

CHAPTER-ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Language is the strong means of human communication. It is a unique feature of human and most effective means of communicating ideas, feelings, thoughts and emotions. No language is superior or inferior in terms of communicating ideas. It is most frequently used and highly developed form of human communication.

Different scholars and linguist have defined language differently.

According to Robins (1964) "Languages are symbol systems...based on pure or arbitrary convention...infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs of speakers". In Block and Trager's (1942) words "A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates". Similarly the definition of language in Sapir's (1978) words is "A purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of a voluntary produced symbols. These symbols are, in the first instance, auditory and they are produced by the so called organs of speech". In the same way, Richards et al. (1985) define language as "The system of human communication by means of a structural arrangement of sounds to form larger units eg. morphemes, words sentences".

Language is a system of systems. Each language has its own system; grammatical system, lexical system and discourse system. All the human beings acquire their mother tongues at their childhood but learning a second language is entirely different which is supposed to be a planned activity requiring conscious efforts on the part of the learners. The English language, like other languages is full of problems for foreign learners. Some of these problems are easy to explain. For example, the formation of simple yes/no questions or wh-question, differences between that and this etc. But some problems are more

strict and ambiguous which cause difficulty not only for the junior learners but also advanced students and teachers as well.

1.1.1 The English Language

English is generally acknowledged to be the world's most important language. It is perhaps worth glancing briefly at the basics for that evaluation. There are, after all, thousands of different languages in the world, and each will seem uniquely important to those who speak it as their native language, the language they acquire at their mother's knee. But there are more objective standards of relative importance. One criterion is the number of speakers of the language. A second is the extent to which a language is geographically dispersed; in how many continents and countries is it used. A third is its functional load: how extensive is the range of purpose for which it is used? In particular to what extent is it the medium for highly valued cultural manifestations such as science or literature? A fourth is the economic and political influence of the native speakers of the language.

In the present context, the English language has become the link language through which the whole world is interwoven for the sake of communication. Similarly, it has been the main gate to enter the world of the modern science and technology. Thus, the essence of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Nepal has high scope. Despite the greater scope of its necessity, and importance, the teaching aspect of English has never met the need of the learners. There may be various factors, for example, old fashioned teaching and learning process, importance on theoretical aspects, untrained teachers, lack of required materials etc. Generally, the old method and lecture method are not enough for communicative purpose. The teacher centered techniques and methods are being applied in the classroom, which make the learners passive for language learning. The learners do not have access to share their ideas, emotions, thoughts, and queries through this technique. On the other hand there arises a question in the evaluation system of Nepal, which is chiefly

based on written examination system. After NESP 2028 B.S., some changes took place in the education system of Nepal. The newly invented approaches and methods which are based on the learners potentiality, viz. functional approach, OSS approach, the direct method, communicative approach etc were emphasized. In order to realize the importance of English, the government of Nepal has already made English as a compulsory subject from grade one.

According to Sthapit (2000), the English language is essential for the following activities:

-) To participate in classroom interaction
-) To study course materials and other related academic professional matters.
-) To use it as a medium of expression in assignments, tests and examination.
-) To read things for pleasure and general information.
-) To gain access to the world body of knowledge.
-) To appreciate movies, talks, plays, radios and television programmes etc.
-) To keep them abreast of what is going on around the world.
-) To participate in international meetings, seminars, conferences etc.
-) To communicate with foreigners in general.
-) To develop their personality and enhance their career development.

Regarding the importance of English, French (1963) says "... anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the whole world without leaving his own home. A young person starting a career with the knowledge of English holds a key, which will open many doors including easier access to a good job". So English can also be viewed as a way to get a better job opportunity, which will uplift the standardization of his life.

1.1.2 The Grade Nine English Course

The new course of grade nine English has been published by Curriculum Development Centre, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur. The book which designed to fulfill the objectives of grade nine English syllabus is far more better than the previous one which lacked many opportunities on the part of young scholars to enhance their communicative competence. The present book entitled "Our English Grade Nine" has incorporated all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an equally focused manner. This book contains 20 units each of which is equipped with certain language functions along with the activities that are very helpful to carry out such functions in course of communication. The learners are provided with many sample opportunities to foster their communicative competence and enable them to communicate effectively in day to day life. The book is supplemented with a "practice book" dealing with various exercises. In conclusion, listening cassette has added extra flavour to the course.

Apart from several language functions such as socializing, advising, persuading, greeting, telephone conversation, expressing intention, radio interview, T.V. interview and so on. The English course contains different stories, dramas, poems, essays, dairy writing (persuading, greeting, telephone conversation, expressing intention, radio interview) newspaper article, reading passage etc. . Here most of the exercises are of practical nature which develop students' confidence to cope with various communicative events in daily life situation and also to enhance their linguistic competence. As the course is based on communicative approach, the main motto of this book in particular is to enable the pupils to interact effectively in the English speaking world and assimilate the culture so far to make language learning lively and natural.

The exercises in this book are really effective and interesting for the learners. But some exercises are not accessible to the village side pupils who are deprived of modern technology and its invention such as computers, T.V., Internet, etc. These exercises which deal with computer programme, T.V. etc.

are unbearable for the countryside students' who have still not encountered with such technologies.

In spite of some inadequacies the grade nine English course is apt for secondary pupils to develop their communicative capabilities and enable them to encounter with different communicative events in day to day life situation.

1.1.3 Error: An Overview

"Correct English does not exist in any absolute sense. Correct English that goes off well in the situation to which it is used. Some handbooks tells us that it is correct to say "Shall you attend the meeting this evening?" And incorrect to say "Will you attend the meeting this evening?" As a matter of fact, there are relatively few situations in which "shall you attend"? is correct. It is correct if it founds right to the person being asked, but there are not very many such persons in twentieth century in America. Most people will feel the form a trifle strange and if you are talking to them, the sentence is not quite correct. If you are talking about meeting of say, the sailors union of the Pacific, "shall you attend?" is a gross error. In that situation the correct form is "you gonna go?" (Paul Roberts)

An error refers to a deviant form of speech or writing committed by foreign language learner in the use of linguistic items viz. a word, grammatical item, speech act and so on Corder, (1973) defines an error as "breaches of code". This term is used to refer to learners' errors, which they can not correct themselves. So errors result from incomplete knowledge.

Table No. 1
Errors and Mistakes

	Errors	Mistakes
Level	Competence	Performance
User/speaker	Non-native	Native
Reason	Linguistic	Non-linguistic

Occurrence	Regular/consistent	Irregular/ inconsistent
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In course of learning a foreign language, learner's frequently make errors. Generally, the terms errors and mistakes are referred to as synonyms, however, linguists take them quite differently. Errors occur in learners' spoken or written language and consist of deviations in phonology, grammar, lexical system and orthography of target language. The errors may occur at performance and competence level; performance errors are the mistakes, like slips of the tongue, lapses, omissions of the rules and so on. The learners make such type of mistakes due to carelessness, tiredness, haste, lack of attention, forgetfulness, mental fatigue etc. Such mistakes are unsystematic but the errors, which are committed at the competence level, are systematic and consistent. They are made due to linguistic reasons. Such errors are mostly committed by non-native speakers because of incomplete knowledge. These errors are serious, systematic and committed frequently. Sometimes a mistake is used as a cover term for both error and slip. Errors are considered to be more serious. The learners consistently and regularly make them because they are ignorant of the rule of the language so they cannot correct the errors.

The speakers or writers themselves can correct mistakes because they are committed due to lack of attention, tiredness, slips, and lapses or by any other non-linguistic reason. Errors and mistakes differ on the basis of their nature.

1.1.3.1 Importance of Studying Learner's Errors

Error analysis is a stepwise procedure used to analyze the language performance of the learners. So, the study of the learners' errors is never less focused or it has a great implication to language teaching.

Corder (1973) has discussed the practical and theoretical use of studying second language learners' errors. According to him, the practical uses of studying learner's errors have two values to quote his own words "the most obvious practical use of the analysis of errors is to the teacher." Errors provide

feedback. They tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and his teaching techniques, and show him what part of the syllabus he has been following, have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention. They enable him to decide whether he can move on to the next item on the syllabus or he must devote more time to the item he has been working on.

Errors are significant in three different ways. Firstly, to the teacher, in that they tell him if he undertakes systematic analysis how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and consequently what remains for him to learn.

Secondly, they provide the researcher with evidence of how, language is learned or acquired what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language.

Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypothesis about the nature of language that he is learning. The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language. The study of errors thus, becomes a feedback mainly to the language learners.

Study of errors can also help to design remedial courses and develop teaching learning materials. Since the course designers/ and or textbook writers know the area that are relatively difficult for the learners (by studying the errors they make), they pay special attention to deal with those area and this helps the learners to improve their competence in the target language.

1.1.3.1.a The Practical uses of Error Analysis

According to Corder (1973:265), "The most obvious practical use of the analysis of errors is helpful to teachers. Errors provide feedback. They tell the teachers something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and his teaching techniques and show him what parts of syllabus he has been following have been inadequately learned or taught and a need further attention. They

enable him to decide whether they can move onto the next item on the syllabus or whether he must devote more time to the item he has been working on"

In a wider sense, error analysis provides the information for designing a remedial analysis.

1.1.3.1 b. The Theoretical Uses of Errors Analysis

Error analysis is practical experiment of the theoretical prediction made by psycholinguist. According to Corder (1973:265), "The study of learners' error is such an application. The psycholinguistics predict that the nature of the mother tongue will facilitate or make difficult the learning system aspects of a second language." Thus, the study of errors is part of an experiment to conform or disprove the psycholinguistic theory of transfer. It provides us a proof whether errors occur only in different forms and units or only in similar forms and units.

The theoretical interests in studies of error have therefore a feedback to both descriptive linguistics and psycholinguistics. It is a part of the psycholinguistics search for the universal process of second language learning because it is hypothesized and some evidence is now available that children follow a similar course in the acquisition of their mother tongue.

1.1.4 Stages of Error Analysis

Error analysis was developed as a branch of applied linguistics in the 1960s and it set out to demonstrate that many learner errors were not due to the learner's mother tongue but reflected universal learning strategies. Error analysis, thus, was appeared as an alternative to contrastive analysis.

Error analysis can be seen as a series of successive steps/ stages. The stages of error analysis can be listed as follows:

1. Collection of Data for Error Analysis

Collection of data is the first stage of errors analysis. To study and analyse anything, we should be aware of its existence. This fact is equally true in error analysis. Therefore, we must have reliable data to describe and analyse

errors. Data can be of various types. They can be categorized on the basis of texts, approaches they involve, modes and tools they use.

2. Identification of Errors

At this stage, the errors existing in the collected data are identified. Identification/ reorganization of errors indicates distinguishing error from what is not error. For this, we have to define, and classify mistake in general and distinguish between performance mistakes and errors, minor and major mistakes, lapses and uncontrollable mistakes.

3. Description and Classification of Errors

At this stage of error analysis the errors identified at the second stage are categorized and kept under different types. Following Richards et al. (1999), 'Errors are sometimes classified according to vocabulary (lexical error), pronunciation (phonological error), grammar (syntactic error) misunderstanding of a speaker's intention or meaning (interpretative error), production of the wrong communicative effect eg. through the faulty use of speech act or one of the rules of speaking pragmatic error).

4. Explanation of Errors

This step is concerned with determining the source of errors. Why are certain errors made? What cognitive strategies and styles or even personality variables underline certain errors? In other words, this step is concerned with accounting for why and how errors come about. Errors may be committed due to various reasons, interlingual and intralingual. The errors on the basis of their sources can be classified as follows:

- a. errors due to L1- interference
- b. errors due to analogical creation
- c. errors due to overgeneralization
- d. errors due to hypercorrection
- e. errors due to erroneous input
- f. errors due to inherent difficulty

5. Evaluation of Errors

Evaluation of errors refers to the determination of seriousness of error. The seriousness of error is also termed as error gravity. The greater the degree of error gravity the more serious the error tends to be. Error gravity refers to a measure of the effect that errors made by people speaking a second or foreign language have on communication or on the other speakers of the language. The degree of error gravity of different kinds of errors (eg. errors of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary etc.) varies; some errors have little effect, some causes irritation, while others may cause communication difficulties.

6. Correction and Remediation of Errors

At this stage, the errors are corrected by the teachers of the learners themselves are made correct the errors. This stage is not the actual stage of error analysis but the goal or aim of error analysis.

1.1.4 Noun: An Overview

1.1.5.a Definition

Traditionally noun is defined as the name of person, place thing and animal but this definition is incomplete because it offers a characterization in this case of a word class in terms of concepts of meaning. A problem with the notional definition of noun is that it leaves a great number of nouns uncounted for which could also be said to belong to the class of nouns but which do not belong people, animals, places and things. These include words that denote abstract ideas or concepts eg. death, sincerity, success, democracy, friendship, emotional stages eg. happiness, love, bodily sensation eg. pain, dizziness, and a host of others. Of course, we could keep on extending our national definition in such a way that eventually all these words would be incorporated in the class of nouns (Bass Aarts, 1997)

Within the class of nouns we can distinguish numbers that are identifiable as nouns of the basis of typical derivational suffixes. Moreover, most nouns are

morphologically characterized by their ability to take typical inflectional suffixes.

Typical derivation suffixes of nouns are:

- age: coverage, anchorage, postage
 - ance: acceptance, appearance, utterance
 - ation: affirmation, information, transformation
 - dom: boredom, freedom, kingdom
 - ee: divorce, employee, payee
 - eer: engineer, mountaineer, profiteer
 - ence: difference, existence, preference
 - ess: actress, governess, murderess
 - eete: cigarette, sonette, usherette
 - hood: childhood, kinthood, parenthood
 - ism: idealism, modernism, organism
 - ist: Marxist, royalist, specialist
 - ment: amendment, commandment, shipment
 - ness: bitterness, exactness, whiteness
 - ship: friendship, kinship, scholarship
- Aarts and Aarts 1986)

Regarding the definition of nouns, Crystal (1997) defines nouns as a term used in the grammatical classification of words, traditionally defined as the name of a person, place or thing, but the vagueness associated with the notions of 'name' and 'thing' has led linguistic description to analyse this class in terms of the formal functional criteria of syntax and morphology. In linguistic terms, then, nouns are items that display certain type of inflexion (e.g. of case or number), have specific distribution (e.g. they may follow prepositions but not, say, modal verbs) and perform a specific syntactic function (e.g. as subject or object of a sentence). Nouns are generally sub-classified into common and proper types and analyzed in terms of number, gender, case and countability.

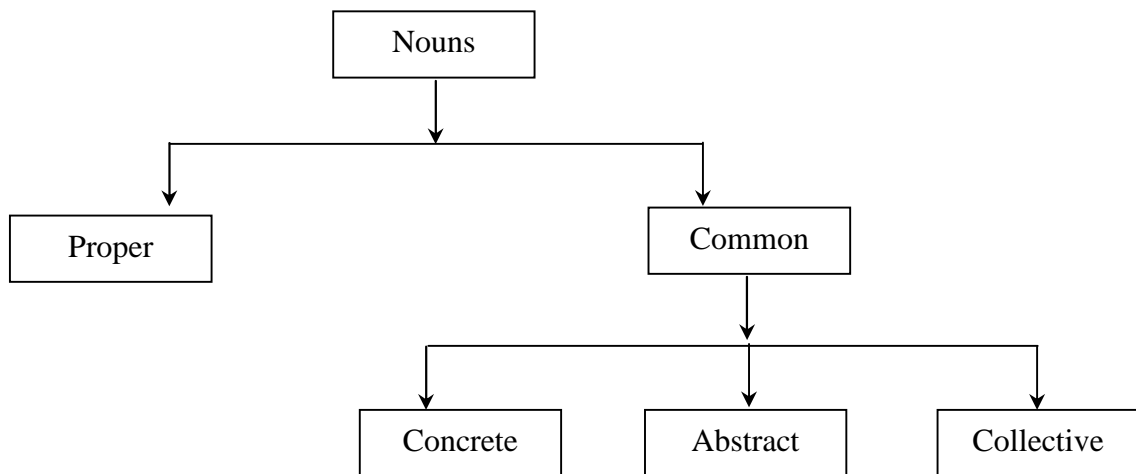
To sum up a noun is a naming word, it is the name of anything seen and unseen: person, place, animal, thing, joy, sorrow, death, love, etc.

1.1.5.b Classification of Nouns

Simply, a noun can be classified into two groups, proper noun and common noun.

Proper noun is the name of a particular person, or a place, or a thing which does not have singularity and plurality in a plain sense. The common nouns can also be divided into three groups. Let us see a clear table about the classification of nouns by Foning (1998)

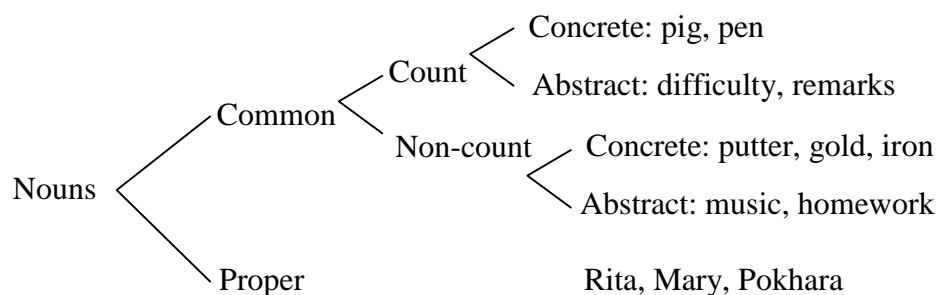
Figure 1.a.: classification of nouns



The English nouns have a number of criteria to categorize them like types of nouns, countable and uncountable nouns gender of the nouns, etc. The only way that English nouns are morphologically irregular is with respect to plural formation. Only countable nouns of course, would exhibit such irregularly. (Celce Murcia and Larsen Freeman, 1999).

According to Quirk et al. (1983), nouns are classified as follows:

Figure 1.b: classification of nouns



1.1.5.c Number

The English number system constitutes a two term contrast singular, which denotes 'one' and plural, which denotes more than 'one'. Each noun is either singular or plural, and its number is determined generally by its head, which is typically a noun. In the following sections we will concentrate on number as a property of nouns and as a basis for their classification (Quirk, 1983).

We distinguish three main number classes of nouns:

1.1.5.c (i): Singular Invariable Nouns

Singular invariable nouns are non-count nouns, which have no plural. Some concrete non-count nouns can be reclassified as count nouns with specific meanings, for example butter (kinds of butter) and a tea (a glass of tea).

Abstract non-count nouns like music, dirt etc. normally has no plural. But some can be reclassified as count nouns where they refer to an instance of a given abstract phenomenon, injustices, regrets, pleasures, etc.

Proper nouns are typically singular and invariable. Some non-count nouns particularly those denoting natural phenomenon may be pluralized, egg walking through the words. Lets play on the sands.

The following classes of invariable nouns ending in S¹ take a singular verb except where other wise mentioned News, nouns ending in-ice denoting subjects science etc are usually invariable and treated as singular of mathematics is the science of qualities. Other, such nouns in include: acoustics economics, linguistics, athletics, ethics, phonetics, classics, gymnastics and physics.

Some nouns, however, can be singular and plural, in particular when such words can denote both ones knowledge of the subject and the particular application of the subject and the practical application of the results: politics is said to be the art of impossible. His politics are rather conservative (political views)

1.1.5.c (ii): Plural Invariable Nouns

Plural invariable nouns are those nouns, which do not have singularity. They are always plural. The nouns which denotes tools, instruments and articles of dress consisting of two equal parts which are joined together are called summation plurals.

The most common summation plurals are:

-) Tools and instruments: bellows, glasses, spectacles, clippers, penceps, scissors, tongs, etc.
-) Articles of dress; Braces, breeches, brief, pannels jeans, knickers, pants, pajamas, shorts, slacks, trousers, suspenders, tights and trunks.
-) Plural tantum that means the nouns, which are plural in the given sense only. Some examples are:
 -) Accommodations: living accommodations
 -) Amends: make all possible amends.
 -) Arms: (weapons) arms aid, arms control.
 -) clothes: warm clothes, a clothes, basket (but cloths/ k ts/ as plural of cloth: a table cloth

There are unmarked plural nouns as well which means they don't have plural marking but used as plurals eg. people, clergy, staff, police, folk, cattle, poultry, livestock, vermin.

1.1.5.c (iii): Variable Nouns

(a) Regular

Variable nouns have two forms. Singular and plural. The singular is the unmarked form that is listed in dictionaries. The vast majority of nouns are variable in this way and normally the plural is fully predictable both in pronunciation and spelling by the same rules as for the –S inflectional of verbs

i.e. they form the regular plural. If the plural cannot be predicted from the singular it is an irregular plural.

The plural morpheme (s_1) is regularly realized in three ways.

|s|: After bases ending in voiceless sounds except sibilants. eg. books, roofs, lips, hats, births.

|z|: After base ending in voiced sounds except sibilants. eg: trees, bars, laws, zoos, boys, ribs, pens, loves, beds, flames, bottles etc.

|iz|: After bases ending in a sibilant:

|s| horses, nurses, kisses

|z| noises, sizes, nose

| | brushes, dishes, clashes

| | mirages

|tʃ| churches, torches, witches.

|d | pledges, bridges, languages

b) Irregular Plurals

Irregular plurals are by definition are unpredictable. In other words if the plural cannot be predicted from the singular form, it is an irregular plural. There is no indication in the written or spoken forms for examples; 'Ox' 'sheep' and 'analysis' to suggest that their plurals are oxen, sheep, and 'analyses'.

i) Complete Irregular Nouns

Some of the singular variable nouns which have their plural forms but they are extremely unpredictable. There is no indication in the written or spoken forms of for example, 'ox', 'sheep' and 'analysis' to suggest that their plural are 'oxen', 'sheep' and 'arayses'. They include zero plural, en-plural, always plural and mutation. The plural morpheme (s) is not regularly realized. For example, the plurals of 'goose', 'child', 'people' are 'geese', 'children' and 'people' etc. respectively.

ii) Conditional Regular Nouns

The terms, themselves say that the singular variable nouns have their plural forms with some condition. Here, the plurality is not regularly realized but it is realized with some condition. For example, the plural of 'country', 'copy', 'story' are 'countries', 'copies', 'stories' respectively.

Similarly, the plural of 'wife', 'loaf', 'leaf' are 'wives', 'loaves', 'leaves' etc respectively.

a) Voicing and S-plural

There is irregularity in the pronunciation of plural suffix 's'. Some nouns which in the singular, end in the voiceless fricative / /f/ /s/ (spelled-th-f-or fe and -s) form plural with corresponding voiced fricative /v/ /z/ and /z/ respectively.

/ /-- /v/ +/s/: baths, mouths, paths

/f/- /v/ +/z/: halves, knives, thieves

/s/- /z/+ /lz/: houses

b) Mutation

The following six nouns are formed plural by mutation (a change of vowels):

foot |ʊ| -- feet |i:|

goose |u:| -- geese |i:|

mouse |aʊ| -- mice |ai|

tooth |u:| -- teeth |i:|

man |æ| -- men |e|

woman |wʊm n| -- women |wimin|

c) Zero Plural

Some nouns have the same spoken and written forms in both singular and plural. They are called zero plural eg. deer, grouse, species, Chinese, Portuges, air (craf), sheep, salmen, series, Japanese, Swiss, bison.

d) The -en plural

The -en plural occurs in three nouns

Child: Children (with mutation)

Ox: Oxen (in America the plural oxes is also some time found.

Brother: brothen (with mutation as well as the –en ending) is limited to brother meaning (follow member of a religious society: otherwise regular plural brothers.

e) Foreign plural

Foreign words- in English form their plural in three different ways. First there are those that take a regular native plural eg.

virus—viruses

dilemma—dilemmas

asylum-asylums

encyclopedia—encyclopedias

prospectus—prospectuses

Some foreign words take both a native and a foreign plural eg.

formula-formuals-formulae

cactus-cactuses-cati

syllabus-syllabuses-syllabi

index-indexes-indices

memorandum-memorandums-memoranda

Finally there are foreign words that take foreign plural only, e.g.

analysis-analyses

erratum-errata

basis-bases

stratum-strata

diagnosis-diagnoeses

criterion-criteria

Thesis-theses

phenomenon-phenomena

alumnus-alumini

desideratum-desiderata

stimulus-stimuli

1.2 Review of Related Literature

An error, in general, refers to the use of a linguistic item in a way, which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. Error analysis refers to the systematic study and analysis of the errors made by second language learners.

The existence of errors in the process of second language acquisition is universally accepted, several studies have been carried out to study the errors of

second language learners. However, there are mainly two approaches to error analysis, the contrastive and the non-contrastive.

Quirk et al. (1985) opine that irregular plurals can not be predicted from their either form, singular or plural. There is no indication in the written or spoken forms of, for example, ox, deer, and thesis to suggest that their plurals are oxen, deer and theses. The particular plural of such nouns have to be learned as individual units.

Richards (1985) expresses his reaction in his own words over contrastive analysis. CA was more successful in phonology than in other areas of language and declined in the 1970s as interference was replaced by other explanations of learning difficulties. In recent years contrastive analysis has been applied in other areas of language. We can take, as an example, of discourse system.

Shrestha (1989) has carried out a research to find out the errors in subject verb agreement committed by Nepali Learner's of English. He found that the students are likely to commit high frequency of errors when the headword is preceded or followed by a word of opposite nature in grammatical number.

Awasthi (1995) has carried out a research entitled "A linguistics Analysis of Errors Committed by Nepali Learners of English" and it is found that the Nepali learners of English commit errors due to both interlingual and intralingual influences. At times, they are also found developmental in nature. It is also found that the native English teachers are more lenient in evaluating learners' errors compared to their non-native counterparts.

Arts, (1997) expresses his views regarding the number system of nouns that the morpheme (s_1) is only realized for regular plural and other system of pluralization is irregular plural. In the exceptional cases of regular pluralization, he has mainly focused on change in base+ regular suffix, mutation, zero plural and –en plural.

Chudal (1997) has undertaken a research to find out the English vocabulary achievement of grade six students. The research showed that most of the students were found below the average. And hence, they were not found satisfactory. The boys were found better than the girls. Likewise, the urban schools students were found better than the rural schools' students.

Nepal (1998) has carried out a research to find out the causes and sources of the errors committed by the seventh graders while forming the past and past participle forms of verbs. It was found that on comparing the students' errors in simple past and past participle of the given irregular verbs, more errors were found in past participle than the simple past forms of the verbs.

Adhikari (1999) has carried out a research to find out the errors in the causative verbs and explained their resources. It was found that the students committed more errors in have type of causative verbs rather than in 'make' and 'get' types.

Thapa (2000) says that comparing the student's errors in the use of comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives, more errors were found in the use of superlative degree than in the use of comparative degree of adjectives.

The present research is basically different from those reviewed researches in that nobody has done on the grammatical errors of plural nouns.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of this study is to identify and analyze errors in the use of English plural nouns in number committed by the grade nine students. However, the specific objectives are as follows:

- a) To find out the errors in the use of English irregular nouns.
- b) To find out the causes and sources of errors in different types of irregular nouns.
- c) To suggest some pedagogical implications on the basis of findings of the study.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will have great significance to the syllabus designers, text book writers, classroom teachers of students especially involved in secondary level in teaching English as a foreign and/or second language mainly in the context of Nepal. Likewise, it will be useful to the perceptive researchers on grammatical aspects of error analysis. Hopefully, it will have a global significance as well.

Errors are significant in three different ways, firstly to the teachers in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal and the listener has progressed, and consequently, what remains for him to learn. Secondly, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learnt or acquired. What strategies or producers the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense that is their most important aspect), they are indispensable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learners use in order to learn. It is a way, the learner has of testing his hypothesis about the nature of the language he is learning.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher sought to identify and analyze the errors in the use of English plural nouns committed by the ninth graders. The researcher adopted the following methodology during the study.

2.1 Sources of Data

2.1.1 Primary Sources

On account of being a field study, the primary sources of data were collected from:

-) The students studying in grade nine in Rupandehi district.
-) The English language teachers of the concerned class and schools.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources

In addition to the primary sources of data, there were the following secondary sources of data.

-) The grade nine students' answer copies related to the irregular nouns checked by their teachers available in the school.
-) Grammar books, journals, articles related to the study.
-) Other books, reports and thesis.

2.2 Sample Population and Sampling Procedure

The sample population consisted of ninth graders of five different public schools. The five different public schools of Rupandehi district were:

1. Shree Butwal Secondary School Butwal,
2. Shree Kalika Secondary School, Kalikanagar,
3. Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School,
4. Shree Ujurshing Secondary School
5. Shree Gynodaya Secondary School, Hattbazar Line, Butwal.

There were twenty students from each school in which ten were boys and ten were girls. The researcher used simple random sampling procedures while selecting the informants.

2.3 Tools for Data Collection

2.3.1 Test Items

The researcher constructed the following types of questions under the guidance of his guide chiefly related to the topic. Written questions were the main instrument for collecting data. The question items were as follows:

A: Fill in the blanks using suitable nouns from the box given below. Use the plural form of the nouns. Example (1) A lot ofare waiting for bus.
(Man)

This item 'A' contained eight questions with various types of irregular nouns.

B: Tick the best answer from the given alternatives. (Multiple Choice)

For Example:

Mr. Gurung has three.....

(a) wife's (b) Wives (c) Wife

It also contained eight questions with variant types of irregular/plural nouns.

Likewise, there were eight machine items, 8 gap filling items, keeping in the right column items, writing singular and plural form items. Altogether, there were 64 questions asked to be done.

2.3.2 Questionnaire

A set of questionnaire consisting 15 questions was developed for the English teachers of the concerning schools.

2.4 Process of Data Collection

The researcher adopted the following procedure for data collection. The researcher developed the research tools with the help of his guide before going to the field. These tools i.e. test items, and questionnaire were developed to measure the proficiency in the correct use of number of plural nouns.

-) The researcher selected five public schools of Rupandehi district randomly.
-) Then he established the rapport with the headmasters of the concerned schools to have the permission to conduct the research work.
-) The English teachers of class nine were consulted for the study.
-) The researcher gave the clear cut instructions to the students before they fill up responses of the test items.
-) After that, he collected the items within the limited time framework.
-) Then the researcher prepared a questionnaire containing 15 questions for the teachers with the help of his guide.
-) After checking the test items, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the concerned teachers of the concerned schools.
-) Then he collected the data from the teachers.
-) Finally he analyzed and interpreted the collected data.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

This study had the following limitations.

-) It was limited to five public schools of Rupandehi district.
-) The primary data was included only from class nine.
-) This research was confined within the words of plural nouns in number up to class nine.
-) The conditional regular nouns like country, wife, class, bench etc. were recognized under irregular nouns for this purpose because of the lack of sufficient complete irregular nouns being used up to grade nine.

-) Some of the singular invariable nouns and plural invariable nouns are supposed to be irregular nouns for this research. The words, trousers, pants and scissors are summation plurals and the word people are unmarked plural nouns.
-) The research was based on the objective judgments drawn from the population of the study.

CHAPTER-THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data. The responses of the students were marked systematically in accordance with the objectives of the study. On the basis of the tables of the students errors, the analysis and interpretation carried out in this chapter has been made as effective, and accurate as possible. For the purpose of making the study more objective, the analysis and interpretation were done by using simple statistical tools of average and percentage.

3.1 Analysis of Errors

The main aim or objective of this study is to identify and analyse the errors committed by the ninth graders in the use of English plural nouns. This chapter holds the most crucial part of the whole study as it to reach the objectives of the study.

The analysis and interpretation have been carried out under the following headings.

3.1.1 Item-wise Analysis and Interpretation of Errors

Here, the item a set of the sample of the test does not mean the question 'A', as the researcher has mixed various types of plural nouns in a set of question of item A:, so the researcher has again categorized all the related questions in different items i.e. complete irregular nouns and conditional regular nouns.

Table No. 2

Distribution of Errors

Complete irregular nouns				Conditional regular nouns			
Sample size	Total marks	Number of errors	Percentage	Sample size	Total mark	Number of errors	Percentage
100	1600	911	56.96%	100	4800	1872	39.04%

The above table shows the different types of irregular nouns as a whole record of this study. The table indicates that the students committed more errors

i.e. 56.96% in complete irregular nouns than conditional regular nouns in which the students committed 39.04%.

3.1.1.a Complete Irregular Nouns

Complete irregular nouns include zero plural, en-plural, mutation and always plural. The students frequently used 's' or 'es' suffix to make those nouns plural. It clearly shows that the students are poor in complete irregular nouns because of the incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns, incomprehension of instruction, overgeneralization etc. which have been discussed in type wise analysis and interpretation of errors. The following tables show the clear-cut errors committed in various types of complete irregular nouns.

Table No. 3
Complete irregular nouns

S.N.	Items	Sample size	Total marks	Number of error	Percentage
1.	Zero-plural	100	300	231	77%
2.	En-plural	100	300	128	62.67%
3.	Mutation	100	700	360	51.43%
4.	Always plural	100	300	192	64%

The table above makes clear that the errors committed in the complete irregular nouns. The students committed more errors i.e. 77% in zero-plural and the least i.e. 51.43% in mutation.

The details of these two types of errors are described below.

The following sub items and table shows the detail analysis and interpretation of those items.

3.1.1.a (i) Total Errors Committed in zero-plural

Table No. 4

Total errors committed in zero plural

S.N.	Variables	Total marks	No. of errors	Examples	%	Average percentage
1.	Sheep	100	85	Set 'A' plural form sheep/ sheeps	85%	77%
2.	Deer	200	146	Set B5: Ram sold me ten deers	73%	

The above table makes it clear that the students showed their very poor performance in zero plural. There were only two words i.e. 'sheep' and 'deer' of zero plural in which the students have committed 85% and 73% errors respectively and the average percentage of these words is 78.

3.1.1.a (ii) Total Errors in En-Plural

Table No. 5

Total Errors in En-Plural

S.N.	Variables	Total Marks	No. of errors	Examples	%	Average percentage
1.	Ox	100	87	Set 'A' (4) My uncle has kept a pair of oxes to plugh the field	87	42.27
2.	Child	200	41	Set 'B' 7. Permila looks after many childs in the hostel.	20.5	

The above table exhibits the item wise analysis and interpretation of errors in En-plural. The frequency of errors in the word "Ox" was 87 out of 100 samples. Similarly, the frequency of errors in the word 'child' was 41 out of the 260 sample size. So the percentage of those errors was also 87 and 20.5

respectively. The students committed more errors in 'ox' than in 'child'. The average percentage between these two words is 42.27.

3.1.1.a (iii) Total Errors Committed in Mutation

Table No. 6

Total Errors Committed in Mutation

S.N.	Variables	Total marks	No. of errors	Examples	%	Average percentage	
1	Man	200	74	Set 'A'2: A lot of mans are waiting for bus.	37		
2	Mouse	100	29	Set 'B' 6. Hari killed a mice yesterday	29		
3	Tooth	100	8	Set 'D'		8	51.43
				Singular	Plural		
				child	tooth		
4	Foot	100	93	Set 'C' 2. Yesterday my only one foot was paining but today my both fots are paining.	93		
5	woman	100	69	Set 'F'. Singular form of women is women.	69		
6	Goose	100	87	Set 'A'. 8 Gooses are swimming in the pond.	87		

Table No. 6 shows the item-wise analysis and interpretation of errors made in mutation. There were seven items of variables, among them, the highest percentage were found in 'foot' that is 93% against 8% of tooth. Likewise, they committed 37% in 'man', 29% in 'mouse' 69% in woman, 87% in 'goose'. The average percentage of errors in mutation was found 51.43.

3.1.1.a (iv) Always plural

There are certain words that do not have their singular forms. They represent the plural items or a set of things like pants, trousers etc. The table below clarifies the errors committed in such cases obviously.

Table No. 7

Total errors committed in always plural

S.N.	Variables	Total marks	No. of errors	Examples	%	Average percentage
1.	Trousers	100	49	Set 'A' 7. My father brought me a pair of trouserses from Hongkong	49%	
2.	Pants	100	62	Set 'E' plural form of pants—pantse	62%	64%
3.	Scissors	100	81	Set 'C' 1. Hari has two pair of scissorses	81%	

The table above shows us a clear picture of the errors found in the words that are always plural. It shows that the maximum number of errors i.e. 81% was found in 'Scissors' against 49% that was for 'trousers'. The errors made in pants was 62. The sample size of those words was 100 of each so the percentage of those words is also the same. The mean percentage of the errors committed in 'always plural' is 64.

This table indicates very poor performance of the students in the proper use of words: trousers, pants and scissors. They were hardly found in form especially in their number system.

3.1.1.b Conditional Regular Nouns

Conditional regular nouns that are supposed to be irregular nouns for this purpose have been categorized in eight different items. In such plural nouns, there is some regularity in the formation of singular and plural forms of nouns with some conditions. So, the researcher observing the level of the students on

which his research is chiefly based on has term as irregular nouns so that it will be helpful to the concerned people.

Table No. 8
Total Errors Committed in Conditional Regular Nouns

S.N.	Items	Total Marks	Number of errors	Percentage
1.	consonant 'y' ending	1100	635	57.73%
2.	Vowel + 'y' ending	300	27	9%
3.	'F' or 'Fe' ending	700	554	79.14%
4.	'F' or 'fe' in exceptional case	100	67	67%
5.	Sibilant ending	700	165	23.57%
6.	'O' ending	100	59	59%
7.	'O' ending in exceptional case	200	92	46%
8.	Except sibilant ending	1600	273	17.06%

To analyze the errors in conditional regular nouns as a whole the above table shows the highest percentage i.e. 79.14 of errors in 'F' or 'Fe' ending against 9% the lowest percentage in vowel + 'y' ending. Likewise, the students have committed the errors 57.73% in consonant + 'y' ending, 67% in 'for 'fe' ending in exceptional case, 23.57% in sibilant ending, 59% in 'o' ending, 46% in 'o' ending in exceptional case and 17.06% in except sibilant ending.

The individual analysis and description of those errors are presented in the following sub items.

3.1.1.b (i) Consonant + 'y' ending

Table No. 9
Total errors committed in consonant + 'y' ending

Variables/ items	Total words	Sample size	Total marks	Total errors	Example	%
copy, enemy dictionary, baby jewellery, country, dawary, library, story, battary, chilly	11	100	1100	635	Set 'E' plural form of jewellery - Jewelleryes Set 'F' singular form of batteries - batteri	57.73%

The above table makes it clear that the students committed 635 errors out of 1100 i.e. 57.73% in consonant + 'y' ending type of conditional regular nouns.

These all words were not given in the same set of questions rather they were mixed in different sets. So, the students used inappropriate forms of their singularity and plurality.

3.1.1.b (ii) Vowel + 'y' ending

Table No. 10

Total errors committed in Vowel + 'y' ending

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
Boy Key Day	3	300	27	Set B: 4 She is a girl but They are boies	9%

It is a criticism of consonant + 'y' ending rule. If a singular nouns ends with 'y' preceding vowel letter, we simply add 's' to make it plural and vice-versa.

The table above indicates that the students were found committing 27 errors out of 300 words i.e.9%. That is the lowest percentage of errors made in 'conditional regular nouns' in this study.

3.1.1.a (iii) 'C' 'F' or 'Fe' ending

Table No. 11

Total errors committed in F or Ending

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
Leaf, wife, knife, shelf loaf calf	6	700	544	Set 'A' 6: We should eat green Leaf to get vitamin 'A'. Set 'e' Plural form of knife-knifes	79.14
79.14					

The table above displays that the students committed 544 errors out of 700 i.e. 76.14% in 'F' or 'Fe' ending types of irregular nouns. That is the highest percentage of errors committed in conditional regular nouns.

3.1.1.a (iv) 'F' or 'Fe' Ending in Exceptional Case

These nouns do not follow the general rule/ principle of forming plural. 'F' or 'Fe' is not changed into 'V' and adding 'es' suffix as for general principle.

Table No. 12

Total errors committed in 'F' or 'Fe' ending in exceptional case

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
roof	1	100	67	Set 'B' 2: These roofes are very old so that there is leakage of water.	67%

The above table shows that the students committed 57 errors out of 100 i.e. 67% percentage.

3.1.1.a (v) Sibilant Ending

Sibilant is a speech consonant sound which is produced with friction and which has an 's' like quality. For example, in English the consonant /s/, /z/, /ʒ/ /t/ and /dʒ/ are sibilants. Generally 'es' suffix is added after the singular sibilant ending nouns.

Table No. 13

Total Errors Committed in Sibilant Ending

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
Bus, glass watch bench, house brush, dish	7	700	165	Set E Singular Dish Plural Dishes	23.57

The table above makes it clear that the students committed 165 errors out of 700 i.e. 23.57% percentage in this category.

3.1.1.b (vi) Except sibilant ending

Table No. 14

Total errors committed in except sibilant ending

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
-----------	-------------	-------------	---------------------	----------	---

Pen, teacher, animal, monument, friend, arm panda, egg, cloth, kite, song, kid eye, girl, pot sari	16	1600	273	Set 'E'		17.06
				Singular Song	Plural Song	
				Set 'A' 5: The ten pen costs Rs. 130		

The table above indicates that the students were found committing 273 errors out of 1500 words i.e. 17.06 percentage in except sibilant endings.

3.1.1.b (vii)'O' Ending

The singular countable nouns, which end with the letter 'O' for the time being, have been called 'O' ending. Normally, the suffix 'es' is used after 'O' ending nouns to pluralize them. The purpose based description of such nouns is shown below.

Table No. 15

Total errors in 'O' ending

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
Hero	1	100	59	Set 'e'	59%
				Singular Hero	

The above table reveals the fact that the students committed 59 errors out of 100 i.e. 59%. They were confused to add 's' or 'es' suffix after the singular countable noun endings with 'o' which we have discussed in the cause and sources of errors in the next part of this study.

3.1.1.b (viii)'O' Ending in Exceptional Case

There are a number of words that do not follow the general principle of formation of the plural in 'O' ending as well. They are rather pluralized simply by adding 's' suffixes as in regular plural but they are the exception of rules.

Table No. 16

Total errors committed in 'O' ending in exceptional case

Variables	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of errors	Examples	%
-----------	-------------	-------------	---------------------	----------	---

Kangaroo zoo	2	200	92	Set C. B. we can see many kangaroos in Australia	46%
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The table above denotes that the students committed 92 errors out of 200 i.e. 46% in 'O' ending in exceptional cases. They overgeneralized the rules and committed such types of errors.

3.1.2 Source-wise analysis and interpretation of errors

The researcher, according to the purpose of his study, has divided the errors in the following different types. He has warmly accepted the suggestions given by the concerned subject teacher which he obtained through the means of questionnaire to them. Likewise, he studied the student's errors in the test in depth.

Table No. 17
Distribution of Errors

S.N.	Types of error	No. of error	% of errors	Examples
1.	Erroneous input	493	17.72	Set 'A' (6) we should eat green leaf to get vitamin A.
2.	Incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns	1191	42.79	Set 'B' 2: These rooves are very old so that there is a leakage of water.
3.	Over generalization	983	35.32	Set A 1: Lot of mans are waiting for bus.
5.	Lack of practice	116	4.17	Set 'c' 3: There are three dictionaries in my library but there is only one dictionary in his library.

The table above records different causes of errors in the given irregular nouns on the whole. The table makes known that the students committed the highest number of errors i.e. 42.79% due to the incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns against the lowest number of errors i.e. 4.17% lack of practice. Similarly, they committed 17.72% errors due to erroneous input and 35.32% errors were committed due to overgeneralization.

3.1.2.a Erroneous Input

Some errors were committed by the student due to erroneous teaching by the respective teachers. The exceptional cases were not adequately stressed by the subject teacher and as a result the pupils committed the errors.

Sometimes teachers give rules which are not fully adequate and student follow them, then they commit errors.

3.1.2.b Incomplete Knowledge of Irregular Nouns

The students were found having the incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns. They generally recognized irregular nouns but they did not know how to make them singular and plural.

Lack of practice, lack of suitable teaching techniques, approaches, materials, language games and teacher's negligence etc. were found the responsible for such errors.

3.1.2.c Overgeneralization

Some of the students were found to have used 's' or 'es' suffixes to convert singular countable irregular nouns into plural ones and vice-versa. They overgeneralized the rule of irregular nouns and committed such errors.

3.1.2.d Lack of Practice

The students happened to commit the errors because of lack of practice. They had known the answers but did not expose to the practical life and committed the errors. The difficult irregular nouns should be used in real life situations only to overcome from errors.

3.1.3 Question wise Analysis and Interpretation of Errors

So far, to make the questionnaire more effective, the researcher has mixed all different types of irregular nouns within a set of questions. So set 'A' or question 'A' does not mean either the complete irregular nouns or conditional regular nouns within complete irregular nouns also there may be mutation, zero-plural, en-plural etc. on the basis of which the researcher has analyzed the most part of his study rather it is a refined and a systematic form in the sense that every set of questions is distinct from each other in its nature. For example, set

'A' relates to the fill in the blanks type of question, set 'B' is of multiple choices and set 'C' is another kind of fill in the blanks question. Similarly, set 'D' is write in suitable column and so on.

The details of the nature of the questions and the students' performance are shown in the following table.

Table No. 18
Question-wise Analysis and interpretation of error

S.N.	Variables	Sample size	Total words	Total marks	Frequency of error	%
1	Set 'A'					% of 800
	Fill in the blank	100	8	800	472	59%
2	Set 'B'					% of 800
	Multiple choices	100	8	800	365	46.63
3	Set 'C'					% of 1600
	Write down either singular or plural	100	8	800	594	74.25
4	Set 'D'					% of 1600
	Write in suitable column	100	16	1600	51	3.18
5	Set 'E'					% of 1600
	write the plural form of given word	100	16	1600	979	60.68
6	Set 'F'					% of 800
	write the singular form of given noun	100	8	800	330	41.25
Total			64	6400	2783	

The table above shows the question-wise analysis and interpretation of errors. There were six different types in the formation of it with again different number of questions. The table above systematically records that the students committed the highest number of errors in "write down either the singular or plural form of underlined nouns. There were 594 errors out of 800 marks i.e. 74.25% against the lowest number of errors in "write in suitable column." There were 51 errors out of 1600 i.e. 3.18 percentage. Similarly, the second highest percentage is 60.68. "write the plural form of given words. There were 472 errors out of 800 i.e. 59 percentage in fill in the blanks." The students committed 365 errors out of 800 in 'Multiple choice' that implies the 46 percentage of errors. They committed 330 errors out of 800 i.e. 41.25% in write the singular form of given nouns.

3.1.4 School-wise Analysis and Interpretation of Error

The school-wise analysis and interpretation of five different schools of Rupandehi district is described below.

The five different schools under study are Shree Kalika Secondary School (K.H.S.S.) Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School (K.H.S.S.) Shree Butwal Secondary School (B.S.S.), Ujhersingh Secondary School (U.S.S.) and Shree Gynodaya Secondary School (G.S.S.). The detailed description of the errors is shown below.

Table No. 19
Total Errors of Five Different Schools

S.N.	Name of school	Total marks	Frequency of errors	% of errors
1.	Shree Kalika Secondary School	1280	632	49.37
2.	Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School	1280	455	35.55
3.	Shree Butwal Secondary School	1280	493	38.51
4.	Shree Ujursingh Secondary School	1280	601	46.95
5.	Shree Gynodaya Secondary School	1280	602	47.03
	Total	1280	2783	

The table above shows that the students of Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School committed the lowest number of errors that is 455 out of 1280 i.e. 35.55 percentage. The students of Shree Kalika Secondary School made the highest number of errors 632 out of 1260 i.e. 49.37 percentage.

Then, the students of Shree Butwal Secondary School committed 493 errors out of the same data with 38.51 percentage. Similarly, the students of Shree Ujurshingh Secondary school and Shree Gynodaya Secondary School made 46.95% and 47.03% errors respectively. It showed that the Students of Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School committed the minimum number of errors and the students of Shree Kalika Secondary School committed the maximum number of errors on the whole.

3.1.4.a Total errors of Five Different Schools in Complete Irregular Nouns

Table No. 20

Total Errors of Five Different Schools

S.N.	Name of the	Always	Mutation	Zero	En-	Total	%
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	school	plural		plural	plural	error	320
1	Shree K.S.S.	28	86	51	29	194	60.6
2	Shree K.H.S.S.	40	58	53	26	177	55.3
3	Shree B.S.S.	45	63	45	15	168	52.5
4	Shree U.S.S.	38	60	36	33	185	58.43
5	Shree G.S.S.	41	73	46	25	183	57.8
	Total					911	

While analyzing and interpreting the errors of five different schools in complete irregular nouns, the table shows that Shree K.S.S. made the highest number of errors 194 out of 320 i.e. 60.6% against Shree B.S.S. with 168 errors i.e. 52.5%. Similarly, Shree K.H.S.S. made 177 numbers of errors out of 320 i.e. 55.3%, Shree U.S.S. and Shree G.S.S. committed 58.43% and 57.8% of errors respectively. It showed that Shree U.S.S. committed the second highest percentage of errors in that item.

Table No. 21

Total Errors of Five Different Schools in Conditional Regular Nouns

S.N.	Name of the school	Consonant + 'y' ending	Vowel + 'y' ending	'f' or 'fe' ending	'f' or 'fe' in exception case	Sibilant ending	Except sibilant ending	'O' ending ea	'O' in exceptional case	Total errors	% of 960
1	Shree K.S.S.	156	13	111	16	38	76	13	15	438	45.62
2	Shree K.H.S.S.	85	3	100	9	12	30	14	20	273	28.43
3	Shree B.S.S.	112	5	98	8	16	53	14	19	325	33.85
4	Shree U.S.S.	132	5	125	18	49	59	7	19	414	43.12
5	Shree G.S.S.	150	1	120	16	45	55	11	19	417	43.44
	Total									1867	

The table above makes it clear that the students of Shree K.S.S. committed the highest number of errors 438 out of 960 i.e. 45.62% in conditional regular nouns against the lowest number of errors of Shree K.H.S.S. with 273 errors i.e. 28.43%. While comparing other schools Shree G.S.S., Shree

U.S.S. and Shree B.S.S. committed 43.44%, 43.12% and 33.85% errors respectively.

3.1.5 Sex-Wise analysis and Interpretation of Errors

Table No. 22

Total Errors in Terms of Sex

S.N.	Variables	Sample size	Total Marks	Number of errors	Percentage
1.	Boys	50	3200	1422	44.44
2.	Girls	50	3200	1361	42.53
	Total			2783	

On the over all analysis and interpretation, the above table shows that there is 1.91% difference between the boys and girls. Out of the 50 boys with sample 3200 words, they were found committing 1422 errors i.e. 44.44% and on the other hand the girls also were found with 1361 errors out of the same sample size. According to T-test carried out, the girls committed 1.91% less errors less than boys.

3.1.5.a Total Errors Made by Boys and Girls in complete Irregular Nouns

Table No. 23

Total Errors made by Boys and Girls in complete Irregular Nouns

S.N.	Variables	Total marks	Number of errors	Percentage
1.	Boys	800	476	59.5
2.	Girls	800	435	54.37
	Total		911	

This table indicates that the boys made 59.5% of errors that means 476 errors out of 800 against 54.37% of errors that implies 435 errors out of 800 marks. According to the T-test carried our, 4.16% The girls were found committing less errors than the boys.

3.1.5.b Total errors committed by the boys and girls in the conditional regular nouns

Table No. 24

Total errors committed by the boys and girls in the conditional regular nouns

S.N.	Variables	Total marks	Number of errors	Percentage
1.	Boys	2400	946	39.42
2.	Girls	2400	926	38.58
	Total		1872	

The analysis and interpretation of errors in terms of sex in the conditional regular nouns is shown in the above table. To sum up this table according to our purpose is that the boys of all five schools on the whole committed 946 errors out of 2400 sample, which implies 39.42% than the girls. The girls made 926 errors out of the same (2400) data i.e. 38.58% which is slightly less than the boys. To conclude, there was not found any significant difference among girls and boys in conditional regular nouns.

3.6 Analysis of the Data obtained from the teachers

The researcher in accordance with his proposal had prepared a set of fifteen questions for the teachers. The responses obtained from the five teachers have been analyzed and interpreted below separately along with the question.

) What do you have to say about the English textbook being used in the ninth grade in the school of Nepal.

Most of the teachers teaching this book were found satisfied with it. A few of them felt it difficult in teaching because of the lack of teaching materials like cassette, teacher's guide etc.

) Do you think that the textbook is fully relevant, adequate, scientific and well organized?

Many of them said that the book looks fully relevant, adequate and scientific and well organized because it has been designed systematically for communicative purpose. But some teachers found it better than the earlier ones

but it is not fully relevant and scientific according to the students' needs and demands.

) Do you think some parts are inadequate and should be replaced? if so, which ones?

Most of them have no comment. However, a few of them said that grammatical items are not sufficient.

) What areas of textbook do you think the most suitable and effective?

They found the communicative functions like greeting socializing, requesting etc. most effective.

) How do you teach different grammatical items? Do you use any particular method or techniques while teaching grammar?

Most of them preferred O.S.S. approach and some said that they use both inductive method. A few of them emphasized on the rote learning as well.

) Which nouns: regular or irregular are easy to teach and why?

They found regular nouns easy to teach because there is a simple rule in teaching nouns.

) How do you teach irregular nouns?

They suggested different techniques while teaching irregular nouns.

Z Discovery and discussion techniques.

Z Using irregular nouns in contexts.

Z Explanation, illustration and demonstration techniques.

Z By oral and written practice i.e. drill.

Z Comparing them with regular nouns and recognizing them as exceptional cases.

) Do you use any additional books to teach irregular nouns apart from the textbook.

Most of them said 'yes'. They used some other books related to nouns to teach irregular nouns, apart from the text book.

) What teaching aids do you use while teaching irregular nouns?

They suggested different teaching aids while teaching irregular nouns, they are:

Z Pictures, flash cards, word cards,

Z Realia, pocket chart etc.

) There are two terms contrast in nouns number, which term do the students learn easily and why?

Most of them found singular nouns easy to teach because the students need not bother about the various rules, exceptions etc. in singular form.

) What are the major difficulties while teaching and learning the irregular nouns?

They differently expressed their views on this issue as follows:

Z Incomplete knowledge of nouns

Z Interference of regular nouns

Z Lack of practice

Z Inappropriate use of nouns

Z Spelling and pronunciation problems

Z Exceptional cases

) What solutions do you suggest for these difficulties?

Most of them gave emphasis on rigorous practice, games, competition, use of teaching aids, contextual teaching, rote learning etc.

) Most of the students were found using 'es' and 's' suffix after 'deer' and 'sheep'. How can we avoid such errors?

The ideas obtained from the teachers are as follows:

Z Teaching them as an exception.

Z Familiarizing the examples not with rule.

Z Asking the students to learn such words by heart.

Z Doing a lot of practice with such words.

) How can we minimize the spelling mistake?

They suggested the following techniques to minimize the spelling mistakes:

Z Exposing the students with correct pronunciation.

Z Conducting dictation in the classroom.

Z Correcting their errors.

Z Asking the students to memorize.

Z Providing adequate exercises for practice.

Z Using audio-visual aids etc.

) Do you have any other suggestions to improve the students' proficiency in the irregular nouns?

They suggested in the following ways:

Z By using contrastive method

Z Providing enough nouns related to the target

Z Providing more grammatical portion in the textbook

Z Applying direct method.

Z Teaching inductively

Z Encouraging the students

Z Teaching communicatively

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Findings

The main focus of this research was to identify and analyze the errors committed by the ninth graders of public schools. Using the simple random sampling procedures, five government schools of Rupandehi district were selected and twenty students from each school were chosen for the study. The researcher prepared a set of test items. After that the test was administered to hundred students. Then the researcher again divided those six sets of questions in twelve different items for the purpose of this study. The statistical analysis was carried out using simple statistical tools like; average and percentage. After the result of the test, questionnaires were filled up by the concerning teachers. The filled up questionnaires focused mainly the approaches methods and techniques of teaching plural nouns. Thus, the overall findings from the students performance and teachers questionnaire on the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data are summarized below.

4.1.1 Findings from the student's performance

-) The students committed forty three percentage errors out of the total sample test.
-) The students committed more errors in complete irregular nouns than conditional regular nouns.
-) Within the complete irregular nouns, the students committed the highest number of errors in zero plural against en-plural.
-) In conditional regular nouns the students committed the highest number of errors if 'f' and 'fe' ending types of words against the lowest errors in vowel+'y' ending.
-) Regarding the errors in the use of irregular nouns, after checking the test items on the basis of the researcher's theoretical knowledge of error

analysis, he come to know that the students frequently committed errors due to the following causes.

Z Erroneous input

Z Incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns

Z Overgeneralization

Z lack of practicality

-) Among the various causes of errors, the students committed most of them due to the incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns against the least number of errors, which was due to the lack of practice.
-) In question-wise analysis and interpretation of errors the students were found to have the maximum number of errors in write down either singular or plural form of nouns. And they made the lowest number of errors in "write in suitable columns".
-) In accordance with the school-wise analysis and interpretation of errors students of Shree Butwal Secondary School committed the lowest number of errors and the students of Shree Kalika Secondary School committed the highest number of errors.
-) On the over all analysis, interpretation and comparison of sex i.e. boys and girls of different schools; we did not find any significant variation between/ among them. However, the girls committed a few number of errors less than the boys.

4.2 Recommendations

Having summarized the present study the researcher would like to make the following recommendations and pedagogical implications.

-) The people especially teachers, course designers, examiners etc. who deal with grade nine students should consider the following recommendations.
-) The teacher should use enough appropriate teaching materials as far as possible for examples, flash cards, pocket charts flannel board etc.
-) They should advise the students to collect different types of irregular nouns and ask them to play with their singularity and plurality.

-) The teachers should use audio-lingual method frequently and apply the drill method.
-) The teachers should provide adequate interesting reading materials to increase comprehension power of the students comparing with regular nouns.
-) The teachers should give stress on objective oriented teaching rather than examination oriented teaching.
-) The teachers are recommended to use several grammar books written by English native speakers as reference books for teaching plural nouns.

Since the researcher can not claim that the present study is conclusive in finding out all types of errors in the use of irregular nouns he can only confirm that the Nepali learners of English tend to commit errors frequently in the use of irregular nouns too but the research work may not cover the serious as well as other many causes and sources of errors because of this study is limited only in the hundred students in Rupandehi district. The researcher, therefore, suggests the concerned authority to carry out other researchers as soon as possible to detect the causes of errors and to suggest the remedies for them found in the use of irregular nouns of English which has been existing in a larger amount.

Appendix-I

TEST ITEMS

Name of the school:

Time:

Grade:

Date:

Name of the students:

Roll No.:

Boy

Girl

A. Fill in the blanks using the suitable nouns from the box given below. Use the plural form of the nouns.

Party, Leaf, trousers, Ox, goose, Teacher, Man, Watch, Pen

Example: I have enjoyed many parties.

1. There are three..... in my school.
2. A lot of are waiting for bus.
3. The five..... cost Rs. 5000.
4. My uncle has kept a pair of . to plough the field.
5. The ten..... cost Rs. 150.
6. We should eat green..... to get vitamin A.
7. My father brought me a pair of from Hongkong.
8. are swimming in the pond.

B. Tick the best answer from the given alternatives.

Example: There are five..... in my room.

a. box b) boxes c) boxen

1. Mr. Gurung has three.....

a. Wifes b. Wives c. Wife

2. These are very old so that there is a leakage of water.

a. roofs b. rooves. c. roofes

3. Suman has a bus but Sarala has two

a. buses b. bus c. buses

4. She is a girl but they are

a. boys b. boy c. boies

5. Ram sold me ten

- a. deers b. deeres c. deer
6. Hari killed a yesterday.
- a. mouse b. mice c. mouses
7. Parmila looks after many in the hostel.
- a. child b. childs c. children
8. I have bought six for six subjects.
- a. copies b. copy c. copys

C. Write down either the singular or plural form of underlined nouns, in the given blanks.

Example: These boxes are made in India. But this box is made in Nepal.

1. Ram has a pair of scissors. But Hari has two pair of
2. Yesterday, my only one foot was paining but today my both are paining.
3. There are three dictionaries in my Library but there is only one in his library.
4. A deer is grazing on the ground but four are grazing on the lawn.
5. This loaf is fresh but these are not fresh.
6. There is a bench in my room. But there are three in his room.
7. My father bought a sari for my mommy. But his father bought three for his mummy.
8. Kangaroo is national animal of Australia so, we can see many in Australia.

D. Write down the following nouns in their own suitable column. If they are singular write in column 'A' and if they are plural write in column 'B'

- Man Chilies Keys Glasses Child
- Animals Houses Stories Zoo Monuments brush
- Tooth Friends Arms Panda Egg

Singular	Plural
Bear	Fishes

E. Give the plural forms of the following words.

Example:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Mango	Mangoes		
Knife	-----	Dowry	-----
Dish	-----	Hero	-----
Jewellery	-----	Kid	-----
Cloth	-----	Calf	-----
Library	-----	Song	-----
Wife	-----	Sheep	-----
Baby	-----	Enemy	-----
Pants	-----	Kite	-----

F. Give the singular form of the following nouns.

Example

<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>
Pencils	Pencil		
Days	-----	Pots	-----
Batteries	-----	Countries	-----
Shelves	-----	Girls	-----
Eyes	-----	Women	-----

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER

1. What do you have to say about the English textbook being used in the 9th grade in the school of Nepal.

2. Do you think that the textbook is fully relevant, adequate, scientific and well organized?

3. Do you think that some parts are inadequate and should be replaced?

4. What areas of the textbook do you think the most suitable and effective? Please point them out.

5. How do you teach different grammatical items? Do you use any particular methods or approaches while grammar.

6. What nouns; regular or Irregular are easy to teach and why?

7. How do you teach Irregular nouns? Do you use any particular approaches, methods, techniques while teaching irregular nouns.

8. Do you use any additional books to teach irregular nouns apart from the textbook.

9. Do you use any teaching materials while teaching irregular nouns?

10. There are two types of plural nouns (regular and irregular) which plural nouns do students learn easily and why?

11. What are the major difficulties while teaching irregular nouns?

12. What solutions do you suggest for these difficulties?

13. Most of students were found using 's' and 'es' suffix after 'deer' and 'sheep'. How can we avoid such errors?

14. How can we minimize spelling mistakes?

15. Do you have any other suggestions to improve the students proficiency in the irregular nouns? If so, please point them out.

Appendix IV
List of Schools

S.N.	Name
1.	Shree Kalika Secondary School, Kalikabazar
2.	Shree Kanti Higher Secondary School, Butwal
3.	Shree Butwal Secondary School, Butwal
4.	Shree Ujursingh Secondary School, Butwal
5.	Shree Gyanodaya Secondary School, Butwal



Name of the School : Butwal ~~Marabi~~ Time
 Grade : Nine (9) (A) Date: 2064-4-28
 name of the Students : Shagun Khamcha
 Roll No. : 11
 Boy [] Girl [✓]

A. Fill in the blanks using the suitable nouns from the box given below. Use the plural form of the nouns.

Party, Leaf, trousers, Ox, goose, Teacher, Man, Watch, Pen

Example : I have enjoyed many parties.

- ✓ 1. There are three ~~teachers~~ in my school.
- ✗ 2. A lot of ~~trains~~ are waiting for bus. *-overgeneralization*
- ✓ 3. The five ~~watches~~ cost Rs. 5000.
- ✗ 4. My uncle has kept a pair of ~~oxes~~ to plough the field. *-overgeneralization*
- ✓ 5. The ten ~~pens~~ cost Rs. 150.
- ✗ 6. We should eat green ~~leaf~~ to get vitamin A. *-incomprehension of word*
- ✗ 7. My father brought me a pair of ~~trousers~~ from Honkong. *-overgeneralization*
- ✗ 8. ~~Gooses~~ are swimming in the pond.

B. Tick the best answer from the given alternatives.

Example: There are five in my room.

- a. box ✓ b. boxes c. boxen.

- ✓ 1. Mr. Guring has three
 a. Wifes ✓ b. wives c. wife
- ✗ 2. These are very old so that there is a leakage of water.
 a. roofs ✓ b. rooves c. roofes *incomplete knowledge of irregular noun*
- ✓ 3. Suman has a bus but Sarala has two
 a. busses b. bus ✓ c. buses
- ✓ 4. She is a girl but they are
 a. boys b. boy c. boies
- ✗ 5. Ram sold me ten
 a. deers b. deeres c. deer *-overgeneralization*

Incomplete knowledge of irregular nouns.

- Hari killed a yesterday.
 - a. mouse b. mice c. mouses
- Parmila looks after many in the hostel.
 - a. child b. childs c. children
- 8. I have bought six for six subjects.
 - a. copys b. copy c. copys

c. Write down either the singular or plural form of underlined nouns, in the given blanks.

Examples :

These boxes are made in India. But this box is made in Nepal.

Ram has a pair of scissors. But Hari has two pair of scissors.

Yesterday, my only one foot was paining but today my both feets are paining. *overgeneralization*

There are three dictionaries in my Library but there is only one dictionary in his library. *→ lack of practicality*

A deer is grazing on the ground but four deers are grazing on the lawn.

This loaf is fresh but these loafs are not fresh. *overgeneralization*

6. There is a bench in my room. But there are three benches in his room. *overgeneralization*

7. My father bought a sari for my mommy. But his father bought three saris for his mummy.

8. Kangaroo is national animal of Australia so, we can see many kangaroos in Australia. *kangaroos*

d. Write down the following nouns in their own suitable column. If they are singular write in column 'A' and if they are plural write in column 'B'

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| man | chilies | keys | glasses | child |
| animals | house | stories | zoo | monuments |
| tooth | friends | arms | panda | egg |

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER

Singular	Plural
Bear	Fishes
Man ✓	chillies ✓
child ✓	keys ✓
house ✓	glasses ✗ <i>spelling error</i>
zoo ✓	animals ✓
brush ✓	stories ✓
tooth ✓	monuments ✓
Panda ✓	friends ✓
egg ✓	arms ✓

e. Give the plural forms of the following words.

Example:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Mango	Mangoes	Dowry	Dowry
Knife	knifes	Hero	Heros
Dish	dishes	Kid	kids
Jewellery	Jewelleryes	Calf	calfes
Cloth	clothes	Song	Songs
Library	Libraries	Sheep	Sheep
Wife	Wives	Enemy	Enemies
Baby	Babies	Kite	kites
Pants		

over generalization (pointing to Knives, Dishes, Jewelleryes, Libraries, Babies)

over generalization (pointing to Dowry, Heros, Kids, Calfes)

f. Give the singular form of the following nouns.

Example

<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>
Pencils	Pencil	Pots	Pot
Days	Day	Countries	country
Batteries	Battery	Girls	Girl
Shelves	shelves	Women	Women
Eyes	Eye		

Lack of practicality (pointing to Battery, shelves)

spelling error (pointing to country)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER



1. What do you have to say about the English text book being used in the 9th grade in the school of Nepal.

It is quite suitable in Nepalese context though most of the teachers don't use it as it is to be used.

2. Do you think that the text book is fully relevant, adequate, scientific and well organized?

No, some of the above mentioned qualities are not properly catered in this very textbook i.e. relevance.

3. Do you think that some parts are inadequate and should be replaced?

The grammar exercises are inadequate and some creative exercises should be added.

4. What areas of the text book do you think the most suitable and effective? Please point them out.

Conversation portion and reading passage section, I think are the most suitable ones.

5. How do you teach different grammatical items? Do you use any particular methods or approaches while grammar.

I teach grammar through Inductive method which is the most effective method at present.

6. Which nouns; regular or Irregular are easy to teach and why?

Regular nouns are easy to teach because the suffix used to convert them plural are predictable.

7. How do you teach Irregular nouns? Do you use any particular approaches, methods, techniques while teaching Irregular nouns.

I teach them through contextualization and interaction. In some cases Inductive approach is also used.

8. Do you use any additional books to teach Irregular nouns apart from text book.

Yes, I use some other books related to nouns to teach irregular nouns apart from the text book.

9. Do you use any teaching materials While teaching Irregular nouns?

Yes, I use realia, flash cards, pictures, etc. while teaching irregular nouns.

10. There are two types of plural nouns (regular and irregular) which plural nouns do students learn easily and why?

Students learn regular plural nouns easily because they can be formed easily by adding the suffixes (s, es) which are easily predictable.

11. What are the major difficulties while teaching irregular nouns?

Their plural forms are not predictable and the pupils may also overgeneralize while making plural.

12. What solutions do you suggest for these difficulties?

Students should be well-practised for long-lasting mastery.

13. Most of students were found using 's' & 'es' suffix after 'deer' and 'sheep'. How can we avoid such errors?

We can avoid such errors by making the pupils more familiar with these types of terms and by focusing such items time and again in the class.

14. How can we minimize spelling mistakes?

By engaging the pupils in several dictation tasks and also by making them memorize the spelling of the difficult words.

15. Do you have any other suggestions to improve the students proficiency in the irregular nouns? If so, please point them out.

- Ⓐ Student should be taught inductively.
- Ⓑ Much more practice should be done in the class.
- Ⓒ Problem-oriented teaching should be emphasized.

B. Appendix

Total Errors Committed by all Students' of Five Different Schools in Different Items

S.N.	Items	K.S.S.		K.H.S.S.		B.S.S.		U.S.S.		G.S.S.	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1	Always plural	16	12	22	18	29	16	16	22	23	18
2	zero plural	22	29	26	27	28	17	20	16	24	22
3	En-plural	16	13	14	12	11	4	14	19	14	11
4	Mutation	38	48	29	29	36	27	39	41	39	34
5	Constant '+y' ending	71	85	45	40	63	49	49	83	66	84
6	Vowel '+y' ending	10	3	3	0	2	3	4	1	1	0
7	'F' or 'Fe' ending	49	62	58	42	58	40	58	67	52	68
8	'F' or 'Fe' ending in exceptional case	7	9	6	3	2	6	8	10	6	10
9	'O' ending	9	4	7	7	9	5	4	3	9	2
10	'O' ending in exceptional case	7	8	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	10
11	Sibilant ending	19	19	12	5	12	4	24	25	22	23
12	Except	41	35	22	8	34	19	29	30	30	25

	sibilant ending										
	Total	305	327	254	201	293	200	275	326	295	30

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