

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Since Chomsky's generative linguistics has dealt the grammar of any language as the result of the interaction of morphology, syntax and semantics, it is possible to consider generative linguistics as the principal school of thought among others in the field of linguistics. Generative linguistics focuses on the knowledge of language and language acquisition (LA) wherein the faculty of language is a cognitive device that can distinguish human languages from other animal languages.

Generative linguistics has taken its development through different steps or stages. It started from 1957 when Chomsky published his book *Syntactic Structure* which focused mainly on transformational grammar. This is followed by *Aspect of Theory of Syntax* 1965 which was the basis for Standard Theory which extended later in 1970. In 1981, Chomsky produced *Government and Binding Theory* (GB), wherein he introduced the notion of government and binding within constituents in the same structure, and in 1995, he produced *Minimalist Program*, wherein Chomsky focused on minimizing the structural derivation considering Economic Conditions (EC).

Among these theories there are theories of first language acquisition (FLA) as well as for second language acquisition (SLA), first language acquisition seems to be innate biological endowment as stated by (Chomsky, 1981) from which it takes place in normal natural setting whereas the later, namely, second language acquisition (SLA) seems to be most problematic from which it requires intensive instruction and exposure under certain

circumstances, although it takes place under above mentioned circumstances, still learners face difficulties to master it, there are lots of errors come out when they are performing this activity (SLA), such errors considered to be phonological in terms of accent, semantic in terms of misuse of lexical item , morphological in terms of derivation and inflection, syntactic in terms of structure, and morhpo-syntactic in terms of structural relation among lexical items in large proposition, thus many researchers attempted to explain the performance of second language acquisition and tried to focus only on categorization and identification of most frequent errors in this process that learners face difficulty, thus analyzing these errors to identify factors or causes of these issues is important for three seasons as (Pongsiriwet, 2001) stated:

1. According to these errors the teacher will know the progress of his/her learners
2. Provide the basic information to the researchers and teachers as well about how language is learned and acquired
3. These errors can be regarded as the style that the learners used to learn second language

He added that, analyzing these errors may give information about the following areas:

1. Contrastive linguistics
2. Improving the description of target language
3. Provide information about general cross linguistics traits issues
4. Linguistics universal
5. Language teaching

And hence errors have significant role in understanding second language acquisition.

Thus by applying Chomskyan theoretical frameworks one comes across Universal Grammar (UG) which assumes that human linguistic capacity similarly rests on dedicated mental structure whose specific details are an innate biological endowment of species (Chomsky, 1981). He added that grammar is composed of a lexicon and computational system (CS) with the strong evidence to confirm that our performance is a reflection of our competence that presents our (PLD) primary linguistic data. And therefore, this study ***Morpho-Syntactic Errors of ESL learners' Written Essays: A Minimalist Approach*** (MP) is considered to be in the same sense and for the same reason, by trying to trace out those conceptions and approaches using the latest version of Principles and Parameters theory (P&P) that represents in Minimalist Program (MP).

1.1 Statement of the problem

To learn writing in English as Second Language (ESL) is not easy task, learners need quite enough time to practice how to improve this skill, during their attempt of improving this skill, they make quite number of mistakes and errors, most of these errors due to morpho-syntactic rules' misapplication, so morpho-syntax has been found to be a fundamental source of writing errors in second language.

Second language learners tend to find morpho-syntax as very problematic area, so it seems clear that, they confuse or either ignore morphological and syntactic rules in their writing, for instance, they write **while they studying** instead of *while they are writing*, **students they are facing many problems** instead of *either students or they are facing many problems*, **agriculture is very importance** instead of *agriculture is very important*,.... etc.

Since generative linguistics has dealt grammar as the composition of morphology, syntax and semantics, it would be important for the teachers of ESL to help their learners to improve grammatical accuracy in writing; in addition learners may not be able to express well-formed essays.

Because of the above mentioned problems, this study aims to analyze morpho-syntactic errors on Sudanese university ESL learners' essays using Minimalist Program as the researcher's framework and X-bar theory as analytical tool and attempts to find out types of these errors, why these considered as errors, factors behind these errors and establish how does lexical choice affect the structure.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

There are a number of studies which have been published on written texts analysis, but nearly most of these studies investigated this phenomenon, by categorizing or classifying errors in terms of gender and frequencies using different theoretical frameworks and analytical affinities. By applying the Minimalist Program, the latest version of Principles and Parameters theory (P&P), this study attempts to (1) analyze morpho-syntactic errors on ESL learners' essays; (2) why these are considered as errors; (3) and establish how lexical choice affects the sentential structure.

1.3 Research Questions

As I mentioned above the whole endeavor is an attempt to provide answers to the central questions arising in the study:

- (1) What are the morpho-syntactic errors in these written essays?
- (2) Why these issues are considered as errors?
- (3) How does lexical choice affect the whole phrasal structure?

1.4 Scope and Limitation

According to the above objectives, this study presents morpho-syntactic analysis on errors of Sudanese university ESL learners' essays by employing Minimalist Program. The type of essay included in this study is that of the narrative. In particular this study will be dealing with errors of lexical projection those result from the misapplication of morphological and syntactic rules.

1.5 Significance of The Study

This study will contribute to the study of ESL in the field of morphological and syntactic errors that second language learners find difficulties to acquire; this will be done by using Minimalist Program as the current analytical tool of generative linguistics. In addition this study will lend a hand for researchers and students as well in the field of linguistics, in particular, morphology and syntax.

1.6 Theoretical Background

The Minimalist Program (MP) is the latest version of Principles and Parameters theory (P&P) from which Chomsky attempted to establish a theory of language's acquisition and knowledge, this theory is a progression of the overall Chomsky's work in linguistics. (MP) is built upon the assumption of minimizing the theoretical aspects of Principles and Parameters theory; it assumes that the grammar of any language is minimally complex, this notion presents grammar from three different levels which are: an external level which is interpreted by semantic and phonetic components, logical form (LF) and phonetic form (PF) are internal level represent lexical information, and deep structure (D-structure), (Cook, 1996), these three levels connected and combined to form well-formedness structure through single level of representation: surface structure (S-structure), this will be explained in the following diagram as adopted from (cook, 1996):

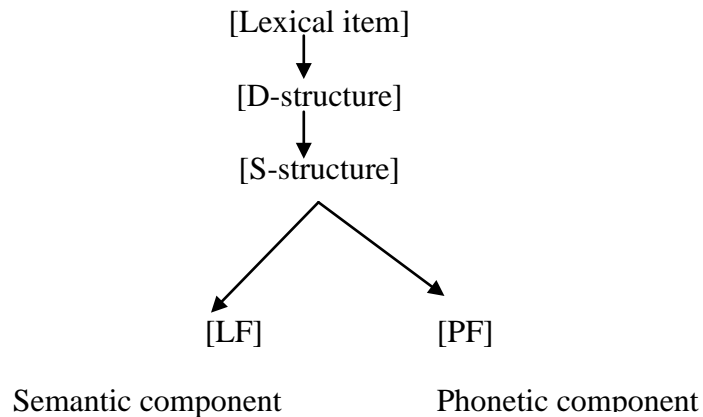


Figure 1.1

And since (MP) minimizes the grammar of any language, the question that rose up in earlier Government and Binding theory (GB) was: are these three levels of representation necessary? (Chomsky, 1995) argued that, since language is a mapping between sounds and

meanings there is no necessity for other levels, he stated that the only important is lexicon which spells out to LF and PF as the following diagram illustrates:

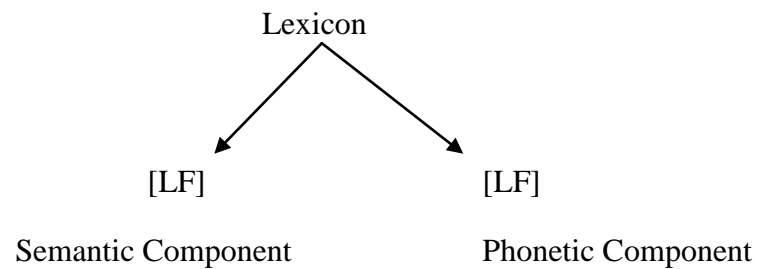


Figure 1.2

To presents these notions, Chomsky used X-Bar theory which assumes that all sentences are projections of different lexicons as below:

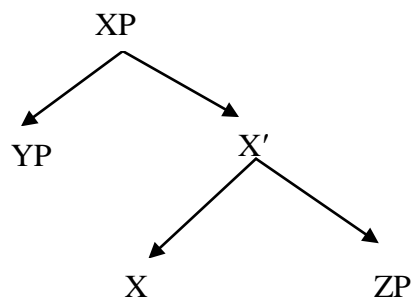


Figure 1.3

From which XP is the head or maximal projection of the category X, YP is the specifier of X, X' is the intermediate projection of X, X is the minimal projection of X, and ZP is the optional complement of X. This followed by the assumption that all sentential representations fall under categories known as grammatical categories, the categories according to (Radford, 2004b) and (Adger, 2003) bear features, morphological, syntactic, and phonological features, these categories are:

Noun (N)	[+N, -V]
Verb (V)	[-N, +V]
Adjective (A)	[+N, +V]
Preposition (P)	[-N, -V]

The categories build up any syntactic structure by the process of *Merge* and *Movement*, thus the grammar outlined above in Minimalist Program as adopted from (Jubilado, 2010) is summarized as in the following diagram:

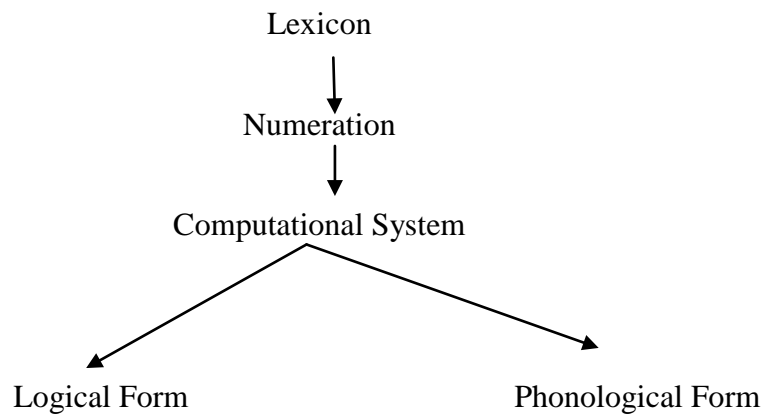


Figure 1.4

Thus lexicon composes categories via numeration in our mental brain according to computational system to form out logical form and phonological form.

1.7 Summary

In relation to this study, the researcher has explained and explored the area of difficulties which make second language acquisition to be considered as problematic in terms of the acquisition of morphosyntax. The researcher also stated the problem of the misapplication of morphology's and syntax's rules, in addition the researcher provided the reasons and motivation due to this study and asked the proposed questions to be answered during this study, and finally the researcher furthermore stated the limitation and significance and explained precisely the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 An Overview of Second Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition in general is very different from first language, it needs in most cases to be under instruction in order to be familiar with the processes of different linguistics' components (phonetics, phonology, semantics, morphology, and syntax); whereas first language is innate biological endowment (Chomsky, 1981).

Ellis 1995 observed that the process of second language acquisition is complex task, including different interrelated factors; it indicates the learning of new language after acquiring first language. There are different factors relating to the learner in one hand and the learning situation in another hand. Second language acquisition is not expectable, there is no definite way for learner to follow when learning second language, different learners learn in different situations, it means that the learner has to acquire all different aspects of the language, with regard to the acquisition of morpho-syntax, there have been few related studies in this field, and the focus has been on syntax and morphology separately and how learners acquire lexis not morpho-syntax as unite form of grammar of any language.

According to Lydia 2010 the interfaces between linguistic system and grammar external components should be considered in second language acquisition, these interfaces are for example: syntax/discourse, syntax/semantics, syntax/morphology, or morphology/phonology, moreover these interfaces should not be decomposed, thus second language learners find difficulties in integrating linguistic phenomena related to certain

interfaces. Moreover, she proposes that it must be highly recommended to take into account the assumption that:

1. All above mentioned interfaces are equally problematic or unproblematic for second language learners to master.
2. External interfaces provide the main point of second language deficiency to the learners.
3. All different linguistic properties relating to same interface will behave the same.

In addition she added that, the term interface does not mean the level of representation or the locus of mapping between the levels of representation as understood by some linguists, but the term interface as in Chomsky's work (1995) means conceptual logical form (LF) and perceptual phonetic form (PF), these forms have the function of interfacing with the cognitive system external to the grammar or (conceptual- intentional system (meaning)) and the articulatory- perceptual system (sound), thus second language learners find difficulties in mapping different linguistic levels of representation for example: the syntax of a sentence should be mapped onto its semantics and that is syntax/semantics interface; the syntax of a sentence should be mapped onto the phonology and hence the syntax/phonology interface and so on, and therefore it's evidence that second language learner should acquire these interfaces or appropriate mapping (different levels of representation).

2.1 An Overview of Morpho-syntactic Features

Since all sentential propositions build upon words (lexicons) that have certain morphological forms which due to the agreement relation. This relation connected purely to morphological properties such as whether word ends in (-s) or not in (1), or (-d, ed) or not in (2) as in the examples below:

1. (a). *The boy plays* foot ball.
(b). *The boys play* foot ball.
(c). **The boy play* foot ball.
(d). **The boys plays* foot ball.
2. (a). *The teacher walked* quickly.
(b). *The teacher wrote* on the board.
(c). **The teacher writed* on the board.

From the examples above, it would be erroneous if we assumed that verb in present tense ends in an –s as in (1a), because it takes another shape as in (1b); and consequently if we assumed that verb in past tense ends in an –d or –ed as in (2a), because it takes another shape as in (2b). So these shapes of words are both morphological and phonological properties, these properties are exhibiting agreement relationship in different ways, so these properties are commonly called morpho-syntactic features.

A morpho-syntactic feature is the property of the word that determines its shape in any syntactic representation, (Adger, 2002). Given this statement the researcher could conclude that, feature is the core element of any language that relate phonetic form (PF) sounds with logical form (LF) meanings. To make this clear let us refer to the examples in (1) which state agreement relationship clearly in term of number (singular subject takes

singular verb, and plural subject takes plural verb), so in English, nouns and verbs have the following features in term of Number:

3. [+singular, -plural]
 [-singular, +plural]

So features will tell us for example in (1) which boy we are talking about, that is to say one boy or more than one, in this sense; features effect the semantic interpretation are to say *interpretable features* whereas the opposite is *uninterpretable features*. Thus phonologically we pronounce the words in particular morphological forms, then these forms relate to each other in syntactic representation. However English exhibits features that relate to functional grammatical categories such as tense and major lexical categories which is considered to be the core of syntactic interpretation, these major categories are listed bellow with the feature that each one bears:

4. (a). noun [+N, -V]
 (b). verb [-N, +V]
 (c). adjective [+N, +V]
 (d). preposition [-N, -V]

In addition, the case arguments or NPs such as [nominative, accusative, or obligatory], person such as [first, second, or third], gender such as [masc, fem], and other verbal morpho-syntax features such as [finitive, infinitive] are necessary in building up syntactic proposition. Morpho-syntactic features can be summarized in the following table as adopted from (Adger, 2002):

<i>Type of feature</i>	<i>features</i>
<i>tense</i>	[past], [present]
<i>number</i>	[singular], [plural]
<i>person</i>	[first], [second], [third]
<i>gender</i>	[masc], [fem]
<i>case</i>	[nominative], [accusative], [obligatory]
<i>category</i>	[N], [V], [P], [A]
<i>others</i>	[infinitive], [participle]

2.2 Review of Related Literature

Aside from the major theoretical books, studies on morpho-syntactic errors analysis have been published and most of them focused on categorization and classification of morpho-syntactic errors in the domain of frequency and gender using different theoretical frameworks. So studies on morpho-syntactic errors analysis from the perspective views of Generative Linguistics are important in making this study, which presents the morphological and syntactic analysis of errors found in ESL learners' narrative essays, namely, Analyzing Morpho-syntactic Errors on ESL learners' Narrative Essays.

Hamin & Mutafa 2010 explored morpho-syntactic errors, wherein they tried to identify morpho-syntactic errors of ESL learners' written compositions in term of subject-verb agreement, the subject of their study comprises of 20 postgraduate students, they presented and categorized these issues into five major types; these categories are:

1. Subject-verb agreement in person
2. Subject-verb agreement in number
3. Subject-verb agreement in coordinated subject
4. Subject-verb agreement in indefinite expression of amount
5. And subject-verb agreement in notional agreement and proximity

Their results revealed that, the most frequent errors relate to this part of morpho-syntactic study were occurred in subject-verb agreement of number followed by subject-verb agreement of person. However this recent study will analyze these errors, and provide evidences to why these are considered as errors, in addition subject-verb agreement will be dealt as the syntactic representation built up from different morphological forms of lexis,

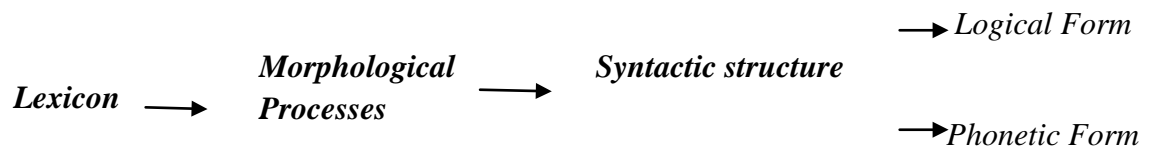
that bear different features which exhibit syntactic relationship of agreement or disagreement using X-bar theory that represents in Phrase Structure's Rules.

Pongsiriwet 2001 in her dissertation investigated the frequent type of grammatical errors in EFL students, most of these errors appeared to relate with misapplication of morpho-syntactic rules of their L2. Pongsiriwet presented these errors into 12 groups, these are: noun, pronoun, tense, article, preposition, word form, verb formation, verb omission, subject omission, extraneous subject, subject-verb agreement, and fragment. She also attempted to investigate whether there is a relationship between scores on grammatical accuracy and the main two aspects (cohesion and coherent) of discourse features in writing; in addition she established the effect of grammatical accuracy and discourse on the evaluation of writing quality.

However this study categorizes but not the frequent type of these errors, it attempts to justify the ungrammaticality of phrases and sentences in these narrative essays, the justification will be according to the theoretical framework that the researcher uses in this study which is Generative Morphosyntax or Minimalist Program that adopted by Chomsky (1957-up now), aside from this discourse is not a part of this study which analyze morpho-syntactic errors at the level of phrase and sentence as well.

Junghanns 2008 tried to clarify the interaction between the lexicon which is (semantics/morphology) and syntax in Slavic languages, this interaction yields to well-formed linguistic expression. In other word, aforementioned interaction will be referred to it as morpho-syntactic features valuation, because he tried to say that the lexicon semantic undergoes different morphological processes in our metal brain, these processes due to

come up with syntactic structure, then spell out in both phonetic form (PF) or sound and logical form (LF) or meaning. This will be explained as in the following:



In addition he explained the role of argument as lexical information of predicate and how lexical information of this predicate affect the sentential structure (syntactic structure), this will be a part of this study which deals with syntax at the clause level. In addition this study extents to include phrase structure as well, aside from above mentioned the current study will be dealing with different lexical such as noun, preposition adjective and so on, this to establish how these lexicon affect the phrasal and sentential structure when analyzing morphological and syntactic errors.

Harganto 2007 in his study attempted to analyze these morpho-syntactic errors produced by ESL learners. Furthermore he explained the possible causes that stand behind these errors in second language or foreign language writing. He found that these grammatical errors can be classified in term of morpho-syntax into: (1) misuse of verb groups, (2) violation in subject-verb agreement, (3) misuse of articles, (4) misuse of prepositions, (5) errors of pluralization, (6) misuse of pronouns, (7) and misuse of conjunctions. Finally he reported that; the possible causes of these morpho-syntactic errors found to be: (a) overgeneralization (b) and interference. So classification or categorization it's a part of this study and it will extend to justify by providing persuasive evidences according to minimal views of lexical projection and establish how Minimalist Program presented in X-bar theory will analyze morpho-syntactically these errors.

Estela 2006 analyzed non-native speakers' text to determine lexical, morphological and syntactic fluency, accuracy and complexity. In addition she compared two groups of advanced and non-advanced level to find the frequency of ungrammaticality in their texts. She found that advanced learners make more frequent and variant ungrammatical phrases or sentences; she analyzed these errors in terms of syntax, morphology and lexical features of ESL academic text produced by non-native speakers.

In her results she categorized these grammatical errors into lexical, morphological and syntactic, more precisely she included any single word whether content or functional word to lexical item presented in our mental lexicon or brain, she added that word substitution, meaning approximation, word omission and word insertion were to be considered and categorized as lexical errors. Consequently the omission, substitution or incorrect insertion of derivational and inflectional morphemes were categorized and considered as morphological errors, and finally she explained that erroneous forms like agreement, anaphora, word/constituent order, the omission or insertion of multi-word phrase or copulative verb, the omission of the subject noun or pronoun, the omission of the verbs and inconsistent consequence of tense were considered as syntactic errors.

However the current study will be dealing with lexicon as the part that projects into the larger unit forming syntactic projection (phrases or sentences), so the process of this projection has to be according to the grammar of a language which allows limited derivational or inflectional rules at the morphological level. In addition, syntactic rules have to be considered, thus the process of projection will be the central focus of this study and not the lexicon only, because it's plausible to say that the omission, insertion and substitution of morphemes/words can be considered as morphological errors. Aside from the above mentioned this study will deal with issues such as the omission of a subject (noun

or pronoun), the omission of a verb or any lexical item at phrasal or sentential level can be seen as syntactic errors which due to the lack of syntactic knowledge of a particular language and consequently these errors can be viewed as the projection errors.

Padrosa 2010 established the study of specific type of word- formation (compounding) and its relation to morphology and syntax interaction, she also tried to established the ultimate understanding of word-formation namely compounding, aside from this, she explored the different aspects of compounding, in her dissertation she first presented some evidence for possibility of theory of language (grammar) from which the two words; syntax and phrasal syntax are two different fields within syntactic field as generation of compounds within word morphology/syntax. The morphological aspects were based on (Akema & Neeleman ,2004); morpho-syntactic competition theory was explored and then tested using English and Romance language (Catalan & Spanish) examples. Furthermore syntactic analysis of compound-word was based on distributed morphology.

Secondly she established the appearance of heads in morphology then showed their role in classification of these compound word-formation, then she examined the nature of compounding elements in English and Catalan; this was followed by a brief overview of compound classification, she followed in her classification (Bisetto & Scalise, 2005), this framework proposes that there are three type of macro-compound these are subordinate, attributive and coordinate these are further subdivided into another types. Overall, this study although the title appears to deal morphology and syntax as integrative components of the language, it deals with syntax and morphology separately. However in the current study as morpho-syntactic analysis, morphology and syntax will be dealing as the component that complete each other, this comes from the fact that morphology is something that has a big deal with word formation and these words when project further to

form syntactic projection that is to say phrase or sentence, and this projection build upon morpho-syntactic features of those words used in the projection, so word-formation itself within a large unit (phrase/sentence) is depend on the syntax of the language which allow or does not word-formation.

Embick & Noyer 2005 explored that; distributed morphology can be seen as syntactic operation (merge-movement) within complex word formation object, because the lexicon employs some derivational and inflectional process to form complex object that can be presented syntactically as the word (dislike) in the following diagram:

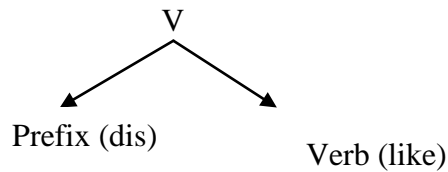


Figure 2.1

Thus they assumed that the architecture of grammar in distributed morphology is:

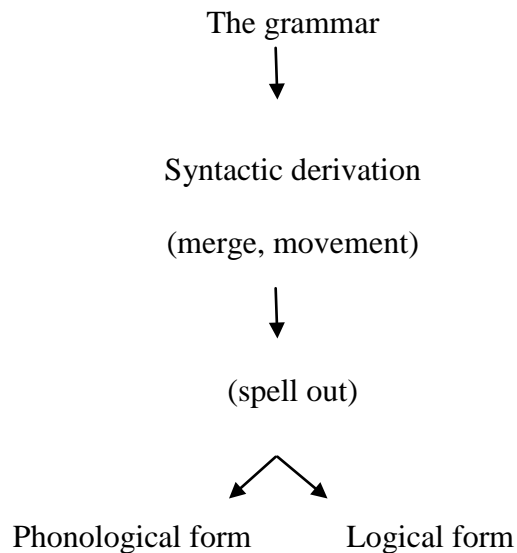


Figure 2.2

However this study considers the lexicon as the base component of all derivational and inflectional operations (merge and movement) (Cook & Newson, 1996), then either syntactic or morphological operation builds up from the lexicon (lexical projection), so the architecture of this building depends on the assumption that the grammar of the language builds from the lexicon or metal brain, the lexicon within computational system (CS) has to determine the shape and the form to be appeared according to its morpho-syntactic features, this will be through morphological rules and passes up to syntactic projection when spell out in both phonetic form and logical form as in the following figure:

The grammar of language =

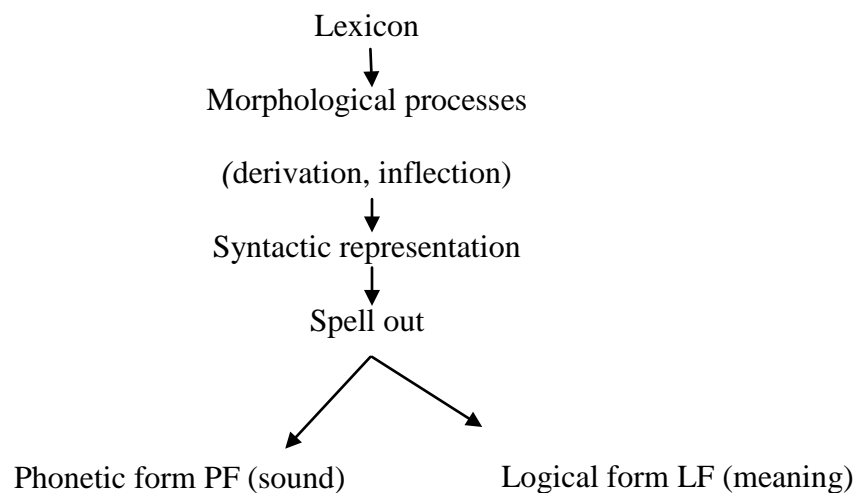


Figure 2.3

Abe 2007 investigated grammatical errors, wherein she wanted to focus on the different types of errors in second language's proficiency levels, she attempted to explain how these errors may characterize each developmental stage; moreover she attempted to find out answers to the following questions:

(1) Are there any differences in rates of parts-of-speech accuracy between spoken and written form in second language performance?

(2) What differences can be seen in terms noun-and-verb related issues in different performance skills?

Her results showed that the accuracy rates for preposition related to verb had the highest tendency in both performance skills (spoken and written), the accuracy rate for article had a significant tendency in both skills, and the overall rates for pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and verbs had consistently high accuracy rates at all proficiency levels. In addition errors related to noun-verb were considered; because this is a fundamental issue in sentences construction, thus the results showed that errors relate to noun-verb were categorized as: tense, lexical errors, case, agreement, inflection, and word formation.

Jehsuhana 2010 examined lexical errors, wherein she examined the lexical errors in written forms of fifty-fourth year students at different Thai universities, all these students were majoring in English both in faculty of education and faculty of humanities and social sciences. The central goal of her study was to (1) investigate those types of lexical errors produced by those Thai universities' students, and (2) to explain what factors stand behind these errors in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors. Furthermore, she categorized those lexical errors in terms of interlingual and intralingual into 13 subcategories, 3 for interlingual which are: (1) direct translation (2) misordering, and (3) use of native words, intralingual issues were categorized into 10 subcategories, these subcategories are: (1) confusion of sense relation, (2) collocational issues, (3) distortion, (4) omissions, (5) additions, (6) confusion of derivatives, (7) redundancy, (8) paraphrasing, (9) confusables,

and (10) confusion of binary terms. The implication of her results showed that; mother tongue has significant role in producing such errors, this; aside from the main two causes (interlingual and intralingual) that have been mentioned above.

However in the current study, lexical errors will be analyzed as integrated units within syntactic projection which includes morpho-syntactic features, and to do so, the researcher will not look at the lexicon separately out of syntax.

Overall it seems that all the studies mentioned here tended to study morpho-syntactic errors in terms of classification of errors according to gender and frequency using very traditional theoretical frameworks such as (Corder (Error taxonomy, 1976)), such frameworks and theories were not able to justify these errors and provide philosophical evidences to why they considered these as erroneous. Thus the needs arising up toward new approaches and theories that capable to justify such errors, so by applying minimalist program as analytical tool this study traces the concepts and processes of generative linguistics in analyzing morpho-syntactic errors on ESL learners' narrative essays.

2.3 Summary

This chapter presented the overall review of second language acquisition in terms of morphosyntax and explained how these two components interface each other in well-formedness grammatical sentences. The researcher attempted to overview morpho-syntactic features of lexical items in English language. This to give the reader a clear picture of what it means by morphosyntax; in addition the previous related studies have been reviewed to look at the similarities and what makes this study different in terms of analysis process and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

With regard to the findings from different literatures that have been reviewed in previous chapter, a number of features is demanded more focus in ESL advanced writing to satisfy morphosyntax acquisition, as previous chapter showed, all learners included in the reviewed studies, seem to had deficit in linguistics discourse, although they were able to satisfy high level as undergraduates, some of morpho-syntactic errors were indentified in the performance of these advanced ESL writings include: agreement features, inflectional morphology, categorical features, verbal morphosyntax, projection of TP, and word choice.

Considering that all these range of problems in second language writing are so wide, some studies tried to define advanced writing in ESL based on some standard writing test (TOFEL, IELTS,...) on the hand and on the length of staying in English-speaking countries on other hand, the need will be in refining some definitions and looking at the results of researches in ESL writing.

To answer the research questions, the researcher will analyze these narrative essays that were collected from Sudanese university students, the analyzing process will be according to Minimalist Program as the researcher's theoretical framework, this will be done by applying X-bar theory represented in phrase structure's rules or tree diagram.

3.1 The Subject of The Study:

The subject of this study consists of 36 fourth-year university students from Omdurman Islamic University. These students are majoring in English language from faculty of education, the students comprised of 15 males and 21 females whose ages ranged from 20-24 years old, all the students have studied English language as compulsory paper in their primary and secondary levels for 6 years, all of them have been admitted to the English language department based on their scores in Sudanese National Certificate Examinations.

After their enrollment in the English language department they had attended four courses related to writing, namely; creative writing in first year, the principles of writing composition in second year, styles and usage in third year, and advanced essay writing in the final year.

3.2 Instrument

The researcher, in order to conduct this study has adapted only one instrument that was students' written essays.

3.2.1 The Written Essays

There is one set of written essay consisted of three topics. The topics are narrative in nature and familiar to the learners, because they can use their personal experiences, attitudes, and impressions in their writing.

The analysis of these essays has employed in this study, because it is an effective approach to examine the language performance. In addition it's an effective method to collect quite a number of corpuses of written English in very limited time and with fewer costs. However the quality of writing in these essays such as (content, style, punctuations, and etc) does not included in the scope of this study. The researcher selected three different essays (one for each topic) as samples of learners' written work; they are illustrated in the appendices I, II, and III.

3.3 Data Collection:

To collect the data for this study, the researcher followed several steps, these started by obtaining permission from the dean of the faculty of education and the head department of English language at Omdurman Islamic University to conduct this study, this followed by informing the lecturer of writing course; namely "Advanced Essay Writing" the purpose of the study, and finally discussions were held to explain the methods and details of the study tools.

3.3.1 The Written Essays

Copies of examination papers were obtained directly from the examination authorities at faculty of education in Omdurman Islamic University during examinations period, this part of the exam was consist of one question from which the teacher of writing course asked the students to write narrative essay choosing one of the following topics:

1. Sudan is agricultural country
2. International musician

3. The pressure of being student

The length of essays was not determined.

3.4 Data Analysis

After the researcher collected the data, the data were analyzed qualitatively according to their morpho-syntactic errors. The coding schema was used in this study is the minimalist approach which labels the errors according to their morphosyntactic features as the following chapter codes.

3.4.1 The Written Essays

The data of this recent study have been analyzed according to the Minimalist Program that proposed by (Chomsky, 1995), this was done by applying the X-bar theory as the analytical tool, the researcher followed the following procedure for analyzing morpho-syntactic errors:

- I. Identify and categorize the morpho-syntactic errors in these essays
- II. Justify and provide evidences and explicate why these were considered as issues in language acquisition
- III. Establish how lexical choice affects the sentential structure.

3.5 Summary

This chapter presented information about the subject of the study, instruments used to conduct this study, data collection procedures, and how the data will be analyzed (quantitative, qualitative or mixed mode). Next chapter will present the complete analysis of data and will attempt to provide answers to the proposed questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of morpho-syntactic errors' categorization of ESL learners' essays, justification by providing evidences of why these are considered as errors, and establishes how lexical choice affects the sentential structure. The process of categorization and justification will be done collectively in section one, discussion of how the of lexical choice effect the sentential structure will be in section two.

4.1 Section One: Categorization And Justification

4.1.1 Errors of Agreement Features, these consist of:

4.1.1.1 Subject-verb Agreement

4.1.1.1. a. Number-agreement

4.1.1.1. b. Person-agreement

4.1.1.2 Tense Agreement

4.1.1.2.1 Omission/Misuse of Inflectional Morphology that consists of:

4.1.1.2.1. a. Omission/Misuse of tense marker on verb

4.1.1.2.1. b. Omission/Misuse of auxiliary

4.1.1.2.1. c. Misuse of verb form

4.1.1.3 Errors of Categorical Features which consists of:

4.1.1.3. a. Misuse of prepositions

4.1.1.3. b. Misuse of adjectives

4.1.1.3. c. Misuse of determiners

4.1.1.4 Verbal Morphosyntax of infinitive

4.1.1.5 Projection Errors of TP that consists of:

4.1.1.5. a. Omission of subject

4.1.1.5. b. Double subject

The following sub-section will provide examples for each type of aforementioned errors, which due to ignorance or misapplication of morpho-syntactic rules of target language (English for this study).

4.1.1 Errors of Agreement Features:

These errors are the result of the violation of morpho-syntactic features or (the properties of words that encompasses morphological and syntactic rules when represented in larger syntactic structure (Radford. 2009b)); these agreement features' violation consist of the following sub-issues

4.1.1.1 Subject-verb Agreement, this agreement violation appears in the following examples:

4.1.1.1. a. Subject-Verb Agreement in Number

(1) ***Sudan have** this problem

(2)*The Blue Nile **come** from Ethiopia and **run** through Sudan

(3) *Sudan **do not** have enough experience in agriculture

(4) *Sudan **have** many agricultural projects

From the examples given it's obvious that the learners find difficulty in applying those morpho-syntactic rules especially those which are related to subject verb agreement in number, thus in examples (1), and (4) they used erroneous form of the verb (have), moreover in (2) and (3) they misused the verbs (come, run, and do) respectively.

As the researcher mentioned in previous chapter; that morpho-syntactic features are those properties of lexical items which determine the shape and position of lexical items within large syntactic representation, and since features have the power to determine the shape and position of lexical items; they are a core of languages that relate sounds and meanings of any lexical item (Adger, 2002), regarding this statement as the central focus of morpho-syntactic features, the sentences (1 &4) considered to violate these properties and features, when the learners used (Sudan as the subject) with plural verb form (have). And because the subject (Sudan) has the feature of being [+*singular*, -plural] this feature forces it to take only singular form of the verb that has [+*singular*, -plural] to satisfy the agreement relationship, thus the correct proposition will be (Sudan has). The following figure will illustrate this.

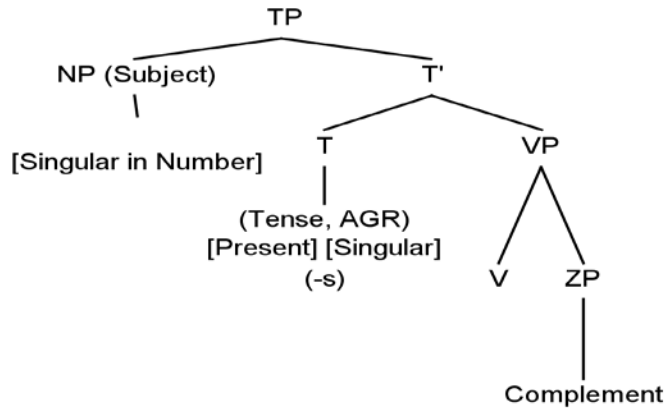


Figure 4.1

From the above structure of two sentences in (1 & 4) it clear that; since the subject has [+*Singular*, -plural] feature, the verb has to satisfy this feature and agrees with its subject. So in this structure both (NP) the subject and the feature of agreement under the head (T) hold [+**singular feature**] forming grammatical structure of these sentences, (1) *Sudan has this problem* and (4) *Sudan has many agricultural projects*.

However; in (2 & 3) singular subjects with plural forms verb were used as showed in the following:

- (2) *Blue Nile come from Ethiopia and run through Sudan
- (3) *Sudan do not enough experience in agriculture

In these two examples, features' violation is extremely appeared, because the subject in both sentences has [+*singular*, -plural in number] feature that requires the verb to bear same feature under tense agreement in the position under (T) in the structure, the following tree diagram will explain that:

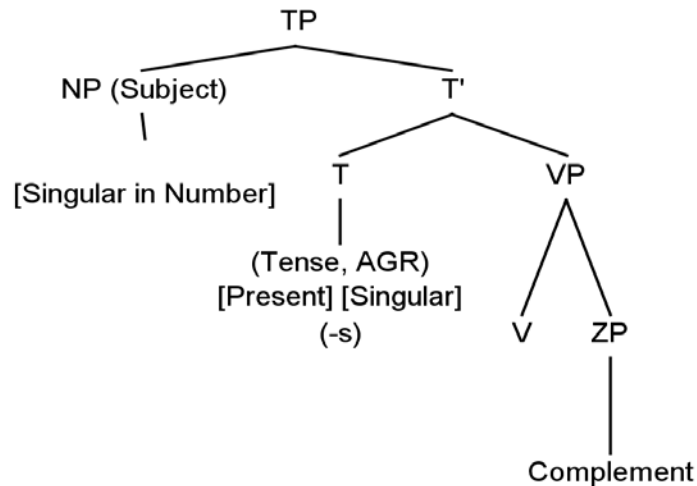


Figure 4.2

And therefore as the above structure showed the features of NP, the verb should uniform with this features and take (-s) as in the figure under T to form grammatical proposition as:

(2) *The Blue Nile comes from Ethiopia, and runs through Sudan* (3) *Sudan does not have enough experience in agriculture*

4.1.1.1. b. Subject-verb Agreement in Person

(5) *because it **have** everything

(6) *it **give** us food, **keep** us, and **make** us very well

(7) *she **have** many pictures all over the world

(8) *It **have** this problem

(9) *Some of them **lives** in their farms

Since the subject in all these sentences in (5-8) carries the feature of being [+*Singular*, -plural *in Number*], and [-First, -Second, and +*Third in Person*] it's plausible to construct the following structure that would be possible to apply for all these sentences.

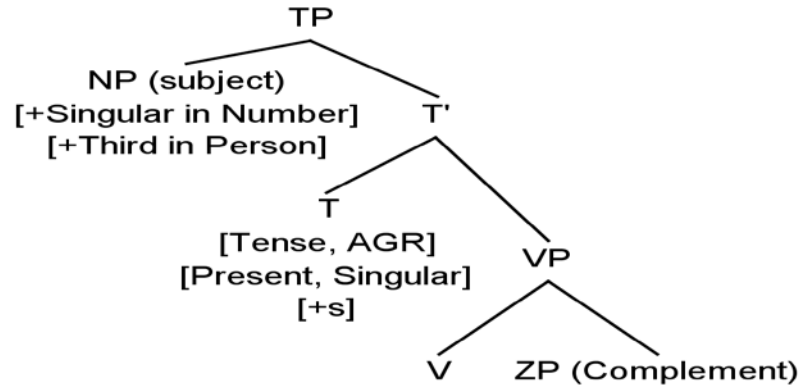


Figure 4.3

Taking this as the template, the above mentioned sentences would have the following grammatical forms: (5). *because it has everything*, (6). *because it gives us food, keeps us, and makes us very well*, (7). *she has many pictures all over the world*, and (8). *It has this problem*

However (9) has different structure because of the different feature it employs, so it has the structure as follow:

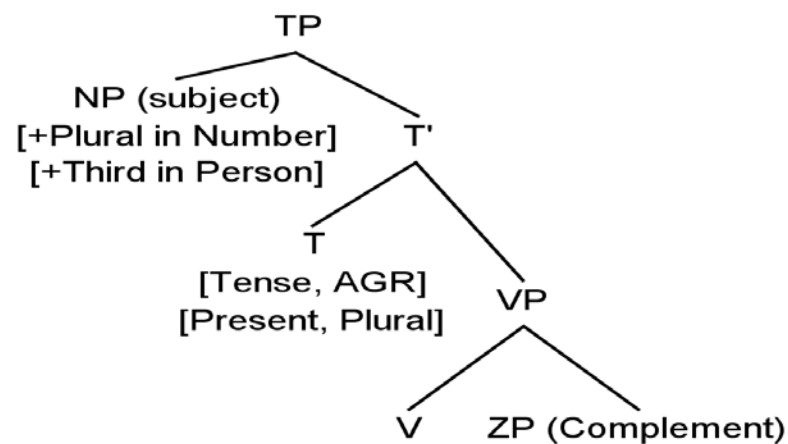


Figure 4.4

Thus the grammatical form of the sentences in (9) would be: *some of them live in their farms*. As showed in the structure above, because the feature of plural subject forced the verb to satisfy and choice singular form.

4.1.1.2 Tense Agreement:

4.1.1.2.1 Omission/Misuse of Inflectional Morphology:

Although tenses are required, to achieve the ultimate access to the grammar of any language, regardless of first or second language, most of L1 and L2 learners find tense to be most problematic with compared to semantics, and since what we sound reflects our mental brain or lexicon (Chomsky, 1957), it is highly recommended for the teachers and learners as well to give extensive practice to the grammar of target language. So second language acquisition is not an easy task for learners to master, the learners face lots of deficits during this period and commit errors. In this recent study the results show errors of misapplication of tense agreement on verb as in the following examples:

4.1.1.2.1. a. Omission/Misuse of Tense Marker on Verb:

(10) *The government **do** not care about agriculture (Omission)

(11) *it **mean** income to him (Omission)

(12) *While they **are studies** (Misuse)

As the researcher mentioned earlier, that morpho-syntactic features have to be checked in any syntactic projection, however the violation of these features appeared in above sentences either in term of omission of tense marker or in term of misuse of tense marker on main verb, so since the learners need to know the category feature (V) for verbs from the view of their syntax and morphology, let us assume for this moment that the

feature V for verbs bear on small v dominated within vP, this small v bears uninterpretable inflectional tense features, and furthermore these features get value from the tense feature on T making what so called agreement relationship (Adger, 2002), and consequently the above mentioned sentences mismatched this features on small v and T resulting ungrammatical sentences. So the following tree diagrams will illustrate the grammatical form for each.

(10) *the government do not care about agriculture

Let us assume that the noun (N) *agriculture* merged with preposition (P) *about* forming prepositional phrase (PP) *about agriculture*, the resulting (PP) merged with the verb (V) forming (VP) *care about agriculture*, the resulting (VP) merged with small v which bears ***uninterpretable*** inflectional tense features forming small v-bar *v' care about agriculture* (*v'*), this *v'* merged with noun phrase (NP) *the government* forming (vP), the resulting (vP) in turn merged with negation particle *not* (NEG) forming (NEGP) *not care about agriculture*, then the resulting (NEGP) merged with the head T which checks value feature of verbal complex to form (T') *doesn't care about agriculture*, and the resulting T' by universal grammar's principles (EPP) that specifies all sentences to have subjects (Cook & Newson, (1999)), T' merged with (NP) *the government* forming the whole sentential structure *the government doesn't care about agriculture* as in the following figure:

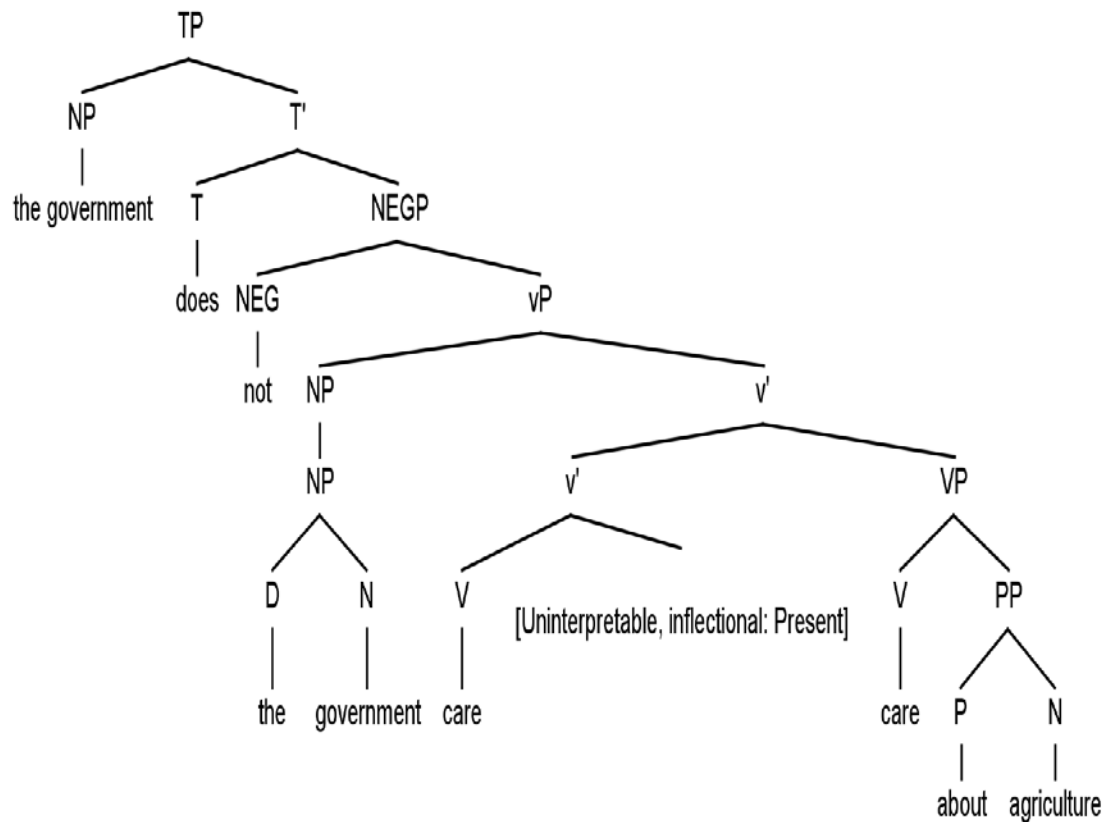


Figure 4.5

However in (11) the accusative pronoun (PRN) *him* merged with (P) *to* to form (PP) *to him*, the resulting (PP) merged with (N) *income* to form (NP) *income to him*, the resulting (NP) in turn merged with (V) *means* to form (VP) *means income to him*, and this is then merged with the head (T) to form (T') that bears tense features as being simple present, this (T') because it has three different projections extended to its maximal projection and merged with the specifier of (TP) to satisfy (EPP) forming (TP) *it means income to him* as in structure below:

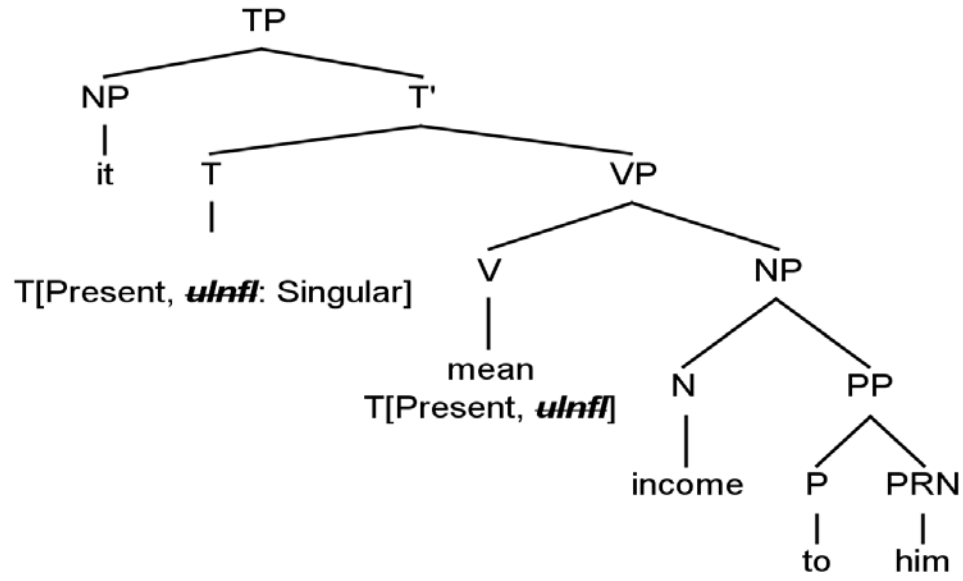


Figure 4.6

In (12) the researcher argued that this sentence violated morpho-syntactic features from generative point of view in two aspects. One is relates to inflectional morphology that requires all verbs to agree with their heads (T) or preceded auxiliaries to fulfill feature checking on (T), and consequently the feature on T has to be checked with those in subject. The second violation relates to semantic property of the verb (study) namely (thematic and argument structure, (Ouhalla, 1999) that requires it to take at least two arguments to complete its meaning, thus (12) the complement of the verb studying *X* merged with (V) *studying* to form (VP) *studying X*, the resulting (VP) merged with the minimal projection of (T) forming the intermediate projection of (T) in (T'), the resulting (T') by the principle of universal grammar (EPP) needs to extent to its maximal projection by merging with the subject *they* to form (TP) *they are studying x*, and finally the resulting (TP) merged with complement C (while) forming complementiser phrase CP *while they are studying x*, as in the structure bellow:

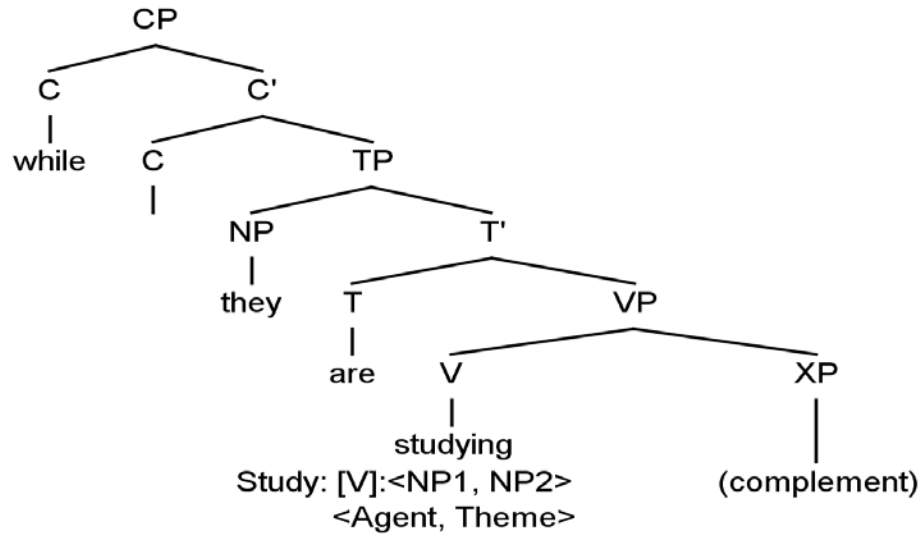


Figure 4.7

From the structure above XP is the complement of the verb study that the students omitted, in addition since the head T has the property of [+*Progress*: Tense] and [+*plural*: Number] the inflected form of V should be studying rather than studies.

4.1.1.2.1.b. Omission /Misuse of Auxiliaries:

(13) *All these is make Sudan agricultural country (Misuse)

(14) *Nowadays Sudan depending on agriculture (Omission)

Furthermore, the researcher argued that the sentences in (13-14) considered to be ungrammatical, because the learners in both sentences used either miss form or omit auxiliary, so since auxiliaries in English have different inflectional forms, it's possible to confirm that these inflectional forms due to morpho-syntactic features that have to be checked in T, and accordingly, these features determine syntactic form of subject that takes the position as the specifier of TP in the maximal projection of T. in addition the syntactic

relationship has to accommodate the agreement between subject and auxiliary. Thus (13) will have the following grammatical structures:

The (N) *country* merged with (A) *agricultural* to form (AP) *agricultural country*, the resulting (AP) merged with (N) *Sudan* to form (NP) *Sudan agricultural country*, the resulting (NP) merged with (V) *making* to form (VP) *making Sudan agricultural country*, the resulting (VP) merged with (T) *are* that bears [**plural**: *Number*, **Progress**: *Tense*] feature of Spec or subject to form (T') which is the intermediate projection of (T) *are making Sudan agricultural country*, then the resulting (T') by (EPP) needs to extend and merge with Spec (subject) which itself constructed when the complement of the determiner (D) *these* merged with (D) to (DP) *these things*, and the assumption that (N) *things* is the complement of (D) *these* comes from the fact that this sentence relates to preceded phrase or sentence, the resulting (DP) merged with quantifier (Q) *all* to form (QP) *all these things* which is the Spec of TP, then (T') finally merged with (QP) to form (TP) *all these are making Sudan agricultural country*, as in the following figure:

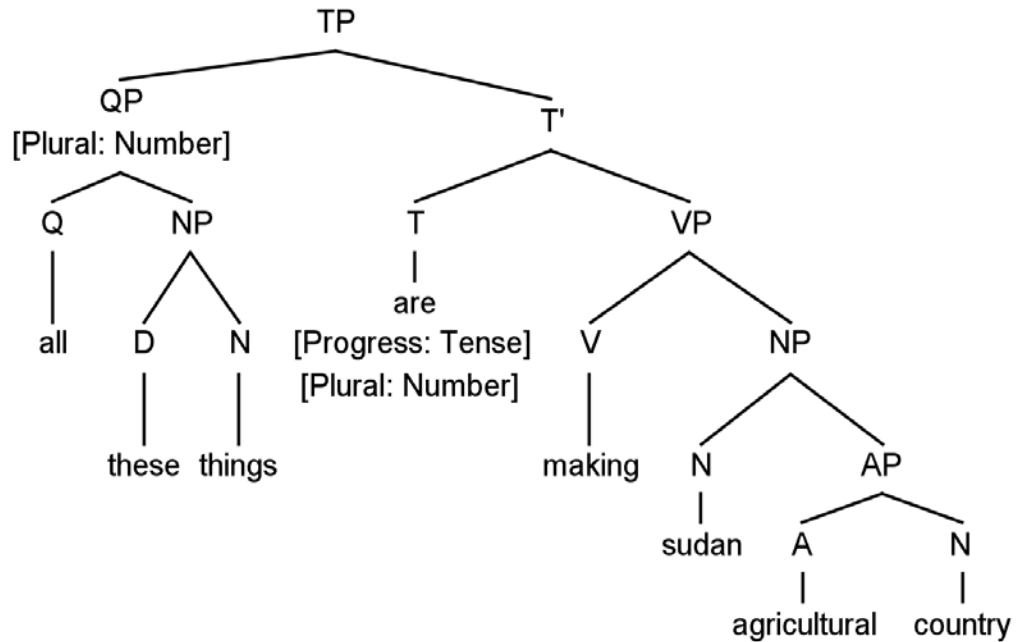


Figure 4.8

It's clear that the above structure shows the agreement feature between subject and auxiliary that the learners failed to accommodate and used singular form of auxiliary rather than plural which led to ungrammatical structure, thus the grammatical sentence will be (13) *all these are making Sudan agricultural country*.

However in (14) the auxiliary is omitted (**Nowadays Sudan depending on agriculture*). And to explain this, two tree diagrams will be used, the first one will show the incorrect one and the second for the correct one, this to look at the different between them. Now for the first one, let us assume that (N) *agriculture* merged with (P) *on* to form (PP) *on agriculture*, the resulting (PP) merged with (V) *depending* to form (VP) *depending on agriculture*, this (VP) merged with the subject and form S, **nowadays Sudan depending on agriculture*, as in the following figure:

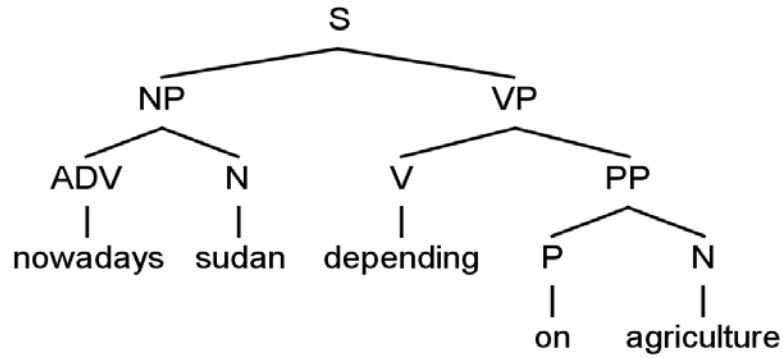


Figure 4.9

The above structure considered to be ill syntactically, this is comes from the fact that one of the principles in UG specifies that all sentences must be headed by (T) (Cook & Newson, 1999), this (T) or auxiliary gives information about tense, number, and person. And this information appeared to be absence in that structure. Thus the second structure shows the correct form, *nowadays Sudan is depending on agriculture*

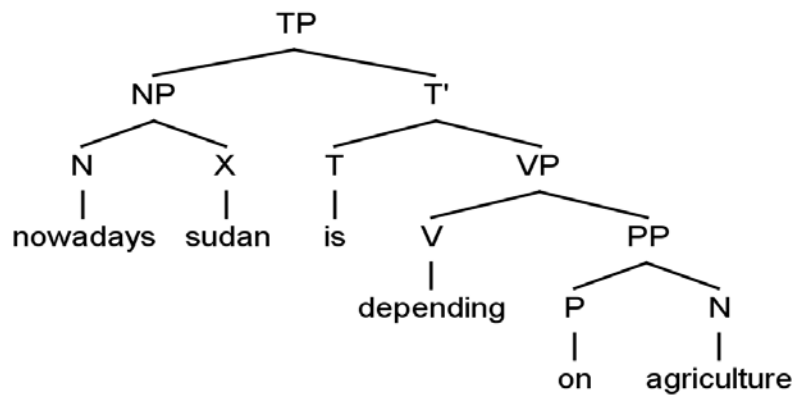


Figure 4.10

The issues in (13 & 14) considered to be pure inflectional issues. In particular, the morphology of the auxiliary, in both 13 & 14 the issues of omission or misuse of auxiliary

appeared, so it's plausible to say that second language learning needs more practice in morphology and syntax of target language.

4.1.1.2.1. c. Misuse of Verb Form:

(15) ***Some farmers grows** the seeds of marig

(16) That will **reacting** on their study

Other issues were rose in this study, relate to the morphological and syntactic features of verb that allow only well-formedness syntactic representation, and since it joins other categories or lexical entries it has to accommodate morpho-syntactic relation with other lexical entries within one syntactic projection that is to say the agreement features have to be checked. Considering this as the base of verb morphology, the above sentences are to violate morphological rules of verb form.

To make this violation clear let us construct and look at how this miss form of verb affect on all the sentential structure.

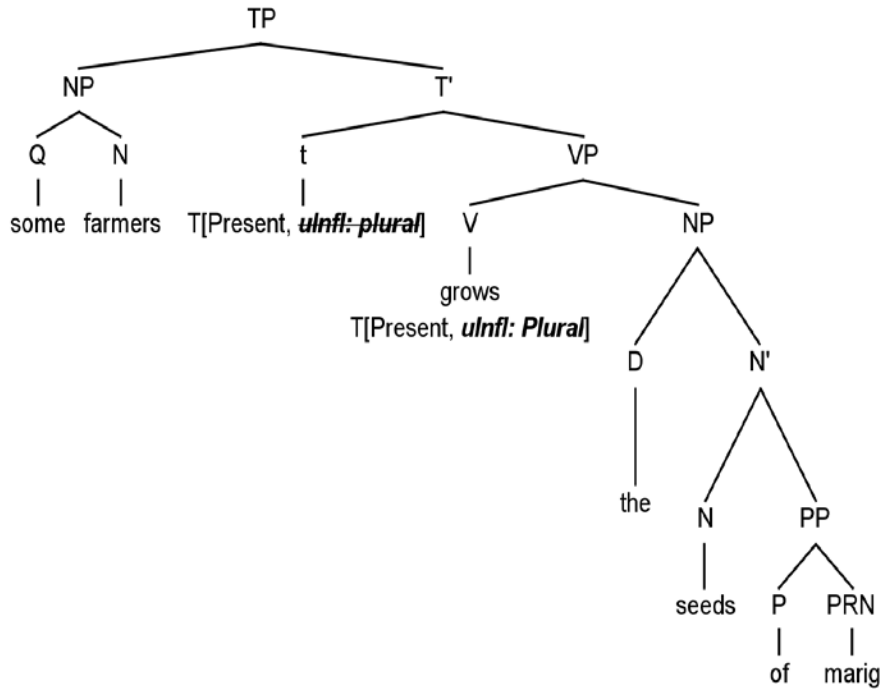


Figure 4.11

It's clear from the above structure that *uninterpretable* inflectional feature (*uInfl*) of (T) doesn't checked in (V) under (VP) resulting ungrammatical sentences. Now to construct the correct form let us assume that the (N) *marig* merged with (P) *of* to form (PP) *of marig*, the resulting (PP) merged with the lower (V') to form another higher (V'), the lower (V') itself formed as the result of merging the (NP) which dominate (D) *the* and (N) *seed* with (V) forming the lower (V') *grow the seeds* , then the (PP) of *marig* merged with lower (V') to form higher (V'), the resulting (V') rose up to (VP) by *headedness projection principle* that specifies all phrases must have a head (Radford, 2004), the resulting (VP) merged with (T) that bears tense feature and uninterpretable inflectional feature of (V) to form (T'), and then the resulting (T') merged with Spec (QP) that dominates (N) *farmers* and (Q) *some*, by virtue of UG principle (EPP) to form (TP) as the following figure illustrates:

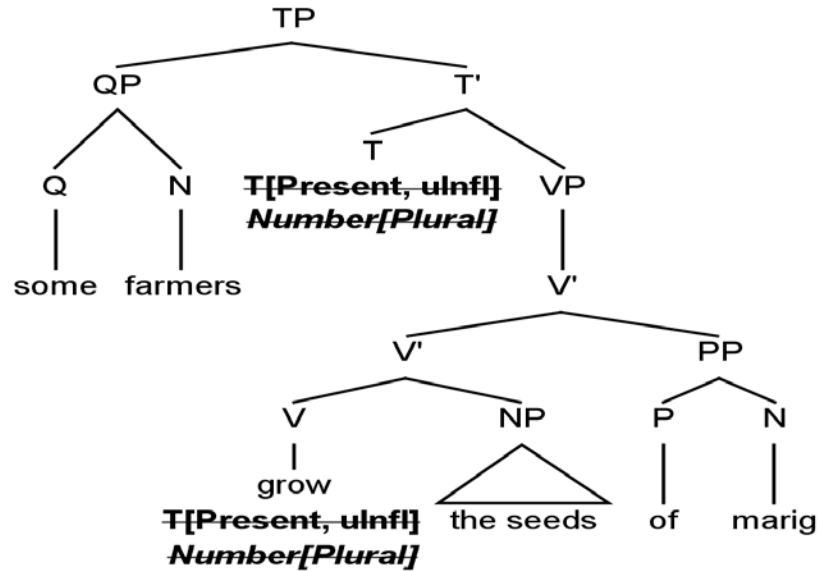


Figure 4.12

So the verb's form (inflected or un-inflected) is determined by the morpho-syntactic features dominated within the tense under T, in addition the number agreement within subject, if there is no auxiliary used in the sentence, However, in case of the presence of Aux definitely the features will be determined by Aux only because it has the power to attract the verb to bear same features. Even though the users of the second language find this to be problematic, and because their limit knowledge they confuse to choice either finite or infinitive form of verb during their performance. Thus they misused the verb in (16) which seem to be strange sentence, this argument bases on the generative views of English auxiliaries and modals that in some cases take only an infinitive form of verb as in above, so if comes to the structure, the (N) *study* merged with (D) *their* to form (DP/NP) *their study*, the resulting (NP) merged with (P) *on* to form (PP) *on their study*, furthermore the resulting (PP) merged with infinitive form of V *react* to form (VP) *react on their study*, the resulting (VP) merged with the head (T) to form (T') *will react on their study*, and by

virtue of (EPP) T' extended to its maximal projection and form (TP) *that will react on their study*, as in the following:

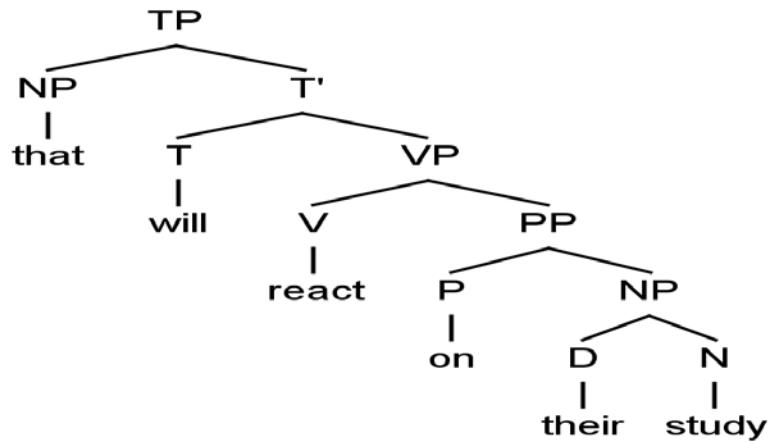


Figure 4.13

4.1.1.3 Errors of Categorical Features:

Grammatical categories are the basic knowledge of grammar (Ouhalla, 1999), this is because all syntactic representations build upon categories whether lexical or functional categories, according to (Chomsky 1965, Radford 2004 & adger 2002), the learners should know the features and position of each one of these categories within the syntactic projection, for example the lexical category noun (N) in English's syntax has the features to takes the position after and before verb in deep structure (Chomsky, 1965) as well as follows the determiner (D), and adjective (A) takes has the features of being preceded by quantifier (Deg) and so on for the rest of categories. So as the researcher mentioned earlier that the learners of second language feel worry from the proper use of these categories, thus they committed several misuses of those category as explained in the following examples:

4.1.1.3. a. Misused of Prepositions:

(17) *People used to supply their seeds **with** ground water

(18) *we all depend **to** agriculture

(19) *Agriculture depends **of** all populations

(20) *When you finish, **to** example

Since the semantic properties of any preposition are needed in acquiring second language, it seems obvious that the learners in above sentences did not successfully use the prepositions (with, to, and of). So the proposed prepositions would be (by, on, on, and for) respectively.

4.1.1.3.b. Misuse of Adjectives:

(21) *agriculture is very **importance**

(22) *Very **bigger**

(23) *Sudan is **bigger** country in Africa

The researcher mentioned earlier that generative linguistics considered to be the principle school of thought in linguistics because it attempts to explain language acquisition in term of different aspects and linguistics operations, one of these operations, is the explanation of the features of any category that lead us to determine well-formedness from ill-formedness, for example the category (A) in English has the feature of being followed by Sepc such as *very, so, ...* and so on as well as has inflected comparative and superlative forms. However using the Spec (Deg) *very* with inflected form, violate morpho-syntactic features and consequently ungrammaticality appeared as in above (21 and 22), in addition the inflected forms, comparative and superlative depend on the level of comparison, so to compare two entities it takes the suffix (-er) whereas for superiority it takes (-est), thus the above (23) considered to violate this. And accordingly the (21, 22, and 23) will have the grammatical form as in the following:

(21) *Agriculture is very important*

(22) *Very big*

(23) *Sudan is the biggest country in Africa*

4.1.1.3. c. Misuse of Determiners:

(24) ***These** country

(25) ***These** day

(26) ***A** agriculture

To join any two words together we need to know all information about the features and properties of each according to target language, these features and properties allow only and only correct forms not else. Thus to use determiners with their complement we normally need to identify features of both in term of number, that is to say singular determiners with singular complements and plural determiners with plural complements, in addition phonological environment is important to be considered in particular with indefinite articles, so accordingly, it's obvious to say that the plural form of the nouns only can complete (24 and 25) which are (countries, and days) respectively. Moreover with regarding to phonological environment in (26) the only indefinite article (an) will be suitable to specify the noun *agriculture*, thus the grammatical form for (24, 25, and 26) will be as:

(24) *These countries*

(25) *These days*

(26) *an agriculture*

4.1.1.4 Verbal Morphosyntax of Infinitive

Since generative syntax has considered the lexical word verb (V) as the important part in any sentential structure, this because within the properties of this lexical word, the learner will know what are the other parts of the sentence, based on what are called thematic and argument structure of the verb (Chomsky, 1995). However the above mentioned statement will be applicable only with finite verbs, but infinite verb has different properties that do not allow any inflectional rules, and consequently, although these properties of infinite verbs should acquired regardless first or second language, learners always have faced problems due to these properties, thus the following examples illustrate how second language learners failed in this recent study to deal with this properties:

(27) *People used to supplies their seeds

(28) *We need to eating from agriculture

The assumption that these sentences are ungrammatical comes from the fact that infinitival (to) has the feature to take only infinitive form of the verb and not inflected as the learners used in above sentences, thus to use (to) with inflected form of verb due to ungrammaticality, to make this clear here are some examples:

- a. *they used to eating
- b. *they used to ate
- c. they used to eat

And accordingly, only infinitive verb will be used to form grammatical sentences (Adger, 2002) as in the following two trees which explain both structures:

(27a) Grammatical

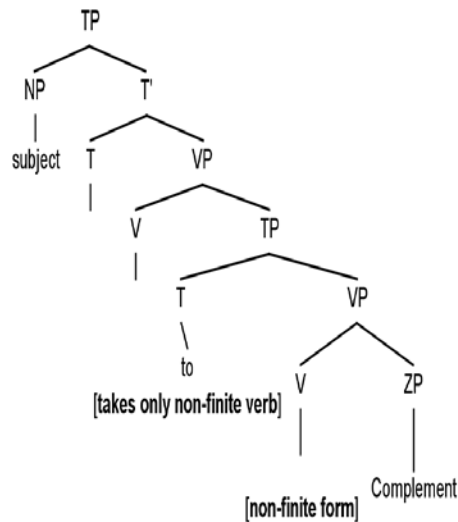


Figure 4.14

(27b) Ungrammatical

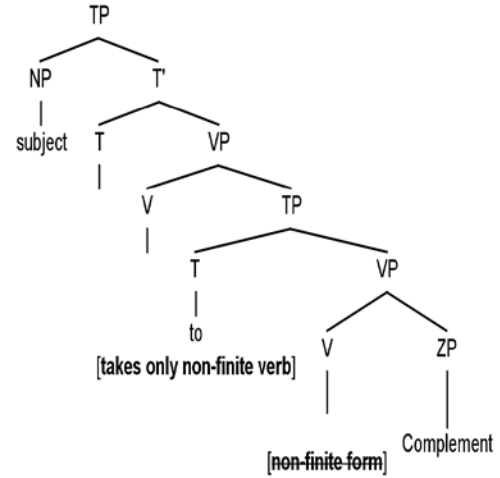


Figure 4.15

From the above structures it's clear that the features under T (to) in (27b) do not checked and consequently forms ungrammatical sentence.

4.1.1.5 Projection Errors of TP

The term projection that has been used here, goes back to chomskyan generative syntax (1957) when Chomsky published his book titled *syntactic theory from the aspect theory of syntax*, in this book he proposed that, the sentential structure of any sentence in any language builds up according to stages, so for meanwhile the researcher can say that projection means stages of building up sentences, its starts from the minimum projection (isolate lexicon), goes through intermediate projection T' (T-bar) via syntactic and morphological operations , and finally raises up to maximal projection in (TP) which is last stage in sentence structure (Radford, 2009a, & 2009b). So for second language and even

first language learners, this projection issues seem to be problematic, because they do not aware of rules in that target language, thus this analytic study revealed these issues from two prospective:

b. Omission of subject

a. Double subjects

To explain these more precisely the following examples were taken as a part of their writing.

4.1.1. a. Omission of Subject

(29) *Grow several crops in three seasons

From the above in (29) it's evidence to say that this sentence violates morpho-syntactic features from two perspectives, one is that, since EPP specifies all sentences to have subjects, this sentence lacks of subject, another assumption is that, according to X' theory that specifies all sentences to be headed by TP, this sentence shows only (T') and not (TP).

The following two figures illustrate both grammatical and ungrammatical forms:

Ungrammatical projection

**Grow several crops in three seasons*

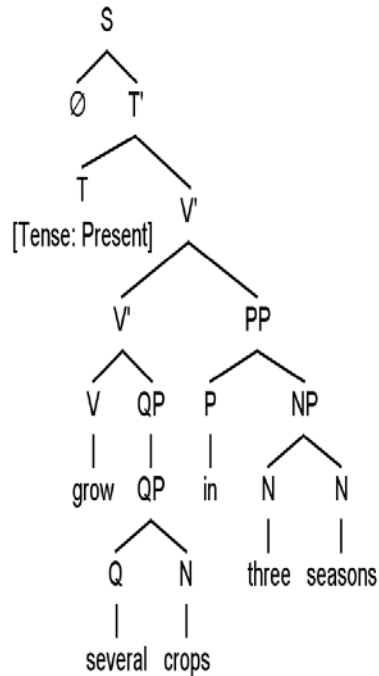


Figure 4.16

Grammatical projection

They grow several crops in three seasons

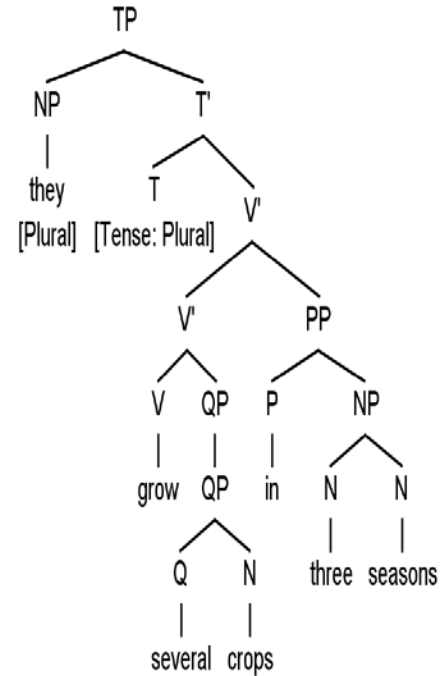


Figure 4.17

b. Double Subject:

30. **Students they are facing many problems*

The researcher argued that this sentence is ungrammatical, this comes from the assumption that by EPP all sentence must have only one subject, otherwise subjects must co-ordinate to construct grammatical sentences, so by using both *students* and *they* as the subject violates this principle and accordingly ungrammatical. Thus the following two figures explain both forms:

Ungrammatical (30a)

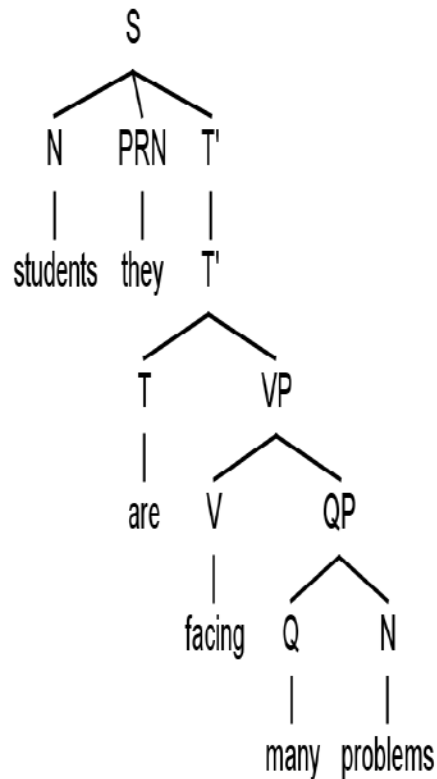


Figure 4.18

Grammatical (30b)

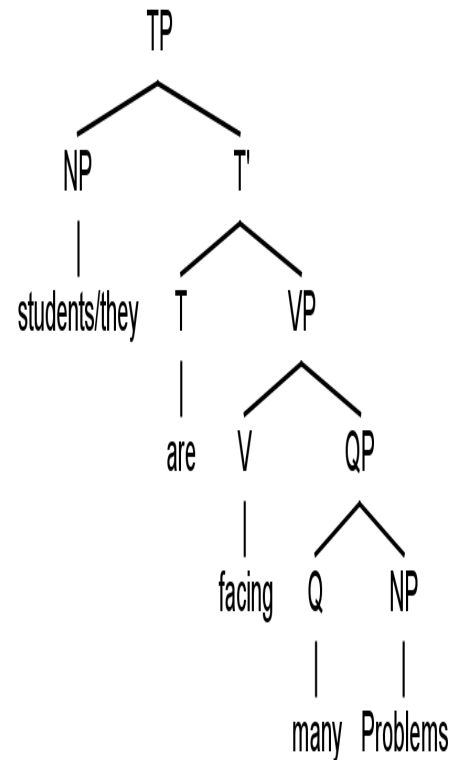


Figure 4.19

Aside from what the researcher has just mentioned, (30a) seems to violate *binary projection principle* which specifies that any projection must follow up binary branches, but (30a) has ternary branches. Moreover the inability of PRN (they) and NP (student) to co-occur in the same position follows from the idea that they are both specifiers and categories which occupy the Spec position of the TP. (Ouhalla, 1999).

4.2 Section two: The effect of lexical choice on sentential structure

Although the rules of any language allow only grammatical sentences, still there are many users of languages utter ungrammatical sentences that seem to violate syntactic, morphological, and semantic properties of lexical items, and to make this clear look at the following sentences that produced by the learners in this study:

1. *people used to supplies their seeds with ground water
2. *Agriculture depends of all people
3. *Agriculture is very importance
4. *X grow several crops in three seasons

The example in (1) is considered to be ungrammatical as I mentioned in section one, because the feature of infinitival (to) requires to select an infinitive verb. In addition, the feature of the verb supply as used here requires selecting PP as its complement that dominates only the preposition (by) and not (with). Whereas in example (2) the PP will be the complement of V depend, this PP must dominate P (on) not (of) as used here. Furthermore, in the example in (3) I argued that only infinitive adjective can complete the Deg (very) which is important and not importance. And finally in (4) the omission of an argument (NP) the subject affect the meaning from which the reader will not know who grow several crops in three seasons.

Thus overall, the reasons for occurrence of all these sentences is something to do with the properties of individual lexical items, for example why NP is required to be a subject and not PP or any other phrase in (4), and consequently this will lead us to what so call sub-categorization that specify the categorical class of lexical item and the environment in which it can occur (Ouhalla, 1999). Hence we might say that, within any syntactic

projection there what so called selectional restrictions that allow only and only suitable lexical item to fill certain position in the structure to form grammatical sentences, this selectional restrictions involve two different component of grammar, one is concerns with the structure which is **syntactic component** and other is concerns with the meaning that is **semantics**. (Ouhalla, 1999), and since these component are complete each other in any grammatical operations, it would be possible to confirm that lexical items are the base of any syntactic projection.

So lexical choice has *syntactic* effect in term of structure if any lexical item does not select appropriate position, in addition it affects the *meaning* of whole sentence or phrase and will lead to ambiguity.

4.3 Factors behind morpho-syntactic issues

Different researchers have described different kinds of grammatical errors, in particular morpho-syntactic errors, therefore it's necessary to move further and attempt to ask about the sources or factors of these erroneous in language acquisition, since errors in second language acquisition seems to occur as the results of interference of first language, sources of morpho-syntactic errors can be categorized into two domains:

4.3.1 Interlingual transfer:

The term interlingual used in different books to refer to the language transfer, (the dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics, 1992) defined interlingual errors as the errors that result from the transfer of first language into second language, (Richard, 1971) considered interlingual transfer as the negative transfer of L1 to L2, this transfer may occur in different level such as transfer of morphology, syntax, lexicon, etc. according to (Brown, 1994) there are two sub-categorization of interlingual transfer, (1) direct translation, (2) and the used of negative words, in this study many issues appeared to be interlingual transfer such as: Omission of auxiliary in (13 and 14) this simply because their first language does make use of auxiliary thus they confused the proper auxiliary or omitted as in the examples (13, 14)

(13). *All these is making Sudan agricultural country

(14). *Nowadays, Sudan depending on agriculture

Another error to consider here as interlingual transfer will be the errors of infinitive verbal morpho-syntax from which the learners found difficulties to deal with it, in particular when they used finite form with infinitival particle (to), this because their first language allows such structure. Thus they used inflected form of verb in (27, 28) as follows:

(27). *people used to supplies their seeds

(28). *we need to eating from agriculture

The learners in these two sentences just translated the sentences from their first language to second language.

4.3.2 Intralingual interfere:

Intralingual interfere used to refer to the issues that results from the learners' attempt and use the target language in a very simple way, (Richard, 1971) stated that these kinds of errors due to main four reasons, (1) overgeneralization, (2) ignorance of rules, (3) incomplete application of rules, (4) and false concepts hypothesized, these issues appeared in the study in terms of the following sub-branches, such as:

Tense agreement

Misuse of adjectives

Misuse of determiners

Misuse of preposition ...etc.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has provided precise results for the morpho-syntactic errors, justified the ungrammatical forms, mentioned the possible factors behind these errors, and established how lexical choice affects the sentential structure.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents summary for the results of this study corresponding to research questions. It discusses the findings of the study that relate to morpho-syntactic errors, it provides conclusion, and finally suggests some recommendations for future researchers.

5.1 Summary of Results According to Research Questions

5.1.1 Research Question 1: what are the morpho-syntactic errors in these narrative essays?

Results: regarding the above mentioned question, the results of this study revealed five main errors to be considered as morpho-syntactic, each one of these five errors sub-divided into sub-categories as in the following:

1. Errors of agreement features that consists of
 1. Subject-verb agreement
 - I. Number agreement
 - II. Person agreement
 2. Tense agreement
1. Omission/misuse of inflectional morphology this consists of
 - I. Omission/misuse of tense marker on verb

- II. Omission/misuse of auxiliary
 - III. Misuse of verb form
3. Omission of categorical features which consists of
- I. Misuse of prepositions
 - II. Misuse of adjectives
 - III. Misuse of determiners
4. Verbal morphosyntax of infinitive
5. Projection issues of TP that consists of
- I. Omission of subject
 - II. Double subject

5.1.2 Research Question 2: why these errors considered as errors?

Results: since the grammatical rules of any language allow only and only well-formedness structure, the results of this study found the morphology, syntax, and semantics are integrated units of any projection that should not be decomposed, because each one complete another in the structure, and consequently once they decomposed ungrammaticality or ambiguity appears in the structure as mentioned in chapter four section two.

5.1.3 Research Question 3: how lexical choice affects the sentential structure?

Results: according to this question the results revealed that lexical items have effect in any sentential structure in terms of syntax wherein the word order is not on random base;

moreover lexical items have effect on the meaning of the structure wherein the semantic of the sentences is determined by lexical items, and thus it affects the structural refining.

In addition, the results showed that; the interface is the most blocks that stands as factor or source of morpho-syntactic errors in terms of two different kinds of transfer, *interlingual transfer* from which the learners attempt to apply the rules of their first language in second language, and *intralingual interfere* from which the learners just try to learn second language as very simple as possible.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Morpho-syntactic Errors and Factors Behind Them

The 5 major morpho-syntactic errors which were found in this study considered to be similar to those of (Abe 2007, Harganto 2007, Pongsiriwet 2001, and Hamin & Mustafa 2010) in different reviewed literatures in chapter two from which different researchers tried to investigate these morpho-syntactic errors but separately, such as subject-verb agreement, misuse of prepositions and so on, so by examining these morpho-syntactic errors as one study makes the study important and distinct from cited literatures in chapter two. Furthermore, since the similarity in the results is consistent it would possible to confirm the priority intensive attention to ESL learners and encourage them to practice more and more in order to be familiar with second language's rules.

With regard to morpho-syntactic errors found in this study, interlingual transfer was considered to have more effect due to these errors, this appeared clear in the errors relate to inflectional morphology from which they attempted to apply their first language' rules (Arabic language) or just translated the idea, although two languages are totally different in the way they employ the morpho-syntactic rules.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has presented morpho-syntactic errors analysis of essays written by Sudanese university students, the study revealed 5 errors categories found in the students essays, including errors in (1) agreement features that consist of subject-verb agreement in number and person, (2) tense agreement that appeared in inflectional morphology as misuse or

omission. This consists of omission/misuse of tense marker on verb, omission/misuse of auxiliary, and misuse of verb form. In addition (3) errors of categorical features were found which consist of misuse of prepositions, adjectives, and determiners. Furthermore, errors in (4) verbal morpho-syntax appeared in particular infinitive verb, and finally (5) projection errors of TP took place which consists of omission of subject and double subject.

With regard to factors behind these errors, the study found that interlingual and intalingual transfer to be sources of these issues. In addition the study tried to establish the effect of lexical choice on the sentential structure and found that this effect represented in two different component, syntax and semantics as well.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. As this study investigated morpho-syntactic errors of ESL learners essays, future researchers may investigate these errors in different language skills such as speaking and try to find out whether the results are consistent similar or not.
2. As simple samples of written essays were used in these study the results may not be generalized, so further research may include large samples and try to compare the results.