (-ize) and (-en) respectively turn the original parts of speech into verbs. In the formation of some adjectives and certain classes of adverbs the changes are derivational as in 'beauty-beautiful', 'enjoy-enjoyable' (adjectives), and 'careful-carefully', 'loud-loudly' (adverbs). Positional errors were identified using Fries' technique of substitution frames.

Appendix G provides discussion of the details involved elsewhere in classifying and recording the errors. Having identified and analyzed the errors, the investigator drew up a recording sheet for them. They were entered under their appropriate headings and sub-headings in morphology, function words, lexis and sentence structure.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## Point of Departure

In his categorization and description of errors the investigator

drew valuable ideas from studies by Wyatt (1973) and Politzer and

Ramirez (1973).[1]

Wyatt's classification of errors includes spelling mistakes and

certain other departures from edited English that are outside the scope

of this study. Although he makes the point that "it is not . . . the

number of times a particular mistake has occurred that is relevant; but

the percentage it represents of all mistakes," the inclusion of such

errors as spelling, punctuation, contractions, abbreviations, informali-

ties, etc. in percentage calculations makes it difficult for a reader to

make inferences regarding the basic competence of his sample of students

in matters of written English language production. The present investi-

gation is focussed on the assessment of the problems which Tanzanian

secondary school students face from the point of view of such basic

mechanics of the English language as morphology, function word usage,

lexical item usage and sentence building. Though the investigator

benefited from those portions of Wyatt's classification which are within

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[1]An extensive discussion of the error categorization decisions
may be found in Appendix G.
 Some explanation as to how an opinion was reached in the
categorization process to count an error under, for example, derivation
rather than lexical, is given in footnotes in the discussion or in
Appendix G.

the scope of the present study, his focus on the niceties of written usage and his lack of detail on basic items (e.g., his lack of reference to adverb problems) differentiate his approach from the present one.

In their analysis of errors Politzer and Ramirez used two complementary methods: "(a) a description and categorization of the errors, and (b) a statistical presentation of their relative frequency in order to determine differences due to independent variables such as grade, sex, and type of schooling (bilingual vs. monolingual)." They categorized the errors along fairly traditional lines into errors in morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. Except in the case of vocabulary errors, the categorization Politzer and Ramirez used was not based on any assumptions about the causes of errors but was purely descriptive. The present study, however, is not only descriptive; it seeks causes of errors in places where there is evidence to support such conjectures. While Politzer and Ramirez made error comparisons in terms of percentage of correct usage as well as overall comparisons of the frequency of all errors in terms of number of errors per number of words, the present investigation uses comparisons of percentages of errors per total number of words for either Form as well as the percentage of errors for the total number of words for both Form Two and Form Four taken together.

Results

The tabulation of errors and error percentages for the sample are shown in Tables 3-7. They are recorded under the headings: Inflection, Derivation, function word, Lexis and Sentence structure. These headings were numbered 1 through 5 in the Tables and in the discussion to follow, for descriptive purposes. Categories of errors which could be subsumed under a particular heading are classified under its number and indicated by a decimal point as, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, etc. Under each sub-category, figures are shown for I (incorrect), C (correct) and T (total), along with %i (percentage of error in relation to total words) and %ii (percentage of error in relation to opportunity -- i.e., to total occurrences of the item).

Errors of Inflection

Results of the calculation of percentage of error in the total sample indicate that Form Two students have problems, from high to low percentages, with Tense 0.99%, Participle 0.45%, Noun Number 0.43%, Concordance 0.42%, and Genitive Construction 0.11%.[2] By the same formula Form Four students have problems with Concordance 0.39%, Tense 0.35%, Noun Number 0.24%, Participle 0.22%, and Genitive Construction 0.16%. Both Forms have problems with Tense 0.60%, Concordance 0.40%, Noun Number 0.31%, Participle 0.31%, and Genitive Construction 0.14%.

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[2]The total number of words in the sample for either Form was obtained by addition of the total number of words which each student used in a composition. Form Two students used a sum total of 5,535 words whereas Form Four students used 8,776 words. The two figures yield a grand total of 14,311 words which students of both Forms used in their compositions.

TABLE 3

Number and percentage of inflectional errors

in students' written composition

| FORM | 1.1 NOUN NO | | | | | 1.2 GENITIVE CONST. | | | | | 1.3 TENSE | | | | | 1.4 PARTICIPLE | | | | | 1.5 CONCORDANCE | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | C | T | %I | %II | I | C | T | %I | %II | I | C | T | %I | %II | I | C | T | %I | %II | I | C | T | %I | %II |
| II | 24 | 127 | 151 | 0.43 | 15.90 | 6 | 27 | 33 | 0.11 | 18.18 | 55 | 233 | 288 | 0.99 | 19.10 | 25 | 40 | 65 | 0.45 | 38.46 | 23 | 64 | 87 | 0.42 | 26.44 |
| IV | 21 | 217 | 238 | 0.24 | 8.82 | 14 | 64 | 78 | 0.16 | 17.95 | 31 | 386 | 417 | 0.35 | 7.43 | 19 | 44 | 63 | 0.22 | 30.16 | 34 | 132 | 166 | 0.39 | 20.48 |
| BOTH | 45 | 344 | 389 | 0.31 | 11.57 | 20 | 91 | 111 | 0.14 | 18.02 | 86 | 619 | 705 | 0.60 | 12.20 | 44 | 84 | 128 | 0.31 | 34.36 | 57 | 196 | 253 | 0.40 | 22.13 |

'I' stands for 'Incorrect'.

'C' stands for 'Correct'.

'T' stands for 'Total'.

i% is percentage error in relation to total words used in all compositions of one form.

ii% is percentage error in relation to opportunity frequency, that is, total occurrences of an item in all compositions of one Form.

In computation of figures for both Forms the percentages are calculated independent of the sum total of figures obtained for either Form.

TABLE 4

Number and percentage of derivational errors

in students' written compositions

| FORM | 2.1 NOUN FORMATION | | | | | 2.2 VERB FORMATION | | | | | 2.3 ADJECTIVE FORMATION | | | | | 2.4 ADVERB FORMATION | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | C | T | %1 | %11 | I | C | T | %1 | %11 | I | C | T | %1 | %1f | I | C | T | %1 | %11 |
| II | 7 | 9 | 16 | 0.13 | 43.75 | | | | | | 2 | 4 | 6 | 0.04 | 33.33 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0.02 | 25.00 |
| IV | 7 | 36 | 43 | 0.08 | 16.28 | 3 | 33 | 36 | 0.03 | 8.33 | | | | | | 4 | 7 | 11 | 0.05 | 36.36 |
| BOTH | 14 | 45 | 59 | 0.10 | 23.73 | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | 10 | 15 | 0.03 | 33.33 |

## TABLE 5

Number and percentage of errors in students' written compositions at Syntactical Level

| FORM | 3.1 ARTICLE | | | | | 3.2 PRONOUN | | | | | 3.3 AUXILIARY | | | | | 3.4 PREPOSITION | | | | | 3.5 CONJUNCTION | | | | | 3.6 QUALIFIER | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii |
| II | 36 | 137 | 173 | 0.65 | 20.81 | 22 | 147 | 169 | 0.40 | 13.02 | 7 | 33 | 40 | 0.13 | 17.50 | 58 | 180 | 238 | 1.05 | 24.37 | 12 | 36 | 48 | 0.22 | 25.00 | 1 | 17 | 18 | 0.02 | 5.56 |
| IV | 38 | 205 | 243 | 0.43 | 15.64 | 14 | 144 | 158 | 0.16 | 8.86 | 17 | 90 | 107 | 0.19 | 15.89 | 70 | 370 | 440 | 0.80 | 15.91 | 7 | 27 | 34 | 0.08 | 20.59 | 10 | 34 | 44 | 0.11 | 22.73 |
| BOTH | 74 | 342 | 416 | 0.52 | 17.79 | 36 | 291 | 327 | 0.25 | 11.01 | 24 | 123 | 147 | 0.17 | 16.33 | 128 | 550 | 678 | 0.89 | 18.88 | 19 | 63 | 82 | 0.13 | 23.17 | 11 | 51 | 62 | 0.08 | 17.74 |

## TABLE 6

### Number and percentage of errors in students' written compositions at Lexical Level

| FORM | 4.1 NOUN | | | | | 4.2 VERB | | | | | 4.3 ADJECTIVE | | | | | 4.4 ADVERB | | | | | 4.5 WRONG WORD | | 4.6 IMPRECISE WORD | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I·C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | C | T | %i | %ii | I | %i | I | %i |
| II | 3  35 | 38 | 0.05 | 7.88 | 49 | 346 | 395 | 0.89 | 12.41 | 6 | 16 | 22 | 0.11 | 27.27 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 0.07 | 36.36 | 32 | 0.58 | 7 | 0.13 |
| IV | 8  76 | 84 | 0.09 | 9.52 | 26 | 373 | 399 | 0.30 | 6.52 | 2 | 8 | 10 | 0.02 | 20.00 | 13 | 34 | 47 | 0.15 | 27.66 | 51 | 0.58 | 14 | 0.16 |
| BOTH | 11  111 | 122 | 0.08 | 9.02 | 75 | 719 | 794 | 0.52 | 9.45 | 8 | 24 | 32 | 0.06 | 25.00 | 17 | 41 | 58 | 0.12 | 29.31 | 83 | 0.58 | 21 | 0.15 |

%ii percentage in relation to opportunity frequency sentence for wrong (unnecessary) word, imprecise word, and sentence errors could not be calculated.

TABLE 7

Number and percentage of errors (%i) in

students' written compositions at Sentence Level

| FORM | 5.1 MODIFICATION | | 5.2 DISJOINTED | | 5.3 TRANSLATION | | 5.4 HYBRID (MAZE) | | 5.5 CONDI-TIONAL | | 5.6 REPE-TITION | | 5.7 COMPA-RATIVE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | %i | I | %i | I | %i | I | %i | I | %i | I | %i | I | %i |
| II | 12 | 0.22 | 56 | 1.01 | 32 | 0.58 | 14 | 0.25 | 21 | 0.38 | 61 | 1.10 | 21 | 0.38 |
| IV | 9 | 0.10 | 49 | 0.56 | 24 | 0.27 | 8 | 0.09 | 3 | 0.03 | 7 | 0.08 | 5 | 0.06 |
| BOTH | 21 | 0.15 | 105 | 0.73 | 56 | 0.39 | 22 | 0.15 | 24 | 0.17 | 68 | 0.48 | 26 | 0.18 |

By the percentage of errors in relation to opportunity frequency
Form Two students show difficulties from high to low percentages with
Participle 38.46%, Concordance 26.44%, Tense 19.10%, Genitive Construc-
tion 18.18%, and Noun Number 15.90%. Form Four students have problems,
from high to low percentage, with Participle 30.16%, Concordance 20.48%,
Genitive Construction 17.95%, Noun Number 8.82%, and Tense 7.43%. Both
Forms have problems with Participle 34.36%, Concordance 22.13%,
Genitive Construction 18.02%, Tense 12.20%, and Noun Number 11.57%.

## Errors of Derivation

The percentage of errors in relation to total words reveals Form
Two students to have derivational problems with Adjective formation
0.04%, Adverb formation 0.18%, Noun formation 0.02%. No Form Two
errors were recorded for Verb formation. Form Four students appear to
have derivational difficulties with Noun formation 0.08%, Adverb
formation 0.05%, and Verb formation 0.03%. No Form Four errors were
recorded for Adjective formation.

The same calculation shows both Forms taken together to have
problems with derivational affixation in this order: Noun formation
0.10% and Adverb formation 0.03%. No separate grand total is recorded
here for the two Forms combined for Verb and Adjective formation since
errors with Adjective formation appeared only in Form Two and errors
with Verb formation occurred in Form Four only.

The percentage of errors per possible occurrences for Form Two
students was as follows: Noun formation 43.75%, Adjective formation
33.33%, and Adverb formation 25.00%. Form Four students had trouble
with Adverb formation 36.36%, Noun formation 16.28%, and Verb formation

8.33%. Both forms revealed problems with Adverb formation 33.33%, and Noun formation 23.73%.

## Function Word Errors

The percentage of error in relation to the total number of words showed Form Two students to have difficulties with Preposition 1.05%, Article 0.65%, Pronoun 0.40%, Conjunction 0.22%, Auxiliary 0.13%, and Qualifier 0.02%. Form Four students are troubled by Preposition 0.80%, Article 0.43%, Auxiliary 0.19%, Pronoun 0.16%, Qualifier 0.11% and Conjunction 0.08. Both Forms show problems with Preposition 0.89%, Article 0.52%, Pronoun 0.25%, Auxiliary 0.17%, Conjunction 0.13%, and Qualifier 0.13%.

As for total occurrences of functors at Form Two level the function word error percentage was Qualifier 32.00%, Conjunction 25.00%, Preposition 24.37%, Article 20.81%, Auxiliary 17.50%, Article 15.64%, and Pronoun 13.02%. For Form Four the order was Qualifier 22.73%, Conjunction 20.59%, Preposition 15.91%, Auxiliary 15.89%, Article 15.64%, and Pronoun 8.86%. Both Forms taken together had trouble with Qualifier 26.09%, Conjunction 23.17%, Preposition 18.98%, Article 17.79%, Auxiliary 16.33%, and Pronoun 11.01%.

## Lexical Errors

The percentages of lexical error in relation to total sample at Form Two level were Verb 0.89%, Wrong (unnecessary) word 0.58%, Imprecise word 0.13%, Adjective 0.11%, Adverb 0.07%, and Noun 0.05%. At Form Four level the percentages were Wrong (unnecessary) word 0.58%, Verb 0.30%, Imprecise word 0.16%, Adverb 0.15%, Noun 0.09%, and

Adjective 0.02%. The percentages for both Forms were Wrong (unnecessary) word 0.58%, Verb 0.52%, Imprecise word 0.15%, Adverb 0.12%, Noun 0.08%, and Adjective 0.06%.

The percentage of errors per possible occurrence at Form Two level was, from high to low, Adverb 36.36%, Adjective 27.27%, Verb 12.41%, and Noun 7.88%. At Form Four level the percentages, down the scale, were Adverb 27.66%, Adjective 20.00%, Noun 9.52%, and Verb 6.52%. For both Forms the percentage rank scale appeared similar to that of Form Two. The percentages were in this order: Adverb 29.31%, Adjective 25.00%, Verb 9.45%, and Noun 9.02%.[3]

## Errors at Sentence Level

The percentage of error in relation to total words revealed the following kinds of problems with Form Two students: Disjointedness or Disjunction 1.01%, Translation 0.58%, Conditional 0.38%, Comparative 0.38%, Hybrid (Maze) 0.25%, Modification 0.22%, and Repetition 0.11%. The nature of problems for Form Four students was revealed as follows: Disjointedness or Disjunction 0.56%, Translation 0.27%, Modification 0.10%, Hybrid (Maze) 0.09%, Repetition 0.08%, Comparative 0.05%, and Conditional 0.03%. The nature of problems for both Forms was revealed for Disjointedness or Disjunction 0.73%, Repetition 0.48%, Translation 0.39%, Comparative 0.18%, Conditional 0.17%, Modification 0.15%, and

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[3]It should be noted in Tables 6 and 7 that 'opportunity' frequency (%ii) is the same as total word frequency (%i) for Wrong word, Imprecise word and Sentence error. In the case of Sentence error, sentences might have been counted, but this would have been a departure from the meaning of '%ii' as it is used elsewhere, applying to total words.

Hybrid (Maze) 0.15%.

Although it was mentioned in 'Scope of the Study' that the study is basically not comparative between the two Form levels, the point that, in the majority of cases, the frequency of errors appears lower by Form Four level sounds encouraging for both teachers and students. Implicit in this observation for teachers is the information that their work is fruitful. At the same time for the students the observation could be interpreted to mean that their advanced instruction is not a waste of time.

## Discussion

### Inflectional Errors

#### 1.1 Noun Number

For most of the noun number errors students used singular forms of nouns in contexts where the plural form was required. The misuse of the plural form for singular was not as high in frequency as the other way round, singular for plural.

A few of the errors involved the group of nouns in which there is no morphological change in the plural. Long and Long (1971:300-301) call such nouns 'quantifiables'. According to their description,

> Quantifiable nouns are used to designate what are thought of as, in some sense, masses, not even vaguely divisible into separate instances. . . . Quantifiables have singular grammatical force, never plural.

Students made errors in sentences such as:

*'I put on my best trouser (trousers)'[4]

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[4]Words in parentheses are considered to be correct forms in place of the mistaken ones.

*'I wear my pair of short (shorts)'

In a few instances students inflected plural nouns which are always in singular form. They wrote, for example, *'All my furnitures (furniture) would be brought together' or *'At half time most of the people went to give the Lipuli team more advices (advice)'.

Jespersen (1964:209) classes such nouns in the category of individualization. He writes,

> . . .as it is often desirable to single out things consisting of some mass, this must then be done by means of such expressions as a lump of sugar, a piece of wood.

> Furniture is a mass-word, but as there is no corresponding thing-word we say, for instance, not a single piece of furniture'.

> Corresponding expressions are used with immaterial mass-words to denote individual outcomes of some quality or manner of action:

> A last word (or piece) of advice.

> A matter of common knowledge.

Nouns which are invariably singular or plural constitute what Strang (1968:103) calls a virtually closed class. It is doubtful whether there is any easier way of teaching them, than invoking rote memory.

Number inflection for the word 'life' posed special complications to students. In all instances, this word was used in singular form 'life' when the plural form 'lives' ought to have been used. This is a problem not only to Tanzanian English beginners. It is a tendency that could be observed in the writings of most Tanzanians, regardless of the number of years of English behind them. Admittedly the investigator would not have noticed the error in some of the cases.

The students wrote sentences such as:

*"I would like to help other people who have no work which
will help them in their life (lives)."

*'These educated people used education in their daily
life (lives).'

*'We signed to be Mr. and Mrs. for all our life (lives).'

When do we use 'life' or 'lives' with reference to people?
Jespersen (1964:204-205) says,

> In speaking of a married couple we say: "Their
> married life was a singularly happy one," but in
> speaking of two brothers: "Their married lives were
> led under totally different circumstances."

This is a concept that would better be grasped in a natural

setting, where the learner interacts with native speakers of English.

It would not be surprising to learn that the incorrect use of the word

'life' is reinforced in the mind of the learner as he listens to

Tanzanian English.

The Swahili system might also be an interfering factor. The

Swahili word for life 'maisha' is never inflected for number. It

always carried singular force.

At the same time English language principles were probably

misleading to a second language learner who might have been taught that

uncountable things are never inflected for plural. Life is not

countable. "Why should we speak of lives?" he would ask himself.

The word 'work' and the compound word 'homework' were inflected

for plural. One student wrote, *'Homeworks (homework) from various

teachers are completed during this time'. Another one wrote, *'They

build the nation in many ways like games, works (work) and many other

things.' The word 'work' would be considered in the category of nouns

which are invariably singular. But then how does the teacher explain

the plural inflection for 'work' in the name of a Tanzanian Ministry

of Communications Power and Works, written in short 'Comworks'? In the

sentence, *'I would give them helps (help)' It is likely the student

was misled by Swahili plural inflection for the word 'msaada (Sg)

misada (Pl)' which literally would be translated *help - helps.

Apart from the described problems with noun number for nouns

which form the closed class, other errors showed lack of agreement, for

example, *'Some of secondary schools and all primary school (schools)

should be under the government' or in *'TANU is trying to establish

many social centre (centres)'.

In the case of noun number English teachers in Tanzania would

be advised to pay particular attention to nouns which do not conform to

the regular pluralization of nouns. They also need to be aware of the

class of nouns which are invariably singular yet in some contexts take

plural inflection, for example, 'water'.

Noun number is a tricky subject in the English language. It

does not conform to clear cut principles.[5] The Chinese grammarian who

is quoted by Jespersen (1964:211) saying, "English commonsense has

triumphed over grammatical nonsense" in principles of noun plural

formation was probably talking from practical experience. To the

Chinese grammarian, and indeed to any other student of English as a

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[5]Jespersen would probably modify this statement. To him it is
not only noun number that does not conform to clear cut regulations. In
his view, ". . . English is like an English park, which is laid out
seemingly without any definite plan and you are allowed to walk every-
where according to your own fancy without having to fear a stern keeper
enforcing rigorous regulations . . . . The English language . . . is
opposed to any attempt to narrow-in life by police regulations and
strict rules either of grammar or of lexicon. . . ." (Jespersen 1948:14, 16).

second language, Strang (1968:102-103) has this to say,

> . . .in the great majority of cases number-variation is
> indicated by morphological change, and if there is only
> one indication, it is most often this one. That is why
> we speak of the distinction as primarily morphological;
> but equally we must recognize that nouns, singular and
> plural, are established not by a single criterion but by
> family resemblances. The lack of invariable criterion
> means that sometimes number is not clear . . . . but
> even internally ambiguous sentences are usually
> clarified by co-text or context.

## 1.2 Genitive Construction

Some of the errors concerning the genitive construction were
cases of omission of the possessive marker in contexts where it was
required. The frequent omission of the possessive marker could be an
indication that it is considered redundant in the mind of a Bantu
language speaker. It was omitted, for example, in the sentence *'I
would like to look after Ø (my) family'.

One point which most likely escapes the attention of teachers
and learners of English as a second language is the difference between
the case of a noun that is strictly possessive and one that is genitive.
On this point Sledd (1959:70-71) writes,

> The name 'possessive' comes from the idea of
> possession which the form sometimes conveys, as in the
> sentence 'The man's hat is in the ring,' but the name
> is perhaps misleading since the idea involved is often
> not possession at all. The King's picture may mean a
> picture representing the King as well as a picture
> owned by the King, and the President's assassination
> would usually refer to an action of someone other than
> the unfortunate executive; for this reason some
> students prefer the label 'genitive'.

It was observed that at times the students used the definite
article 'the' in places where a genitive marker should have been used.
The confusion perhaps arises from the fact that the forms 'my, our,

your, her, their', and marginally 'his' and 'its' function very much as the definite and indefinite articles do (Strang 1968:128). It is possible that students do not find it easy conceptually to see the dividing line between the functions of the definite article and the functions of the genitive marker. This would particularly happen if the functions of the definite article and the genitive are not well drilled.

One student wrote, *'This should not be my (the) end of Ø (my) studying'. This is a literal translation of a Swahili sentence 'Huu hautakuwa mwisho wangu wa kujifunza.' The dominating idea he wanted to express was the fact that he did not intend to stop studying.

In the sentence, *'I want to increase some of our (the) doctors in our country', the genitive element 'our' is used to mark the idea of belongingness to the nation. All forms of resources, human, crops, minerals, etc. are owned by the nation. Thus one would speak in collective terms of: our teachers, our animals, our diamonds, etc., although they are not his personal possessions. This would sound strange to the western mind. Loogman (1965:93) writes,

> The life of a Bantu is subordinate to the life of the tribe, and his possessions are primarily possessions of the clan.

If he visited Tanzania today it is likely he would revise his statement to read, '. . .and his (a Tanzanian's) possessions are primarily possessions of the nation'.

In a few cases the students used the genitive word 'their' in the place of 'there'. This is a case of homophonic clash. There is one-to-one correspondence between phonemes and graphemes for the majority of phonemes in the Swahili writing system (Polomé 1967:204).

This is not the case with English. The difference could be the root of the error in a sentence such as, *'The people just roaming in towns were forced to go to villages to work their (there)'.

The use of an apostrophe to mark the genitive case was a puzzle to some of the students. Some of them omitted the genitive marker /-s/ and the apostrophe. Others placed them wrongly. They were left out in a position where usually the genitive does not have a following noun. This is a type that Christophersen and Sandved (1969:33) call an independent 'local genitive'. The apostrophe and the genitive marker /-s/ were left out, for example, in the sentence *'I am going to leave for my uncle who is living in Mbeya'. They are redundant in the sentences, *'I follow every school's rule' and *'We left the church with (my) black suit's pocket full of rice'. The problems with an apostrophe to mark the genitive case could be attributed to the fact that this style is nonexistent in Swahili and other Bantu languages. Bantu languages normally employ prepositional forms of words to indicate the genitive case. Moreover, the genitive apostrophe in English is sometimes used in sentence patterns where it is required to express the idea 'have'. But there is no word for 'have' in Swahili (Loogman 1965:93). In his opinion,

> Swahili has no word to express our 'have'. It has no substitutes corresponding exactly to the English possessives. Instead it uses constructions which indicate a special relation between a thing and a person.

## 1.3 Tense

According to the percentage of errors per total number of words in the sub-sections under inflection, tense proved to be the most

troublesome structural feature to Form Two students. It came second to

concordance for Form Four students. Many times the students used

either the simple past tense in places where the simple present was

required or vice versa. The distinctions between the tense systems of

Swahili and English are assumed to have been largely responsible for

the students' confusion of the simple present and simple past tense

forms. The tendency to equate principles of the first language and the

second language is a persistent disease to the beginner of a second

language. It gets controlled as the learner's insight into the target

language develops. But it is disputable whether a second language

learner ever rids himself completely of inter-structural associations

even if he becomes highly sophisticated in command of the target

language.[6] Mackey (1965:80) believes that,

> . . .if we subtract the characteristics of the first
> language from those of the second, what presumably
> remains is a list of the learner's difficulties.

Tenses in Swahili are expressed by changing the phonemic features

of infixes. On the contrary, English uses a verbal auxiliary system to

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[6]French believes that target language intra-structural inter-
ference creates more difficulties to second language learners than mother
tongue interference. But he does not dismiss completely the problem of
first language interference. He writes, "In acquiring the habit of
linguistic expression in a foreign language . . . cross-associations
arise simply from the fact that each idea that comes into our minds
instantly suggests the native expression of it; whether the words are
uttered or not and however strongly we may stamp the foreign expression
on our memories, the native one will always be the stronger" (French
1949:4).

express inter-structural relationship of tense, aspect and modality.

To the students whose errors with tense are probably rooted in their process of transferring Swahili principles to English, Ashton (1970:35) sounds a warning. "Except for a few time tenses it is a mistake to equate any one Swahili tense with any one particular tense in English."

Some tenses in Swahili do not have their counterparts in English tense forms. Ashton adds "Frequently two or more tenses in Swahili are covered by one tense in English, or conversely one Swahili tense may be represented by several tenses in English" (Ashton 1970:35).

In most contexts where the past tense 'could' was required the students used the present tense 'can'. This was probably because by Form Four the learners cannot have been familiar with all the shades of meaning expressed by the English 'can' nor what is implied by the use of its 'past' form 'could'. Palmer (1965:115-118) suggests six distinct uses of 'can': ability, characteristic, permission, possibility, willingness and sensation. Of the six uses it appears the students were not sure of the places where they should have used 'could' to express either ability or possibility with feasibility. They could not see fault in sentences such as *'I can (could) get the girl to marry' or *'There is a big change that a nation can (could) boast of'. These examples were incorrect in the context of the essays. They would be acceptable sentences in isolation.

Apart from the trouble with 'can-could' uses resulting from the several meanings expressed by 'can' and the implications of its past form the problem could have come from the students' temptation to employ

'can' in structural slots where Swahili uses the word 'weza'. The word 'weza' literally represents 'can' in English. But whoever used it wrongly probably was not aware, in the words of Hocking (1973:94), that

> 'the semantic range of Swahili 'weza' . . . is
> considerably wider than that of the roughly
> corresponding English 'can'.

It is revealed in the students' compositions that some of them have the problem of switching from one tense to another in clauses of a complex sentence. In most cases the switch was from a simple past tense form in one clause to a simple present tense in another. In a composition about a dream one student wrote, *'Among these five boys whom I had in mind I first contact (ed) Juma and explain (ed) (to) him the whole procedure'. The student probably applied what in Swahili is called the subsecutive tense. It has no equivalent tense in English. It can be said to mark a telegraphic chain of action. The Swahili subsecutive tense marked by the morpheme (-ka) is always used in contexts where time can be conceived as relative to another process, stressing that one action is subsequent to another (Polomé 1967:44).

Tenses which are used in the conditional structure were also a problem to the students. This could, in part, be attributed to the fact that the Swahili (-ki), (-nge) and (-ngali) tenses, which express a condition or a supposition, function differently from English conditional tenses (Ashton 1970:253). The (-ki) tense for example,

> . . .as a simple tense, corresponds to two totally
> different forms in English:
> (i) A present participle, when the participle refers
>      to an incomplete action.
> (ii) A conditional clause, when used without reference
>      to any definite time. (Ashton 1970:138).

Sentences such as *'When I will get (If I get) a chance in Form

Five I will be ready to continue with my lessons' (Nikipata nafasi

katika kidato cha Tano nitakuwa tayari kuendelea na masomo yangu) are

common to Tanzanian students.

In a number of errors a continuous tense was used instead of a

simple past tense. This type of error could be attributed to the

unfamiliarity of students with the English tense and aspect system in

relation to locations in time. Whereas tense, in English, relates to

the location in time of an utterance, aspect has to do with its temporal

distribution or contour. Tense and aspect are inextricably entwined.

One student constructed the sentence, *'The group which was going to win

(won) was going to be given (was to be given) a present'. He was

writing on a soccer game. He reports what the organiser of the game

promised before it started. In this way he falls into the trap of using

a future continuous tense in a past framework. It is likely he employed

Swahili principles in an English sentence pattern; and if that was the

case, the equation was wrong. Loogman (1965:382) has observed,

> The Swahili verb-form cannot be easily fitted into
> the usual categories of Indo-European verb-forms,
> especially in the matter of tenses. A translation of
> a Swahili verb form is always an approximation;
> interpretation of a particular form must ultimately
> be made within the framework of the context. The
> Swahili speaker does not seem to associate a fixed
> time-reference with isolated verb forms. Instead he
> manipulates them quite freely in his chosen frame of
> reference in such a way that present, past, or future
> events can equally be represented as transpiring at
> the moment of speaking. . . .

The English tense system is not an easy subject. While some of

the students' errors could be said to crop up from the principles of the

source language, the root of others probably lies in the internal

structure of the target language. French (1949:19) has an opinion based

on his study that a foreign learner of English

> . . . .fails to discriminate correctly between the English
> conventions regarding tense usage, involving as they do
> conditions not merely of time but also of probability,
> condition, concession, indirect speech and all the
> other bugbears usually lumped together under 'tense
> sequences'.

This applies not only to the foreign student but even to the native speaker of English. Long and Long (1971:230) believe that inflection of verbs to indicate tense is the most complicated variety of inflection contemporary English maintains. The complication probably stems from sources such as the English auxiliary system, with its discontinuous morphemes (have + en) etc. and its highly irregular verb system. Further complications are posed by the fact that the English auxiliary system defies adequate description; a factor which makes it still harder for teachers to teach auxiliaries.

## 1.4 Participle

In the Error Recording Sheet wrong usages of participles and gerunds were examined under the same sub-section. Long and Long (1971: 115) hold the view that while gerundials, infinitivals and participials are easily distinguished from one another, they have enough in common to warrant their being grouped together within a single category.

Many of the errors the students made with participles and gerunds involved using a past participle in place of a simple past tense or a gerund instead of an infinitive. As regards the wrong use of a past participle for a simple past tense, the number of errors was swelled by one candidate. He was responsible for over half of the checked errors. The students used the auxiliary 'be' plus a past participle in

contexts which required a past tense in structures such as *'I was gone (went) to see this girl' or *'The King was died (died)'. It is not easy to come up with a plausible explanation for such errors.

The case of using gerunds in contexts which required infinitivals is explainable on the supposition that at their level of second language learning, the students' understanding is not yet deep enough to enable them to see the distinctions in the shades of meaning expressed by gerunds and infinitivals in either Swahili or English or in both languages. The infinitive form of the verb in Swahili has two usages (Ashton 1970: 123); it functions as a verbal infinitive in certain contexts but as a verbal noun in others. The verbal noun in Swahili forms a class of nouns known as the Ku-class. This class of nouns, Ashton maintains, express the act of doing, or becoming, or the state of becoming, and correspond to both infinitive and gerund in English. She gives examples.

Infinitive form: To sing is pleasant.

Gerund form: Singing is pleasant.

He has finished singing. (p. 123).

In English, certain catenative verbal sequences may be followed by either 'to + infinitive' or the (-ing) form (Palmer 1965:150-151; Christophersen and Sandved 1969:150-151).[7] However, there is a difference in meaning or use between the two constructions. They are used with a limited range of verbs. Unaware of the distinctions in meaning between 'to + infinitive' and (-ing) constructions a Swahili speaker sees

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[7]Christophersen and Sandved describe catenatives as linking verbs such as keep, begin, want, mean, and get. They always occur in a chain in complex verb phrases -- p. 76. For details see also Palmer 1965:150-179.

no fault with sentences such as *'A big number of school leavers chose
roaming (to roam) idle in towns' or *'We returned home hoping to do much
through the Union and ready in forming (to form) other Unions'.

There were also recorded cases in which a present participle
would be used for a past participle and vice versa. Students constructed
sentences such as *'Where would we have being (been) had we not created
this party?' or *'This independence was a result of TANU been (being)
led by Mwalimu Nyerere. Such errors could be said to emanate from
Swahili's complex tense system. Compound tenses are numerous in Swahili:
some of them refer to time, past or future; others refer to some aspect
of time, action or state and yet others may have either of the above
functions according to context (Ashton 1970:247). At the same time the
English construction 'be + ing' is not without problems. This
construction expresses continuity, duration, action and other shades of
meaning (Christophersen and Sandved 1969:209). It could be argued,
therefore, that a Swahili student is confronted by inter-language
interference in cases where compound tenses of his native language make
it hard for him to grasp the English participial system. On the other
hand he contends with intra-language interference since relational
features of an English participle, while fundamental in the determination
of the meaning of a particular participial construction, can hardly be
adequately described for all possible forms of participial usage.

1.5 Concordance

Concordance was to Form Four students more troublesome than other
structural elements examined under morphology.[8] Form Two students did

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[8]See Percentage of Errors as to Total Sample, Table 3.

not find it easy either. One aspect of concordance that proved very

tricky to many students was the agreement morpheme /-s/ for verbs which

go with the third person pronouns 'he, she,' or 'it' or a nominal for

which 'he, she' or 'it' could be substituted. It is called the third

person singular present tense (Palmer 1965:13, Christophersen and

Sandved 1969:42-43). In many cases a verbal form was inflected for the

third person singular present tense /-s/, when actually it should not

have been. In the other contexts a verbal form was not inflected,

although the structure so required. Students may find this aspect of

concordance a problem because it operates differently in English from

Swahili and other Bantu languages, and also because it is irregular in

English, being the only concord-marked verb form except for the

irregular 'be'. Ashton is of the view that,

> In Swahili the verb cannot stand alone as in English,
> but must be prefixed by the Pronominal Concord proper to
> the noun which forms its subject. This oppositional
> phrasing is a feature of Bantu speech and contributes
> to its preciseness. . . (Ashton 1970:15).

In Swahili the noun dominates the sentence (Ashton 1970:10).

Words relating to it are brought into concordial relationship with it by

affixes. The affixation, depending upon noun class concords, is

characterized by the Bantu class-prefix system (Harris 1969).[9] Writing

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[9]Swahili nouns may be divided into classes distinguishable by
the pairs of prefixes which indicate the singular and plural number
(Loogman 1965:10). But the precise number of differentiable classes and
the order in which they may be presented are topics subject to debate.
    Loogman (1965:18), Ashton (1970:12), and Perrott (1971:8-27)
distinguish eight noun classes. They discuss the singular form and the
plural form of a noun class under one category. Eastman and Topan (1966:
30-31) distinguish eighteen noun classes. They treat a singular form
and a plural form of what other Swahili grammarians call one class, as
two different classes. Like Eastman and Topan, Polomé (1967:94-95)
divides Swahili nouns into eighteen classes.

on complex discontinuous morphemes, Harris says that

> . . .the grammatical noun classes of the Bantu languages
> are usually treated as a subdivision of the noun
> vocabulary into classes, each of which 'agrees' with
> particular affixes, particles, etc., elsewhere in the
> utterance. In this treatment, the class markers are
> prefixes which occur before particular nouns and
> then 'agree' with other prefixes in the utterance
> (p. 182).

Polomé (1967:94) gives three kinds of concords: nominal, pronominal and verbal.[10]

Swahili perfectives and imperfectives are marked by the tense morphemes (-a-), (-na-), (-me-), (-ta-) and (-li-), in combination with aspect prefixes to form compound tenses. The compound tenses combine with various verbs used in auxiliary capacity, such as '-kuwa', 'kwisha', 'kuja', 'kwenda', etc., according to whether reference is made to a particular period, to a process or to a state. But the compound tenses so formed cannot always be differentiated in English (Ashton 1970:249). This could be the cause of difficulties to Tanzanian students in their attempt to mark subject-verb concordance using the auxiliary forms 'is', 'are', 'was', 'were', 'have', and 'has'.

In the majority of occurrences in the incorrect use of 'is' and 'are', 'is' was used in place of 'are'. In fewer cases, 'are' was used in contexts where 'is' was needed. As for uses of 'have' and 'has', 'have' was persistently used in structural slots where 'has' should have been used perhaps because 'have' is the regular form in the paradigm.

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[10]According to Polome (1967:94) the three class concords are considered (a) nominal (with nouns, locatives and adjectives including some numerals); (b) pronominal (with the connective and referential participles, the demonstrative, the possessives and the interrogatives as well as 'ote', '-enye' and 'enyeve'); (c) verbal.

There is no single instance of the reverse. The problem in such cases
is probably intensified by inter-language interference. It can be
explained using Ashton's sentences. "Kisu kimeanguka", 'A (or 'the')
knife has fallen down', and 'Chumba kimechafuka', 'The room is untidy'.
The English translation for 'Kisu kimeanguka' would be a well-formed
sentence whether an indefinite article 'a' is used or the definite
article 'the' is used. Verbal affixation in the cited sentences is in
the following order:

TABLE 8

SEQUENCE OF AFFIXES IN A VERBAL GROUP

| INITIAL NOMINAL/PRO PREFIX | TENSE MARKER | VERB-STEM |
|---|---|---|
| ki- | -me- | -anguka -chafuka |

The problem comes, however, as Ashton puts it, because (-me-) is a tense prefix, indicating:

(a) Completion of an action, The knife has fallen.
(b) Resultant state,          The room is untidy.

> These two ideas must not be kept apart, for state is the result of an action completed. In English these two ideas are expressed by the auxiliaries 'is', 'are' or 'has', 'have', Hence in translation the student should think of the meaning to be conveyed rather than any fixed formula of English words (Ashton 1970:16).

Ignorant of the principle expressed by Ashton, some students constructed sentences such as *'Two of their serious problems have (are) to get enough water for their fields and to deal with pests' or *'I was told that he has (was) once presented a gift as a Tanzanian sololist'.

## Derivational Errors

Derivational errors were very low in frequency. The few errors recorded are not systematic enough to provide reliable information concerning the learners' problems. Tanzanian students probably do not find English word formation a major problem. The raters pointed out errors such as the following:

## 2.1 Noun Formation

In some cases well formed substantives were used in improper context, such as in the sentences *'The rival (rivalry) of these clubs is the only obstacle for our marriage', and *'Biology has interested me in its studying (study) of our living environment'. The writers used the underlined substantives probably unaware of their difference in meaning from the ones in parentheses.

## 2.2 Verb Formation

Two errors were recorded under this sub-category. They occurred in the sentences, *'As far as I am conceinn (concerned) I follow every school rule' and *'All Africans who were prisoned (imprisoned) by the Portuguese were released'.

## 2.3 Adjective Formation

As was the case with Verb formation, two errors were recorded here. There is a what may be simply a spelling error in the sentence *'I will start to find a good or beautif (beautiful) woman' and a word wrongly used in the slot for an adjective in *'But this was not succeeded (successful); instead TANU went on with its work'.

## 2.4 Adverb Formation

Almost all errors recorded under adverb formation are in the (-ly) form of adverbs which are formed from adjectives. The (-ly) is missing in sentences such as: *'We all sat down very quiet (quietly)', *'This man real (really) controls his instrument', and *'We have to go direct (directly) for games'.

## Function Word Errors

## 3.1 Article

From the point of view of the percentage of errors in relation to total words, failure to use an article ranked second to the preposition for both Forms taken together in the syntactical error group. In over half the number of faults with the article it was omitted. The English structural feature 'article' has no equivalent feature in Swahili (Ashton 1970:15; Cooper 1971:73). This is an observation which

is supported by Perrott (1971:7).[11]  It appears, therefore, that the
students' tendency to leave it out in contexts where it was required
could be an indication that they find it redundant.  George (1972:94-96)
discusses the definite and indefinite articles in English as deictic
items which provide redundant information.  He says from his experience
with learners of English as a second language that many of them do not
use 'a' and 'the' or they use them randomly.  To Hocking (1973:91) such
cases constitute a sort of 'negative' interference.  It is not an
intuition about an existing feature of the $L_1$ that causes the trouble
but the absence of any intuition about the point at all.

The phenomenon of 'negative' interference could also be applied
to the redundant use of the article.  There were many instances in
which the use of the article was uncalled for.  As for contexts where
the definite article was used instead of the indefinite, or vice versa,
the Error Recording Sheet had more occurrences of an indefinite article
'a/an' being used in places requiring the definite article 'the'.  It
is possible that the problem is developmental.

As for the inappropriate use of the article in place of a
different functor there are cases in which the article is used in
sentence slots requiring a genitive deictic 'my, our,' etc.  Nevertheless,
in other contexts it is used instead of the pronominal 'they'.  There is
no logic the investigator could invoke to account for the wrong usage

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[11]Greenland (1971:205) also writes, "Examples like the following
are very common:  'second thief asked. . . .', 'to police-station'.  The
obvious remark to make here is that the Bantu languages do not have
articles. . . ."

of the article in contexts which required the pronoun 'they', unless, of course, this is viewed as a spelling phenomenon.

The English article system exemplies a case of the interaction and re-inforcement of inter- and intra-lingual interference. Apart from the problems which the students face due to their unfamiliarity with the article system further complications lie in syntacto-semantic relationships an English speaker has to observe in article usage. A fairly simple surface structure involving articles, for example, signals a complex semantic referent to noun countability, number genericness and definiteness. Articles are moreover not adequately described in any English grammar that the investigator knows of.

## 3.2 Pronoun

The highest number of faults involving pronoun usage are cases of omission. The pronoun is among the category of deictics which, in certain sentence patterns, provide redundant information (George 1972: 116-118).

Unnecessary use of pronouns and improper usage of some of them also ranked high by frequency rate. Redundant pronoun usage could have its root in the heavily inflected Swahili language. As was earlier mentioned, a noun is the most important part of speech in Swahili. Nominal and pronominal prefixes are more heavily employed in its structure than in English. If a pupil is not alerted to this observation he might find himself using a pronoun in positions where it is uncalled for. Translated in Swahili, a sentence such as *'I woke up five boys whom I showed them where they kept those things' would read "Niliwaamsha watoto watano ambao niliwaonyesha mahali walipoweka vitu vile'. In

every word in which the morpheme (-wa) appears it denotes the boys. The Swahili word 'ambao' is in the translated sentence standing for the English relative pronoun 'whom'. It is immediately followed by the word 'niliwaonyesha' which is used for a full English sentence, 'I showed them'. The morpheme (-wa) represents the English 'them'. The Swahili translation indicates the pitfalls for the writer of the cited sentence.

The failure in a sentence such as *'Myself I would be able to remember the time', could be accounted to a translation difference between the English and the Swahili representations of the same utterance. The deviant sentence was taken from the collected corpus. The Swahili representation of the above improperly constructed sentence would be acceptable Swahili in the words 'Mimi ningeweza kukumbuka muda'.

The inappropriate use of one form of pronoun for another, as in the sentence 'We start this work immediately' instead of 'I start this work immediately', crops up from a pupil's failure to keep track of his subject element in a long theme. In one instance he uses 'I', in another he uses 'we'. This was a common error in the composition topics 'What I do after school' and 'What I did on Union Day'. Further-more, probably from an intercultural point of view, Bantu languages employ pronominal 'we' more frequently than would be the case in

English.[12]

## 2.3 Auxiliary

Auxiliaries were partly discussed under the sub-sections on tense and concordance. The discussion here is confined to faults with modals and the primary auxiliary functioning in a passive structure, 'Noun/ Pronoun-auxiliary form of 'be' -- past participle -- complement', as in the sentence 'He was asked to report for duty'.

The tabulation of errors indicates that the modals 'will' and 'can' are more difficult to employ than other forms. In most cases the students either used wrong tenses for 'will' and 'can' or used 'can' in contexts for 'will'. Usage of these items is probably made difficult by two factors, as suggested by Palmer (1965:106-107):

> First, the past tense forms do not often refer to
> past time. Secondly, there are a number of different
> uses of . . . WILL and CAN that are not wholly
> semantically distinct and that are not easily defined
> in formal terms . . . .

The form 'will' was used in many places where 'would' should have

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[12]See Loogman (1965:93).
The use of the plural form of the 3rd Person Pronoun 'they' as an anaphoric substitute for some referent which is withheld is a common phenomenon in Bantu speech to mark politeness or respect. In the investigator's mother tongue the word 'nibakasinge' means 'thank you'. Although the morpheme (-ba) is a plural marker, the form of the word itself is always used whether the referent is in plural form or singular form. Similarly, in Swahili the word 'ahsanteni' means 'thank you'. Although the final morpheme (-ni) is a marker of plurality, the form is sometimes used even if the referent is singular, particularly in a case of a respected person.
The investigator has observed that English native speakers sometimes employ the plural 3rd Person Pronoun to indicate the abstract representation of bureaucracy, that is, the distinction between an establishment and the people it is supposed to serve. It would not be strange to hear someone say something about a Government Department, a Board of Directors, etc. using the 3rd person plural form 'they' as in 'They would not listen to my request'. In certain cases the referent of the pronoun 'they' would be one individual, a director, a secretary, etc.

difficulties in such cases was not easy to deduce. Notwithstanding, the source of the problem could be negative interference since it is likely that the English pattern 'I am supposed to work hard' is not realizable in Swahili.

## 3.4 Preposition

In the percentage of errors in relation to total words the students made more errors with prepositions than any other syntactical item in the Error Recording Sheet. Such a high rate of mistakes could, on the one hand, be accounted to the fact that prepositions are by far the most important and the most frequently used of all structural words in the English language (French 1949:66). The more a particular part of speech occurs the more the chances it stands to be misused.[13] On the other hand the root of the problem may lie in both structural and conceptual differences between Swahili and English, since the Swahili language has no words which can properly be called prepositions or conjunctions (Loogman 1965:276; Ashton 1970:195, 197; Perrott 1971:98). The functions of prepositions and conjunctions are fulfilled in Swahili by certain words working with particle /-a/ or they are handled by phrases. It is possible that most confusion with prepositions arises from Swahili's tendency to employ several words with the particle 'ya' as a constant in contexts where English uses prepositions expressing

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[13]In French's view "If errors come because an opportunity arises for the pupil to make a mistake, prepositions give plenty of opportunity." (French 1949:85).

different meanings.[14]

Another factor that might have played a part in raising the number of errors with prepositions is the difficulty inherent in the multiple functions of some of them coupled by their indefinite collocational affinity.[15] French (1949:96, 117) has this to say,

> The great freedom with which prepositions have taken to themselves figurative meanings. . .has often enabled one preposition to trespass in the field of another. . . the pupil is in constant difficulty about which preposition to use. No rules can be formulated for his guidance. . . .

Prepositions are difficult not only to Tanzanian students. Their usage is one of the most difficult areas for almost all students learning English as a second language (Khampang 1974:215).[16] The investigator is not sure whether students who are native speakers of

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[14]Ashton (1970:195) gives a list of Swahili compound prepositions which combine with the particle (-ya) as a constant to do the job of several English prepositions:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| chini ya- below | juu ya- on, over | kabla ya- before (time) |
| ndaniya- inside | kati ya - among | katikati ya - between |
| mbele ya- before (place) | baada ya- after (time) | nyuma ya- after (place) |

This list is not exhaustive.

[15]Roberts (1956:88) estimates the number of words which may occur as prepositions to be about fifty; Long and Long (1971:33) raise the list to sixty-four and Strang (1968:192) fixes her estimation at eighty-five. This limited number of prepositions is required to show relationships for all words in the English language. It comes as no surprise when the Oxford English Dictionary lists sixty-three different meanings for the preposition 'of' (French 1949:96).

[16]The study of Khampang yielded no evidence to disapprove the hypothesis that English preposition usage is truly a universal problem to speakers of other languages (Khampang 1974:215-222).

English find prepositions very difficult.[17]

Confusion of prepositions was by far the most common form of error. The forms 'on/in' which pattern with a following noun to express relationships in space and time seemed to be the most confusing.[18] The cause of the problem could be inter-language interference. Swahili marks relationships in space and time in a different manner from English. The multiple function of one Swahili compound preposition for several prepositions in English is another stumbling-block. There were many cases in which the preposition 'in' was used instead of 'on' to indicate time in contexts where a date or day was mentioned. Sentences such as *'Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar united in April 26, 1964' or *'Saba is celebrated in that day' were numerous. Swahili does not use any form of preposition before a date. This could be the source of structural difficulties in the first sentence. In the second sentence the writer used 'in' instead of 'on' probably because a preposition is redundant in such a slot in Swahili. He was not sure of which preposition was

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[17]Dr. M. L. Marckworth, a specialist in language acquisition pathology, is of the impression that native speakers do not exhibit many acquisition errors with prepositions, although they may not acquire the full spectrum of them until quite late. She adds, however, that native English aphasics exhibit considerable difficulty with them especially in comprehension. (She made this interesting comment when she read the first draft of this thesis.)

[18]Ugandan students appear to have similar problems. Greenland (1971:206) writes, "There are about sixty examples of prepositions wrongly used in expressions of place and time; presumably these would be taught incidentally in the process of comprehension and reading rather than by drilling them in blocks."
Wyatt, writing also about Ugandan students, makes the same point, ". . .the choice of prepositions in expressing relationships in space and time . . . seemed to cause most confusion" (Wyatt 1973:184).

appropriate. Besides 'in' and 'on', other prepositions which were fequently confused were 'for', 'to', 'at' and 'of'.

Omissions of prepositions were particularly marked in positions where they are required to collocate with preceding verbs as in the sentence, *'It is a day which we should think Ø (of) first. As for redundant usage, prepositions were used to a large extent in sentence patterns in which Swahili requires them but English does not.[19] A literal translation of the sentence *'The Regional Secretary of T.A.N.U. was emphasizing on the importance of defending our Union', (Katibu wa T.A.N.U. Mkoani alikuwa anatilia mkazo kwa umuhimu wa kulinda Muungano wetu), which one student wrote, would be an acceptable Swahili sentence. But in the given English sentence the preposition 'on' is redundant.

## 3.5 Conjunction

Errors with conjunctions were not frequent. On the one hand their frequency in normal speech is not as high as that for prepositions or articles. On the other hand, most of the sentences used in the students' compositions were simple and the service of conjunctions was not needed.

As was the case with prepositions, the most common type of error with conjunctions, for the few which were recorded, was a confusion of their functions: using one form in a position where a different conjunction would have been appropriate. One reason for the confusion could be conceptual difficulties, since there are no Bantu words which

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[19]Olu-Tomori suggests the same cause. The findings of his study led him to the conclusion that $L_1$-based interference accounts, in the main, for the omission of prepositions and articles in the writing of semi-literate Yoruba-speaking Nigerians (Olu-Tomori 1971:215).

are basically conjunctions (Ashton 1970:197). A single Swahili connective word would sometimes be used in contexts where English would employ different conjunctions. Since Swahili students speak the kind of language that survives without conjunctions of the English pattern, they may not find it easy to make distinctions between English conjunctions which are used to show a range of specific logical connections between clauses.

In many cases the confusion was between subordinate conjunctions or between co-ordinate conjunctions.[20] Not even once was a subordinate conjunction used in the place of a co-ordinate conjunction or vice versa. Subordinate conjunctions were used many more times than co-ordinate conjunctions. The raters noted sentences such as *'I am sure that for (through) my hard working I will develop my country' or *'As far as (since, because, etc.) football is my hobby, when it is time for games, I always look for football'.

Subordinate conjunctions were more prone to confusion whereas co-ordinate conjunctions were more liable to omission. All omissions which caught the raters' sight were cases of co-ordinate conjunctions. They all occurred in Form Two compositions. This is a factor which points to the possibility that they could be developmental cases. They seem to disappear as the pupils' insight to deal with the mechanics of English structure becomes more developed. Conjunctions were omitted in sentences such as *'I put over my best trouser (and) a T-shirt with dark brown shoes' or *'At home we ate a special meal for the holiday

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[20]I counted how many times a different form of a conjunction was used instead of an appropriate one and came up with the result that subordinate conjunctions were inappropriately used seven times whereas co-ordinate conjunctions were wrongly used three times.

(and) also lot of drinks'.

Redundant usages were not high in either of the two categories of conjunction. There was recorded almost the same number of redundant usages for both subordinate and co-ordinate conjunctions. A conjunction was, for example, used redundantly in the sentence *'We have a very nice lunch of roasted chicken and since (Ø) when the lunch was over I left her'.

Problems with conjunctions may be expected to diminish gradually as students learn the functions and the possible positions of conjunctions in an English sentence. Their grasp can probably be strengthened only through listening to proper English, reading and practice.

## 3.6 Qualifier

Most prevalent mistakes with qualifiers were misuses of quantifiers, demonstratives and intensifiers. Similar to the explanation advanced in connection with students' problems in using other forms of deictics, the genitive and the article, the source of difficulties with the qualifiers probably lies in Swahili. The function of deictics in Swahili is very much dependent on the already mentioned nominal/pronominal classes. This is a kind of phenomenon that has no parallel in English structure.

As regards quantifier usage, it appears the choice of a precise quantifier to fit a particular context was not easy. The problem had, in one way or another, something to do with noun countability. In most cases the failures exhibit the students' tendency to use quantifiers of countable nouns in places where the context required quantifiers for

uncountable nouns, or the other way round. In the sentence *'The sick

man got a mental disturbance because he was the first to see so <u>much</u>

people', the quantifier 'many' should have been used rather than 'much'.

The student who constructed the sentence, *'We haven't plenty of (many)

doctors' was probably not sure of the contraints which govern the use of

'plenty of' in co-occurrence with negative.

Swahili demonstratives perform approximately the function of

the definite article in English when they precede a noun (Ashton 1970:

181). The noun must have been mentioned or implied as in the example

given by Ashton, 'Kadhi akampa haki mwivi, akanena hizi lu ni zake',

(The judge gave judgement in favour of the thief and said 'The pearls

are his'). When they follow the noun or stand alone, their function

is similar to that of English 'this', 'these', and 'that', 'those' as

for example, in the sentence, 'Chukua kitabu hiki', (Take this book').

This could be true with other Bantu languages since it is believed that

they are usually rich in demonstrative adjectives (Greenland 1971:205).

English demonstratives were confused in number, plural for singular or

vice versa,[21] and in other contexts they were used in places which

required genitives or the definite article.

In the sentence, *'I get at least every thing required by a boy

of this age', the word 'this' was considered imprecisely used in the

context of the composition. The genitive form 'my' was suggested as the

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[21]The confusion of 'this' and 'these' was earlier observed by
Wyatt (1973:183). In his study it occurred 43 times (*this things;
*these man). He poses a rhetorical question, "Is it a phonetic error
-/i/v/i:/- or is it felt that the word ending in /-s/ must be the
plural form?"

proper functor in place of 'this'. The replacement of the demonstrative 'this' with the genitive 'my' improves the English structure to sound more natural in the ear of a native speaker.

It is also likely that the students' source language played a misleading role in deviant structures in which a demonstrative was used instead of the definite article. Checked for this sort of error are sentences such as, *'The Europeans did not rejoice at this (the) formation of TANU,' or *'We know that TANU was started on this (the) date above'. Swahili could be the source of the mistake since its

> . . .demonstrative form '-le' may either precede or
> follow the noun it qualifies. When it precedes the
> noun, its function corresponds to that of the definite
> article in English (Ashton 1970:59).

In both of the cited sentences in which the demonstrative 'this' was used wrongly for the definite article 'the', from the Swahili point of view, the writers were not wrong. The demonstrative precedes the noun. Unfortunately their assignment was not Swahili, but English.

As for the application of intensifiers, the most common form of error was the redundant use of 'very'. The cause is traceable to the nature of the job of Swahili syntactic words in contrast to English functors. There were sentences like, *'It is very unlawful to be out of school without permission' and *'Although it is not very compulsory to go to classes evening preparation begins at 7:30 p.m.'. In both sentences the intensifier 'very' is not needed. The words 'unlawful' and 'compulsory' are strong enough to work independently in their respective contexts. But in literal Swahili translations of the cited sentences, the intensifiers 'kabisa' for 'very', as in 'very unlawful' and 'sana' for 'very', as in 'very compulsory', would not be out of

place. This problem is caused probably by the difference in categorization that may exist between two languages. Hocking (1973:92) gives an example,

> . . .'more' in English is a member of only one category but the (approximately) corresponding words in Bantu languages, such as the Swahili 'zaidi' are both comparatives and intensifiers (as 'most' is in English).

The point Hocking makes is what most likely lies behind the students' misuse of intensifiers.

### Lexical Errors

#### 4.1. Noun

Errors involving noun usage were comparatively few. Of those that occurred the most frequent were misuses of one form of a noun for another and a noun in a context which either required an adjective or a verb. A wrong noun or wrong form of a noun was used in sentences such as, *'Another work (job) which I want to do is engineering', *'The mat            Lipuli being the victory (victor)', and in *'Physics inte          y much because of its wide applications (applicability) to ma          aterials'.

          cause of error in the first sentence could be Swahili, since one wor       zi' can be translated as 'work' in one context and it can be tran       ed as 'job' in a different context.

          e explanation behind the students' uses of such nouns as 'victor        instead of 'victor' and 'application' in place of 'applicability' could be a failure to grasp distinctions in meanings expressed by nouns derived from the same base.

The wrong uses of a noun in place of an adjective were, in most

cases, affixation problems. A sentence such as, *'Saba Ṣaba is importance' (important)' exhibits derivational difficulty and similarly a problem such as, *'I was interested in people who were dancing tradition (traditional) dances' is primarily derivational. They were Form Two errors; they seem to disappear as the students learn more English.

With regard to misuses of a noun for a verb, it appears the few cases recorded were basically spelling errors. It is unlikely that mistakes in sentences such as *'I go to bath (bathe)' and *'They usually give speeches and emphasis (emphasize) the aims of our ruling party', could be accounted to something else other than spelling failure, but they were included in the error count because lexical confusion from some unknown source cannot be ruled out where the supposed misspelling results in a different word.

## 4.2 Verb

Of the four form classes of the English language (Roberts 1956:12), verb usage proved to be the most difficult to the students. This observation is no surprise. It confirms Palmer's (1965:1) contention.

> The most difficult part of any language is usually
> the part that deals with the verb. Learning a language
> is to a very large degree learning how to operate the
> verbal forms of that language, and, except in the case
> of those that are related historically, the patterns
> and structure of the verb in each language seem to
> differ very considerably from those in every other
> language.

The most common type of error with the verb was a confusion of meaning of different lexical verbs. The students show a tendency to use one form of a verb in a context which requires a different one. The cause of the confusion might have been in part inter-linguistic and

partly intra-linguistic. Inter-linguistic distortions could, among

other things, be accounted to subcategorization differences between the

Swahili lexicon and the English lexicon. For instance, in the

sentences *'I would have done (made) many arrangements to simplify the

problems' and *'I will make sure that my wife does not get (have) any

problems' the verbs in parentheses are more appropriate to their

respective contexts than the underlined forms which the writers

used. Such cases arise from what Hadlich (1965:426) calls 'problem

pairs' in the second language: pairs of words which are usually

represented by only one word in the mother tongue. Hadlich gives

Spanish examples: salir/dejar (English 'leave'); ser/estar (English

'be'); conocer/saber (English 'know'); and por/par (English 'for').[22]

Nevertheless English verbs, for example, 'have', 'do' and 'make' occur in

extremely wide semantic fields. In most cases they take most of their

lexical content from the nouns they occur with. From the Swahili point

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[22]Politzer (1965:75) illustrates the same point in the words
". . . Another series of problems is created through the fact that
different languages will, so to speak, subdivide different concepts or
activities differently. Some languages will introduce subdivisions
and distinctions where other languages do not see the necessity of
making any distinction whatsoever. As a native speaker of English you
may perhaps wonder why German, French or Spanish need two words for the
concept of know . . . . why French needs two words for the concept of day
(and two for evening), etc."
      See Sreedhar (1970:141-142). At the lexical level, he says,
"English has words like 'mist', 'fog', 'dew', 'snow', etc. to describe
differences in the phenomenal world. Due to the absence of these
phenomena in South India, a language like Malayan does not have
equivalent words for 'mist', 'fog', etc.
      "In English, the kinship terms uncle/aunt can refer to a blood
relative or an in-law from either the mother's or the father's side,
whereas Hindi, Gujarati and other Indo-Aryan languages have not only
kinship terms to differentiate an in-law from a blood relative but also
a paternal uncle/aunt from a maternal uncle/aunt."

of view the English verbs 'get' and 'have' are represented by one verb
'pata'. It is likely, therefore, that students who made the cited verb
errors unconsciously presented their ideas using verbs which, in the
foreign language, were inappropriate. As Politzer (1965:72) would say,

> . . .very often the learner simply uses a word in the
> wrong way; in other words, the word itself is correct,
> but the learner misunderstands its function or meaning.
> The reason for this kind of mistake is invariably that
> the learner has simply equated a foreign word with a
> word of his native language and used it in exactly the
> same way.

Confusions about other lexical verbs could be traced to intra-
linguistic sources. Compound as well as phrasal verbs or verbs with
particles appear to have been the most difficult to use. Sentences such
as *'The Regional Secretary of TANU gave up (gave) his speech' or *'After
finishing practice I put off (take off) my football boots and clothes'
were a common sight in the compositions. The root of such confusion
probably lies in the multiplicity of meanings an English verb, or any
other lexical item for that matter, conveys in its different forms. For
one thing, lexical words belong to an open set (Halliday, McIntosh and
Strevens 1964:22). The set is permanently open to incorporate new
lexical forms which are always created to express new ideas in English.
However, in conjunction with the on-going process of word production,
new or different ideas are usually expressed by changing the form of
lexical items. A verb conveys different meanings when it combines with
different words as, for example, the verb 'come', 'come under', 'come on',
'come across', 'come at', etc. The control of meaning multiplication

lies with the native speakers of a language.[23] As such, foreign

learners may not be aware of the kinds of meanings conveyed by a verb

in different environments. This would particularly be the case if

their contact with the target language is not strong. The errors with

phrasal verbs add evidence to the observation of Politzer that the

symbols or arrangement of symbols that express a particular meaning may

be so similar to those used to express a different meaning that the

learner has difficulty in keeping them apart. He writes (1965:117),

> . . .as a native speaker of English you will not get
> confused in the usage and the meanings of get up, get
> out, get along, get over, get away, etc.; or take up,
> take over, take on, etc. However to a foreigner
> learning English, the multiplicity of meanings that
> can be expressed by simply varying the word with
> which take, get, make, etc. can be combined,
> represents a baffling problem.

The confusion of such verbs as 'become' for 'come', 'returned'

for 'turned', and 'sure' for 'assure', may also be caused by the shape

of the verbs per se although a native speaker has no trouble

distinguishing such lexical forms.

Easily confusable lexical verbs were not the only stumbling

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[23]Twaddell (1972:270) would say, "People don't have a meaning for
a word; people have meanings for words . . . . This phenomenon -- having
meanings and very often different meanings for a word -- is polysemy,
multimeaningness."
    See Dale (1965:895-901). He suggests that knowledge of a word
can be placed on a continuum starting with 'I never saw the word before'
and progressing to 'I know there is such a word but I don't know what it
means', 'I know generally how the word may be used', and 'I know the
word and can use it'.
    Yet Petty, Herold and Stoll (1967:14) are convinced that knowing
a word and being able to use it usually does not mean knowing every
possible meaning and being able to use the word in all its contexts.
Word meaning is a concept too elusive for simple defining.

blocks. Differences in the phonemic systems of Swahili and English were, in some cases, responsible for misuses of verbs. What else could be the cause of using wrong forms of verbs in sentences such as, *'I would like people to fall (follow) things which would help them' and *'In the walk (work) I shall put my effort till I have get promotion'? Greenland (1971:201) calls such errors 'logical' pronunciation mistakes whereas Ritchie (1968:184) prefers to call them phonic interference errors.[24] They are caused by the clash of values of vowel phonemes in the Swahili phonemic inventory as contrasted to the phonemes in the English r-less dialect phonemic inventory. Swahili is said to have five vowel phonemes (Polomé 1967:208, and Milan 1967:36) as compared to English's many more vowel phonemes. The classification of English vowels is a complex and controversial matter; it is even difficult to define a vowel with precision (Stageberg 1971:12). Nevertheless, American English's eleven to twelve vowel phonemes (Prator and Robinett 1972:11, Stageberg 1971:12) and British English's twenty-one to twenty-three vowel phonemes (Jones 1957:61, Harrison 1973:20) are a challenge to a Swahili speaker whose network of communication is served by only five vowels. What he does, then, is to replace an English vowel phoneme with a Swahili vowel phoneme very close to it.[25] The approximation of

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[24]Ritchie (1968:184), writes: "It is generally conceded that one kind of interference behavior, 'phone substitution', results when a learner unconsciously identifies or categorizes an $L_2$ sound as being 'the same as' a particular $L_1$ sound (even though it differs from the $L_1$ sound in the perception of native speakers of the $L_2$) and substitutes the latter sound for the former in $L_2$ utterances."

[25]See Figure 2, next page.

# Figure 2

## SWAHILI VOWEL PHONEMES CONTRASTS WITH ENGLISH



| Key-Words | English Vowel Phonemes | Swahili Vowel Phonemes |
|---|---|---|
| beat | / i / | / i / |
| bit | / i / | |
| bait | / e / | / e / |
| bet | / e / | |
| bat | / æ / | / a / |
| pot | / a / | |
| bought | / ɔ / | / o / |
| boat | / o / | |
| put | / u / | / u / |
| boot | / u / | |
| but | / ʌ / | |
| Bert | / 3 / | |
| bite | / ai / | |
| Hoyt | / ɔi / | |
| bout | / au / | |
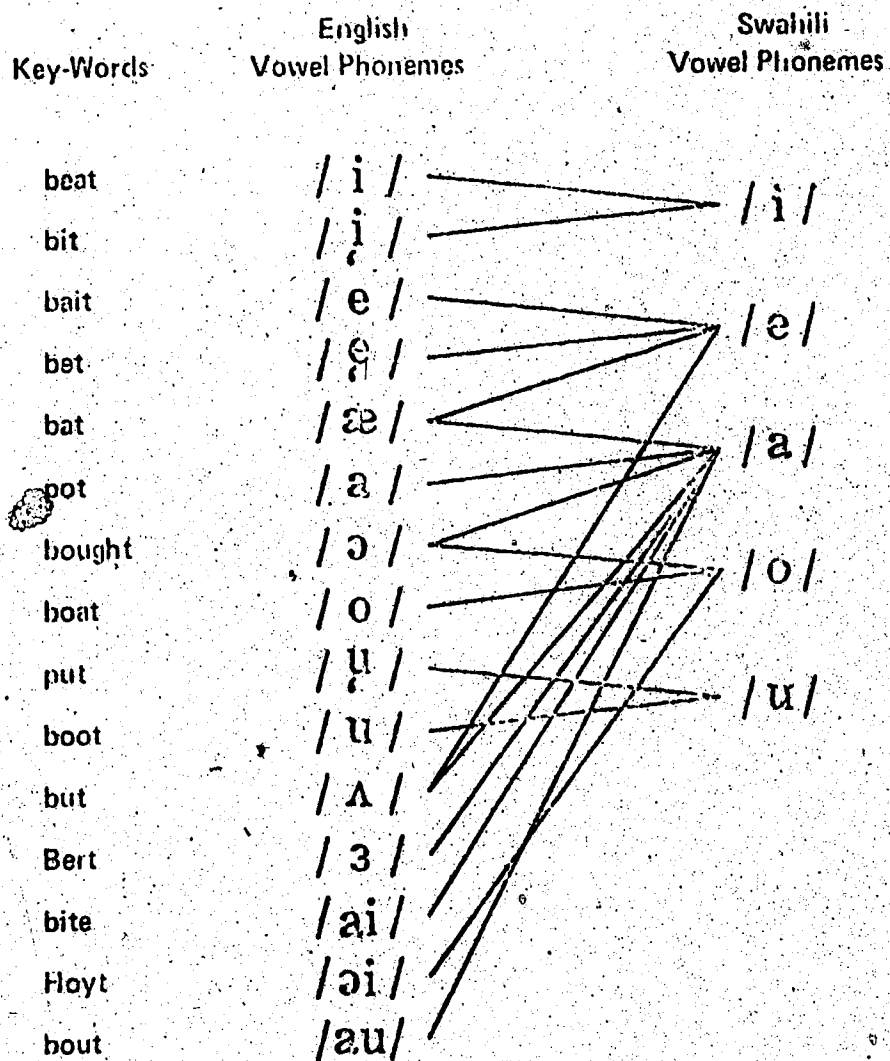
SOURCE: E.C. Polome', Swahili Language Handbook, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington D.C. (1967), p.208

vowel phonemes would work in the production process as well as in the receptive process. A Swahili student's perception of English speech would be affected to some degree by his bending the vowel system of his native language to fit the system of English. In the cited examples, one student wished to write 'follow' but unfortunately dropped the final syllable, exchanged vowels, and ended with 'fall'. The other student wished to write 'work' but his phonic system, I suspect, led him to something different, 'walk'.[26]

Omission and redundant use of verbs were other forms of error. Raters found sentences such as *'Without eyes no good life', *'I are very quickly in order not to late', or *'I will have profit from games'. In the first two sentences the verb 'to be' is missing, whereas in the third case the verb 'have' is redundant. In all cases literal translations of the cited sentences would be acceptable Swahili sentences. Omissions of the copula 'be' and redundancies of verbs such as 'have' and, in certain cases, 'be' could be attributed to the fact that English structure is different from Swahili structure in these respects. In its internal organization of minimum elements to produce a well-formed sentence, Swahili can do without some of the elements which are essential in an English sentence. The contrary could also be true. Harrison (1973:31-32) advances the argument that

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[26]It might seem strange how wrong pronunciation can affect words in writing a foreign language. It should not appear very surprising. I believe learners of a new language talk to themselves in the process of writing as they frame their sentences. In the way of talking in their mind, it is suspected, the words they write unconsciously take the forms of their pronunciations.

There are very few cases of structural identity
between languages, and even similarities are often
more apparent than real. If we are to avoid structures
which have no analogue in the mother tongue, then this
can lead to impossible constraints. There are, for
example, languages which function perfectly adequately
without the copula, the verb 'to be' and its different
forms, but one cannot get very far without it in
English.

Swahili can function perfectly well without the copula verb in
certain forms of sentences. The fact that English cannot is apparently
a frequent source of error for students.

## 4.3 Adjectives

Wrong uses of adjectives were not as numerous as wrong uses of
the verb. However, in the few errors recorded, misuses of an adjective
for a noun, an adjective for an adverb, or an adjective used for a
different form of adjective occurred in almost equal numbers.

In sentences such as *'Coffee will help me in my life to get
food and to increase the economic of our nation', or *'I would use my
ability and skiful to help my villagers', the nouns 'economy' and
'skill' should have been respectively used in place of the underlined
words. The cause of the problem was probably semantic confusion of
words which belong to different classes.

In respect to constructions such as *'They can leave peaceful'
or *'By peaceful the match was ended', the difficulty probably arose
from the form of the word although pronunciation interference could not
be ruled out completely. A foreign language learner who does not
enunciate distinctly the final syllable /-li/ in adverbs which end in
(-ly) might be caught unawares writing 'peaceful' for 'peacefully'.

Semantic confusion was, it is assumed, responsible for misuses

of one form of an adjective for another. The writer of the sentence
*'There was a nice (good) match, Lipuli Sports versus Ushirika', was
not probably aware of the constraints in English on the uses of these
adjectives with certain nouns.

## 4.4 Adverb

Many of the inconsistencies with adverb usage exhibited them-
selves in the redundant use of the adverb, wrong usage of one form of
an adverb for another, and misplacement of adverbs in English sentence
structure.

In constructions such as *'My first idea would be to prepare
food which would last me for all three days completely', or *'Then there
follows the outcomes of after independence', an adverb 'completely'
and the prepositional adverb 'after' (Long and Long 1971:79) are
redundant. The adverb 'completely', as it is used, would show emphasis
in a literal Swahili translation of the cited sentence 'Wazo langu la
kwanza lingekuwa kuandaa chukula cha kunitosha kabisa (completely) siku
zote tatu'. Likewise the way the prepositional adverb 'after' is used
in the second sentence is not deviant in the Swahili translation 'Kisha
kunafuata matokeo ya baada (after) ya uhuru'. The errors show the
student's temptation to transfer Swahili principles to English writing.

The confusion of adverb functions in, for example, the sentence
*'The players of both teams played very nice (well)', is perhaps caused
by problem pairs. The adverb 'nicely' is represented by a Swahili adverb
'zuri' whose function would depend upon nominal/pronominal concords of
noun classes and the same word may function as an adjective in certain
contexts.

## 4.5 Wrong (Unnecessary) Word

Phonic interference was, to judge from the analysis of words wrongly used, responsible for most of the errors in this sub-section. This was particularly marked in the usage of homophonous words earlier mentioned. It appears that homophony deserves special attention on the part of teachers of English. George (1972:156) has a warning,

> Whereas the threat to communication through a foreign speaker's creation of new homophony is commonly exaggerated, the hindrance to learning created by the casual introduction into the first few months of a beginners' course of existing homophonous forms is usually unperceived.

A learner innocently writes *'After doing that he went to hide them in the grass while his friends were in the process of looking and searching weather (whether) there were people walking about', or *'My fellow students and I were on the move to the District TANU Office were (where) the marching was officially to start'. He is a victim of homophony.

Closely related to misperceptions which are attributable to homophony are difficulties whose source could be traced in orthography. Milan (1967:43) supports the opinion presented by Polomé (1967) that Swahili has a phonemic writing system. But English has an 'unphonetic spelling' (Abercrombie 1967:20). "The correspondence of English sounds to letters is erratic"; so says Abercrombie. One English sound can be represented by different graphemes in different environments.[27] This means that on top of the challenging exercise of training his ear to register English phonemes, particularly the more troublesome vowels, the learner is faced with the demand to recognize an English sound

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[27] See the different letters which represent the sounds /ɛ/ and /i/ in different environments, Figure 3.

Figure 3

Spelling Representations for

American English Sounds /ɛ/ and /i/

| Spelling | Key Words |
|----------|-----------|
| -e- | pet |
| -ea- | bread |
| -ei- | heifer |
| -u- | bury |
| -eo- | leopard |
| -a- | many |
| -ie- | friend |
| ae- | aeroplane |
| oe- | oedipus |
| -ai- | said |
| -ay- | says |

/ɛ/

| Spelling | Key Words |
|----------|-----------|
| /ie/ | belief, grief |
| -ei- | receive, either |
| -ea- | bead, mean |
| -ee- | greet, speed |
| -e- | me, she |

/i/

Note: The source for sound /i/ is Politzer (1965:92). The source for /ɛ/ is Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary.

represented by different letters. It is more than a hide-and-seek game to the learner who is used to direct phoneme-grapheme correspondence. He would not easily discover the kind of error in sentences such as *'I was glad when I sew this girl', or *'He farther insisted 'that the main aim of Tanzania at this time was to see that all other African countries united'. Politzer (1965:91) believes that such errors are created by orthographic interference. He continues,

> Languages like English, in which a variety of sounds are represented by the same orthographic symbols and the same sound by a variety of symbols, will obviously cause difficulties. When it comes to lack of consistency in sound-symbol relationship, English is one of the worst offenders.

A few errors of word usage were probably caused by the variety of English the students are exposed to. In the sentences *'I <u>took</u> lunch at 12:00 noon' and *'I marched about a mile from our settlement to the <u>ground</u> where public occasions usually take place', the verb 'took' and the noun 'ground' are considered improperly used according to the normal speech of a native speaker of English. He would consider acceptable the verbs 'eat' or 'have' in place of 'take' lunch. But the sentence 'I took lunch at 12:00 noon' as it is constructed, is the model that is familiar to the student from the standard Tanzanian English dialect he has heard. This is a case of the variety of English reflecting English usage in a different social and cultural setting (Richards 1972:184).[28]

One other factor worth mentioning is the fact that the meaning

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[28]During their recent visit to Tanzania, White and Kristof (1975: 479) made the observation that "The local English has undergone some alterations, too. 'Will you play?' can mean 'Will you dance?' When a man says he's going to help himself, he's going to the toilet."

of words is much more fluid than is usually realized by most people
(Lado 1964:118).[29] The meaning or content of a word is found in a
culture. Lado maintains,

> . . .although the function words necessary to express
> sentences are usually the same as for the native
> speaker, the content words -- for actions, things,
> qualities -- are different, since the second language
> serves a different purpose from the first (Lado 1964:
> 115).

The existence of a Tanzanian standard of English is talked about
in speculative terms, but there is no rigorous research known to the
investigator that has been carried out to support this speculation. One
has to be aware of expressions like the ones cited which might sound
strange to a native speaker but are acceptable by local standards. Since
research is lacking on which to base examples, the Nigerian parallel by
Bamgbose and the Indian variant by Kachiru could serve to illustrate this

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[29]Japanese borrowed the word 'milk' from English but restricted
its meaning to 'canned milk'. The form of the word in Japanese is
similar to English but the meaning is only partly similar since it
does not include fresh milk, for example. (Lado 1972:285).
    A native speaker of English on a visit to Japan would find the
usage of the word 'milk' strange as its meaning would not represent
the total meaning in his experience. By the same token he might, at
first, doubt his ear if he heard someone in Tanzania say 'I went to
take lunch at 12:00 noon'.

point.[30]

## 4.6 Imprecise ████

As was ████ elsewhere one would not expect sharp distinctions between the ty████ which were categorized here and those discuss███ nder ███ rd'. The taxonomy was considered in the form of a cl███ ass███ obvious distortions under 'wrong word'; lexical items wh██ at█ bscured the meaning that a writer apparently wished to convey█ ███ were not totally out of place were classified under imprecise ██

Almo██ ll errors counted here revealed a shortage of active English voca███ry which the students could have drawn on to express their ideas. ██rently the composition topics demanded a better command

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[30]Kachiru attempted to describe Indian English by drawing attention to some of those █rmal features of Indian English which mark its Indianness from t█ Englishness of British English or from the Americanness of American█ ish. He argues that in India an idiom of English has developed w█ Indian in the sense that there are formal and contextual expo█ of Indianness in such writing, and the defining context of suc█ oms is the Indian setting. I believe that the Indian deviatio█ can be better understood after one takes into consideration the linguistic and cultural setting of India (Kachiru 1965:396). Kachiru supports his stand with the reason that the factors which mark Indian English as separate are not much different from those factors which justify the differences in Australian English, Canadian English, etc. (Ref. his footnote 24).

Bamgbose (1971:41) notes, for instance, that "A Chief Examiner for English in the 1965 W. African School Certificate and G. C. E. examination pointed out that the expression, 'It was my first time of going to hospital' -- used by many candidates with the meaning, 'It was my first visit to a hospital', would definitely be marked wrong by London or Cambridge examiners, but in Nigeria most examiners would probably accept it as a local variant. . . ."

of English vocabulary than that which could be expected of a just-above-elementary-level student. It could be suspected that the writers of the sentences *'After school I change my school uniform and put on my rough dresses (clothes)', *'The colonialists started (introduced) tax', or *'Everybody can study to his capability (capacity)' had a limited source of vocabulary to manipulate. Twaddell (1972:273) would support this suspicion. He believes that at the beginning of intermediate language study the learner is faced with a disastrous shortage of vocabulary resources, and this shortage continues through and beyond the intermediate level.

It should not, however, be forgotten that all word misusages would not be solely accounted to inter- and intra-language problems, phonic and orthographic interference. Classroom observation has it that among other conditions success in word manipulation is a function of how learning materials are presented to the learner (Higa 1972:292-303). From the psycholinguistic viewpoint, Higa (293-294) says,

> ....the 'difficulty' of foreign language vocabulary
> seems to consist of five factors which reflect the
> relationships between and among words already
> learned and words to be learned. These factors
> are:
> (1) the 'intrinsic difficulty' of a word to be
> learned,
> (2) the interaction between previously learned
> words and a new word to be learned,
> (3) the interaction within a group of words to
> be learned at the same time,
> (4) the interaction between groups of words to
> be learned in sequence and
> (5) the effect of repeated presentation of words
> to be learned.

From the investigator's familiarity with the nature of English instruction in Tanzania, it is highly unlikely that the subjects who wrote the compositions used in this study had the advantage of such well

developed and well-sequenced presentation of material as Higa suggests.

Sentence Structure Errors

## 5.1 Modification

Failures with modification were revealed by misusages of relative pronouns: 'which', 'that', 'who', etc. and their omissions. Redundant usages of relative pronouns in certain contexts and vague modification using groups of words were classified here. Confusion of the functions of 'what' and 'that' was noted in a sentence such as *'The work what I want to do is to doctor'. Redundant usage of 'that' was noted in a sentence such as *'As I have mentioned that it was TANU which conducted the activities of freedom struggle'. The cause of the distortions in the use of relative pronoun is primarily inter-language. In English, functions of relative pronouns are distinguished differently from Swahili. Swahili relative pronouns function according to pronominal concords of nominal/pronominal classes whereas English relative pronouns agree with the head noun in syntactic features such as (+ Human), (LOCATIVE), etc.

Jacobs (1969:117-122) agrees that the question of relativization in the teaching of English as a second language would be dealt with better if there was carried out a comparative and contrastive analysis of the first language and English. Emphasis would be laid on the comparative aspect. Taking Swahili as an example, he wishes there was a booklet pointing out how Swahili resembles and differs from English in the details of deletion, complementation, expression of qualification, relativization, and so on. Who in Tanzania would not like to see that?

## 5.2 Disjointedness or Disjunction

Errors in disjointedness or disjunction were more numerous than errors recorded in other categories at the level of sentence building. High in frequency were rambling sentences, omission, and unnecessary or wrongly placed groups of words. In a few cases there would occur telegraphic forms of sentences. Such constructions as *'As such therefore in whole these are the things I would like to do', *'He displaced a big and a nice box with two shirts', or *'His friends was in the process of looking and searching weather there were people', were very common. Such forms of errors primarily are stylistic in form. These errors appear to reflect problems with a variety of complex English sentence patterns; particularly noticeable were co-ordination errors as in *'a big and a nice box', and errors in structure and placement of sentence modifiers, as in *'As such therefore in which'.

## 5.3 Translation

Errors due to item-by-item translation of sentences from Swahili were frequent. The majority of errors counted under different sub-sections revealed the students' undue dependence on the chances of correspondence in meaning between English/Swahili words and structures.[31] Sentence patterns such as *'When I complete school first of all I would

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[31]In the view of Harrison (1973:24-25), it is in his attempts to produce well-formed or grammatical sentences ". . .that mother tongue interference is most noticeable in someone with a poor command of English. The rules which generate 'correct' sentences in one language very rarely generate correct ones in another . . . What seems to happen is that the mechanisms which produce correct sentences in the mother tongue are applied quite unconsciously to the target language, English. A kind of literal translation is taking place but at a deep level."

like to go to National Service', or *'Every where in Tanzania the celebrations of Saba Saba are performed by speeches, dances and different kinds of shows every year', are built, I suspect, on Swahili structure. The students probably organize their ideas in Swahili which are later reproduced in what they imagine to be English structure according to approximative systems (Nemser 1969, and Sampson and Richards 1973).

## 5.4 Hybrid Structure (Maze)

Hybrid structures were not as frequent as disjointed sentences. Hybrid sentences were, for example, *'We lift up the heavy stones all body building exercises completely finished there', or *'The day in being celebrated had full of majorities who led at heart to Saba Saba stadium for their procession'. These sentences appear to reflect the unavailability of sufficient syntactic patterns for expressing complexly related ideas.

## 5.5 Conditional Structure

Although it was thought that themes such as, 'What I would like to do when I complete school' and 'What I would do if I knew I would be blind in three days' would have tempted the students to use the 'if' sentence structure on many occasions, it was avoided. Moreover, most of the conditional sentences that were used were not well formed. The record has sentences such as *'That is all what I have to do whenever (if) I would be blind in three days' and *'If so would be the case then some fellows who are coming from destitute families would not benefit from the education which would virtually be for Tanzanians'. Tense proved very difficult to use in conditional sentences, possibly because

it shares the use of the verb form with the meaning 'past time' in
English and students find it difficult to connect two such different
semantic notions with the same structural component. Thus the student
problem with 'if' constructions seems to be a product of inadequate
grasp of tense application to convey different meanings in identical
sentence structures.

## 5.6 Repetition

It appears that the problem of pronominal repetition, particularly
of subject and object of a sentence, should not be taken lightly.
Sentences such as *'Members of TANU they were preparing to get
independent'. *'Those people I saw them when I was in Dodoma', or
*'If I miss both two chances that is going for higher education and
training then I will go to help my villagers', were not uncommon. Such
errors could be caused by inter-language interference. Hocking (1973:93)
has observed that,

> Speakers of Swahili and other Kenyan languages
> are very likely to produce deviant sentences like
> *'This law . . . its purpose is to prevent his
> orders'. Surface structures like that are perfectly
> normal in Swahili. . .but deviant in English, or
> at any rate in written English.

Such errors are persistent. They may disappear gradually as students
tighten their grip on the English language, and start thinking directly
in the target language. In this way they then skip the stage of
translation which is always a big hurdle in second language learning.

## 5.7 Comparative Structure

Occurrences of errors with comparatives were not frequent, not
because students find the comparative structure easy, but probably

because the structure itself did not feature very highly in the students'
compositions. The few errors which were recorded include such
deviances as in *'Young people are always (more) active than old men',
and *'The good (better) solution is to get these students once they do
their examination'. In many of the deviant sentences students either
left out the comparative marker 'than' or 'more'. Such errors could be
a function of Swahili interference. It is possible to construct well-
formed Swahili sentences of a comparative meaning in which a comparative
marker is not obligatory.

## Recapitulation

In the discussion of the possible causes of problems to
Tanzanian learners of English in this Chapter, the investigator took, in
part, an error analysis approach which Schachter (1974:205-206) refers
to as the contrastive analysis (CA) a posteriori approach, that is,
CA in just those areas that have been proven by error analysis to
present difficulties in production. She writes,

> Assuming that speakers of language A are found by
> the process of error analysis to make recurring errors
> in a particular construction in their attempts to learn
> language B, the investigator makes an analysis of the
> construction in language B, and the comparable construc-
> tion in language A, in order to discover why the errors
> occur.

The kind of methodological approach discussed by Schachter would
basically reveal inter-language interference problems. Intra-lingual
problems were assessed through the analysis of the students' version of
English sentences according to the context in which they appeared.

A frequency count of noun number errors revealed that in the
majority of cases a singular form of noun was used in places where the

context required a plural form. There were cases of errors which at
first sight struck the investigator that they should be categorized
under 'concordance', but then he convinced himself that they belonged
to noun number category. Such ambiguous cases were, for example, *'We
had a very good <u>conversations</u> (conversation) or *'I went to another
<u>places</u> (place)'. The logic that under concordance there should only be
categorized errors which involved subject-verb agreement served to
distinguish errors of noun number agreement from errors which involved
subject-verb concordance.

As for genitive construction errors, the genitive marker was
frequently omitted or it was used in contexts calling for the definite
article. In sentences such as *'Edwina will leave for her uncles this
afternoon' or *'We ought to obey school's rules', the apostrophe was
redundantly used four times, and it was omitted three times. In the
majority of cases, genitive construction errors were attributed to
inter-language interference.

It was revealed through a frequency count of tense errors that
the simple present was used instead of the simple past, and vice versa,
about an equal number of times.[32] In the majority of tense errors the
problems were attributed to inter-structural problems between Swahili
and English. On the other hand, English's interaction of tense, aspect

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[32]Frequencies of errors which appeared lower than a certain
arbitrary number for a particular error category were noted for future
reference. According to the purposes of this study they were not
considered worth the trouble of trying to speculate on their causes.
For instance, there were recorded on the investigator's working sheet
ninety-two tense errors and twenty genitive construction errors. In
case of tense the discussion was confined to error frequencies that
appeared more than five times, and for the genitive construction the
discussion was limited to error frequencies that appeared more than three
times.

and modality to determine the appropriate tense in particular contexts is not easy to describe nor easy to teach. It must have caused intra-structural problems to the students.

Long and Long (1971:115) consider gerundials, infinitivals and participials to have enough in common to warrant their being grouped together within a single category. Apart from that it is moreover not easy to describe adequately the distinctions in application among participials, gerundials, infinitivals, the perfect tenses, present and past, etc. Similarly to the problems with tense usage, participial errors indicated the students to have both inter-lingual and intra-lingual difficulties.

The third person singular present tense was the one aspect of concordance that was wrongly used many more times than other aspects. It is perhaps difficult to grasp because it is non-existent in Swahili.

The preposition and the article were the two function words whose error frequencies were very high. They have a higher distribution than other functors. This may have been one of the causes of their higher frequency in error counts. However, the root of problems with function word usage in general probably lies in the complexity of syntacto-semantic relationships which determine their appropriate usage. These relationships can hardly be adequately described and, hence, it is not easy to devise effective techniques for a teacher to employ in his teaching of function words.

As regards lexical word usage the analysis of errors revealed students to experience both inter-lingual and intra-lingual interference difficulties. However, many more times the problems were attributed to

inter-language interference rather than intra-language. But this should in no way be construed as evidence for the opinion that the biggest stumbling block to Tanzanian learners of English is inter-language interference. All that could be suggested with a grain of validity is the possibility that a Tanzanian learner has very limited resources to rely on in his arduous task of learning English. Despite the mentioned odds he is left to a great extent on his own to sort out the mass of puzzling English rules. This means, therefore, that in the face of a challenge such as writing a composition in English, he might be tempted to introduce some rules of his own making. And if that happens to be the case, the chances of his blending his created English rules with borrowings from his first language are many.

# CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
## FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is presumed that Tanzania's fervour to develop the national language, Swahili, does not imply dropping the English language from the school curriculum. English is taught as a second language in Tanzania. It opens many doors and provides children with another way of looking at life. English is still the language of instruction in secondary and post-secondary education. At present it seems to have no rival as the language of wider communication. This puts a premium on it because Tanzania cannot afford insularity in this technological era when international understanding is required. The interdependence of nations in the areas of science, business, politics, etc. makes it obligatory for a nation to have access to a widely spoken language. In this regard English has a very real contribution to make to Tanzania. There is need to pay attention to its instructional program.

## Summary

The present study was conceived to explore English language areas which Tanzanian secondary school students find difficult at Form Two and Form Four. Its overall purpose was to examine morphological, syntactical and lexical error content in secondary school students' English compositions administered in normal classroom situations. The nature of the error content, it was assumed, would be useful in a diagnostic

process of determining the difficulties which the students face in the areas of English morphology, syntax and lexis. The information obtained could deepen the insights of the teacher in his endeavour to find out what the students do or fail to do in the process of learning English. Furthermore, the knowledge concerning the strengths and weaknesses of students could enlighten the mind of the curriculum developer in his process of planning a better program of instruction. To borrow the words of Burt,

> . . .familiarity with the types of error students make
> is a valuable guide for determining the sequence and
> emphasis of instruction in the English as a foreign
> language classroom (Burt 1975:54).

The investigation was partly motivated by the allegation that the standard of education in Tanzanian schools was falling. In so much as the learner's understanding is, to a large extent, influenced by the language of instruction, it would not be out of place to assess how much English instruction achieves by the time a student completes Form Four. It should be borne in mind that post-primary education in Tanzania, secondary, technical, and university, is offered according to the dictates of high-level manpower requirements, considering the skills necessary in the overall development of the nation.[1] A shaky command of the language of instruction would be a liability to the student's intellectual growth and general education. Such a phenomenon

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[1]Ref. (1) The Economic Survey of the United Republic of Tanzania (1971-1972:129-132), Dar es Salaam.

(2) Daily News, January 7, 1975, p. 4; Daily News is Tanzania's only English daily Newspaper.

(3) In an article published recently, Anderson writes, "In Tanzania. . .investment in post-primary education is made, as it is in other segments of the economy where it will result in the highest return to national development. The purpose of this education is to produce the trained manpower needed in the country" (Anderson 1974:257).

could further be a limitation in the kind of high quality labour anticipated from a secondary school graduate.

On the other hand efforts are being made to develop and promote Swahili to take over tasks which, in the past, were done in English. Actually, in several fields, Swahili has already replaced English as the language of operation. The pressing question at the moment is the date of implementation of the government's intention to make the national language the medium of instruction in secondary schools. In the process of exchange of duties between English and Swahili a research-based opinion on the secondary school student's English production could provide an unbiased view of the English language program as it now exists.

## How was data obtained and processed?

One hundred and ninety-five students drawn from two Tanzanian secondary schools wrote compositions on given topics. The compositions were mailed to the investigator. He selected a sample of forty-two employing Kish's (1965) sampling technique. The selected compositions were marked by a panel of three independent raters, all of whom are native speakers of English. If a feature in a text was marked as an error by any two of the judges, this was considered enough evidence for the opinion that it deviated from normal English structure.

The researcher analyzed and categorized the errors by the double classification technique (Fries 1952, Roberts 1956, Sledd 1959, and Strang 1968) which distinguishes parts of speech either by affixation or by position in an utterance. Morphological errors were dealt with by looking at the nature of affixation, but for function word, lexical and

sentence structure errors the investigator tried, in most cases, to look at the nature of word placement in a group.

Errors were categorized under four major headings: morphology, function word, lexis and sentence structure, and they were further examined under several arbitrary sub-headings. The frequency of errors was counted and their percentages were calculated, both in terms of the percentage of the specific error in relation to the total number of words used in all compositions by one form, and, in terms of its percentage in relation to total occurrences of the particular feature.

## Conclusions

On the whole the degree of difficulty posed by different aspects of English structure appears in almost the same order for both Forms Two and Four. An interesting observation from the percentage of error in relation to the total number of words, although it was not unexpected, is that Form Four students appear to perform better than Form Two in all matters of mechanics of English word and sentence building.

### Morphology

In answer to the question 'What kind of morphological errors do Tanzanian students frequently make in their writing?' It is seen that, they frequently make, in order of difficulty, mistakes with: tense, concordance, noun number, participle, genitive case, noun formation and adverb formation.[2] Opinions about error source were given for the most troublesome areas.

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[2]See Percentage Error for both Forms, Tables 3 and 4.

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It has been learnt from the error frequency count that students used a Simple Present Tense form instead of a Simple Past Tense form twenty-one times. They used a Simple Past Tense form in place of a Simple Present Tense form twenty times. This observation points to the likelihood that the learners are not conceptually aware of the functions of the Simple Present and Simple Past tenses. Other observations of tense misuse, though not as frequent as the simple forms, involved Past Continuous for Simple Past, six times; Simple Past in place of Infinitive, four times; and Present Perfect for Simple Present, four times. According to the nature of the recorded tense errors it appears that, to a large degree, the students suffer from cross-associations between the infix-governed Swahili and the verb-form-governed English. From the intra-structural point of view, progressive tenses, perfect tenses and the infinitivals were difficult to handle, perhaps because of their structural and syntacto-semantic complexity in English, which requires a knowledge of how tense, aspect, and mood work together.

Concordance came second to tense in order of difficulty regarding morphological features. The misuse of the 3rd Person Singular present 'stem+s form' in place of the zero morpheme for verbs whose subject is 3rd Person Plural form, was responsible for almost half the errors with subject-verb agreement. In marking the compositions the raters frequently found structures such as *'Millions of people assembles', *'Science subjects interests me very much', etc. The investigator does not have sufficient evidence to establish the source of this form of error. But he is tempted to advance analogy as the possible cause of trouble. Swahili and other Bantu language verbs have a plural morpheme

to mark subject-verb agreement. Since in English plurality for nouns is regularly marked by the (-s) morpheme, probably Tanzanian students imagine it is right to employ the (-s) morpheme to reflect plurality for verbs whose subjects are 3rd Person Plural in number.

The use of 'have' in contexts where 'has' was required was another common form of violation of laws of English concordance. Although this form of misusage was accounted to the fact that Swahili has no words which function as English 'have/has', it is not known why there was not a single case in which 'has' was used in place of 'have'. The suggestion was made that it is because 'has' is the only irregular form in the present tense paradigm of 'have'. Nevertheless, if one of the significances of errors is to point to areas which need particular attention in an instructional program, then it should be obvious that the 3rd Person Singular/Plural present tense distinctions and the 'have/has' functions offer ground for concern.

In the majority of errors with number, the singular form was used in places where the plural form was required, whereas the plural form for singular form was noted in fewer instances. The nature of number errors offers support for a warning to the teacher of English to be aware of conceptual differences between Swahili and English number systems. The meaning of the plural number in English is not always

obvious.[3] Bearing this observation in mind, the teacher should think of better approaches to teaching the English number system.

The fact that the most common faults with the genitive case were omission of the genitive marker and its use in contexts where the definite article was required, is explained by the observation that it is redundant in Bantu languages. Teachers of English should work hard to establish its _function_ in English, as well as its variable construction.

## Function Word

The study reveals that use of the following function words eludes the insights of Tanzanian students. By their order of stubbornness, they are: preposition, article, pronoun, auxiliary, conjunction and qualifier.[4]

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[3]To elaborate this point "Large numbers of words (time, trouble, observation, encouragement, society, etc.) are observed to occur sometimes with the characteristics of countable, sometimes with the characteristics of uncountable nouns. Multiple encounters with such words will blur the countable x uncountable distinction unless both usage and the concepts are already established" (George 1972:98).
Some plurals have acquired meanings which are not found in the corresponding singulars, e.g. colour, colours (flag)
letter, letters (learning literature)
air (of atmosphere), airs: give yourself airs, etc.
The double-sidedness of collectives is confusing. Sometimes they are treated as singulars and sometimes they are treated as plurals, e.g.
Mine is an old family -- Singular
All my family are early risers -- Plural
The Government has taken new measures to curb inflation -- Singular
The Government congratulated themselves on the result of the election. -- Plural
(Jespersen 1964:204-205 and 250).
Note: The sentence 'The Government has taken new measures to curb inflation' is the researcher's.

[4]See Percentage Error, Table 5.

The problem with preposition usage was speculatively ascribed to both inter- and intra-linguistic factors. It is partly inter-linguistic because the manner in which Bantu languages mark relationships between substantives in time and space is different from English. It has also been established that Swahili grammar does not have functors whose job is similar to the English preposition (Loogman 1965; Ashton 1970; Perrott 1971). The difference is illustrated by Swahili's use of one prepositional form for several English prepositions which express different meanings. The opposite may also be true; that is, in certain cases English's one preposition may also represent several Swahili prepositions.

On the other hand, from the intra-linguistic angle the multiplicity of meanings expressed by a single English preposition, for example 'of', is, by itself, perplexing to a second language learner. Not only that, the co-occurrence restrictions between prepositions and nouns in English structure are rather unpredictable. This study has shed light to the degree of care that teachers and curriculum developers should give to the preposition in an English syllabus.

The high rate of omissions of the article (40 times) and its redundant usage (17 times) was ascribed to the contention by Ashton, Cooper and Greenland that it represents a concept non-existent in Bantu languages. This lends weight to the suggestion that the authority responsible for preparation of English teachers and teaching materials should devise techniques mnemonic to the pupil in his learning the English article; it is not an easy matter due to its complexities of structure and meaning in English.

As was the case with the article, the most common mistake with

pronoun usage was its omission (15 times) and using it redundantly (9 times). However, the causes, it is suspected, are not similar. Most of the omissions involved the pronoun in the objective case, particularly 'them' and 'it'; whereas the majority of unnecessary usages concerned the pronoun in the subjective case. Both these forms are likely inter-structural. The omissions could be explainable on the observation, according to Ashton (1970:44, 45), that in Swahili

> . . .direction of emphasis dictates the position of the
> noun object, and the use or omission of the object
> prefix. . . . Beginners should err rather on the side
> of omission in regard to the object prefix, and not
> imagine that it should be used every time the English
> translation contains an 'it' or a 'them'. . . .

The redundant uses of the pronoun in the subjective case were described elsewhere as being perfectly normal in Swahili (Hocking 1973:90). The mechanics of their operations are governed by nominal/pronominal prefixes. The mode of employment of these is determined by the degree of definiteness to be conveyed depending on a particular context. A normal Swahili sentence, 'Juma ameondoka', could literally be translated 'Juma he has left'. But the proper translation would demand 'Juma has left'. The explanation for omissions and uncalled for uses of the pronoun leads the English teacher to a problem that is remedied without too much difficulty once its source is realized.

Categorized under auxiliary errors were problems with modals and primary auxiliaries in passivized form. Highly frequent was the confusion of the functions of modals 'will - would', and 'can - could'. In other contexts they were omitted. The use of 'would' and 'could' does not always denote the past in time. And both these modals express multiple meanings whose shades of meaning are not easy to distinguish.

In teaching they require a careful approach to make clear the different meanings they express in their present tense and past tense forms.

Conjunctions were sometimes confused; either one form of subordinate conjunction would be used for another or a co-ordinate would be employed in place of a different co-ordinate conjunction. In other places they were redundantly used. The students probably have conceptual difficulties since in the Bantu languages there are no words which are basically conjunctions or which function as English conjunctions do (Ashton 1970:197). It would perhaps be a good idea for teachers to employ teaching techniques which could supplement the students' deficient experience with conjunctions.

## Lexis

At the lexical level this study has indicated that students have problems, in decreasing degrees of difficulty, with: general choice of English words, verb, adverb, noun, and adjective.[5] This finding settles the question, 'What kind of lexical errors do Tanzanian students frequently make in their writing?'

In many instances the students confused the semantic referents of different nouns. This could be, on the one hand, because of an unawareness of the shared semantic functions between an English noun and its equivalent in Swahili, as for example, the nouns 'tone' and 'voice', 'work' and 'job'. Either pair of these nouns is represented by one word in Swahili. On the other hand, it appears that confusion occurred between nouns with the same root, for instance the pairs: 'application -

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[5]See Percentage Error Table 6.

applicability', 'victor - victory', 'rival - rivalry' and 'shout - shouting'. Similarly, it is presumed that the subjects used a noun instead of an adjective when certain cases of both parts of speech happened to be derivations from a common stem, for example, 'independence' for 'independent' and 'development' for 'developing'. The described cases provide grounds for the inference that these points deserve more attention in teaching than they may have been receiving.

As for errors with adjectives, it is likely that the causes of trouble seen in misusages were also responsible for adjectival mistakes. Overlapping semantic fields for adjectives between Swahili and English probably misled the students to write sentences such as *'There was a nice match, Lipuli Sports Club versus Ushirika', and *'Perhaps T.A.N.U. would have been born some date after 7th July 1954, then it is vivid that we would have been a step or more backward (behind) the development which is at hands meantime'. Confusion of meanings of words derived from a common stem could be the cause behind misusages such as 'economic' for 'economy', 'skillful' for 'skill', and 'peaceful' for 'peacefully'. All the described distortions are indicators of problems which require more emphasis in the Tanzanian English language syllabus.

Common features of misuse of adverbs were redundancy and confusion of adverb forms. Uncalled for uses of adverbs were observed in places where Swahili would employ them to make an intended meaning more precise. In English such modification would be unnecessary. In the sentence *'My first idea would be to prepare food which would last me for all three days completely', the underlined adverb is redundant. However, it would be proper in Swahili.

Adverbs were confused, it is assumed, in cases where a student was not sure of the exact meaning expressed by a certain adverb in a particular context. The result was a sentence such as *'When the dance came to a half time I was <u>partly</u> tired'.

The points which have been made in connection with wrong adverb usage and other lexical forms support the conclusion that conceptual and categorization differences between the Swahili lexicon and the English lexicon should be held, for the majority of cases, responsible for the stultification of the students' efforts to learn English words. Such lexical conflict is always an important, and often unsuspected, difference between languages. In the eye of an anthropologist,

> . . .people speaking different languages may be said to
> live in different "worlds of reality" in the sense that
> the languages they speak affect, to a considerable
> degree, both their sensory perceptions and their
> habitual modes of thought.
>
> Comparisons of widely divergent languages provide
> ample illustration of the fact that languages categorize
> reality in many different ways (Hoijer 1953:558).

The errors which were recorded under verb, wrong (unnecessary) word and imprecise word seem to have much in common. It is thus perhaps logical that possible features, inter- and intra-linguistic, which are assumed to be caused by mistakes under the three sub-sections, should be discussed together.

<u>Interference Theory</u>

Interference theory is traditionally reflected in differential analysis of features existing in the source language and the target language. However, similarities and differences between two languages are not the only source of trouble in language learning. Recent

developments in studies on interference have proved that the target
language per se contributes something to the difficulties which bedevil
second language learning. That is how there came about the dichotomiza-
tion of interference into inter-linguistic, if features of a known
language are presumed to have some adverse effect on the acquisition of
another one, and intra-linguistic, if the root of the problem is
suspected to lie in the internal structure of a target language.

Politzer (1965) and Hocking (1973) look at the phenomenon of
interference in much detail. The investigator considers their approach
more precise, particularly in a discussion concerning the finer details
of the causes of language learners' difficulties.

## Lexico-Conceptual Interference

A large number of errors reveal the students' tendency to look
constantly for equivalence in meaning between Swahili and English words.
This is a misleading strategy since there is very little one-to-one
correspondence between the meanings speakers of one language have for any
one of their words and the meanings speakers of another language have for
any one of their (Twaddell 1972:270-271). Twaddell refers to the tendency
of matching pairs of words in two languages as an educational atrocity.
Unless communities exhibit signs of prolonged cultural contact it is
unlikely that two cultures would categorize elements of their languages
in comparable lines.

## Phonic Interference

To the degree that the English vowel inventory is several times
larger than Swahili's or those of the Bantu languages in general,

perception of correct English vowel sounds is a very difficult exercise to Tanzanian students. Misperceptions of English vowel phonemes were behind their using words inappropriate to particular contexts, for example, 'bud' instead of 'bad', 'sack' instead of 'sake', 'fall' instead of 'follow', etc. Consonants do not seem to be a major source of error.

## Orthographic Interference

Almost all graphemes in Bantu languages correspond simply and dependably to the phonemes they represent. This means that a word is written in the manner in which it is pronounced. Since English lacks unambiguous sound-symbol relationship, Tanzanians find its writing system disconcerting. The lack of phoneme-graphic correspondence in English explains the subjects' wrong uses of certain words, for instance, 'pull' for 'pool', 'new' for 'knew', etc.

## Syntactic Interference

Hocking (1973) looks at syntactic interference, considering

(a) differences in transformational rules operated by speakers of different languages to reach the surface from the deep structure;

(b) the presence of a syntactic feature in $L_2$ which does not have an analogy in $L_1$; and

(c) the imposition of a constraint on a lexical item in $L_2$ which is never observable in the usage of an almost equivalent word in $L_1$.

Differences in syntactic structure between Swahili and English lay behind the students' unnecessary use of words or groups of words in

certain English structures. Sentences such as *'In my school we have different activities to do after school' or *'I will try my level best so as to become of modern times' in which the underlined words are redundant, illustrate the point in mind.

## Negative Interference

Negative interference is one kind of syntactic interference. It is the type whereby a target language happens to have a feature which is non-existent in the source language, or a particular word in the target language works under rules which do not find their equivalent in the source language.

The presence of a syntactic feature in English but lacking in Swahili was responsible for the students' misusages of function words, for example, the article and phrasal verbs as in *'I put over my best trouser'.

The differences in circles of operation between words which more or less do similar jobs was noted in improper uses of modals, particularly 'can-could' and 'will-would', and verb forms, for example an infinitival form for a gerund or a simple present form, as well as strange uses of adverbs.

## Semantic Interference

Semantic interference is closely related to lexico-conceptual interference, but lexico-conceptual interference resides particularly in systemic differences between two languages categorizing and interpreting their experience as dictated by their particular environment, and that is just one aspect of semantic interference. Semantic structure concerns how a particular language community observes,

reacts and expresses themselves in a special way (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1951). Apart from the problem of meaning between languages, sometimes a second language learner is puzzled by the multiplicity of meanings a single lexical item expresses in the target language. It means that the source of this type of semantic interference lies in the internal structure of the second language. It is a problem which is not so much identifiable with beginners in a new language as is lexico-conceptual interference. Advanced students and even second language users who have attained proficiency close to that of native speakers are, at times, victims of this form of interference. Even the simplest conversations in a new language may use a word in a wide range of meanings, depending on the context in which it is used (Twaddell 1971:198).

Semantic interference from within the target language in many cases causes confusion of meaning of synonymous words. One word can be synonymous with different words in different contexts. Sometimes the word 'start' can mean the same thing as 'introduce', but in the context *'The white man started tax in Tanzania' the word 'introduced' fits better than 'started'. Such errors were common in the students' compositions. One way to combat semantic interference would be to assure knowledgeable teaching procedures. In particular, teachers should be careful to avoid rewarding the wrong kind of vocabulary learning (Twaddell 1972:271).

## Sentence Structure

In the mechanics of sentence building it was revealed that students have more difficulties with disjointedness or disjunction, translation and repetition than with other sub-categories under sentence

structure. However, this does not mean that they know better how to

use, for example, the conditional and comparative structures. It is

perhaps because disjunction and translation problems are observable in

all kinds of sentence structures, comparative, conditional, etc., whereas

the other specific syntactic structures may have been avoided by the

students. Repetition, particularly of the subjective case of pronoun,

was high, it is presumed, because in Swahili and other Bantu languages

it is an acceptable structural phenomenon.

## Implications

In contrast to the tasks a secondary school English language

syllabus prescribes for students to accomplish, this study has revealed

that by the time they complete Form Four, most of the students still

exhibit a lack of the language processing skills needed for fluent use

of standard English. This observation carries a number of implications.

1. The curriculum developer in Tanzania needs to re-examine the

English language syllabus in order to assure that it sets out

reasonable aims and objectives. It is believed that,

> . . .an examination of objectives is paramount to the
> study of any course of action; in teaching especially
> they tend to determine everything except the innate
> capacity of the students (Freiser, LaFontaine and
> Houston 1963:39).

2. The training of teachers requires particular attention.

Second or foreign language teaching is a difficult, complex and demanding

task. It should be conducted by teachers who have a sufficiently skillful

command of English and are professionally competent. They should, in

particular, be knowledgeable about probable difficulties in English,

their source and treatment.[6]

3. In view of the fact that foreign languages are never easy to learn, whatever the motivation (Elliot 1974:197), improvement of English language learning conditions can be of great value to the learner. Despite the teacher's wealth of professional understanding and his proven techniques to articulate instruction, if the learning environment is discouraging, the instruction can achieve very little, if anything.

4. Teaching materials, the syllabus, the prescribed textbooks, the ancillary materials (readers, workbooks, etc.), and the available aids (flash-cards, puppets and wall-charts, etc.) make up the tools of the teacher's trade (Strevens 1974:24). If they are carefully utilized they bring second language concepts closer to reality in the mind of the learner. The question of available teaching materials, their use and maintenance, should always be considered by curriculum specialists and teachers.

5. The point was made in the background to this study that the kind of English which the students get in the primary school militates against their progress in the secondary cycle. This view is supported by the error rate in the secondary school students' compositions. Implicit in this opinion is the suggestion that steps should be taken to improve English language teaching at the primary level. In this way a firm foundation will be laid on which to build up ease and facility for advanced learning.

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[6]"In many ways the most important consideration of any foreign language education program is the teacher. Materials, methods, organization, none is better than the intelligence with which it is used" (Freiser, LaFontaine and Houston 1963:93).

6. To the extent that language teaching depends much on national interest there is cause to articulate the Tanzanian language policy on more explicit terms. What Harries wrote back in 1969 concerning the language policy in Tanzania was not exaggerated. He said,

> . . .it is generally understood that Swahili is the
> official language of the Republic of Tanzania. Perhaps
> because the concept of a national language has never
> been clearly defined within the Tanzanian context,
> there is some misunderstanding in the minds of many
> Tanzanian citizens as to the factual linguistic
> situation in their country (Harries 1969:275).

At present the crux of the problem is not with the definition of the concept of a national language. The unclear fundamental question is, 'Of the three languages in the educational system, Swahili, English and French, what language should be assigned to what tasks in national development?' It is clear that Swahili is continually being stretched to catch up with national development. However, a clear statement of terms for each of the three languages in national life would be useful in the determination of what course of development each one of them should take.[7] Mackey (1970:viii) has the opinion that,

> A language policy determines which languages are
> important, the areas of activity in which they may be
> involved (and to what extent), which percentage of the

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[7]A language policy should primarily be concerned with the process of evaluation and language planning in a nation. Rubin and Jernudd define language planning as a ". . .deliberate language change; that is, changes in the system of language code or speaking or both that are planned by organizations that are established for such purposes or given a mandate to fulfill such purposes. As such, language planning is focused on problem solving and is characterized by the formulation and evaluation of alternatives for solving language problems to find the best (or optimal, most efficient) decision" (Rubin and Jernudd 1975:xvi).

national budget should be devoted to language and how
it should be distributed among the various language
needs, which language aims should be achieved and by
what date.

A language policy would exert some impact on the Tanzanian

Language Arts curriculum in general and could, in one way or another,

establish a clearer sense of direction which Swahili, English and French

should take.


## Recommendations for Further Research

This study has illuminated certain areas for future study in an

attempt to improve not only English, but language teaching in general.

(1) The corpus for this study was collected from only two

schools. A better picture to show strong and weak points in English

instruction can be obtained if an error analysis study were carried out

involving a wider representation of Tanzanian secondary schools.

(2) According to the present study, a large number of errors

were accounted to Swahili and Bantu language interference in general.

A detailed examination of the structure of Swahili or any other Bantu

language in contrast to English structure would throw more light on

interference pitfalls for Tanzanian learners.

(3) The present study was very much of a general nature. It

looked at several differing aspects of second language learning

difficulties. It could not examine any of the aspects discussed in

detail. Probably it would be a good idea to conduct different studies

on English learning, with each one of them charged to observe a

particular aspect, for example, tense, preposition, vocabulary, etc. in

much detail.

(4) It has been expressed that, to a dangerous extent, English instruction in the elementary cycle affects the students' learning in the secondary. Could some research be done to probe the truth of the matter?

(5) The success of foreign language instruction is very much influenced by the teacher. This study has looked at the written product of the learners. Would it not be a good idea to look at the model of English the students are exposed to, through a study designed to assess the language proficiency of teachers in the field?

(6) Perren (1968:164) presumes that the language of instruction can have adverse effects on other subject areas. An exploratory study should be planned to examine the content of truth in this assumption.

(7) In order to assess the function load for each of the three languages in national life, Swahili, English, and French, it would be worthwhile undertaking a language survey concerning language use and the people's attitude toward the three languages. O'Barr examined the language repertoire of one rural Tanzanian village, Usangi, in Pare District. He had three aims in mind:

(1) to describe the abilities of Usangi villagers in the language which they use either in their own country or while away from it.

(2) to consider the functional domains of the two most frequently used languages, and

(3) to report the results of a survey examining popular sentiments toward various languages.
(O'Barr 1971:289).

If a language survey is carried out along the lines of O'Barr's, but at a national level, the potential for Swahili, English, and French could be assessed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX D


Letters to: (1) The Headmaster
Mkwawa Secondary School
Iringa, Tanzania


(2) The Headmaster
Lugalo Secondary School
Iringa, Tanzania

11402 - 77th Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada.

The Headmaster,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
P.O. Private Bag,
Iringa,
Tanzania.                                       April 29, 1974.

Dear Sir,

     Your cooperation is requested in the development of a study be-
ing conducted in an attempt to detect the sources of errors in Tan-
zanian students of English as a Foreign Language at both Form Two
Level and Form Four Level.

     The purpose of the study is to examine the morphological and
syntactical error content in secondary school students', compositions
administered by teachers in the normal school situation.

     The accuracy and value of data gathered in this study will de-
pend upon your cooperation in sending me the students' compositions
written on the suggested topics:

          Forms Two and Four Composition Topics

Stream One:     Write a composition on Either,
                "What I would like to do when I complete school"
                              Or
                "What I would do if I knew I would be blind in
                 three days"

Stream Two:     Write a composition on Either
                "What I did on 'Union Day' April 26, 1974"
                              Or
                "An interesting dream I once had"

Stream Three:   Write a composition on Either
                "The Importance of Saba Saba Day to Tanzania"
                              Or
                "What I always do after school"

     It is planned that three streams only should be involved in this
exercise.  Every student in each of the three streams is expected to
write a composition on only one of the two given topics.  For Form
Two students the composition should at least be one and half pages
and for Form Four students it should at least be two pages.  If any
student wishes to write a composition longer than the minimum he/she
is free to do so.

While a normal classroom period at your school probably lasts forty minutes I would ask you to allow students about one hour to do this assignment.

When the compositions are written please put scripts from each stream into an envelope. I would also suggest that you tie the three envelopes from either Form into a parcel. Kindly pass the two parcels to Mr. Z.L. Kachecheba, Mkwawa Secondary School, P.O. Private Bag, Iringa. He will be responsible for mailing them to me.

I shall appreciate your efforts to organize the collection of the requested data in good time for me to carry out the intended piece of research.

If you wish to know the results of my research, please let me know when you send me the data. Arrangements can be made to send a copy of my findings to you.


Yours faithfully,


M. Lukendakenda.

cc: Z.L. Kachecheba
    Mkwawa Secondary School
    P.O. Private Bag
    Iringa, Tanzania

    Please arrange to see the Headmaster, Lugalo Secondary School, regarding collection of the composition parcels ready for mailing them.

    The Principal Coordinator
    Teachers of Foreign Languages
    P.O. Box 35094
    DAR ES SALAAM

11402 - 77 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada.

The Headmaster,
Lugalo Secondary School,
P.O. Iringa,                                                    April 29, 1974.
Tanzania.

Dear Sir;

Your cooperation is requested in the development of a study be-
ing conducted in an attempt to detect the sources of errors in Tan-
zanian students of English as a Foreign Language at both Form Two
Level and Form Four Level.

The purpose of the study is to examine the morphological and
syntactical error content in secondary school students' compositions
administered by teachers in the normal school situation.

The accuracy and value of data gathered in this study will de-
pend upon your cooperation in sending me the students' compositions
written on the suggested topics:

Forms Two and Four Composition Topics

Stream One:      Write a composition on Either,
                 "What I would like to do when I complete school"
                                    Or
                 "What I would do if I knew I would be blind in three
                 days"

Stream Two:      Write a composition on Either,
                 "What I did on 'Union Day' April, 26th 1974"
                                    Or
                 "An interesting dream I once had"

Stream Three:    Write a composition on Either
                 "The Importance of Saba Saba Day to Tanzania"
                                    Or
                 "What I always do after school"

It is planned that three streams only should be involved in this
exercise. Every student in each of the three streams is expected to
write a composition on only one of the two given topics. For Form Two
students the composition should at least be one and half pages and for
Form Four students it should at least be two pages. If any student
wishes to write a composition longer than the minimum he/she is free
to do so.

While a normal classroom period at your school probably lasts. forty minutes I would ask you to allow students about one hour to do this assignment.

When the compositions are written please put scripts from each stream into an envelope. I would also suggest that you tie the three envelopes from either Form into a parcel. Kindly pass the two parcels to Mr. Z.L. Kachecheba. He will be responsible for mailing them to me.

I shall appreciate your efforts to organize the collection of the requested data in good time for me to carry out the intended piece of research.

If you wish to know the results of my research, please let me know when you send me the data. Arrangements can be made to send a copy of my findings to you.


Yours faithfully,



M. Lukendakenda.

cc: Z.L. Kachecheba,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
P.O. Private Bag,
Iringa, Tanzania.

Please arrange to see, The Headmaster, Mkwawa Secondary School, regarding collection of the composition parcels ready for mailing them.

cc: The Principal Coordinator,
Teachers of Foreign Languages,
P.O. Box 35094,
DAR ES SALAAM

# APPENDIX E

## DIRECTIONS TO COMPOSITION RATERS

## DIRECTIONS

Please find attached herewith 42 compositions written by

Tanzanian secondary school students. Suppose you were editor

of their school newspaper will you, please, circle any word or

words or sentence that bothers you as not being standard written

English. Try to put in the margin the word or words which

could replace the circled ones to make an utterance sound like

better English. In case of failure to think of a word or words

which could exactly fit the context you can write 'unclear' or

any other comment you think appropriate. Please disregard

simple spelling mistakes except in cases where, according to

the context, a different part of speech should have been used

instead of the one used by the student, for example in a sen-

tence like,

    \*I would like to be an athletician for 'I would like to

    be an athlete.'\*\*

---

\*\*The fact that the example was later seen to be defective for the
point that was being made did not seem to bother the raters.

APPENDIX F

WORD COUNT FOR STUDENTS' COMPOSITIONS

FORM TWO AND FORM FOUR

WORD COUNT FOR STUDENTS' COMPOSITIONS

| | FORM TWO | | FORM FOUR |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 280 | 23 | 532 |
| 2 | 140 | 24 | 3907 |
| 3 | 266 | 25 | 424 |
| 4 | 305 | 26 | 413 |
| 5 | 224 | 27 | 620 |
| 6 | 248 | 28 | 410 |
| 7 | 260 | 29 | 448 |
| 8 | 202 | 30 | 704 |
| 9 | 232 | 31 | 479 |
| 10 | 334 | 32 | 446 |
| 11 | 280 | 33 | 432 |
| 12 | 272 | 34 | 294 |
| 13 | 214 | 35 | 392 |
| 14 | 248 | 36 | 434 |
| 15 | 178 | 37 | 235 |
| 16 | 154 | 38 | 390 |
| 17 | 264 | 39 | 594 |
| 18 | 231 | 40 | 354 |
| 19 | 536 | 41 | 329 |
| 20 | 192 | 42 | 456 |
| 21 | 210 | Total | 8776 words |
| 22 | 265 | | |

Total 5535 words

APPENDIX G

ERROR RECORDING SHEET

AND

CHECKING PROCEDURE

## ERROR RECORDING SHEET

| CATEGORY | FORM II | | | | FORM IV | | | | BOTH FORMS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | C | T | Per-cent | I | C | T | Per-cent | I | C | T | Per-cent |
| 1. MORPHOLOGICAL-INFLECTION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 NOUN NO | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2 GENITIVE CONS. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3 TENSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.4 PARTICIPLE OR GERUND | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.5 CONCORDANCE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. DERIVATIONAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 NOUN | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.2 VERB | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.3 ADJECTIVE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.4 ADVERB | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. SYNTACTICAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 ARTICLE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.2 PRONOUN | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.3 AUXILIARY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.4 PREPOSITION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.5 CONJUNCTION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 4. LEXICAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.1 NOUN | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.2 VERB | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.3 ADJECTIVE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.4 ADVERB | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.5 WRONG (UNNECESSARY) WORD | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 5. SENTENCE ERRORS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.1 MODIFICATION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 5.4 HYBRID, STRUCTURE (MAZE) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.5 CONDITION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.6 REPETITION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.7 COMPARATIVE STRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NB: I stands for 'Incorrect'
C stands for 'Correct'
T stands for 'Total'

## ERROR CHECKING PROCEDURE

The numbering of items in the following outline is in accord with the original numbers in the Error Recording Sheet. For each item comments will be made to elaborate how an opinion was formed.[1] Where examples are given they are taken from the marked sample scripts.

### Morphological Level

Under morphology, errors were checked at the level of the word. Word formation beyond the stem requires, by grammatical convention, either an inflectional or derivational change.

### Inflection

#### 1.1 Noun Number

This refers to the traditional number-system of countable nouns, singular for one thing, and plural for any number more than one. An error in number was checked for improper use of the plural morpheme (-s), or for omitting it where it was considered necessary. Also checked in this category were errors in the use of uncountable nouns. In the sentence *'Here there are different kinds of game like football, judo, volleyball boxing, etc.' an error was recorded for wrong number concerning the word 'game'.[2] It should have been in the plural form

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[1] Since there exists no written English grammar which offers precise directions concerning the potentiality of word usage and categorial classification almost all decisions were arrived at according to the intuition of the investigator. The opinions are ad hoc rather than axiomatic contentions of any particular school of grammar.

[2] An asterisk precedes a student's wrongly formed sentence or group of words.

'games'.

## 1.2 Genitive Case Construction

Errors in the use of pronouns inflected to indicate possession in the form of 1st genitive and 2nd genitive (Christophersen and Sandved 1969:52) were checked here. Under the first category cases were examined such as 'my', 'your', 'his', 'her', 'its', 'our', 'your', and 'their'. In the second category a check was made for 'mine', 'yours', 'his', 'hers', 'its', 'ours', 'yours', and 'theirs'. The genitive morpheme, which has four allomorphs in a phonemically conditional distribution, was also checked in this class, e.g. 'Twalip's pen', 'John's pen', 'George's pen', 'the pupils' exercise books', etc. The misplacement or the leaving out of an apostrophe to mark the genitive case was counted an error. In cases where there occurred a mistake of uncalled for shift in genitive case usage, for example, using 'our country' in one instance, then later using 'my country' in the same sentence, an error was checked. In the sentence *'I would like to look after family', 'my' was omitted. Such a case was counted as an error for failure to use the genitive case.

## 1.3 Tense

Errors of inflection for tense -- zero, 3rd person singular /-s/, regular past tense morpheme /-ed/ -- 2nd future tense, as well as irregular tense formation, were checked here. In a sentence like *'I think I complete my school in 1976', the future tense 'will complete' should have been used. The error was checked for tense.

## 1.4 Participle

In this category errors were checked which indicated a failure to differentiate between the present participle, the past participle or a gerund, or the failure to use participial forms in appropriate circumstances. In a structure like *'Since independence we have being (been) celebrating the birth of this party' an error was checked for the wrong use of the participle.

## 1.5 Concordance

This refers to agreement of subject and verb. In instances such as *'this day remind . . .' or *'I will buy things which is necessary', an error was recorded for failure to observe concordance.

## Derivation[3]

### 2.1 Noun Formation

Errors in noun formation from an adjective, a verb, or other part of speech were counted in this category. In the structures *'TANU is the party which led Tanganyika to get its freedom and independent' and *'Today Tanzanians are being benefited in the unification especially in the defense aspect', the underlined words should have been 'independence' and 'union', respectively. An error was checked in both cases for noun formation.

### 2.2 Verb Formation

It was mentioned elsewhere that certain classes of verbs are

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[3]An error was categorized under derivation if a lexical item was considered to exhibit a student's failure to put together appropriate affixes to form a word that belongs to a particular form class, a noun, a verb, an adjective or an adverb. A given error was categorized under lexis if, from the semantic point of view a lexical item conveyed a different shade of meaning from the intended one as judged from the context.

formed through a derivational process by affixation. These were the kinds of verbs examined here. In the sentence *'All Africans who were prisoned by the Portuguese were released out of the prisons', the underlined verb should have been 'imprisoned'. The student failed to form the proper verb.

## 2.3 Adjective Formation

Errors counted in this category were mostly failures in adjective conversion from either nouns or adverbs. Deviances such as *'To make a wealth country'[4] or *'The colonialists were unkindful' were checked for wrong adjective formation.

## 2.4 Adverb Formation

Checked here were errors which, in most cases, had to do with the sub-class of adverbs whose morphological structure consists of an adjective base followed by suffix (-ly). The use of 'quiet' for 'quietly' as in 'We all sat down very quiet' was marked for problems with adverb formation.

## Syntactical Level

By upward movement in grammatical description from the level of the word, consideration is given to larger constructions, that is, the patterning of words, syntax. The interest shifts from isolated word

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[4]In the sentence *'To make a wealth (wealthy) country', the word that occupies the slot 'a --- country' is supposed to be an adjective. Thus the mistake was categorized under adjective formation and not under the lexical item 'noun' because the student must have intended to form an adjective 'wealthy' to qualify the noun 'country' rather than desiring to use the noun 'wealth' since he has a correctly positioned word for noun.

formation to the way in which words are related to each other in a
string. Particular attention is paid to the closed class of words
like 'the', 'at', 'and', etc., which serve to indicate the relationship
between individual words. Words which belong to this small class do
not carry any lexical meaning of their own. The important thing about
them is their function. Their classes are relatively stable.

Unlike the open class of lexical words where new members are
constantly being created, only very rarely does a function word come
into being. However, in normal language usage, function words occur
much more frequently than lexical items. Christophersen and Sandved
(1969:67) state that ". . . the two words that occur most frequently
in English are 'the' and 'of', both typical function words."

## Function Words

### 3.1 Article

In this category an error was checked for the improper use of
'a/an' and 'the'. In instances where the indefinite article 'a/an'
was used instead of the definite article 'the' or vice versa, an error
was counted. Also in places where it was used when an idiom clearly
called for its omission, or its function as a structural signal was
considered necessary, an error count was made. For example, in contexts
like *'shoot myself with gun' where the indefinite article 'a' is
missing before 'gun', or in *'When the give speeches to the masses. . .'
where the context requires 'they' rather than 'the', an error was
counted for failure to use correctly the indefinite article 'a' and the
definite article 'the' respectively.

## 3.2 Pronoun

Since the possessive case of the pronoun was treated under the genitive case, sub-section 1.2, the examination here was limited to the subjective case of pronouns ('I', 'you', 'he', 'she', 'it', 'we', 'you', 'they') and the objective case ('me', 'you', 'him', 'her', 'it', 'us', 'you', and 'them'). Also included in this class was a check for reflexive pronouns ('myself', 'yourself', 'himself'), etc. In a sentence pattern like *'I haven't anyone to help -- when I am. . .' in which English diction requires the use of 'me' after 'help', an error was checked for the omission of the objective pronoun 'me'.

## 3.3 Auxiliary

In the class of auxiliary verbs the interest was on words that occur with verbs to form verbal groups or verbal phrases. Palmer (1965:19) suggests that there are eleven, or possibly twelve, auxiliaries with twenty-eight distinct forms in all, or thirty if those that function both as finites and non-finites are counted twice. Palmer classifies auxiliaries into:

    (a) Tense auxiliaries - primary - e.g. is, are, am, have, etc.

    (b) Modal auxiliaries - secondary - e.g. will, shall, would, can, etc. and

    (c) Full verbs - be and have.

Since cases of tense auxiliaries were examined under inflection, sub-category 1.3, the problems dealt with here were limited to modal auxiliaries and auxiliary forms which were required in the formation of passive constructions such as 'he is interested'. An error was counted in constructions such as *'I surprised and I asked my father

"Please father, what about your friend?"' where auxiliary 'was' is
needed between 'I' and 'surprised' or in *'. . .while this <u>could</u> not
have happened if every student had chosen to go to his village', where
the context requires the use of 'would' rather than 'could'.

## 3.4 Preposition

Checked here were problems of misuse of a preposition where
the context required a different one, as in the sentence *'<u>In</u> that
very time I was coming from the town'. The preposition 'at' should
have been used instead of 'in'. In other cases a preposition was
left out where the context actually required it. In the sentence *'He
always looked me' the preposition 'at' is missing between 'look' and
'me'. In instances like this an error was checked for the preposition.

## 3.5 Conjunction

Examined under this category was the use of co-ordinating and
subordinating conjunctions. In a sentence such as *'This TANU got
so many votes and then it won' where the use of 'and then' is uncalled
for, or in *'We have a few engineers in our country so we want to
increase development' where 'and' fits better than 'so', an error was
counted for the incorrect usage of conjunctions.

## 3.6 Qualifier

To limit the number of items in the error recording sheet, only
failures to use intensifiers, demonstratives and quantifiers were
checked. An error was checked for failure to use an intensifier in
sentences like *'It is <u>very</u> unlawful to be out of the school area
without a permission from either the head prefect of the hostel, the

room prefect or the teacher concerned' where the student should have omitted 'very'. An error was counted for failure to use a quantifier in a sentence like *'He was the first to see so much people' where the use of 'many' instead of 'much' sounds better. In the sentence *'The Europeans were not happy with this formation of TANU', the definite article should have been used in place of 'this'. In this case an error for demonstrative was counted.

## Lexical Level

At the morphological level in section two, errors were examined with the investigator's attention on the internal structure of a word. In this section the interest was directed to the proper usage of a lexical item in its form class: noun, verb, adjective or adverb. Lexical items can be identified by their formal signals such as inflectional and derivational affixes, a characteristic which is missing in function words.

### 4.1 Noun

An error in connection with noun usage was counted in patterns where a noun was incorrectly used instead of another noun or a different part of speech that was considered more suitable according to the context. In the sentence *'The match ended with Lipuli being the victory (victor)', the appropriate noun should have been 'victor'. In a case like this an error was recorded for wrong use of noun.

### 4.2 Verb

An error was counted in instances where a verb was wrongly or imprecisely used or if it was omitted. In a sentence like *'I will be

nothing to do because this is the will of God' or in *'People started
to congratulate the day' where the verbs 'be' and 'congratulate' do not
fit the context, an error was counted in both cases.

## 4.3 Adjective

For the inappropriate use of an adjective or its use in places
where a different part of speech better fitted the context, an error in
connection with adjective usage was counted. In the sentences *'There
was a very nice match' and *'Peaceful the matches were ended', the
adjective 'good' for 'nice' and the adverb 'peacefully' for the
adjective 'peaceful' would have better fitted their respective slots.

## 4.4 Adverb

Similarly to the method applied in checking lexical item failures
with nouns, verbs and adjectives, an error for adverbs was counted in
cases where an adverb was omitted or used unnecessarily or appeared in
places where a different lexical word would have been preferable. In
such a structure as *'The solution would be to shoot myself with a gun
and die away' where the adverb 'away' was not required, an error was
checked. Also in a sentence such as *'I would like to help other people
who did not successfully in their examination' where the context
requires the verb 'succeed' rather than the adverb 'successfully' an
error was marked.

## 4.5 Wrong Word

An error under the category of wrong word was checked in
instances where failure in word usage could not directly be described as
indicative of lack of knowledge in the use of a particular part of

speech in an English sentence. For example, in a sentence such as *'Eyes are the <u>particles</u> which enable people to distinguish the good and bad things', the word '<u>particles</u>' is not appropriate according to the established context. It could not be classed as an error in noun usage or any other part of speech. It was, for descriptive purposes, counted as an error under wrong word usage.

## 4.6 <u>Imprecise Word</u>

Errors were checked here when the word used in a sentence did not exactly fit the context. It was not easy to draw a line between a 'wrong' word and an 'imprecise' word. In the course of error categorization, however, the analyst checked under 'wrong word' words which were considered obviously ridiculous in the context. He marked under 'imprecise word' words which were not actually out of place by English structure, but all the same did not carry the exact meaning required by context. The words counted here seemed to have resulted not from the student's complete failure to understand the lexical meaning of a word but rather a failure to use the word properly. An error was marked in a sentence such as *'I would have made many arrangements to <u>simplify</u> the problem' where 'solve' would have been more appropriate; or in *'Everybody can study to his <u>capability</u>' in which case the word 'capacity' would have been more suitable.[5]

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[5]The borderline between Noun error and Imprecise word, in a case like this, is difficult to establish. In general, the distinction followed was that if the erroneous word is semantically close to the correct word, it was classified here. Thus 'capability' and 'capacity' are synonymous in some contexts, as are 'solve' and 'simplify' from the previous (verb) example--but the student's choice in each case is imprecise.

## Sentence Level

Essentially any discussion of linguistic elements beyond the word has, by grammatical definition, to be considered in the domain of syntax. This means that confining the analysis of errors recorded under syntax, in section three, specifically on function words, should in no way reflect a misleading notion that the form classes in section four and the grammatical concepts discussed in this section are outside the scope of syntax. The subdivision into three sections of linguistic units which belong, by and large, to the same realm, was, for descriptive purposes, considered to be a useful approach to error analysis. Function words provide linkage to lexical words in a stretch of speech called a sentence by grammatical convention. However, the main point is that in discussions about language all three categories are described within the feature of word patterning. Word patterning is the major criterion in the dichotomization of levels of morphology and syntax.

What error categories were examined under the sentence? As a prelude to descriptions of errors within the sentence there should naturally be some definition of the concept of a sentence. But the investigator could not unearth one universally accepted definition for a sentence in the whole of the literature he examined. Some uncertainty looms as to just what constitutes a sentence either grammatically or stylistically. There is no one acceptable and workable criterion. Fries (1963:196) argues,

> More than two hundred definitions of the sentence
> confront the worker who undertakes to deal with the
> structure of English sentences. The common school
> grammars continue to repeat the familiar definition,
> "A sentence is a group of words expressing a complete
> thought," although this ancient definition (which

antedates Priscian c. 500 A.D.) quite evidently does not furnish a workable set of criteria by which to recognize sentences.

Having dismissed the traditional definition of a sentence, Fries advances his definition.

> . . .a sentence . . . is a single free utterance, minimum or expanded; i.e. . . . . it is "free" in the sense that it is not included in any larger structure by means of any grammatical device (p. 208).

Fries's definition incorporated the idea of Bloomfield (1933:170), who called a sentence a linguistic form not included by virtue of any grammatical construction in any larger linguistic form.

Avoiding notional definitions of a sentence but accommodating some of the characteristics expressed by Bloomfield and Fries, Hartmann and Stork (1972:206) offer the following,

> A typical structural definition of a sentence includes reference to the fact that it is the largest unit on which linguistic analysis can be carried out, i.e. it is a grammatical form which can be analysed into constituents but which is not a constituent of any larger form.

In the face of as many definitions for a sentence as there are grammarians who have attempted one, in this study a sentence was taken in the conventional sense as a group of words standing between an initial capital letter and a mark of end punctuation (Fries 1953:9).

## 5.1 Modification

In sub-section 3.6 on qualifiers, an error was checked for wrong qualifier usage in cases where a sentence exhibited problems with single word pre-/post nominal or verbal qualification. In this section attention is focussed on instances in which a phrase or clause was so placed in a sentence as to lose precision or to result in some kind of

distracting ambiguity. Examined here were relativization problems involving a relative pronoun, a relative clause or a phrase incorrectly used in the form of 'a modifying element' of a sentence, and problems of nominalization. For instance, in the sentence *'I shall help my friends whose have not jobs' the relative pronoun 'who' should have been used in place of 'whose'. Also in the sentence, *'Therefore which I will need to do is to be punctual', the pronoun 'what' fits the context better than 'which'. Cases such as these constituted an error under modification.

## 5.2 Disjointedness or Disjunction

A sentence was considered disjointed if a word or words were omitted or they were wrongly ordered. Sentence fragments and meaningless phrases which violated coherence were also checked here. A sentence such as *'I would overcome this problem of lack of doctors by joining to be one of them' or *'My first salary I will give to my parents' were marked as revealing the problem of disjointedness or disjunction.

## 5.3 Translation

An error was marked for translation if the English structure was considered to be built on Swahili syntactic structure. It is possible that a student might have failed to find English words to express his ideas effectively. In such a situation he probably found it convenient to develop his thought in the language he knows best, Swahili, and then literally translate the Swahili sentence in mind to an English structure. For example in the sentence *'In my village I will work with other people hand by hand without considering my education',

the group of words 'without considering my education' does not precisely fit the context. It is most likely that the writer formulated his idea in Swahili in the words 'Katika kijiji changu nitafanya kazi nawatu wengine bila kujali elimu yangu'. The group of words, 'bila kujali elimu yangu' literally means 'without considering my education'. In such a case an error was recorded under the category of translation. Furthermore, the second part of the sentence *'The white men forced people to work on their plantations; they also started tax', exhibits an obvious problem of translation. Probably the word 'introduced' should have been used in the slot occuped by the verb 'started'. Swahili has one word 'anza' which in English can, in certain contexts, be translated to mean 'start' and in others to mean 'introduce'. It is likely the student translated the Swahili sentence 'Tena walianzisha kodi' meaning 'they (the colonial rulers) introduced the idea of paying tax in Tanzania'.

### 5.4 Hybrid Structure (maze)

There were a few cases in which a given sentence made no sense at all to the rater. Such would be the case when it would not be easy to establish the writer's intentions from the context. The sentence in such a case would be considered a failure to represent some form of English structure. Sentences such as these, *'My girl friend with me and that she appreciate wich such a silly word' and *'I suddenly woke and it way but then early in the morning' were classed in the category of hybrid structure.

## 5.5 Conditional Structure

Errors in if-sentence structures were checked in this category. The problem in the sentence *'If there is a thief who wants to stole my equipment I would be informed' was considered to reveal lack of knowledge with respect to the formation of conditional sentence patterns.

## 5.6 Repetition

Sentence patterns which contained a double subject or a double object were checked here. Repetition of any part of speech or group of words was also checked under this sub-section. A sentence such as *'In my heart it seemed those people I saw them when I was in Dodoma' was considered to contain needless repetition.

## 5.7 Comparative Structure

Under this sub-section were recorded errors which reflected problems with adjectival and adverbial comparative sentence patterns. The mistake in the sentence *'Under TANU our country made quick progress than during British rule' was considered to reveal a problem with the comparative structure.

It should be borne in mind that in the taxonomization of errors, one sentence might contain multiple errors and these were classified under different sub-sections. The sentence cited as an example of an error that was categorized under sub-section 5.7 Repetition was also taxonomized under sub-section 5.2 Disjointedness or Disjunction as revealing a problem with word order.

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE GOOD COMPOSITIONS

JUDGED FROM THE POINT OF

VIEW OF LOW FREQUENCY OF ERRORS

## FORM TWO LEVEL

### "AN INTERESTING DREAM I ONCE HAD"

One day I dreamed that my father was very old. Always he looked me and though, "He is old now, he haven't long to live. He should like to see me married before he die."

So one day he called me and said, "My daughter I am an old man. When I am dead there will be no one to look after you. Surely it would be a good thing for you to be married? I have sent the message to Harry's son to come here today. He has long wanted to marry you". I did not wish to marry that boy because I know that he was not a good boy, but I didn't tell my father. I thought it better to wait until I had seen his face. So I went to the room and sat down near the window to wait.

After a little time I saw a very bad figure of a man with a very dirty clothes. When I heard the sound of the shoes going down the road I went quickly to my father and said "Look father I have seen your son in law, please don't make me marry him. If I marry him, I shall be very dis-consolate. I think he is a bad man, look at his clothes are very dirty and his face are like a face of a monkey. I don't like!!! Farther!!! I don't like!!!

At that day I was very unhappy I went back my room I cried all the day. during the night I planned to run-away. I ran out of the city and set out on my way to another country, for many days I walked until my feet began hurt me so much that I sat down and began to cry, I was in the forest at the time, sitting at the foot of a tree my clothes were worn out. I found my eyes became heavy with sleep, I

slept in the forest because I was very tired

   "Before I finished my dream, my mother called me to awake up

because  I was late that day to go to school."

Don't think that it's true but this was my dreaming.

## FORM FOUR LEVEL

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SABA SABA DAY TO TANZANIA

Any country which had been free from colonial domination tries to remember the day before or after independence. The day which is between these two but opposite days, is a memorial day to that country.

Saba Saba is a memorial day in our country. It is not a memorial day before or after independence. It is a day when we new the Importance of being Independent. Then we created this party, TANU on that particular day to lead us through colonial days towards independence.

Since Independence, we have been celebrating each year the birth of this party remembering the day we created it, on 7.7.1954. Many people prepare their homes with many decorations, other slaughter cows, goats sheep and many others. But, is that what this day means to us? Is the importance of Saba Saba to us just a day whereby people get a better opportunity to slaughter their pastoral animals? Then if this day means all the above, then in an independent country like Tanzania. It is quite opposite.

What is important is to ask ourselves where would we have being had we not created this party T.A.N.U. Try to see as many parts of this world as you can. Mozambique, Angola, South Africa and Guinea Bissau to mention a few. Don't they have goats, cattle and sheep? Geographically, yes. But why don't they celebrate on a particular day as Saba Saba. If they celebrate, is it as intensive and extensive on this Saba Saba day?

Every one knows the intention of any colonial power. To exploit

as much as they can the national resources, manpower and in return to give as less assistance to their colony as possible. When our brothers in the above mentioned countries realised this, they started liberation parties.

Fortunately enough in our country we used only politics and no bloodshed was between the two opposing forces. What is as important as the blood of your brother? This day when we created TANU on Saba Saba (1954) should be remembered.

Then there follows the outcomes of after independence. The colonials gave us an education to create servants and masters who were ready to work for them and extract the profits to their mother country. The examinations made by them were strictly set to help them enhance their powers and to limit our thinking capacities so much so that we will believe ourselves that we have not reached a stage where we can practice our abilities. Also the education provided was for only a handiful of people and as a result many people who were born in the colonial era are illiterates.

But after independence (which was a result of TANU, created on 7.7.1954) we changed that mode of education. We started an education which will help the whole country. Also we have started adult educa- tion to eradicate illiteracy. We have started to create our own exam- inations which will help to raise the development of our country and not the development of outsiders.

If we were still under the colonials, these few listed above would not have appeared for the colonials to tell us. These were hidden

in their minds for their benefit. So you think there is any country which will like to develop another without gaining any thing from it? It is like trade. A trader wants profits every time.

Also, this day Saba Saba is a great day to remember our heroes who died fighting for their rights under the colonials. It is a day to remember Mkwasa, (the chief of Hehe), Chabruma, Meli, and many others who died fighting as the "Maji Maji rebellion" under Kinjenketire. It is a day which we should not forget what the colonials did before the creation of TANU.

To sum up all the above, Saba Saba will never be a day which will resemble Christmas or Id el Fitr. It is a day which we should think first as a day where we started seeing the importance of our rights. Christmas was here before Saba Saba and also Id el Fitz. But did the pastors and Sheikhs claimed for our rights. Remember religion was brought by the outsiders. To what extent has it developed our rights towards the eradication of colonial power? TANU should be given handshakes all over the country.