Original Research Article

Comparative Analysis of Errors in the Use of Simple Past in the Essays of NCE One Students in Some Selected Colleges of Education in Kano

Muhammad Muhammad[1*], Dahiru Ibrahim Abdullahi[2]

[1]Department of English and European Languages, Kano State Collage of Education and Preliminary Studies P.M.B. 3145 Airport Road, Sabon Gari, Kano State, Nigeria

[2]Department of African Languages, Kano State College of Education and Preliminary Studies P.M.B 3145, Airport Road, Sabon Gari, Kano State, Nigeria

Abstract: This paper compares errors in the use of the simple past between some selected private and public colleges of education in Kano state. The study's goals are to identify kinds of errors made by students, investigate the most common types errors identified in their writing, and determine the relevance of differences in errors made by students of English from four colleges of education. The sample size of 80 students for the study was determined using a random sampling technique, with the population consisting of NCE one students of English from four colleges of education. Students were given a test as an instrument. The study used the error types of Dulay *et al*., (1982) and error analysis of Ellis (2003), The t-test statistical method of analysis was used as well as simple percentage. The result reveals the error classification of addition, omission, misinformation and misordering from the writings of NCE one students of English from the four colleges of education. It also reveals the misinformation error type was committed with the highest frequency by NCE one students from public and private colleges of education. Lastly, it reveals the mean performance of public students which is 6.5 with SD 3.3 is low/less than the mean of private students which is 7.6 with SD 3.7, and it shows that the private colleges committed more errors in the use of simple than that of public colleges of education. It was recommended constant training of students on grammar, more especially the use of good tenses is needed, textbooks on grammar should be purchased by students for practice, further research on tense error should be encouraged and comparative study should be carried out to ensure proper teaching and learning.

Keywords: Comparative analysis, errors, simple past, essays.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

English is largely recognized as the most extensively spoken, utilized, and taught language on the planet. Colonialism began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, resulting in the spread of the English language throughout Africa and Asia. As a result of the spread, the colonized countries were forced to adopt the British colonists' language for better national and international communication.

Another important aspect of the establishment of English in Nigeria was the arrival of professional interpreters. Freed slaves from Monrovia and Freetown worked as interpreters. Because they had spent so much time in England, the United States, and the Caribbean, they were able to communicate in English, so the end of the slave trade in the early nineteenth century offered a new beginning for them. Many of them moved to Nigeria to work as government clerks and interpreters between European commerce and the locals. The establishment of English in Nigeria was aided by missionary operations.

The English language is utilized to communicate or convey ideas in our heads. These thoughts are a product of the world we live in. It primarily consists of four abilities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is extremely important to humans since it plays such a crucial role in language learning. The art of writing entails not only putting pen

*Corresponding Author: Muhammad Muhammad
Department of English and European Languages,Kano State Collage of Education and Preliminary Studies P.M.B. 3145 Airport Road, Sabon Gari, Kano State, Nigeria

to paper, but also having something worthwhile to say and knowing how to say it effectively in writing. According to Ibrahim (2012), writing is a formal talent that requires formal instruction, and teachers must push students to develop all necessary skills.

When we write, the subject of what we're writing determines the format. We should be aware that in order to write successfully, we must have mastered English grammar. Grammar is also crucial, particularly when students communicate with others. Furthermore, by knowing English grammar, the learner will be able to transfer and receive a massage without misunderstanding, whether in written or spoken language. When English learners hear the word about, they immediately associate it with tense.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The accurate use of English tense, as the foundation of grammatical study in English, assists students in improving their writing skills or conveying their intended messages. Many students, however, continue to struggle with learning tenses, particularly the simple past tense, which they learn in school, but which can leave them perplexed and cause them to make mistakes in a variety of exercises or pieces of writing. This indicates that the students' understanding of this grammatical category is restricted or that it is not being handled effectively. They cannot use tenses correctly and efficiently in their statements in English essays. As a result, many teachers complain about students misusing the simple past tense in their compositions. As a result, the main focus of this study is to compare on lapses with Use of the Simple Past Tense in the English Essays of NCE One Students of English of Aminuddeen college of Education and Tijjani Ibrahim College of Education from private, and Kano State college of education and preliminary studies and Sa'adatu Rimi college of education from governmental.

1.2 Objective (s) of the study:
a. To find out the types of simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.
b. To find out the most prevalent simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.
c. To examine notable differences in the simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.

Hypothesis
c. There is no significant mean difference in the simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW:
2.1 Error Definition

According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) an error is a systematic departure from a selected norm or group of norms. Richard and Schmidt (2002) views an error as a word, a speech act or a grammatical item that is used in such a way that it appears flawed and indicative of insufficient learning. Fromkin and Rodman (1978) says that the brain of the human being is capable of not only acquiring and storing mental grammar, but also accessing that linguistics store tense to speak and understand what is spoken, implying that they are against the grammatical rule of the language and result in unacceptable utterances they occur in the second language learning because the learner has not internalized the second language grammar.

2.2 Mistakes and Errors

Some scholars distinguish between the terms "error" and "mistake." Errors, according to Ellis (2003), show gaps in the learner's knowledge; they arise when the student is unsure of what is correct. Mistakes are failures in performance that occur when a learner is unable to apply what he or she has learned in a specific situation. Brown (2000) distinguishes between the terms "mistake" and "error." A 'mistake' is a performance fault that occurs when a known system is not used correctly. While a 'mistake' is a noteworthy variation from a native speaker's adult grammar, it reflects the learner's inter-language ability.

2.3 Errors and their Types

Dulay, Burt and Krashen's (1982: 150) surface structure taxonomy is based on 'the ways surface structures are altered' in erroneous utterances/sentences. They suggest that there are four principal ways in which learners modify target forms: omission errors occur when an element of the sentence that should be presented is omitted; addition errors are the inverse of omissions; misinformation errors occur when the wrong form of a structure or morpheme is used instead of the correct one; and misordering errors occur when the order of a word or group of words in an utterance or text is incorrect.

Error-Producing Sources
Brown (2000:223-226) mentions four sources of error and mistake:
1. There is Interlingua transfer, which is the reversal of the learner's mother tongue.
2. There is also Intralingua transfer, which is the loss of the learner's mother tongue.
3. The next is Learning context, which is the classroom with its teacher and resources within a classroom setting, the teacher or the textbook can induce the student to create incorrect language generalizations. 4. Communication strategies. Norrish (1983:21-26) divides mistake causes into three categories: 1. There is an idleness and a lack of motivation 2. It is

about Interference from the first language in the establishment of target language habits. 3. It is concerned with word- to -word translation of mother tongue expressions into the target language.

Procedure for Analysis (Theory)

This research is based on Stephen Pin Corder and Colleages' work on error analysis in the second language acquisition. Error analysis was an alternative to contrastive analysis, a Behaviorism-influenced approach in which applied linguistics aimed to forecast errors by using formal distinctions between first-language learners. Contrastive analysis was found to be unable to anticipate the vast majority of errors, despite the fact that it has been introduced into the research of language transfer as a more valuable aspect. Error Analysis, according to Richard & Schmidt (2010), is the study of errors committed by second and foreign language learners. It is used to carry out or discover learners' language learning strategies, the causes of learners' errors, and information on the common language learning challenges as an assistance in teaching or developing teaching materials.

Error analysis is a method of analyzing a learner's errors in the process of learning a second language. "Error analysis is defined as a process based on analysis of learner's error with one clear purpose, evolving a suitable and effective teaching learning approach and remedial measures essential in particular clearly marked out areas of foreign language," Sharma (1982) noted in his article.

"The fact that learners do make errors, and that these errors can be observed, studied, and classed to tell something about the system operating within the learner, led to a surge of study of learners' error," according to Brown (2000).

'Error analysis,' according to Sharma (1980), can thus provide a powerful support to remedial teaching. According to Corder (1967), error analysis is beneficial to the researcher in linguistics, the language teacher, and the student himself. Corder (1974) defined error analysis as a five-step process that includes the selection of a given of language, identification of errors in it, categorization of errors found, the explanation of the psycholinguistic reasons of errors, and evaluation of errors. Once all of the faults have been detected, Ellis' (2003) way of assessing learners' errors is that they can be defined and classified into kinds: 1. identifying errors. 2. describing errors. 3. Explaining errors. 4. Error evaluation. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. One method is to categorize errors into grammatical groups. For example, we might collect all verb errors and then identify the various types of verb faults in our sample errors in the past tense. Another option is to look for general differences between the learners' utterances and the reconstructed target

languages' utterances. "Omission" is when an item is left out that is essential for an utterance to be regarded grammatical; "misinformation" is when one grammatical form is used instead of another; and "misordering" is when the words in an utterance or written form are placed in the wrong order. He goes on to say that categorizing errors in this way can help us assess learners' learning problems at any point in their growth, as well as illustrate how patterns change over time. The error analysis technique (Theory) used in this study is based on Ellis (2003), the types of error are based on Dulay *et al.*, (1982)

2.4 The Review of Empirical Literature

Many scholars have worked on the tense error from many angles, but there are some areas, notably in the simple past tense, that need to be revisited. Here are some examples of earlier study on simple past:

Rusmiati (2021) conducted research on the topic of 'An Error Analysis of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Students' Works on Simple Present Tense.' The findings reveal: omission 68 (23.61%), addition 23 (7.99%), misinformation 143 (49.65%), and misordering 54. (18.75 percent). Nur (2020) conducted research on 'Error Analysis in Using Simple Past Tense Found in Students' Recount Text Writing.' The results show that grammar is incorrect in 57.3% of the time, punctuation is incorrect in 23.3% of the time, and spelling is incorrect in 26.7% of the time. Fahmi (2020) conducted research on 'Perfect Tense Error Analysis among Islamic Secondary School Students in Terengganu.' The results show that omission 6 (40%), addition 1 (6%), misinformation 15 (100%), and misordering 1 are all present (6 percent). Wa Nursila *et al.*, (2020) looked at faults in tenth-grade students' argumentative writing at SMAN 2 Fakfak in west Papua. The following are the outcomes: omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. Similarly, Saputri (2018) discovered that misinformation mistakes were the most common type of error in the use of the simple past tense, followed by omission errors, addition errors, and finally, misordering errors. Similarly, Nurmala (2017) discovered that the most common errors in the use of the simple past tense were misinformation, omission, misordering, and finally addition. Millah (2016) also discovered that the most common error was misinformation, followed by omission, addition, and misordering. Furthermore, Abdul Gafar (2015) discovered that the most common error was misinformation, followed by addition, omission, and no fault of misordering was detected. Finally, Rizaldi (2014) discovered that the most common error was misinformation, followed by omission, misordering, and addition. However, while there have been numerous studies on simple past tense errors with various variables, this study used T-test to compare errors in simple past usage in English essays of NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education in Kano State.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

To examine students' writing errors, the study used descriptive survey research design. The study's demographic was NCE one students of English from four colleges of education in kano state from private and governmental sides. Random selection technique was used to pick 80 individuals from the four colleges for the study. Students was given a test and was asked to produce a 250 to 350 word essay on the simple past tense. Students was asked to complete a test on 'What did you do yesterday?' or any other relevant questions on simple past in order to assess their ability to write in

the simple past tense. The information was gathered in the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic session of the study and was analyzed. The researchers employed Ellis (2003) error analysis approach as well as Dulay *et al.,* (1982) error classification. T-test statistical analysis and simple percentage were used to analyze the data.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Research Objective a : To find out the types of simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.

Table 1: Types of Simple Past Tense Errors

Sl. No	Frequency	ACE	TICOE (Private)	KASCEPS	SRCOE (Public)	TOTAL
1	Addition	0	3	8	10	**21**
2	Omission	23	25	18	32	**98**
3	Misformation	120	117	105	89	**431**
4	Misordering	0	0	0	0	**0**
	TOTAL	143	145	131	131	550

The Table 1 above shows that the types of errors committed by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges. These errors are of: addition, omission and misformation when using simple past tense. However, error of misordering was not found in their writings.

4.2 Research Objective b: To find out the most prevalent simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.

Table 2: Frequency of Types of Simple Past Tense Errors

Sl. No	Frequency	ACE	TICOE (Private)	KASCEPS	SRCOE (Public)
1	Addition	0%	2.1%	6.1%	7.6%
2	Omission	16.1%	17.2%	13.7%	24.4%
3	Misformation	83.9%	80.7%	80.2%	67.9%
4	Misordering	0%	0%	0%	0%

The Table 2 shows the frequency of the types of error committed most by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education. It reveals the misformation error type was committed with highest frequency by NCE one students from public and private colleges of education.

4.3 Research Objective c: To examine notable differences in the simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from private and public colleges of education.

Table 3: Comparison of Public and Private Colleges of Education in the simple past errors

Groups	N	mean	SD	t	df	P-value	Remarks
Public	40	6.5	3.3	-1.384	78	.170	
Private	40	7.6	3.7				

The above Table showed that the mean performance of public students which is 6.5 with SD 3.3 is low/less than the mean of private students which is 7.6 with SD 3.7 at t-calculate -1.384, df stood at 78 at P-value .170. Since the P-value .170 is greater than level of significance 0.05, we can therefore conclude that the earlier hypothesis that says there is no significant mean difference in the simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from public and private colleges of education is hereby rejected and uphold the alternate hypothesis that is to say there is difference in significant mean difference in

the simple past tense errors made by NCE one students of English from public and private colleges of education.

5. CONCLUSION

The main focus of this study is to compare errors with use of the simple past tense in the English Essays of NCE One Students of English from Aminuddeen college of Education and Tijjani Ibrahim College of Education from private side, and Kano State college of education and preliminary studies and Sa'adatu Rimi college of education from governmental

side. The finding of this study show the error classification of addition, omission, misformation and misordering from the writings of NCE one students of English from the four colleges of education. It also reveals the misformation error type was committed the most with the highest frequency by NCE one students from public and private colleges of education. Lastly, it reveals the mean performance of public students which is 6.5 with SD 3.3 is low/less than the mean of private students which is 7.6 with SD 3.7, and it shows that the private colleges committed more errors in the use of simple than that of public colleges of education.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS
- Constant training of students on grammar is need, more especially the use of good tenses.
- Textbooks on grammar should be purchased by students for practice.
- Further research on tense error should be encouraged.
- Comparative study should be carried out to ensure proper teaching and learning.

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