THE INFLUENCE OF LUHYA FIRST LANGUAGE SEMANTIC NOTIONS IN INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING OF THE ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE ARTICLE SYSTEM AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS IN VIHIGA COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented elsewhere for a degree award.

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I dedicate this work to my daughter Sidi and my late brother Johnstone Khejeri

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ABSTRACT

Articles rank among the five most frequently used words in the English language, therefore central to a well- developed language and its use. Consequently inaccurate use of the articles is an indication of poor mastery of the language and since English is a central language in Kenya's education system, the decline in its effective usage affects the entire education system. Therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Luhya first language semantic notions in the instruction and learning of the English second language article system among secondary school learners in Vihiga County. Guided by the following objectives the study : examined the systematic developmental features of L2 acquisition of English articles, explored the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners of English L2 in the course of acquisition of the English article system, established the causes of systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners' acquisition of the English L2 article system, identified the challenges teachers face when teaching the English article system and lastly found out the semantic challenges the Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English article system. The theoretical framework was based on four hypotheses: fluctuation hypothesis, full transfer/full access hypothesis, acquisition learning hypothesis and the natural order hypothesis. The study adopted a pragmatic paradigm and a case study design. A mixed method approach was employed to allow for the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The study population comprised of 24 students and 24 teachers from 6 secondary schools in Vihiga County selected using quota and purposive sampling techniques. Data generation techniques included: an interview schedule, a multiple choice, a story-telling task and a guided composition. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis procedures. The findings revealed elements of systematic developmental features which included: fluctuation, overuse and underuse; systematic errors of confusion, omission and unnecessary insertion of articles; causes of errors including influence of learners' L1 and L2 , scanty article content coverage in the English language curriculum and semantic challenges resulting from the notions of specificity and definiteness. It was concluded that both L1 and L2 negatively influence the acquisition and learning of English articles and that the pedagogy utilized in the instruction of the English article is flawed. Thus it is recommended that teachers adopt an eclectic approach in teaching of the syllabus so that it is given sufficient focus given its centrality in language use and development. The findings of this study have both theoretical and practical implications for the future of instruction of grammar in schools in Kenya. Theoretically the study contributes to the advancement of knowledge about the teaching of the article system. Practically, curriculum developers should find the study useful and reconsider revising the English language curriculum reconsidering content coverage at the various levels of learning factoring in elements that would facilitate L2 acquisition and learning.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

∅1   Zero article

∅2   Null article

+ART   With Articles

-ART   Without Articles

+HK   Hearer's Knowledge

+SR   Specific Reference

ACP   Article Choice Parameter

CAH   Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

D   Determiner

ADJ   Adjective

-ART   Without Articles

DEM   Demonstrative

DP   Determiner Phrase

DRC   Democratic Republic of Congo

ESL   English as Second Language

FH   Fluctuation Hypothesis

FRH   Feature Re-assembly Hypothesis

FT/FA   Full Transfer/Full Access

IDIs   In- depth Interviews

IL   Inter-language

ILG   Interlanguage Grammars

KCSE   Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

LI   First Language

KICD   Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

L2   Second Language

Lr   Learner(s)

MSIH   Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis

NP   Noun Phrase

QUAL   Qualitative

QUAN   Quantitative

RDH   Representational Deficit Hypothesis

SMA   Syntactic Misanalysis Account

UG   Universal Grammar

Tr   Teacher(s)

TL   Target Language

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The value of a well-developed and well learned article system cannot be overemphasized. The English article system is an important aspect of grammar for learners acquiring English as a second or foreign language. Articles are important because they constitute an important part of the English language system for the purpose of referencing information and identification which are a crucial function of language (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999).

In addition articles are ranked as some of the function words that appear most frequently in English as revealed by corpus data. Among the articles,'the', is ranked as a word that reoccurs often while 'a*',* comes in the fifth position Sinclair, as cited in Master 2002). This implies knowledge, competence and use of the English article system have a significant effect on learners' spoken and written English. It is therefore not surprising that proper use of the articles by learners is a pointer to the learners' increased level of accuracy.

On the other hand, misuse of the article system is an indicator that learners have a shaky grasp of language. However, it has been documented that acquisition of the English article system poses problems to learners of English (Master, 2002; Ekiert, 2004). This has been linked to learners' L1 Yamada & Matsuura (in Martynchuk 2010). In cases where the linguistic structures of L1 differ from those of L2, negative language transfer is experienced leading to use of incorrect grammatical structures by

learners. Therefore this study sought to determine the influence semantic notions of Luhya dialects in the learning and instruction of the English language article system among Luhya L1 learners of English as a second language.

This chapter presents the background to the study which focuses on the value of a well-developed and well learned article system, the complexity of the English article system for learners whose first language, Luhya, lacks an overt article system; acquiring English as a second language and the challenges it poses to such learners and their teachers during the instructional process and the influence of learners' Luhya first language on the process with instructional implications. The second part, of the chapter discusses the statement of the problem which focuses on the main issue that the study is concerned with; the third section addresses the study objectives and research questions followed by the significance of the study, justification of the study and the assumptions of the study. The scope of the study is also explained; it places the study within Kenya and specifically Western Kenyan context and also limits the study to addressing issues in the study objectives. Theoretical framework, conceptual framework and operational definition of terms come last in that order.

1.2 Background to the Study

This study was about the acquisition of the English article system by learners in Vihiga county of Western Kenya whose first language is Luhya, the role that the first language semantic notions play in the process of learning the article system and the instructional implications. The semantic notions are the notions of specificity and definiteness as realized in English and as marked in Luhya language. The notions are marked and realized differently by the two languages. The English article system is an

important aspect of grammar for learners acquiring English as a second or foreign language.

However, it has been documented that acquisition of the English article system poses problems to learners particularly learners whose L1 does not have an article system. This fact has drawn the attention of researchers world over some of whom have reported that the English article system is one of hardest areas of the English grammar (Master 2002; Ekiert, 2004) and more so for non-native speakers Yamada & Matsuura ,(in Matyuchuk.2010). According to DeKeyser (2005), the article system is indeed hard for students whose mother tongue has no article system and who therefore express the notions of definiteness and specificity through other ways other than an article system. He posits that in cases where the semantic system of the learners' first language is different from the target language and where equivalent concepts have no direct translation in the first language and can only be expressed through discourse patterns then learning becomes even more difficult.

One of the reasons for this difficulty is that in some cases, learners whose L1 is article-less do not have equivalent linguistic items in their native language from which to draw. However apart from learners' L1, there are other factors that contribute to the difficulty in article acquisition. Master (2002) posits that several factors play a role in the difficulty in article acquisition: First articles are functional words which are often unstressed and they are not easily noticeable; in fact, some zero and null articles are invisible, for this reason they are not easy to discriminate in spoken discourse.

Secondly articles occur frequently as a result, learners find it challenging to continuously apply rules that govern their usage over a long stretch of discourse. Finally, Master attributes the difficulty of article acquisition to the fact that they serve

a variety of functions. He explains that in the article system a single morpheme serves a variety of functions. That means a given article can express a number of meanings for example it can express the notions of specificity and non-specificity, definiteness and indefiniteness in addition to countability. It therefore becomes a challenge for learners to determine when to use a particular article. In addition to the above challenges, Ekiert (2007) advances another challenge from a language processing perspective. She opines that in the process of learning a language, learners generally ignore function words and tend to put emphasis on content words when processing language especially for meaning. In the case of articles the difficult of meaning is determined by ''the novelty and abstractness of the concept'' Pienemann (as cited in Ekiert, 2007, p. 2). She further points out that during the learning process learners guesses concerning article usage keep changing at different levels as their interlanguage develops; this coupled with the role of the first language (L1) make the process of learning articles a more complicated task.

In Africa, learning the English article system is not an easy task. It poses difficulties for learners of English as a second language. This is attributed to the fact that most of their first African languages do not have articles and therefore the functions of the articles as realized in English are not realized in the same way in their first languages. This is bound to cause problems in their article use. A few researchers in Africa have examined the challenges of learning the article system for African non-native learners of English and tend to agree that the English article system poses problems for the learners. Jafarova (2017) in his study of problems of first language interference for learners learning English as a second language notes that for Azerbaijan non-native

learners of English, the use of articles is often marred with first language interference in the process of using English nouns.

He therefore advances the view that the study of L1 interference in article use should play a significant role when we look at how L1 interferes with their spoken language as a whole because the assimilation of articles in the English language usually poses a challenge for students. Tshotsho, Cekiso and Mumbembe (2015) report that, among the problems encountered by students from DRC studying English in South Africa, is the English article system. They state that students are often confused in their use of articles particularly in the use of 'a' and 'the'. Kambou (1997) reported that learners in Burkina Faso experience difficulties with application of articles and he stressed that the problem is experienced in all the four semantic categories of articles. Bukenya, Curtis and Park, (1989) state that few things are harder to get right in English than the definite and indefinite articles and caution that articles need care and much practice. Thus the teachers of English need to be keener when handling the article system.

Given that the article system is a complex one, teachers of English often experience problems when teaching the English article system. Some of them tend to ignore focusing on articles and concentrate on other areas of grammar that they consider more important and urgent. Fujita (2004) points out that in practice what teachers put emphasis on during instruction depends on the language items which they think are more urgent to help them meet the learners' immediate objectives and he opines that given these circumstances, articles may be considered as a less important area to devote a lot of time on at the expense of other language items by both teachers and students.

Moreover, some teachers may have content knowledge of the article system but have insufficient pedagogical knowledge on how to handle the article system. This is worsened by the fact that some EFL materials which the teachers rely on are not exhaustive enough in handling the entire article system. This concurs with the comments of a number of language educators who have observed, ''an over-emphasis in EFL materials given to the anaphoric referential function of the definite article'' (Berry, 1991; Whitman, 1974) in which the first mention of nouns occurs with the indefinite article and the second mention requires the definite article. This observation is mostly notable in some textbooks for secondary schools in Kenya (based on the curriculum) some of which include: Integrated English Book 4 (Kenya Institute of Education [KIE], 1990), Head-start book 1 and 2, (Bukenya, Curtis& Parker, 2005).Thus most of the text books do not focus on articles and a few that do so do not cover the article system exhaustively. The textbooks mostly juxtapose 'a', 'an' and 'the'. Whitman (1974, p. 22) states "this juxtaposition of 'a'/'an' and 'the' gives an impression that article choice is a simple dichotomy, when in reality the choice of no determiner or quantifier or alternative determiners and quantifiers is a far more complex issue"

Given that L1 of majority of Kenyan secondary school learners does not have articles, it is important to understand the difficulties that these students may be experiencing in the process of learning the English article system. The main purpose of this study was therefore to find out the difficulty facing learners in the process of learning the English article system, the role L1plays during the process of learning the article system and the challenges teachers face in teaching the article system with focus on learners in Vihiga County. Consequently the linguistic situation in Kenya, the

background of learners and the teaching of the articles are briefly discussed as part of background information of this study.

Kenya is a multilingual society and has about 41 indigenous languages. In addition there are other languages including Kiswahili, English and foreign languages (Kembo-Sure, 1994). English was introduced in Kenya during the era of colonialism when the British Empire ruled Kenya as such; English is a legacy of British colonialism. Kiswahili is Kenya's national language. It belongs to the Bantu language family closely related to many of Kenya's local languages although a great deal of its vocabulary has been borrowed from Arabic (Brock-Utne, 2005). Kiswahili and English are Kenya's official languages. In addition to the two languages there are communal languages mostly used by the rural populations. Communal languages are also used as media of instruction in lower primary schools in rural areas. English is used as a medium of instruction in school from class 4 up to the higher institutions of learning. Apart from this, English is taught as a subject and is a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, most examinations are set in English except for those in Kiswahili and foreign languages. Therefore, the importance of English to a learner in Kenya cannot be over-emphasized. However, Kiswahili is also taught in schools as a subject throughout primary and secondary school and used as a medium of instruction in early childhood classes in urban areas.

It is also a language of wider communication in Kenya - in cases where rural communities do not share a common language they communicate in Kiswahili. Many Kenyan students therefore rarely use English outside school given that they have a number of alternative languages to use. For most Kenyan learners, their socialization and cognitive development during their childhood have been realized through

communal languages or Kiswahili. Consequently, for the many Kenyan learners their L1 is not English but a communal language depending on where they come from and for others it is Kiswahili. English is therefore a second language for the majority of native Kenyan learners.

Majority of students in secondary schools in Kenya are multilingual. Individuals are described as multilingual when they use or have knowledge of more than two languages and frequently use these two languages for communication. Kenya being a multilingual country experiences manifestations of multilingualism in her schools. First, most Kenyan learners begin schooling when they already have two languages; Mother Tongue and Kiswahili. Secondly in other circumstances a learner may understand two different first languages as a result of cross-linguistic migration or intermarriage (Cook, 2001; Muthwii, 2004)and still be a Kiswahili speaker. In some other cases there are learners for whom Kiswahili is a first language. These are mainly learners from the coastal region and cosmopolitan towns. These learners may also have some knowledge of English learnt from home environment. The last group is a minority group whose L1 is English and for whom Kiswahili and any other language is learned as a second language. These are mostly learners from educated or wealthy elite families.

Therefore, there are tentatively two groups of learners in Kenya; compound bilinguals where learning of two languages takes place at school and coordinate bilinguals where different languages are learnt in different settings(Appel &Muysken,1988). These are currently the kinds of learners found in Kenyan secondary schools. They have learnt English since they joined pre-primary school, they have other two or three languages and they have an L1 which is not English. The question to pose here is whether the

learners' L1 influences the process of learning the English article system or whether the problems they have with articles come from some other source and what challenges this poses for the teachers of English.

1.2.1 The Teaching and Acquisition of Articles

The article system as already pointed out is a complex one. Consequently, it poses challenges to teachers who teach English and particularly those teaching English as a second language. Questions as to whether the challenges of teaching the article system arise from its complexity, the learners first language or the approach to teaching it, have been raised. Thus, the approach to the teaching of articles has become an issue of concern among language educators and given rise to arguments as to which methods and strategies should be used to teach articles. According to El Werfalli (2013), one side of the debate is of the view that articles should be taught implicitly in a meaningful context of natural speech with extensive exposure to the target structures. This side argues that articles should be acquired by learners naturally without teaching the rules. They argue that this will enable learners to practice language as it is used in real life situations and lead them to develop proficiency in article use unconsciously. The other side of the debate argues for explicit teaching of grammar which concentrates on the conscious learning of grammatical rules through formal instruction. Some researchers are of the view that articles should be taught through use of rules(Lindstromberg, 1986; Berry, 1991; Master, 1997). In other words they propose that teachers should formally teach the rules governing use of articles so that learners can understand and use the article system from an informed position.

According to Master (1990), teaching of articles can have tremendous positive influence on the learners' use of language. Lindstromberg (1986) posits that formal

instruction of the articles has the advantage of helping to explain and simplify the complex system of the English grammar articles. This view is supported by other researchers including (Ellis, 1994, 2000; Nassaji & Swain, 2000). The scholars argue that there are some grammatical forms which are difficult to learn even in context and are therefore better acquired if they are taught using explicit instruction. Word order and determiners (this, that, those, the, an, a) are examples of such grammatical forms which pose challenges to learners (Lynch, 2009).

Whitman (1974) has proposed that the teaching of the articles be approached using a pedagogical sequence. In his view the English article structure is ''a sequence of quantification and determination rather than a choice between specified and unspecified'' (Whitman 1974,p..253). He therefore provides six steps to be followed in teaching the English articles. The steps are sequenced in such a way that the simple concepts are taught before the complex ones. Master (1990) came up with a strategy where he proposed a binary system. The system has two elements: the distinction between given information and new information. He suggests that students can be led into making the difference between NPs occurring to the right and NPs occurring to the left. They can be guided that NPs occurring to the left of the verb are marked with the definite article; and that NPs occurring on the right of the verb are marked with the indefinite article. Master further states that after this learners can be given practice exercises such as fill-in blanks which can be filled by applying the binary structure. He cautions should a teacher decide to use this system, there are exceptions. He however posits that this system will prove more useful when teaching L2 learners whose L1s are article- less.

Master (1997) further suggests elementary classes should not be started of with rules governing the article system. It is more useful to present to them articles when teaching them vocabulary because they are likely not to understand the rules at this level, since their mental lexicon has not yet fully developed. Instead of explicit instruction of grammar he suggests that articles ''should be presented in the course of teaching vocabulary so that learners will begin to conceptualize the notion of articles in their minds'' (Master1997, p. 226). As for the intermediate level students, a variety of cognitive methods of teaching articles can be employed. Furthermore Master (1997, p.226) asserts that ''successful learning is most likely to occur if sufficient time is spent on practicing a single distinction at a time until students feel relatively comfortable''.

1.2.2 The Teaching and Acquisition of Articles in Kenyan Secondary Schools

In order for language teaching to be successful, it must address the purpose for which one is teaching and the purpose for which one is learning the language. In Kenya the teaching and learning of English and the purpose of doing so is set out in the English language syllabus that has been approved by the ministry of Education syllabus (KIE, 2006). Language teaching like many other disciplines presupposes a theory of language. Kenya's syllabus is therefore guided by a theory based on the functional perspective of language; the perspective that language is a vehicle for communication. Thus language teaching in Kenya is guided by the theory of Communicative Language Teaching which obtains its principles from a number of disciplines including linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology and education.

This view puts emphasis on communicative dimension of language rather than grammatical characteristics of language (Richards &Rodgers, 2001). In keeping with

this theory, Kenya's language syllabus has put in place practices and procedures that English language teachers should follow which involve learners in events that facilitate communication as a strategy to improve their communicative competence. The syllabus states, "... in order to help learners acquire a thorough mastery of the language as a whole, grammatical structures should be presented in context" (KIE, 2006, p.4).

The syllabus adopts an integrated approach to the teaching of language merging the teaching of Literature with the teaching of language skills. The syllabus covers four areas of language skills: speaking and listening skills, reading skills and writing skills and then grammar which falls under writing skills. The content is further divided according to the various levels – forms1, 2, 3 and 4. The specific components of language to be taught which include the aforementioned skills are further divided into topics according to the skill and level of education. At every level the teaching focuses on the four language skills. Grammar is one of the major areas that are addressed in the teaching of English. According to the syllabus under grammar the following elements must be taught with varying levels of complexity as the learners advance: Parts of speech which include: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs prepositions and conjunctions. In addition to that, there is syntax which includes phrases clauses and sentences. Articles are treated under nouns and only appear as a topic in year two. This raises concern for the present study because although they are a well-known area of challenge for learners of English as a second language, they are obviously not being given the attention they deserve, in terms of syllabus coverage. Teaching of grammar in Kenyan secondary schools is done by mainly using the English language text books provided by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

[KICD] (previously KIE) and private publishers. Both the providers base the text books on English curriculum for secondary schools. Most of the text books however do not adequately cover the article system and some try to but they do not focus on form. In other words, they do not focus on various areas of the article system in a way that clearly explains the forms to the second language learners whose L1 lacks a similar system.

Teaching methods, strategies and techniques are crucial in any learning situation. This is because the manner in which the content is presented determines learner's reception, retention and application of the content acquired (Moraa, 2012). Therefore Kenya's syllabus for English has put in place methods of teaching and learning English which include the following methods: lecture, discussion, group work, question answer technique and demonstration among others. Each individual teacher adopts the strategy that she or he feels will serve him better to achieve his objectives. Activities and tasks recommended in the syllabus include: dialogues and conversations, language games, role play, dramatization debates, group discussions, controlled writing and guided writing among others. These activities are based on the theory that guides the syllabus which is communicative language teaching and integration approach. According to Anusu, Barasa and Omulando (2014, p.84), ''the range of activities is extensive but what matters is that they should enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum''.

Most Kenyan teachers base their teaching of the articles on the pedagogical text books in some cases recommended by KIE such as: Headstart Secondary English (Bukenya, Kioko&Njeng'ere, 2005), The Skills of English (Bukenya,Curtis & Park 1989), New Integrated English (Gathumbi, Kimaliro,Mugambi, Bwonya, Newman & Kiio, 2016).

A survey of the current pedagogical grammar books reveals that many of the books do not address the article system at all apart from The Skills of English book 1-4 (Bukenya et al., 1989) which is currently not in use and where the article system is addressed but not adequately. This means the articles are not being given the attention they deserve. It should be noted that it is only at form two level that the secondary school syllabus directly addresses articles as a sub-topic under nouns (KIE, 2006) otherwise it is assumed that the teaching and learning of articles will be in-cooperated in other areas of grammar such as the nouns, the noun phrase and the sentence and in the teaching of the four skills that is listening, speaking, reading and writing since the syllabus adopts an integrated approach.

In most of the current text books articles are treated under nouns and covered under the topic countable and uncountable nouns. Since the Kenyan language syllabus adopts Communicative Language Teaching approach where it is argued that grammar must be picked by the learners through their daily communication and use of the language, teachers are therefore expected to use practices that have been put in place in accordance with this approach. The approach they use is therefore an inductive one. Practice exercises which may include controlled writing, comprehension passages, situational exercises, through which learners should learn use of articles by contextualizing, are used. Apart from this teachers are also expected to use activity method and grouping strategies as one of the best way to deliver instruction (KIE, 2000; Moraa, 2012). Some of the text books, try to simplify the approach to teaching articles for teachers and learners, for example in; The Skills of English (Form 3)states that: "Forthe first time we mention something whose name is a countable noun, we

normally put 'a'or 'an'in front of it; when we refer to it again we put the" (Bukenya et al., 1989, p.177).

Berry (1991) is critical of some of the approaches in some grammar text books and states that they are not well grounded when it comes to articles. He states "teachers efforts to simplify the article system for learners however well-meaning can be problematic" and argues that "such a rule offers a straight forward remedy for dealing with both articles but it is quite wrong" (Berry1991, p.255).He identifies three problems in approaches to article coverage: 1.Misleadingformulation2. Unwarranted emphasis on certain usage and 3.Lack of variety in formats; by this he means there's too much use of gap filling- in exercises at the expense of other formats.

In the literature, there have been numerous studies of learners of second language English and the acquisition of articles. The studies have mostly focused on article errors learners make at various levels and in various contexts. It has been documented that second language learners of English have been found to substitute or overuse the definite article 'the'in contexts where the indefinite article 'a'is required or where a zero article is required (Thomas,1989; Huebner, 2006; Ionin&Wexler,2004;El Wefarli,2013; Atay, 2010;Fen & Lu, 2005). The same kinds of errors have been documented in first language acquisition of English (Chesterman, 1991;Brown, 2003; Marotsos, 2009 among others). Other areas which have been documented as causing serious problems for learners have been omission of the definite article in contexts where it is required (Crompton, 2011; Lardiere, 2005; ElWerfalli, 2013).Studies of adult second language learners whose first languages have no overt article system found out the tendency to over-generalize the null and zero articles in both definite and indefinite contexts. In such instances, article omission was automatically

attributed to first language transfer. Another common error found in second language learners' acquisition of the English article system is the overuse of *'the'*; mostly by second language learners with article- less L1s. Heubner (1985) and Parrish (1987) in their investigations, found out that initially, second language learners overused the definite article 'the' with first mention NPs. Recent research conducted among Mandarin, Korean and Russia learners of English arrived at the same conclusion.

While there is agreement that all English L2 language learners have difficulty in using articles (at least initially), there is no consensus as to what the reasons for these difficulties are. The studies conducted have come up with a variety of causes of article problems during acquisition. The difficulties in some cases tend to emanate from learners' first language while in other cases they have nothing to do with learners' L1.Most of the work on the acquisition of the English article have mainly focused on second language learners from different regions of the world whose first language lacks an article system (Ionin& Wexler, 2003; Ionin, Ko, & Wexler, 2004 ; Bergorn 2007) and a few on second language learners with an article system (Crompton, 2011;El Wefarlli, 2013, Sarko, 2009).For some of the studies, first language interference has been found to be the major source of challenges in the learning of articles but for others the problems have been found to originate from the target language itself. Studies in second language acquisition in Kenya have tended to focus on error analysis in general. The article system has not been focused on. There is therefore a gap that needs to be addressed.

Regarding the teaching of article system in Kenya, problems may arise from the fact that English is a second language to Kenyans, inclusive of the teachers and secondary

school learners. For majority of them their first language lacks the article system. Students in Vihiga county of Western Kenya have Luhya language as their first language; a language which lacks an article system. According to Trifonovitch (as cited in Moraa, 2012), a student is automatically placed at a disadvantage when he/she already has a language of his/her own and he/she is asked to learn another language. After all as already pointed out, studies of adult second language learners have revealed that second language learners whose first language lacks articles experience difficulties in acquiring the articles as they tend to overgeneralize the null article in both definite and indefinite contexts and to omit articles in cases where they are required as a result of first language transfer. Apart from this, second language learners of English in Vihiga County may also be experiencing problems related to the difficulty of the article system itself. As for teachers they may be experiencing challenges arising from various reasons. These may include problems arising fromL1 influence and teaching strategies. Problems with the article system could impact negatively on learners' performance in English in national examinations since articles are some of the function words that occur most frequently in English (Larsen-Freeman, 1999).

Performance in English in national examinations in Vihiga county has remained below average since 2015 with an average mean score of 5.0 against the country's mean score of 6.0 (Ministry of Education, Vihiga County analysis of KCSE results 2015-2019). Poor mastery of the language means inability to access the benefits accruing from good mastery of the English language. Consequently, the central role of English for its utilitarian value renders it an important subject and cannot be overlooked in the process of learning it at school.

Given this scenario, this study sets out to investigate the role of first language in the process of learning the article system by secondary school learners of Vihiga County whose first language is articleless and the challenges the teachers are experiencing in the teaching of the articles.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

It is said that the acquisition of the article system ranks among the most challenging areas of grammar for learners learning English as a second language and is even more challenging for learners whose first language is article-less (-ART) than for those whose first language has articles (+ ART) (Ganzho Sun, 2016; Kwame, 2018).The first language of majority of learners in Vihiga, which is Luhya, has no articles. Therefore, this is likely to present challenges in the process of teaching and learning English.

Articles appear in many areas of discourse practices; they are some of the function words that occur most frequently in English as revealed by corpus data Sinclarre (as cited in Master, 2002)as such they have a significant effect on the effective use of language both written and spoken. According to Miller (2004), errors with articles automatically mark a person out as a non-native speaker and call into question the person's general competence in their English. Therefore, misuse of the English article system among learners is a clear indicator of poor mastery of the language the consequence of which may be poor performance in English at school and in national examination.

In this regard, the analysis of KCSE results of Vihiga County in English from 2015 to 2019 reveal a mean score below average, 4.495 (2015); .3.85 (2016); 3.9985 (2017) 3.9965 (2018); 4.6208 (2019) (Ministry of Education Vihiga County analysis of

KCSE results 2015 – 2019).Thus the overall performance for Vihiga county in the last five years remains dismal over the years.. In the perspective of this study, this could partly be attributed to the poor mastery of the English language grammar and specifically article system. This worrisome trend calls for an investigation.

More importantly because English language plays a crucial role as a medium of instruction across curriculum in schools in Kenya, it implies that if the learner is handicapped in the language of instruction then learning is affected and if this trend continues then learners will miss out on many opportunities such as joining institutions of higher learning and job opportunities.

Furthermore an analysis of the English language syllabus for secondary schools in Kenya reveals that the articles are treated as a grammatical item under nouns and only appear as a topic in year two (KIE, 2006). This raises concern for the present study, because although they are a well-known area of challenge for learners of English as a second language, and they are actually regarded as hard grammar (Liu &Gleason, 2002), they are obviously not being given the attention they deserve. Hence the study wished to create an understanding of how teachers of English negotiate the teaching of the English article in their lessons.

Based on the foregoing information, this study therefore sought to investigate the influence of Luhya first language semantic notions in the learning and instruction of the English article system among the secondary school learners in Vihiga County. This is in view of the fact that learners' L1 influence on second language acquisition has been a most contentious subject in second language research .Two issues have been at the centre of the debate. The first issue has been the initial state of an L2 learner

Furthermore it has been claimed that the English article system is most difficulty for L2 learners whose first language lacks articles Thomas, Master Zobl (in Bergeron–Matoba 2009)and L1 influence on article acquisition has been reported in some studies (Trenkic, 2007, Lardiere, 2001). This study therefore aims to investigate L1 influence on article acquisition with a focus on Luhya learners given that Luhya language lacks articles therefore Luhya learners are appropriate candidates for examination.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the problem stated, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Luhya first language semantic notions in the instruction and learning of the English article system among secondary school learners in Vihiga County.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

a) Establish the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning English L2 articles.

b) Describe the systematic errors of English L2 among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system.

c) Examine the causes of the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners' in the course learning of the English L2 articles.

d) Identify the challenges teachers of English face when teaching the English L2 article among Luhya L1 learners.

e) Establish the semantic challenges the Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English L2 article system.

1.6 Research Questions

Based on the purpose, the research questions of this study are:

a) What are the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning English L2 articles?

b) What are the systematic errors of English L2 among Luhya L1 learners when learning the English article system?

c) What are the causes of the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners when learning the English L2 article system?

d) What challenges do the teachers of English face when teaching the English L2 articles among Luhya L1 learners?

e) What semantic challenges do Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English L2article system?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study focused on generating data on the acquisition of the articles 'the', 'a', 'an',and'zero article' by students in Vihiga County. The focus of the first objective was on the systematic developmental features exhibited during the acquisition of the article system. The findings revealed that learners exhibited fluctuation between definiteness and specificity, overuse and omission. The findings also revealed a tentative sequence of article acquisition where the definite article 'the'is acquired earlier followed by 'a','an' then 'zero article'. This finding should be important to teachers of English language; they should use it as a basis to plan the order in which the grammar items and articles in particular should be taught. In addition, curriculum developers should also use the information as a basis in sequencing items when developing the English language syllabus. Equally, text book writers should find this information useful in arranging the sequence in which grammar items should be arranged.

Based on the second and third objectives, the findings provide insights into the kinds of errors learners make and the causes of these errors. Since acquisition of L2 is largely affected by L1 of the learners and causes arising from the target language, it is prudent to document how the Luhya L1 affects L2 article acquisition in the area under study and how the complexity of the article system itself becomes an impediment to acquisition. Teachers and language educators should find this useful as a guide in developing teaching strategies that focus on elimination of L1 influence and other frequently occurring errors.

Based on the fourth objective, it is equally important to document the challenges teachers of English encounter when teaching the article system and the procedures and practices they adopt. Consequently, the results of this finding should be useful to language educators, curriculum developers, textbook writers and publishers to help in designing interventions that will promote the efficient acquisition and correct use of articles by students, and the appropriate procedures and practices teachers should adopt in teaching articles.

The fifth objective of the study addressed the semantic challenges learners face when learning the English article system. It was also prudent to document the findings. The findings provide insights into the role the learners' Luhya L1 semantic notions of specificity and definiteness play on the acquisition of the English article system. English language teachers should find such a revelation useful as it provides better understanding of the learners' challenges in dealing with the notions of specificity and definiteness in relation to article learning hence use this knowledge as a basis for devising strategies of teaching that can best address the notions of specificity and definiteness, when handling the English article system.

Finally, the researcher hopes that the study will in addition open up the field of study and debate on emergent approaches in teaching of the English article system.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Academically the acquisition of the article system for L2 learners has been studied in depth and widely. Most of the studies have largely focused on learners from various languages that do not have the article system; Russian and Korean (Ionin& Wexler, 2003), Turkish (Atay, 2010) Chinese (Robertson, 2000; Lardiere, 2001), Japanese (Wakabayashi, 1997; Snape, 2006), Polish (Hawkins, 2005). However, while

considerable research has been done to understand the article system in the Western world and in the Far East, it has been understudied in Kenya. There are relatively few studies on the teaching of the articles in Kenya. While much research has been done on nouns, verbs and adjectives in terms of lexical semantic language resource development (Mahesh, 1996), little has been done on the teaching and acquisition of the articles as second language in Kenya. Furthermore, many of the studies done in Kenya have mainly focused on error analysis in general and L1 influence in the acquisition of English (Simwoto, 1993; Masinde, 2005). Since this study is focused on the English L2 article acquisition by LI Luhya speakers, it is intended to address this gap with a view to establishing how the learners' L1 influences acquisition, teaching and learning of the English SLarticle system.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions: first, that Luhya is first language of most learners of Vihiga County. Second, most learners in Vihiga County learn English as a second language. Third, English language teachers are trained and employ teaching practices and strategies stipulated in the syllabus in their lessons with particular reference to the English article system.

1.10 Scope and Limitations of the Study

In this section the researcher looked at scope at three levels: geographical, content and thodological.

1.10.1 Scope

The study was conducted in Vihiga County which is one of the four counties in Western Kenya. It focused on selected secondary schools from the county. Research

participants who included teachers and students were drawn from the schools from this county in the sub-counties of Emuhaya. Hamisi and Vihiga. The study addressed the research questions. The first question dealt with the systematic developmental features of L2 learners' acquisition of English articles. This is development as implied in Krashen's theory of the natural order hypothesis(Krashen& Terrell,1983).The concern was to look at features that emerge in learners' article use during the process of acquisition. Generally, the learners performance in the tasks assigned would indicate the areas of strength and weakness in article use revealing the features. Also of interest was to establish the sequence in which the articles were acquired.

The second question addressed the type of errors learners' made during the acquisition of the article system. The third question was aimed at establishing the causes of the errors. Of interest was what contributed to the errors the learners made in contexts given and the likely source of these errors; whether they arose from learners' L1 or from the target language. Question four sought to establish the challenges teachers face in teaching the English article system. Specifically, the question sought to establish teachers' pedagogic competence in the article system, the teaching strategies they employed and their views about the article system as a grammatical item. Also connected to this question was to investigate the teachers' opinions about learners' Luhya first language; whether they felt it was a challenge to their teaching of the article system. In the fifth question the study focused on the semantic challenges learners with Luhya L1 faced when learning the English article system. Specifically the study sought to establish the role the semantic notions of definiteness and specificity played in the learners' process of acquiring the English article system. Noted was the fact that these notions were expressed differently in the

learners' L1 from the target language. A pragmatic paradigm was adopted for this research.It is a paradigm that advocates for the use of mixed methods in research. This paradigm adapts a philosophical position between positivism and interpretivist which mixes methods from the two major paradigms on the basis of what works and bears little regard for philosophical consequences (Cherryholmes, 1992; Howe, 1988). According to Toshakkari and Teddie (1998, p.21) ''to most researchers committed to the thorough study of a research problem, method is secondary to the research question itself and the underlying worldview hardly enters the picture except in the most abstract sense''.

The paradigm suited my purpose because it provided me with a means of using both QUAN and QUAL in the same study and therefore a means of drawing on the strengths of QUAL as well as QUAN. It meant having at my disposal the methodologies of both the QUAN and QUAL approaches and drawing on the strengths of either without having to worry about any of their extreme philosophical leanings. The research was conducted within the mixed method approach and adopted a case study design.

1.10.2 Limitations

The study's first limitation is from design and methodology. Limitation to the study arose from the sample size which was small because of the in-depth interviews and storytelling sessions. However, a rich and complex understanding of the phenomena is more important in qualitative approaches and methods to research than eliciting data that could be generalized to other geographical areas. For this reason, the researcher was more concerned about this than generalizability of the findings. This limitation was taken care of by restricting the findings of this study only to similar

contexts. Another limitation arose from the fact that the Luhya dialects which form L1 of most of the learners in the study have not been extensively studied and as a result documented literature on the structure of the dialects is limited. Limitations notwithstanding, it is hoped that the study will contribute significantly to the field of education specifically in the area of English language pedagogy in Kenya and other contexts with similar linguistic presentations.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by four hypotheses: fluctuation hypothesis (FH) by IoninKo and Wexler (2004), Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis (FT/FA)by Schwartz and Sprouse, (1994, 1996) and Krashen's two hypotheses: The Acquisition/Learning hypothesis and The natural order hypothesis (Krashen, 1985). The use of the 4 hypotheses was justified as the study used theory triangulation to achieve its purpose. Theory triangulation is one of the levels of triangulation as suggested by Denzin (1978, p.297) that means ''approaching data with multiple perspectives and hypotheses in mind". The researcher used the four different theories to help examine the phenomenon of article acquisition from different perspectives. As it will be seen all these theories are dealing with the issue of article acquisition/learning from different linguistic perspectives as expressed in the objectives; this helped in giving more insight into the topic and was also useful in providing better understanding of the information and data generated from the field based on the study variables.

1.11.1 Article Choice Parameter

The two notions, definiteness and specificity discussed above are semantic universals of the Universal Grammar (UG). In literature, there is a parameter related to these two

notions. This parameter is referred to as Article Choice Parameter and it was proposed by Ionin (2003). It is discussed hereafter.

The English article system is an area of grammar that has been considered by language educationists as problematic for learners during the acquisition process and more so to learners acquiring English as a second language whose first languages have no articles. Korean, Russian, Japanese, Chinese and Turkish are some of these languages (Atay 2010). The difficulty arises from the fact that these learners do not have a similar system in their native languages to mark the notions of definiteness and specificity.

They are therefore usually at a loss when they start learning the English article system. During the acquisition process they make lots of errors. It has however been noted that, the errors they make with regard to the article system are systematic in the sense that they tend to overuse the definite and indefinite articles in certain contexts 'the' is overused in indefinite-specific contexts and 'a' is overused in definite –non-specific contexts (Ionin et al., 2003, 2004, 2007; Ionin, Ko et al., 2008)

It is proposed that specificity and definiteness are two distinct, independent semantic patterns of article choice. Given this proposition, Ionin (2003) advanced an idea that there's a parameter that governs article choice. She called it Article Choice Parameter which is defined as ''a parameter of UG which determines the possible interpretation of articles in languages that have a two-article contrast According to this parameter, a language that has two articles distinguishes them as follows: on the basis of specificity or on the basis of definiteness. Thus languages with two articles mark either of the semantic universals of the ACP i.e. specificity or definiteness. Some of the article languages choose definiteness setting but some others choose specificity

setting Ionin (2003). English and Samoan are examples of such languages. English uses articles to mark definiteness while Samoan uses articles to mark specificity. According to Ionin (2003), the term parameter in the Article Choice Parameter refers to constraints on lexical specifications.

In every language including those without articles, articles have different lexical representations related to specificity and definiteness. In other words even languages without articles have a way of marking specificity and definiteness. Ionin (2003, p.30) in her dissertation advanced the notion that "these differences can be captured via parametric variation, with languages varying on whether they use articles to encode the definite feature, specific feature or both" Ionin further argues that ACP is different from other parameters in the sense that it is not related to syntactic properties such as movement, directionality or locality. Its focus is just the lexical representation of articles and their interaction with the discourse. In this parameter, specificity and definiteness are universal cognitive concepts. However more importantly, they are the only discourse-related semantic features. It is therefore fair to assert that ACP is a discourse based parameter. The concept is captured in Table 1.1

Table 1.1 Article Grouping Cross – Linguistically: Two – Article Languages

a) Article grouping by definiteness (e.g. English)

	+definite	-definite
+specific		
-specific		

b) Article Grouping by specificity   (e.g Samoan)

	+definite	-definite
+specific		
-specific		

(Source: Ionin et al., 2004, p.130)

1.11.2 Fluctuation Hypothesis

Fluctuation hypothesis was formulated by Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004). It states:

a) L2 learners have full access to UG principles and parameter settings

b) L2 learners fluctuate between different parameter settings until the input leads them to set the parameter to the appropriate value.

According to Fluctuation Hypothesis (FH), article systems in two-article languages like English can encode the features [±definite] or [±specific] (Ionin, KO&, 2004).They further state that the way in which the articles are grouped in such languages is governed by a semantic parameter. They call this parameter, the Article Choice Parameter (ACP). This parameter can be set to either the definiteness value or the specificity value. They further assert that L2 English learners with articleless L1 do not have any setting of the ACP. However, since ACP is a UG parameter-setting for articles it is available to L2 learners within the limits of its framework. For this reason, L2 learners will fluctuate between the two settings of the parameter in the cause of article acquisition. The cause of the fluctuation will arise from the fact that initially L2 learners have learnt little of article use therefore they have insufficient input so they are not yet confident about which setting is correct as a result, they may either select the definiteness or specificity setting. This will continue until they are exposed to sufficient input to enable them set the parameter correctly. In other words, the fluctuation of articles will greatly decrease or completely disappear after the

learners have been taught or exposed to the target language for some time. Considering the tenets of FH certain predictions can be made. First, the prediction of FH is that in the process of language acquisition, errors of L2 learners should be systematic.

The FH predicts that fluctuation may result in 'the' used in [–definite][+specific], contexts interchangeably with 'a' and 'a'used in [+ definite - specific] contexts interchangeably with 'the'.This scenario is captured in table 1.5

Table 1.2 Predictions for Article Choice in L2 English

	DEFITINE (target: the)	**INDEFINITE (target: a)**
SPECIFIC	Correct use of *the*	Overuse of **the**
NONSPECIFIC	Overuse of **a**	Correct use of **a**

(Adopted from Ionin et al., 2004, p. 19)

Table 1.2 indicates that wrong choices for the expected settings cause certain overuses in certain contexts; 'the'overuse in indefinite specific contexts and 'a'overuse in definite non-specific contexts.

This theory is relevant to my study because it predicts the error patterns of L2 learners with article less L1.Therefore, the study will use this hypothesis to predict and explain the systematic errors of L2 learners. In this study Luhya L1 learners have no article system in their Luhya native language therefore they have to reset the ''no article parameter'' to a parameter concerning articles. And in so doing, Ionin et al., (2004) hypothesized that initially such learners will fluctuate between definiteness and specificity until such a time when they will gain enough language content through teaching and exposure which will then help them to set the parameter to the correct value.

Guided by this hypothesis I predicted that Luhya L2learners would use articles on the basis of definiteness and specificity and would overuse 'a'in [+definite -specific] context and 'the'in [–definite +specific] contexts. According to this hypothesis it is implied that learners will not face difficulties in [+definite +specific] and [–definite – specific] contexts. FH is therefore crucial to this study as it guides the study in finding

answers to research questions (a) and (b) which are: What are the systematic developmental features of L2 acquisition of English article? What are the systematic errors of English L2 in Vihiga secondary school learners in the course of acquisition of the article system?

1.11.3 Full Transfer/Full Access Hypothesis

The study was also guided by Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis. The proponents of this hypothesis are Schwartz&Sprouse (1994, 1996).

According to this hypothesis, the initial state in L2 acquisition is L1 grammar. Thus ''Full transfer'' means transfer of ''the entire L1grammar with abstract features and functional categories. In other words, any time learners begin to learn a second language, they use their L1 as a spring board. It means during the L2 acquisition process the learner is guided by his knowledge of first language which plays a crucial role during his acquisition of the second language. Schwartz and Sprouse (1996, p.65) posit that in the L2 acquisition process, the learner transfers all the grammar of his first language to the second language that he is learning. It means that"…the entirety of L1 grammar with associated "deep" consequences such as parameters, syntactic consequences of functional categories and feature values are all transferred to L2 as the initial state of the new grammar".

However the transferred L1 grammar is sometimes not adequate or compatible with L2, in other words it may have some features not compatible with L2, and may fail to assign a representation to L2 input. When the L1 grammar is unable to accommodate the L2 input, the learner turns to UG grammar to which he has full access to provide him with options for restructuring. The UG options are not in his L1. The result of the

process is Inter- language grammar (ILG) which may not be accurate but is still UG constraint. Schwartz and Sprouse, (1996) posit that UGis wholly available for L2 learners in second language acquisition process. This implies that L2 learners can access all parameters to set the target structure. However the pace of restructuring varies. During the restructuring every new stage represents an interlanguage and the direction of development is decided to some extent by the initial state and partly by ''L2 input, UG and learnability conditions'' Atay (2010, p.12)

This hypothesis is relevant to my study as it complements the FH in providing an extra tool for examining developmental features in learner language in the process of article acquisition. In addition, the purpose of FH hypothesis is to explain article misuse. It does not take into consideration other problem areas such as article omission or even transfer of equivalent terms from L1 to L2 which also cause errors. FT/FA hypothesis therefore has an added advantage of incorporating both misuse and omissions. It recognizes the fact that UG plays an important role in acquisition but it is not the only one other factors like L1 also play a role. For instance, in this study the learners under investigation have no article system in their L1 so they are likely to produce bare nouns or use zero article where it is not called for in the early stages of L2 acquisition since at this initial stage of L2 acquisition, their L2 functional structure is LI and since their L1 does not have D projection structure nor does it have necessary semantic features assigned to lexical items like articles. The hypothesis also provides ground for examining L1 transfer effects in the course of article acquisition thus addressing the third objective which is to investigate the causes of systematic errors observed in learners' acquisition of the article system and the last objective which is to find out semantic challenges learners face when learning the article

system. For this reason I have found it necessary to include FT/FA to account for predictions of acquisitions patterns outside the FH.

1.11.4 Second Language Acquisition Theory

This study will also be based on second language acquisition theory by Krashen (1985) also referred to as the monitor model. The second language acquisition theory seeks to explain how and by what processes individuals acquire a second language. It has five hypotheses referred to as; the acquisition learning hypothesis, the input hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. However, the researcher utilized only two of the hypotheses which are relevant to the study. These are the acquisition learning hypothesis and the natural order hypothesis. These are discussed below:

a) The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

According to Krashen (1985), learners have two independent language systems. One is as a result of deliberately setting out to learn a language, that is, conscious learning. The second is as a result of picking a language from one's environment through using the language for real communication, without consciously setting out to do so that is, subconscious learning. He calls the former process 'learning' and the later 'acquisition'. Krashen compares the acquisition process to the way children acquire their first language and views learning as a process where the learner receives some formal instruction say in a school or some institution. Thus languages are either learned or acquired.

Krashen (1985) believes the acquired system is superior to the learned system; in his view learning is less important than acquisition. He prizes acquisition higher than

learning and argues that acquisition leads to development of language proficiency but learning is only the representation of grammatical knowledge that has resulted from instruction and it cannot lead to acquisition. He argues that it is the acquired system that we call upon to create utterances during spontaneous language use. According to his argument the learned system can serve only as a monitor of the output of the acquired system (Richards, 2005). Krashen and other second language acquisition theorists prize acquisition over learning and stress that language learning comes about through using language communicatively rather than through practicing language skills (Richards, 2005). It should however be noted that Krashen does not set rules to distinguish language acquisition from language learning. Language, he states, can still be acquired from the classroom when the focus is on communication.

Krashen's hypothesis has been criticized for salient inadequacies. Some researchers opined that the hypothesis proposes an acquired system and a learned system which are totally separate from each other. This has been a subject of debate as it has been confirmed that there are cases where learners acquire rules without ever having learned them. It has also been pointed out that it is possible for learners to consciously know rules and yet not be able to use them in speech. This makes it difficult to separate the acquired system from the learned one.Finally, Krashen has not provided evidence to demonstrate that learning and acquisition are indeed separate systems. Lack of specific criteria for dichotomizing these two systems then becomes a problem for any researcher. In other words what data does one consider as a product of acquired knowledge and what data is learned knowledge?

The criticisms notwithstanding, the theory is relevant to this study as the study mainly focuses on the acquisition of the English article system by L2 learners; and the

challenges the teachers of English face when teaching the articles. The theory guided

the study in finding answers to question (d); what challenges do the teachers face

when teaching the English article system? The question is how are the learners

acquiring the article system? To answer this question we must turn to the teacher. The

teacher influences the learning process hence if there's a problem with the acquisition

of the article then he/she could be facing challenges in teaching the article system.

The question also is what methods, what activities do teachers use to teach the articles

and what challenges do they present? According to this theory the best way a

language is learned is through natural communication rather than through practicing

language skills. This implies that second language teachers should create ideal

situations which allow language to be used in order to fulfill authentic purposes.

b) The Natural Order Hypothesis

This hypothesis argues that there is a natural order to the way second language

learners acquire their target language. According to the hypothesis, learners of a

second language acquire grammatical items in a given order. This order does not

depend on the apparent simplicity or complexity of the grammatical features involved.

This means this order does not go by what we believe is easy or difficult. There also

evidence that the order is independent of the order in which rules are taught in

language classes (Krashen, 1985).

The first objective of the study was to find out systematic developmental features of

L2 learners acquisition of English articles. The natural order hypothesis was deemed

relevant to this study because it helped the researcher to understand better the

development of the article use by the learners, the order in which the articles are

acquired and whether this order is reflective of the learners' L1.The order in which

the articles are acquired was a pointer to the semantic challenges the learners face when learning the English article system.

1.12 Conceptual Framework

The study is conceptualized as indicated in Figure 1.1 which shows how the dependent variable relates with the independent variables. The arrows show the inter-relationship between the variables. According to the conceptual framework English article acquisition depends on the learner's competence in L2 of the article system, errors emerging from L1 and L2 interaction in the use of the article system, causes of systematic errors, instructional factors which include teachers' understanding of L1 article system of the learner and how it affects L2, teacher competence in English article system, teaching strategies and the syllabus. Acquisition of L2 English article system also depends on learners' semantic factors which include L1 influence and the notions of definiteness and specificity, learners 'practice.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES   **DEPENDENT VARIABLES**

**SYSTEMATIC
DEVELOPMENTAL FEATURES
OF LEARNERS L2**
Learner competence in L2 of
article system

SYSTEMATIC ERRORS
Errors emerging from L1 and L2
interaction in the use of the
English article system

**CAUSES OF SYSTEMATIC
ERRORS**
Learners L1
Complexity of the target
language

'L1   interlingual

OUTCOME
Effective L2 English   article
acquisition
Accurate use of L2 English
article system
Application of articles in
complex contexts

**LEARNER SEMANTIC
CHALLENGES**
Practice
L1 influence
The notion of definiteness
and specificity
Absence of definiteness in L1

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Frameworks

1.13 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Article Choice parameter: This is a parameter that exists among languages with an overt article system and have two article systems that have contrastive values.

Cultural Use of 'the': It refers to a situation where the article 'the' precedes a noun that is well known and is unique to the community.

Complexity of the target language: the state of being formed of many parts; the state of being difficulty to understand

Deductive teaching: A traditional teaching strategy in which the teacher begins by presenting a rule then explains it with examples followed by practice exercises.

Definiteness: Being uniquely identifiable or familiar to the speaker and the hearer.

Errors: Errors are said to occur when a learner breaks the rules of a language system he is learning (the target language) because he does not know the rules well.

First language: The language an individual acquires when he begins to learn or to speak. In this study it is assumed to be learners' local language 'Luhya'

Flooding: It is an unusual rise in the usage of a grammatical item. In this study it refers to a significant rise in the usage of the articles 'a'and'the'at the expense of the other articles.

Inductive Teaching: It is an approach to teaching where learners discover the rules of grammar by themselves.

Interlanguage: Is a rule system that L2 learners develop in the process of learning a second language. The concept of interlanguage is founded upon the assumption that at any particular moment in the learning sequence a learner is using a language system which is neither his native language nor the target language. This is a third language that the learner develops in the course of learning a language.

Input: It is the language data that the learner is exposed to during language acquisition process.

L1 influence: This refers to the effects a learner's first language has on second language acquisition.

Luhya language   This is used in the study to refer to three Luhya dilects spoken in Western Kenya, Vihiga county .The dialects include:Maragoli,Lunyore ,Tiriki

Overuse of 'the' 'a' It is realized when learners fluctuate between one article and another in the process of article acquisition leading to overuse of 'the' in contexts where 'a' is required and overuse of 'a' in contexts where 'the' is required. It also refers to a situation where a zero article is required but the article 'the'or 'a' is used.

Target language: The language learners are learning. In this study the target language is English.

Transfer: The influence that learners' L1 has on their acquisition of L2.

Second language: The language learned by an individual after he has learned his or her first language.

Semantic notions of LI: The semantic notions here refer to how the notions of definiteness and specificity realized through articles in English are marked in the learners' Luhya L1.

Semantic notions of L2*:* In this study L2 is English. The English language has an overt article system consisting of 'a', 'an', 'the' and zero article used in realization of definiteness, genericity and specificity. This differs from the Luhya language where these notions are realized differently.

Specificity: Having a particular referent familiar only to the speaker.

Systematic errors: These are errors which are repeated several times on several occasions in various ways. The errors are not noticed by the learner and may not be corrected by the learner without help. Therefore systematic errors are only errors from the teacher's point of view not the learner's.

Systematic developmental features: These are features which are commonly exhibited in learner language when a learner begins to learn a language. The features occur from within the target language after learners have been exposed to the language and have learnt some rules of the language.

1.14 Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter has dealt with the following: the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. The next chapter examines literature reviewed and studies related to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to this study. It is organized under the frame work: The article, definite article, indefinite article, categories of the use of the articles as documented in the literature, Lhya dialects grammar, and related studies. Related studies are organized based on the objectives of the study.

2.2 The Article

An article is defined as a word that is used with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by a noun. The English article system comprises three concepts; the indefinite article, the definite article and the zero article (the absence of an article). Under these three types we have the following articles: 'a/an', 'the'and 'zero article'. The word 'the' is called a definite article because it is usually though not always used to refer to something already mentioned. The words 'a', 'an' are called indefinite articles because they refer to no particular thing or person. The article 'a' is used before words beginning with vowel sounds while *'an'* is used with words beginning with consonant sounds. The sound not the spelling makes a difference (Albert Camilla, Agnes, Power, Raphael, Sylivia&MacNif,1961). Other linguists; Larsen-Freeman, 1983; Quirk, Greenbau, Leech and Svartvik (1985) identify five English articles namely a, an, the, some, and zeroarticle written with the symbol ø.The zeroarticle indicates the absence of an overt article before a noun. This article occurs in most cases with uncountable nouns and plural nouns. Some linguists for example

Master, (1994) do not regard 'some' as an article and so identify only four articles: 'a', 'an', 'the'and'ø'.

Quirk et al., (1985) regards articles as determiners and categorizes them in the class of central determiners. Thus central determiners include the articles; 'a'/an, 'the', and'ø'.There are a few words that can take the place of central determiners such as 'this','that','each', 'every', 'some' and 'any'. These words never occur with an article. Words like this including 'some' fall under the category of determiners only when they precede a noun. If they occur alone standing in for a noun they are being used as pronouns. Central determiners appear before the head of the noun phrase and play a significant role in determining what kind of a noun is in the phrase such as definite, indefinite, proper, common, and countable or uncountable. In most cases central determiners are obligatory. According to Quirk et al., (1985), articles are used to refer to the linguistic or situational context and the noun phrase will have definite or indefinite reading depending on which of the three articles is used. Definite reference is realized through the article 'the' whereas indefinite reference is realized through 'a', 'an', and'ø'. The following examples demonstrate these concept)

1. a) Have you seen **the** bicycle? (Definite)(Quirk, 1985 p.265)

   b) Have you seen **a** bicycle? (Indefinite) (Quirk 1985 p.265)

   c) Have you eaten **an** orange? Countable/indefinite

   d) Water provides life (non- count /indefinite)

The last two examples are additional from the researcher and they illustrate 'an' and'ø'respectively.

2.2.1 The Indefinite Article

An indefinite article is the opposite of the definite article. An indefinite article indicates that the noun it precedes is not a particular one and it is not known to the hearer. There are three types of indefinite articles; 'a', 'an' and 'ø.'

a) Use of the indefinite article a /an

Most grammar books prescribe the use of indefinite article in several categories as illustrated in the following paragraph:

We use the indefinite article for something or a person whose name is a countable singular noun and is mentioned for the first time. In such a case the identity of the person or thing being referred to may not be important or may be irrelevant, or the speaker may be making a general statement about any such thing or person. It should be noted here that essentially 'a' and 'an' mean 'one' so they cannot be used before plural nouns and uncountable nouns. The following examples illustrate this:

2. She bought a television before she moved to her new house.

3. It took him an hour to finish the assignment.

We use the indefinite article 'a', 'an' with ordinary countable nouns when the hearer/reader does not know exactly the noun we are referring to. For example:

4. John and his wife adopted a child.

In this sentence the speaker does not have a particular child in mind and the hearer does not know anything about the child that the speaker is talking about. The following sentence can also be interpreted in the same way:

5. Anne wants to join a university

This sentence just like the previous sentence reveals that the speaker does not have any particular university in mind. The hearer also does not know exactly which university is being referred to. It simply means Jane wants to join any university.

Other uses of the indefinite include its use before phrases of time and measurements; with a noun complement and before phrases of nationality.

The indefinite article is in most cases used with non-specific reference in which the referent of the object is unknown to the hearer and as a result does not exist in any of the speaker-hearer shared sets. According to (Hawkins, 1978) and Quirk et al (1985) the indefinite article is notionally unmarked. Quirk et al., (1985, p. 272) posit,

> The indefinite article is notionally the 'unmarked' article in the sense that it is used (for singular count nouns) where the conditions for the use of 'the' do not obtain. That is, a/an X will be used where the reference of X is not uniquely identifiable in the shared knowledge of speaker and hearer. Hence a/an is typically used when the referent has not been mentioned before and is assumed to be unfamiliar to the speaker or hearer.

It is also suggested that an indefinite article could also be used to indicate a specific reference (Fodor &Sag, 1978 p.88). They state "a specific indefinite article is used if the speaker intends to refer to, a unique individual X, where X is in the restrictor set and denoted by the NP" .This means that when a speaker's purpose is to refer to a particular object, the indefinite object then will be specific. The following sentences are good examples:

6. I have a job that I need to do.

7. I have an assignment that I need to complete.

In both these sentences we are referring to a definite specific job and a definite specific assignment but we use the indefinite *a* and *an* to show that the job and the assignment are not known to the listener; we are introducing them for the first time into the conversation.

Therefore the indefinite article could be used to indicate a specific and non-specific reference. According to Hawkins (1978) and Ionin (2003), we can break the indefinite article into two distinct categories; specific and non-specific reference. They use the word scope to show a clear cut between specific indefinite and non-specific indefinite. They argue that in contexts where the indefinite description has a wide scope or semantic indication, the reference is specific; but in contexts where the indefinite description has a narrow scope that is, it occurs under the scope of one operator it means the reference is non-specific as shown in the following sentence:

8. I will eat a fruit once I arrive home.

In this particular sentence any fruit would do. The speaker has no particular fruit in mind. The referent *fruit* has a narrow scope. And in the following sentence the referent friend has a wide scope.

9. We met a friend to Jane's mother who gave us a lift.

In this sentence the speaker is specific since his purpose is to refer to a particular referent; friend to Jane's mother.

2.2.2 The Definite Article

Quirk et al. (1985, p.265)) describe the definite article in terms of its function. They state, "The definite article *the* is used to mark the phrase it introduces as definite, i.e. referring to something which can be identified uniquely in the contextual or general knowledge shared by speaker and hearer''

A definite article is therefore used to limit the meaning of a noun to a particular thing or person. We normally speak of the sun, the moon or the sky. It indicates that the noun is a particular one which is identifiable to the listener. It may be something that the speaker has already mentioned, for example:

> 10. Mary likes having a mango included in her breakfast meal. The mango must be ripe enough.

> Or it may be something uniquely specified.

> 11. We waited for a while before the sun rose.

Bukenya et.al (1989) outline uses of the definite article as follows: We use the definite article before proper nouns, which are already specified by definition (there is just one of them). This is very common with geographical expressions. For example: 'the Nile, the Ruwenzori, the Atlantic, the Netherlands and the Alps'. In these cases, the definite article may be considered superfluous. Its presence can be accounted for by the assumption that they are shorthand for a longer phrase in which the name is a specifier, i.e. the Nile River, the Ruwenzori mountain ranges, the Atlantic Ocean, etc.

Where the noun in such longer phrases cannot be omitted, the definite article is universally kept: the United States, the People's Republic of China, the Middle East and the Maghreb. The definite article is also used with superlatives as in:

12. He is the most handsome man in films today and balanced comparisons such as

13. The harder he works the less tired he seems to be.

We also use the definite article in various expressions of time. For example: the day before, the previous evening, in the morning, the week after the next.

With reference to categories of the use of 'the', it is important to mention here that the above mention usages of the definite article have been analysed into various categories by Quirk et al., (1985). In explaining the use of the articles, they discuss articles in terms of two kinds of references: specific reference and generic reference. They explain that 'depending on which of the three articles is used, the noun phrase will have a definite or indefinite reading. The article *the* always has a definite reading and the article *a/an* always has an indefinite reading'. (p.265)

Consequently, the study adopts   the analysis explained by Quirk et al. with reference to the categories of the use of 'the'.

2.2.3 The Definite Article and the Specific reference

Quirk et al (1985 p, 265) defines the use of 'the' in specific reference as follows: The definite article 'the' is used to mark the phrase it introduces as definite, as ''referring to something which can be identified uniquely in the contextual or general knowledge shared by speaker and hearer''**.** There are several ways in which specific reference is

used and Quirk and Crystal (1985) identify eight of them which are outlined and explained below along with the researcher's own illustrations.

a) Immediate situation

Immediate situational reference is made on the basis of a situation where the reference of 'the' comes from the extra-linguistic situation where the speaker and the listener are referring to an idea or an event that is taking or has taken place at the time of speaking or something that exists and the speaker and listener have knowledge of it for example

14. The meal is delicious. (Said during or after a meal. (Both speaker and listener are eating or have just eaten the meal).

15. Would you like to meet the girl? (Both speaker and hearer have knowledge of the existence of the girl in question).

b) Extra-linguistic situational reference – Larger situation

This refers to something known (specific knowledge shared between the speaker and hearer) to both speaker and hearer. In this case the definite article 'the' is confined to a particular community. For example:

16. The deputy president visited our factory and opened the new factory plant (Said in Kenya).

17. We spent the weekend at the Clique with my husband (said in Eldoret where a resort Known as Clique exists)

Insentence18 the hearer and the interlocutor know the existence of a deputy president in question and in 17 the speaker and the hearer know of a place called Clique and where it is located.

c) Reference to unique

This is general knowledge held by the speaker and the hearer.

18. The sun is very hot.

19. The moon has disappeared behind the clouds.

d) Anaphoric reference (direct)

This is when the article 'the' is used to refer back to a NP that has already been previously mentioned therefore known to the speaker and the hearer.

20. I bought some potatoes. The potatoes were expensive.

Thus direct anaphoric reference occurs when a NP that has been mentioned in a discourse for the first time with an indefinite article is repeated.

f) Anaphoric reference (indirect)

Indirect anaphoric reference is the mention of a referent which has already been referred to in the sentence by using a different word which brings the entire related concept about the referent into the speaker's and the hearer's mind. Ionin et al (2004) refers to it as associative anaphoric use. The following examples illustrate this concept.

21. He rode off on a bicycle but one of the wheels came off.

22. He bought roses and lilies. He had the flowers sent to his girl-friend.

f) Cataphoric reference

It is making reference to an item that is within the proximity of the speaker so the speaker understands what it is

23. Look at that; the moon.

g) Institutional reference (Sporadic)

24. What's on (the) TV this evening?

25. The church influences Kenyan life in many ways.

h) Logical use of 'the'

The, is used with ordinals, general ordinals, the words 'same, only' etc. and superlative adjectives

25. He caught the first flight to Kenya.

26. She will travel on the next flight.

27. This is the only copy of this book.

28. This is the best film I've ever seen.

Lea and Gleason (2002) refer to reference to uniques as 'cultural use' while Ionin et al (2004) refers to indirect anaphoric use as 'associative use'.

2.2.4 Zero Article

When we refer to a zero article we simply mean the absence of an overt article. We use the symbol ø to indicate the zero article. It is a kind of invisible silent article; it is there but we cannot see or hear it though it plays an important role in determining the

kind of noun phrase. Zero article is realized when a noun is not preceded by an indefinite 'a''an' or the definite article 'the'. The zero article is one of the few features of grammar that has not been given prominence in many studies. It has even in most cases been ignored by teachers during instruction. Therefore most learners are not even aware of its existence. According to Stephanides (1978, p.84), the zero article has not received a lot of attention in research **"probably because it has neither phonologic nor graphemic overt form"**. We use zero article with proper nouns, and mass nouns when we want to refer to entities generically, the reference is indefinite. We also use zero article with plural count nouns where the reference is indefinite. Chesterman (1991) identifies two forms of the zero article: the zero article and the null article. [ø1] stands for zero article and [ø2]for null article. The zero article occurs with non-count nouns for example:'water'and it also occurs with plural count nouns for example 'oranges'. We also use the zero article in reference to generic and non-specific nouns in the plural count nouns. Master (1997) summarizes the zeroarticle as presented in Table 2.1

Table 2.1 Noun Types with the Zero Article (∅1)

Noun type	Example
Mass vs. count	The boys ate <u>chicken</u>
	The locals shot <u>boar</u>
	Mice like cheese
Abstract vs. concrete	Prison dehumanizes <u>people</u>
	My father is in <u>bed</u>
	Herbert travelled by <u>car</u>
	They communicate by <u>radio</u>
Intentional vagueness	<u>Replication</u> of cell takes place over several hours
	<u>Animals in underground</u> caves are often blind and Colorless
Adjective (vs. Noun)	He was <u>man</u> (i.e. manly) enough to accept his fate

(Adopted   from Master 1997, p. 222)

[Note: The zero article occurs in front of each underlined noun]

Master outlines functions of the zero articles in Table 2.2

Table 2.2 Functions of the ∅ Article

Functions	Plural count	Non-count
First mention	Men are fools	Wine was the topic that night
General Characteristics	Snails have shells	Mercury is heavier than water

Existential there	There are holes in your socks	There's lipstick on his face
Defining post-modification	Cars from Japan are unreliable	Water from a spring is pure

(Adopted from Master 1997, p.222)

2.2.5 Null Article

The idea of null article is the brain child of Chesterman (1991).Chesterman posits that the null article occurs often with singular proper nouns and with certain singular count nouns and is applicable in more definite contexts. Master (1997) has summarized the types of nouns that occur with the null article as illustrated in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Noun Types with the Null Article [∅2)

Noun Type	Example
Bounded proper	Italy is a fascinating country
	Mr Jones was appointed chairman
Familiar(vs. unfamiliar)	She was hired as special assistant to the president
Time	After dinner, we'll see a movie
	It usually snows in winter
	I'll call you next week
Place	I left it at home
And coordinated NP	Brother and sister were inseparable

(Adopted from Master, 1997, p. 223)

[Note: the null article occurs in front of each underlined noun]

However as Master (2003) points out, the null article hypothesis only works with some singular proper nouns. He argues that it is a well-known fact that besides singular proper names that do not take any overt articles unless they are modified, there are also scores of English singular proper names that always require the use of the definite article whether they are modified or not. For example: The English Channel, The Tibet Plateau, The Thames, and The Nile.

So we can conclude that the null article only works with some singular proper names not all. Master also posits that Chesterman's theory of the null article does not explain in any way how to tell those proper names that take the null article from those that do not and are preceded by the overt definite article. This is often a source of confusion to learners. For this reason the zero article in this study will be inclusive of the null article.

2.3 Huebner's Classification

For the English articles, Huebner (1983) classified them into several types. He based his classification on Bickerton's semantic classification. In his classification, Huebner analysed NPs in terms of Bickerton's proposed universal features of referentiality namely, whether or not a noun has a specific reference [+/- SR] and whether or not it is assumed known to the hearer [+/-HR]. Hence noun phrases are classified as plus or minus the feature of specific reference [+/-SR] and plus or minus the feature of assumed known to the hearer [+/-HK]. Following this classification, Heubner came up with four categories of articles that he called types. Nouns classified as Type 1 [-SR +HK] are generics and they include; 'a', 'an.''the' and the zeroarticle. Nouns

classified as Type 2 [+SR, +HK] are referential definites and only the article 'the' marks this type.

The category classified as Type 3 [+SR –HK] are referential indefinites; these include nouns which are mentioned for the first time whose referent is identifiable to the speaker but not to the listener for example nouns which the speaker mentions in a sentence for the first time. These include 'a'/'an' and 'zero'. Type 4 nouns are classified as [–SR –HK] and are referred to as non-referential. They include nouns that are non-specific for both the speaker and the hearer. These are marked by 'a'/'an' and 'zero'. Thus Huebner had these four types of classification of articles. In addition to these four types, there's a fifth category added by Butler (2002) and Thomas (1989) referred to as Type 5. It includes idiomatic expressions in conventional uses. In this study idiomatic expressions are not included for the reason that they normally have an established meaning and a fixed grammatical structure.

2. [+SR,+HK]
(the)

1. [-SR,+HK]
(the, a,)

3. [+SR,-HK]
(a,)

3. [-SR,-HK]
(a,)
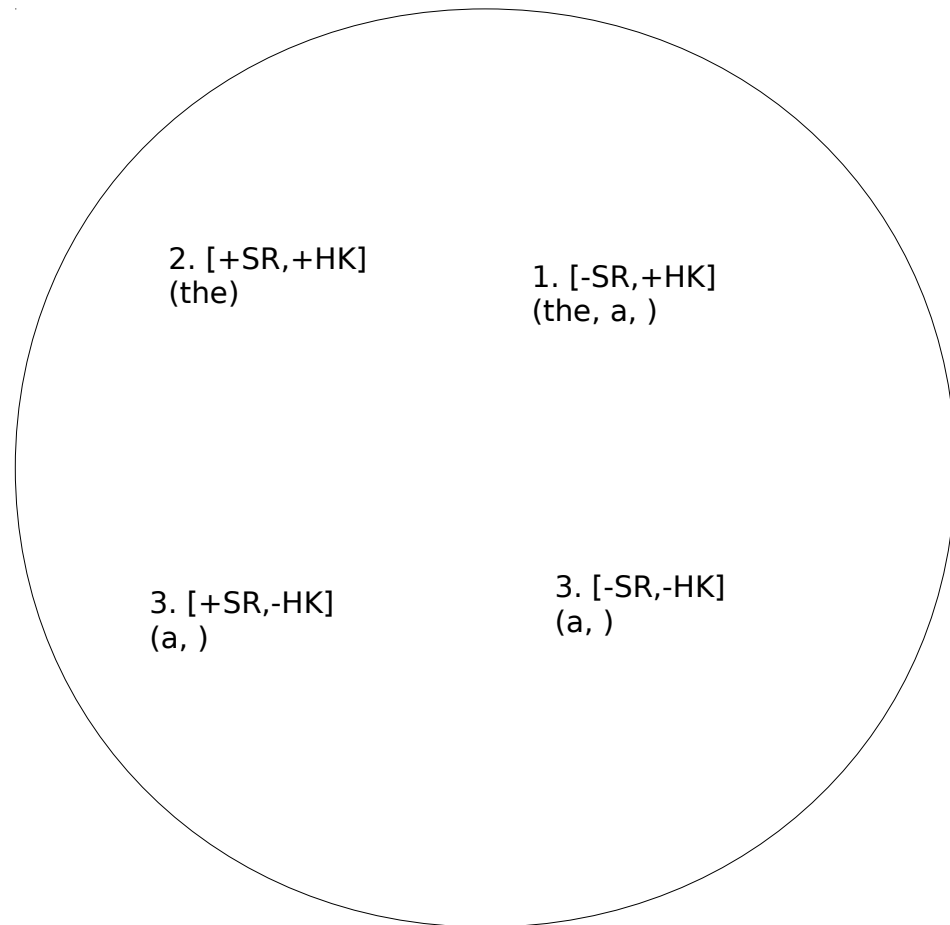
Figure 2.1Bickerton's (1981) semantic wheel for NP reference

2. 4 Specificity

Ionin et al., (2004) argue that there are no markers that indicate specificity in the Standard English language. They further postulates that specificity is marked in colloquial English using the demonstrative 'this'. Both definite and indefinite articles can have specific and non-specific references but it is not possible for an indefinite article to be used to refer to a definite reference and it is also not possible for a definite article to be used to refer to an indefinite reference. According to Quirk et al. (1985), there are two notions in relation to the definite and indefinite articles; specificity and genericity. He makes a distinction between specific and generic reference. Larsen–Freeman (1999) posits that generic reference has two readings;

generic and non-generic distinctions. The non-generic reference is further divided into specific reference and non-specific reference. In her view specific reference is made in reference to a particular member of the class and it is marked by the definite article'the'. Non-specific reference makes reference to no particular member of a class or to no member at all and it is realized through indefinite articles, 'a''an'in the singular and the zero article in the plural. Brinton (2000, p.292) argues; "information is specific if it denotes a particular entity in the real world, whereas it is nonspecific if it denotes no particular entity in the real world''. Both definites and indefinites can be used in both generic and specific contexts. According to Bickerton (1981), what makes the difference between the definite article 'the'and the indefinite articles 'a' and zero article is found in the two features [+/-Specific Reference] and [+/- Hearer Knowledge].

The former means that the article and the noun phrase that it precedes may or may not have a specific reference. The later means that what is mentioned in a sentence may or may not be known to the speaker and hearer from context or previous discourse (El Wefwarlli, 2013; Ekiert, 2007), came up with another additional feature; specific/non-specific distinctions that also are significant in our choice of the articles; this is the common knowledge shared by the speaker and listener and the shared situation of utterance. Ekiert(2007) posits that the referent is considered specific only in cases where it is known to speaker/listener or writer/reader. If only one of the participants of the shared situation of utterance has a definite referent in mind and the other participant does not, then the reference is non-specific since the referent is indefinite for one of the participants. In situations where both the participants do not know the referent, the reference is non-specific. This means for the reference to pass as specific

both participants must have a definite referent in mind. However this view of specificity is not in line with the view of some scholars, Ko, Perovic, Ioninand Wexler (2008p.119), explain that:

> Specificity is a semantic feature that makes reference to the knowledge state of the speaker concerning a uniquely salient discourse referent. It is speaker identifiability and speakers' intention to refer to a particular entity within the border of the sentence. Specificity is concerned with the speaker's intention to refer to an entity regardless of hearer's knowledge about the referent and it only reflects the knowledge state of the speaker.

The notion of referentiality of definiteness and indefiniteness is currently a subject of debate among linguists. For instance, Enç (1991) asserts that all definites are specific and definite NPs cannot have an unspecific reading. Other researchers are of the view that specificity is free from definiteness because both definite and indefinite articles can be used to refer to both specific and non-specific referents.

This means specificity can be realized through both the definite and indefinite NPs (Fodor & Sag, 1982; Lyons, 1999; 2005; Ionin, 2003; Ionin& Wexler, 2003; Ionin, Ko& Wexler, 2004, among many others). On the basis of the above analysis, Lyons (1999) and Brinton (2000) came up with the following four semantic types of NPs; accompanied with examples adapted from Lyons (1999).

1. [+Definite +specific]

29. The students cannot start their examination because the lecturer who is to administer the examination has not shown up; typical of John, he is so irresponsible.

2. [+ Definite –specific]

30. The students cannot start the examination because the lecturer who is to administer the examination has not shown up; I'll go and find out whoever it is but no one can remember his name and students claim they don't know him.

3. [-Definite +specific]

31. A thief broke in here last night; everybody knows him, he is the son of the late chief.

4. [- Definite –specific]

32. A thief broke in here last night; there's no other explanation for the broken window and the missing laptop.

This study is guided by the four semantic types as proposed by Lyons and the multiple choice data collection tool is based on Lyon's four semantic types.

2.5 Definiteness

According to Trenkic (2009), definiteness deals with the identifiability of the referents in discourse. It means that the given discourse referent is definite "if the speaker has the intention to refer to it, and expects the referent to be uniquely identifiable to the hearer. In order for a referent to be uniquely identifiable, the referent has to exist and be unique in "one of the pragmatically delimited domains" (Trenkic, 2009, p.117). In

English the definite article indicates that both the speaker and the hearer have a shared knowledge about the referent. According to Irwin, Bock and Stanovich, (as cited in Kim &Lakshmanan 2009,p.89), 'the definite article marks old given or presupposed information while the indefinite article marks new or asserted information'. Heim (2003) posits that a definite is used when we refer to something that is already familiar to the speaker and hearer at the current stage of the conversation. An indefinite is used to introduce a new referent. He further explains that we only use the definite article in contexts where the referent has been previously mentioned or evoked and when the referent is familiar to the speaker and the hearer. To explain the notions of definiteness and indefiniteness, Heim (2003), comes up with the theory of file change semantics in which she compares the notion of understanding a discourse to keeping a file and explains; ''understanding a discourse is like keeping a file and each referent in the discourse is a file card which is numbered'' (p 11**).**

Thus the file has numbered cards representing discourse information. At the beginning of a conversation, when the speaker says something, the hearer opens a file. So the file is empty at the beginning. When the speaker conveys some information about a referent for the first time, the listener opens the first card which contains the referent. Any time new information about this referent is given the existing card in the file is updated. When a new discourse referent is introduced, it is assigned a new card and added to the file. The role of indefinite article in this representation is to introduce new file cards for the discourse file. The role of definite article is to update the existing card. This is what is referred to as File Change Semantics (Heim, 2003; Lyons, 1999). Thus Heim makes a distinction between definite and indefinite which according to him is that for the former to be realized the condition of familiarity must be fulfilled, this means that the definite article is only deemed definite when there is a

referent in a given discourse familiar to the speaker and the hearer. On the other hand the indefinite is possible when the novelty condition is fulfilled since its function is to introduce new entities into the discourse.

Definiteness is a semantic feature and it is applied when reference is made to what the speaker and the hearer already know concerning a unique discourse referent (Ko, et al., 2008). Fodor and Sags, (1982), Ionin, Ko and Wexler, (2004) define definiteness by asserting that a determiner phrase is said to be definite when both parties in a conversation know of the existence of a unique entity in the context that is denoted by the NP.

The definite is used when the speaker and the hearer are certain about the existence and uniqueness of the referent or the person or thing being referred to. On the other hand the indefinite is used when there exists at least one individual which satisfies a precise condition in the context denoted by the NP (Heim 1991).

Ionin (2003) classifies languages into two groups: languages which use articles and those which don't have articles i.e. (+ ART) and (–ART). She further divides the languages with articles according to whether they realize specificity or definiteness. She explains that English, French and Arabic are examples of languages which differentiate articles on the basis of definiteness. On the other hand Samoan and Turkish do so basing on specificity.

Given that definiteness is a semantic notion of UG then all languages realize definiteness in one way or another. Atay (2010, p.7) asserts that ''the semantic notion of definiteness is realized in some form in all languages because all languages have

demonstratives and personal pronouns which are inherently definite'. Kimambo (2016) argues that since demonstratives exist in all languages and the majority of languages have possessives all languages can realise definiteness.

English however does not only realize definiteness through articles; apart from using the article system, English also uses inherently definite categories to realize definiteness. These categories are proper nouns, personal pronouns, demonstratives, possessives and universal quantifiers Rezai & Jabbari, (in Kimambo, 2016). According to Lyons (1999), not all languages use an overt article system to realize definiteness. He thus makes a difference between grammatical definiteness which he states is represented through an overt article system (as in languages like English Spanish and French) and pragmatic definiteness which is realized through other means such as the context of interaction (as in Swahili, Luhya and Mandarin).This is to say the idea of realization of definiteness through articles is not universal; some languages mark definiteness using morphemes or lexical items while others do not. Majority of the languages which realize definiteness overtly are found in Europe and around Mediterranean. Some of these are Spanish, French, Portuguese as well as Arabic, Norwegian and English. A variety of lexical items are used to mark definiteness in the English language. This includes the English article system. In English, definiteness is realized with the definite article "the" and indefiniteness is assigned with the article "a". Following are two examples:

> (33) On the eve of Christmas day, Leah bought a coloured television
>
> (34) On the eve of Christmas day, Leah bought the colored television which we saw in her house yesterday.

In example 33, the NP'acoloured television' is described as indefinite by the indefinite article 'a'. In this sentence, the speaker knows which television was bought, but it is totally vague for the hearer. In example (34), the definite article marks the NP as definite, which means that the referent 'coloured television' is known both by the speaker and the hearer so the second referent is clear for both parties. The definite NP has a referent which is identifiable without any doubt. The definite article shows that the object being referred to is uniquely identifiable and exist within the shared discourse; whereas the indefinite NP in article in (33) has a referent which is only identifiable just for the speaker, but not for the hearer.

After examining data from various languages, Lyons (1999) argues that, a number of shortcomings are experienced in defining definiteness' but there are certain concepts of definiteness which are mentioned by various researchers and run through the many definitions; these include: familiarity, identifiability, uniqueness and inclusiveness. Lyons suggests that when dealing with articles these aspects should be considered so in the following subsections these aspects of the semantic notion of definiteness are briefly discussed.

2.5.1 Uniqueness

Uniqueness as a concept related to definiteness has been discussed by many scholars. According to Russel (as cited in El Wefwarlli 2013), an object or idea is considered unique when it is a singular noun preceded by the article 'the'. But if the entity is singular and is preceded by the indefinite *a* then it is indefinite not definite. Ionin (2003) asserts that a DP is said to be definite when the speaker and the hearer presuppose the existence of a unique individual in the context denoted by the NP.

Thus definite is used when the speaker and the hearer are certain about the existence and uniqueness of the referent or the person or thing being referred to.

33. By the time we left town the sun was already up.

34. The president attended her wedding.

In these two sentences 'the' signals uniqueness as there is only one sun and one president; knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer.

2.5.2 Familiarity

Familiarity refers to knowledge of the referent by the speaker and the listener or the writer and the reader. Christopen (in El Wefarlli 2013, p. 64) defines familiarity as ''an association between the potential meaning and previously acquired knowledge, by which it can be inferred that one definite individual is meant''. In his view the definite article is used when we refer to a familiar entity. It suggests that information about the entity being referred to is shared between the interlocutor and the listener. The following sentences are an illustration:

35. She lives in the house by the hill- side

36. Her mother bought her a dress. She wore the dress during her birth-day party

In both the sentences the speaker and hearer are familiar with the house and the dress. The house is a particular house known to both the speaker and the hearer. The entity 'dress' is familiar both to the speaker and the listener because the speaker has mentioned it in a previous discourse.

It can therefore be stated that the concept of familiarity can be analysed based on certain function groupings of the article.

2.5.3 Identifiability

Identifiability tends to overlap slightly with uniqueness and familiarity however identifiability requires that the hearer makes an effort to identify the referent. Defining identification Earl (1969) states that identification means that the hearer be able to pinpoint the referent from the speaker's utterance of expression. This means what is being referred to should be identified without doubt or ambiguity.

Lyons (1999) argues that identification requires an effort on the part of the hearer to recognize the referent in the discourse. The following examples are illustrative of this:

    37. Sit on the chair please.

    38. Hang it in the wardrobe please.

In all the three cases the hearer must make an effort to identify the referent. Kimambo (2016) believes that in identification the referent need not be unique or familiar to the hearer and speaker. Kimambo, (2016, p.60) opines:

> A speaker can use a particular form of expression to direct the hearer towards a definite object. It is not necessary that the hearer should be familiar with the entity being described. The object should be simply identifiable in the context of interaction.

2.6 Generic Reference

In English generic reference denotes members of a class without referring to any in particular.

2.6.1 Generic Reference With the article, 'a/an'

English generics can be marked with 'a'/ 'an'. For example:

39. A girl brought me a letter

40. An orange is a fruit

In the three sentences the indefinite articles 'a/an', are used to make generic reference to the NPs. There has been a debate as to whether 'a'/ 'an'is equivalent to *any* and some researchers have argued that *any* can be substituted for indefinite 'a'/'an' (Quirk et al.; 1985, Brinton 2000). According to their argument the above sentences could be, 'Any girl broughtme a letter' and 'Any orange is a common fruit'. However there are some cases where *any* cannot replace 'a'/ 'an' and doubts have also been raised concerning the status of genericity of 'a'. In addition, Dayal(2005) posits that generic expression largely depends on the verbal and nominal elements of a language. For English language the predicate plays a crucial role in determining whether a given sentence expresses generic reference or otherwise. For example a sentence such as'A lion is becoming extinct'does not instantiate generic reference because the predicate requires a class expression that refers to the class as a whole. On the other hand a sentence such as, 'An orange is a fruit'is generic because it has a predicate that expresses inherent characteristics. A fruit '*is*'indicates being a fruit or the quality of fruitfulness.

2.6.2 Generic reference with the article 'the'

Generic reference can be expressed through the definite article. In many cases 'the'can be employed using plural and also singular nouns to realize genericity. But caution should be exercised with regard to *the+ plural nouns.* A number of researchers among them Hawkins, 1978; Quirk et al. 1985; Chesterman, 1991; Huddleston (in El Wefwarlli 2013) have critically examined what makes up a

generic noun phrase and come up with varying opinions.According to Chesterman (1991) the +plural can only express genericity in circumstances where the reference made is referring to a set of categories. The following are examples of sentences expressing genericity:

41. Among the fish, tilapia is the most popular as sea food.

42. Among the cats the lion is the most feared.

43. He likes the fruits of this valley.

In example (41) fish is used to refer to all types of fish the whole class. In example (42) cats refer to all types of cats; the whole class and in sentence (43) the fruits refer to the whole class of fruits.

2.6.3 Generic Reference with 'ø'

We use zero article with proper nouns, and mass nouns when we want to refer to entities generically, the reference is indefinite. We also use zero article with plural count nouns where the reference is indefinite. The zero article occurs with non-count nouns for example water; and it also occurs with plural count nouns for example oranges. We also use the zero article in reference to generic and non-specific nouns in the plural count nouns. But again the predicate plays a role in interpreting whether a sentence expresses a generic reference or not. The following examples help explain the generic use of zero article:

44. Women are cunning

45. Women are awake

46. Monkeys ate bananas

In examples (44) and (45) the predicates bear interpretation. Sentence (44) states that women are cunning, therefore the reference is generic because it has a reference to women as members of a denoted category. It is also generic because it expresses inherent characteristics of women. Sentence (45), states that women are awake. In this sentence the predicate is reporting an event and therefore the sentence is non generic. The last sentence (46) is ambiguous because the verb ate can be interpreted in two ways eating can be a characteristic of the monkeys or it could be referring to an event that took place in the past therefore it carries two interpretations; generic and non-generic.

2.7 Definiteness and Specificity in Bantu

Bantu languages are article-less and therefore they do not indicate definiteness or indefiniteness through use of articles rather they use different morpho- syntactic means to realize definiteness, specificity and referentiality. The means used include demonstratives, possessives, prefixation or the context of interaction (Kimambo, 2016). Indefiniteness and non- specificity would therefore be indicated by the absence of such markers.

2.7.1 The Structure of the Bantu Noun Phrase

Bantu languages exhibit a lot of variation in their word order patterns of the NP (Mark van deValde 2019). Despite the differences majority of Bantu languages include N, DEM, ADJ, and NUM as the common elements in the NP.According to Rugemalira (2007) the structure of the noun phrase in several Bantu languages has the following elements pre-determined, determiner, noun and modifier. He observes that the pre-

determiners of Bantu languages are demonstratives, possessives and the modifiers are the numerals and ordinals or associative quantifiers, adjectives and relative clauses and the distributives. The distributives and demonstratives occupy the determiner position and cannot co-occur while the determiners in English are specifiers which must occur before the head of the NP and their position is fixed. Leech& Svartwick, (in Rugemalira,2007) posit that the determiners in most Eastern Bantu languages are not fixed in one position they are mobile and can take the pre-nominal and post-nominal positions however this applies only to demonstratives. The possessives do not occur before the NP and the distributives only appear in pre-nominal position. The following example is from Kiswahili language (Lusekelo 2013 P.24)

Head   Determiner   post-modification

47. Wazeewale   wapoleThose kind elders

48   Magari hayamabovuThese wrecked cars

49. Vijanawetu wawili-   Our two youngsters

The determiners in the above sentences can change positions from post nominal and appear pre-nominally as follows ; 'wale   wazee   wapole'   and   'haya magari mabovu'.. But in the third NP the possessive cannot precede the NP. In the dialects of the Luhya , the above sentences translated (into Tiriki dialect) would read:

Head   Determiner   post- modification

47. Vasa xulu yavo vanyenyexu-those polite elders

(Elders those polite)

48. Mitokaa yichi mitamanu   - these defective vehicles

49. Vasoleriveru vaviri   - our two youngsters

The determiners in the above Tiriki sentences occur immediately after the NP , however in some cases they may occur before the NP. In Bantu languages a possessive cannot precede a NP. It is however common in Bantu languages to stack two determiners but in most cases they must be a demonstrative and a possessive and the possessive should come after the demonstrative as illustrated in the following sentences from Tiriki dialect   and Kiswahili.

Head   determiner   post-modification

51. Mwana   wanje oyo   mulahi   (Tiriki)

   [Child   mine that   good]

Mtoto wangu yule   mzuri (Kiswahili)

In many of the Eastern Bantu languages therefore, the head nouns precede all their specifiers as well as their post modifiers however as already noted this order is not fixed.

2.8 Luhya Noun Phrase

Luhya dialects spoken by people of Western Kenya belongs to the larger Bantu language family. Bantu language is an agglutinating language; that is a language

which consists of words composed of a sequence of morphemes stringed together, each morpheme with a single grammatical or semantic unit for example the clause. Talking about ''Luhya language'' (Wicks 2006) states that the language is made up of several mutually understood dialects that are principally Bantu (Wicks, 2006). Despite the variations, the rules that govern their morphology and syntax are more or less the same. Luhya being a Bantu language has a NP structure like the Bantu structure thus it consists of a noun (N) a demonstrative (DEM) and an adjective (ADJ) and a number NUM. This elements of the noun however do not follow the same sequence as those of English within the NP.

2.8.1 Definiteness and Specificity Marking in Luhya

A distinct feature of Bantu languages (and Luhya dialects included) is that they have no article system. NPs are not preceded with articles to determine their definiteness, or specificity. The semantic notions of definiteness and specificity are realized through other processes. Chesterman (2005) posits that languages which do not have an overt article system use other ways to realize these semantic notions of the UG. He identifies determiners, tense aspect modality, word order, and case markers as some of the ways through which definiteness and specificity are encoded. For the Luhya dialects, these processes include: prefixation, use of demonstrative, possessive and personal pronouns and use of locative prepositions, tense aspect modality, and discourse pragmatic contexts. These and how notions of definiteness and specificity are realized through them in Luhya dialects are discussed below. The discussion has taken into consideration the concepts used by various scholars to describe definiteness and specificity. These include uniqueness, familiarity, identifiability and locality.

References and examples are drawn from the Tiriki dialect of the Luhya language spoken in Hamisi sub-county.

2.8.2 Uniqueness

a) Use of Demonstrative Pronouns

Luhya language has demonstrative sequivalent to English demonstratives. The demonstratives have a deictic function and express specificity/definiteness. Himmelmann (in Meeuwis& Stroken 2012)states that in languages without an article system demonstratives have been seen to play the role of immediate anaphors after first mention that is to acquire the capacity to be used for more highly salient referents than the ones demonstratives are typically used for. These demonstratives can be declined for number (singular or plural) mwana*uyu*(this child), *avanavano/yava* (these children), person(first, second and third), for example, *inzenziretawe* (I didn't go) *(*first person); *Ive uziretawe (*you didn't go) *(*second person); *Oyo aziretawe*)(he/she didn't go)(third person) and proximity. Demonstratives in the Luhya dialects therefore differ from the English demonstratives in the sense that the English demonstrative retain its form regardless of the noun it is referring to while the Luhya demonstrative declines according to the noun class and number of the noun, person in reference and proximity. The demonstrative in the Luhya language mostly occurs in the post nominal position. Demonstratives among Luhya dialects are important because they are crucial in the realization of specificity and definiteness. Nicolle, (2007) identifies three types of demonstratives in Eastern Bantu languages (Luhya language included) which are often described as 'proximal' (near to the speaker, Tiriki-*Uyu*), 'distal' (far from the speaker or the addressee, Tiriki- *ule/oyo*) and 'non-proximal (near to the

addressee. Tiriki-*oyo*, but also used when the speaker can't identify the referent specifically.

Table 2.4 Tiriki Dialect proximal, distal and non-proximal demonstratives

Noun Class	Proximal Demonstratives	Distal Demonstratives	Non-Proximal Demonstratives
1.	Uyu	Ule	Oyo
2.	Yava	Vale	Yavo
3.	Uku	Kule	Oko
4.	Iri	Lire	Liro
5.	Yaga	Gale	Gano
6.	Ishi	Shire	Isho
7.	Ivi/vinu	Vire	Yevo
8.	Iyi	Ire	Iyo/eyo
9.	Izi	Zire	Ezo
10.	Hanu	Yaha	Yaho
11.	Kunu	Kuno	Kuno
12.	Yumu	Yumo	Yomo

The demonstratives only change in form depending on the noun class and on the distance between the speaker and the referent. The use of the referential draws attention to the fact that the speaker has a particular referent in mind about which further information may be given. The following sentences are a further illustration of some ways in which demonstratives are used to bring out the notion of definiteness and specificity:

53. Inyinga **yene-ey**o bandubabiri valini vajendanga khunjira (Tiriki)

(That particular time two people were walking along the way)

54. Uvoli ulahira mukhana **uyu** musukulu?   (Tiriki)

(Did you say you will take this girl to school?)

In sentence(53), the speaker uses *yene-eyo* to refer to a particular time in the distant past that is far from him (the speaker) and the hearer. *Yene- eyo* is used in cases involving a thing an object or an event that is not visible but a part of the mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer. The speaker can for instance talk of *inguvu yene-eyo* meaning, 'that dress' to refer to a particular dress that is far and may not be visible to the speaker and the hearer but both of them have knowledge of the dress being referred to. In sentence (54) by use of *uyu*the speaker is referring to a particular girl who is closer to the speaker than the hearer.

a) Anaphoric Reference

Anaphoric reference involves reference to an entity that has already been mentioned in the previous utterance. In Luhya language definiteness is realized through anaphoric reference. Unlike English, Luhya does not have an article system therefore

it uses demonstrative pronouns to achieve anaphoric reference as demonstrated in the following illustrations from the Tiriki dialect:

55. Mwivi yinjire mwiduka hamugolova najinji murunda. Mwivi mwene **oyo** arumulwe na vandu khandi valamunula murunda **yoko**

(A thief entered into the shop this evening carrying a gun. The thiefwas beaten by the people and the gun taken away).

56. Mamaangulire vitabu. Ndere vitabu **vyene yevo** mu-musiko kwanje

(Mother bought me books. I put those particular books in my bag)

Sentence (55) the phrase **mwene oyo** is referring back to the thief and in sentence (56) the phrase **vyene-yevo** is used to refer back to the books.

2.8.3 Use of Personal pronouns

In Luhya language personal pronouns are used to realize definiteness/specificity. The following illustration from a Tiriki circumcision song is illustrative of this assertion:

57. Valina veru vakhwali navo**, yavo** vahanda mungolole.

(The friends of ours we were with, those /they have stuck in the mask.)

The friends we were with have stuck in the mask.

58.**Vo** valivabaanga khutsia mu – shiserero sha Sakwa

(Them they were planning to go in Sakwa's wedding)

They were planning to participate in Sakwa's wedding.

In sentence 57 *yavo* is a pronoun from Tiriki dialect meaning 'they 'and it is used here for emphasis and to realize specificity. The speaker is being specific by using *yavo* personal pronoun to show that it is those particular friends who have remained stuck in the mask.**Vo** in sentence 58 is also a personal pronoun and it is used here to realize definiteness and specificity.

2.8.4 Nominal locatives for Realization of specificity in Luhya

Definiteness/specificity in Luhya language is realized also through locatives. The following are some of Luhya nominal locative classes taken from Tiriki dialect: - mu–ha–ku and they are used in certain contexts to indicate definiteness and specificity.

59. Khuziremu –kanisa

(We went to church)

60. Ha-khwamenya ni ihale

(Where we stay is far)

(The place where we stay is far)

In the first sentence (59) the speaker is being specific through use of the locative prefix '-*mu'* to specify where they went. In the second sentence, the speaker is being specific about a particular place where they stay. The speaker has in mind the place where they stay although the hearer does not know the place He uses the Tiriki nominal locatine *ha*. This sentence therefore has a specific reading if we consider the explanation of specificity by Ko, et al., (2008)In this sentence the speaker has in mind the place where they stay although the hearer does not.

2.9 Genericity in Luhya

Luhya language does not have definite, indefinite articles. While specificity is realized through demonstratives, genericity is realized in some cases through the absence of demonstratives mostly bare nouns.. This is unlike English language which realizes generic reference through the definite article 'the 'and the indefinite articles 'a/an' and the 'zero' article. The following sentences illustrate the notion of genericity in Tiriki dialect:

61. Muyayi akuli vitabu

(Boy has bought books)

(A boy has bought books)

The generic sense in this sentence is expressed through the absence of demonstratives. This sentence could be made specific by merely introducing demonstrative pronouns as follows:

62. Muyayi uyu akuli vitabu yevo

(Boy this hasbought books those)

(This boy has bought those books)

Genericity is also realized through definite nouns.

63. Mundu ma umusuvire tawe

(Man you trust cannot)

(You cannot trust man)

In sentence (63) man is a definite noun and it refers to no particular man but a man in general.

In conclusion, although Luhya dialects do not have an overt article system, the semantic notions: (non-) specificity, and (in-) definiteness are realized through other means. This has implications for Luhya learners of L2 English language and for language educators. It means L2 Luhya learners are likely to find other equivalent means to realize these semantic notions in English some of which could be transfer of their Luhya (L1).

2.10Related Studies

This section deals with related literature review .It focuses on second and foreign language (L2) acquisition of the English article system. It is organized based on the five objectives of this study. It explores the various theoretical perspectives on L2 article acquisition including the earliest which were guided by Bickerton's semantic wheel (Huebner, 1981) to the latest perspectives grounded in Fluctuation hypothesis and Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis. The purpose of the review was to highlight the current state of knowledge concerning the learning and acquisition of the English article system linking it to the current study in a wider context. Hereafter is an analysis of various studies that aided the researcher in establishing the gap in research in order to contextualize this study within existing knowledge.

The earliest studies on article acquisition were guided by Bickerton's semantic wheel (Huebner 1981) These studies included: Huebner, 1983; Master, 1987 and Thomas, 1989

2.10.1 Review of Studies on systematic developmental features among learners in the course of learning the English article system

In the course of learning the article system various studies have reported recurring developmental features exhibited in learner language in relation to the English article system. Some of these studies are discussed in the following section

Thomas (1989) was interested in the phenomenon of flooding and fluctuation among learners whose L1s assign articles according to definiteness setting which had been observed in the studies of some researchers among them Heubner1983 and Master 1987. He therefore carried out a study to investigate differences and similarities in the order of article acquisition among adult learners of English who were from both (+ART languages) and (–ART languages). His study sample included 30 adult learners with different L1s.The learners with (+ART languages) included; 1 Greek,1 German, 2 Spanish, 2 Italians and1 French. Those with –ART languages included: 3 Koreans, 13 Japanese, and 6 Chinese. The researcher divided the participants into three groups based on their English proficiency. There were 11 low proficiency level learners, nine intermediate proficiency level learners and 10 high proficiency level learners. He then paired the participants within their groups. The groups were given a story-telling task. They were required to tell each other the story based on the pictures. One participant in each pair was required to tell the other the story based on the pictures. The narration made the narrator to apply articles unconsciously as he told the story. Later the participants were presented with test and distracter pictures and required to judge which picture the speaker was describing.

The results from the study revealed that learners from the –ART languages tended to omit articles. Furthermore the results also revealed that regardless of their L1

background, the groups overused the definite 'the'in definite specific contexts .This was because they associated 'the' with specificity and not definiteness.

This study is of interest to the current study as it investigated article use among learners with articles L1s although included those with languages that use articles. It employed story-telling based on pictures just like the current study on only differing in the manner in which the pictures were used.

Kim and Lakshmanan (2009) carried out a study on article use. Their aim was to examine the processing role of the ACP. Their objective was to determine whether learners would use 'the'with both definite NPs and indefinite specific NPs in an online reading experiment and an offline semantic acceptability task. The study participants included 19 adult native speakers of Korean. 9 of them were advanced level and 10 intermediate level. The study also involved a control group of 14 adult native speakers of English.

The researchers employed several tools to collect data. These included: a written questionnaire, an on-line and off-line reading experiment and a cloze test and an article insertion pre-test.

The findings of the study revealed that for the online task both advanced and intermediate level learners associated definite article with specificity and they fluctuated between definiteness and specificity. But the results in the off-line revealed differences in the performance of the two groups. The advanced learners did not fluctuate and showed native-like performance while the intermediate group fluctuated

According to White (2003a) adult IL grammars may fossilise. This happens when the learner's IL grammar ceases to develop further, despite continued exposure to the

target L2. White carried out a case study whose main purpose was to assess how language development progresses over time. The participant of the study was an adult bilingual speaker of L1 Turkish and L2 English.

Data were collected through a series of four interviews over a two-month period. In addition the participant completed several written tasks. After 18 months, a fifth interview was conducted to determine whether there were significant developments over time, or whether her grammar had reached the end state. She also took an English proficiency test, which showed that she was at the advanced level of proficiency.

In analysing the data, White excluded single word utterances, repetitions of the interviewer's words and formulaic expressions

The findings showed that that the participant omitted the indefinite article more frequently than the definite article. There was a significant difference between omission in the definite and the indefinite contexts. Contrary to the findings in other literature, the participant did not use 'the'and 'a'interchangeably, but omitted articles in some contexts.

Moreover, evidence from the written elicitation task supported the observation that the participant had a good command of definite and indefinite distinctions. The participant was very accurate in using definite articles, but faced challenges in using indefinite ones. The participant also completed a grammaticality judgement task, and the results were similar to those of the previous two tasks. When the data from the three tasks was compared the results revealed that, there were more frequent omission

in the spoken than the written discourse. White (2003a) concluded that the MSIH gives a good explanation of omissions in L2 acquisition.

Ionin and Wexler (2003) carried out a study on acquisition of the English article system among Russian L2 learners. Their aim was to find out how the learners used articles in different definite, indefinite, referential and non-referential contexts. Two studies were conducted in this research and both of them involved Russian learners. The research was premised on the claim that L2 grammar is UG constrained as such the learners have access to the semantic features of definiteness and specificity. In the first study the researchers used a sample of 12 participants. The research instrument was a translation task. The findings revealed article overuse in referential indefinite contexts. The second study investigated the learners' use of articles in referential and non-referential contexts.

The findings of this study again supported the previous ones; there was the overuse of the definite article in specific indefinite contexts. From these findings various conclusions were drawn; that L2 learners have full access to UG but they have a problem in getting the right parameter setting because they are unable to decide which of the two parameters specificity and definiteness differentiates 'the' from *a* as a result they fluctuate since they fail to pinpoint the right trigger to guide them to the correct choice in the input.

This study is relevant to the current study because it addressed the acquisition of articles by learners whose L1 is articleless. It was also noted that Russian language has demonstratives which may be used with previous mention definites and the use of demonstrative pronouns is one way of expressing definiteness among the Russians. This feature is also present in the Luhya language where demonstratives are used to

express definiteness and specificity. Secondly like the current study it investigated how learners used articles in different contexts. However the study was quantitative and only used one research instrument that is, an elicitation task consisting of 52 dialogues .There is a possibility that other areas of article misuse may not have been captured by the elicitation task alone. There was therefore need for the current study to be carried out to address this gap .The current study therefore in addition to a multiple choice task used oral and composition tasks .The researcher of the current study also saw the need to address the article issue from the perspective of the teachers. So an additional instrument; the teacher interview was employed. The idea of gathering information using different methods helped enrich the findings.

Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) carried out another study on article acquisition. The major goal of this study was to establish that L2 learners have access to UG during L2 acquisition process. The study focused on L2 acquisition of English articles by Korean and Russian speakers. Russian and Korean speakers lack the article system in their L1 but the two languages are different typologically. Therefore similar patterns in article misuse would prove that UG factors play a role. The researchers also advanced the argument that because Russian and Korean lack the article system, then it is unlikely that L1 transfer affects their acquisition of English articles. The study involved 70 participants in total; 30 Russian and 40 Korean. There was a control group made of 14 adult whose L1 was English. Three data generation tools were employed in this study; written elicitation task, a production task and a written portion of the Michigan test of L2 proficiency. The findings of the forced elicitation task showed overuse of article for both groups in –definite /+specific contexts. There was evidence of use of the indefinite 'a' frequently in an environment where uniqueness is

obligatory. This study also revealed that the proficiency level of the learners influenced the ability to set the ACP. Learners in the advanced stage were more at home in their use of articles.

This study is relevant to the present study in a number of ways: First it set out to establish if (– ART) learners have access to UG during the process of learning the English article system in other words it tests fluctuation hypothesis. The current study investigated the role the semantic notions of definiteness and specificity play in the learning of the article system and therefore in a way it was trying to establish whether Luhya L1 learners have access to UG during the process of learning the English article system. Luhya language is articleless but it is also different topologically from Russian and Korean languages. Therefore should patterns similar to those in the study of Ionin, Ko and Wexler be exhibited by Luhya learners then it would also be an indicator that UG factors play a role during the acquisition of articles.

Hawkins (2006) also carried out a study on article acquisition that was similar to the one of Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004). The study of Hawkins included Greek and Japanese learners. Greek language has an overt article system whereas Japanese language is articleless. The purpose was to test the Fluctuation Hypothesis. The Japanese learners fluctuated whereas the Greek learners did not. His findings thus revealed that learners whose L1 lacks articles fluctuate between definiteness and specificity.

Atay (2010) investigated the acquisition of the article system by Turkish learners with focus on the role of semantic notions in the process of article acquisition. Her main goal was to establish whether learners who have Turkish as a first language fluctuate

between definiteness and specificity and how this fluctuation impacts on the learning of the article system. Her study sample consisted of 120 learners spread around three groups of levels of proficiency: elementary, intermediate and upper intermediate. For her collection of data she used a forced choice elicitation task made up of 40 short dialogues. The study findings confirmed the researcher's prediction that Turkish learners would fluctuate in their article use between definiteness and specificity. Secondly the study revealed that learners made a number of systematic errors which included substitution errors, omission errors and errors of overuse.

Atay's (2010)study is relevant to the current study because, like the current study, it addresses the acquisition of the article system by learners whose L1 has no articles. However her study was purely quantitative. The current study was a mixed study that employed several data generation techniques including a forced choice elicitation task, a composition task, a story-telling task and a teacher interview allowing the study to gain a more comprehensive account of the problem. In addition the participation of teachers in the current study helped generate different but complementary data for the study.

Sarko, (2009) conducted a study on acquisition of English articles by L1 Syrian Arabic speakers and L1 French speakers of English. The purpose of his study was to investigate the role of Fluctuation Hypothesis, Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (MSIH) and Full Transfer / Full Access Hypothesis on Syrian Arabic and French L2 learners. The researcher predicted that L1 Syrian Arabic and L1 French learners of L2 English would transfer the markings of definiteness from Arabic/French into their interlanguage grammars for English and therefore they would not fluctuate in definite and specificity contexts. Since French has the indefinite article and Arabic does not

have, the researcher also predicted that the two L1 Syrian Arabic and L1 French learners would behave differently in [- definite,/+ specific] contexts. In addition Sarko predicted that since French unlike Arabic does not allow bare NPs,French learners would overuse articles in English. The researcher also predicted that based on MSIH hypothesis learners would omit articles in oral productions. The study used three main tasks to generate data: a forced choice elicitation task, an oral production task and a written production task. The results of this study revealed that in definite contexts (both specific and non-specific), both groups of learners did not fluctuate. The researcher attributed this to L1 transfer since both the groups have definite article in their L1. The findings therefore supported Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis. For indefinite contexts specific and non-specific, again the results were as predicted. French speakers had no problem and there was no evidence of fluctuation, but Syrian Arabic speakers fluctuated thus supporting fluctuation hypothesis.

This study was relevant to the current study as it dealt with developmental features exhibited in learner language in the course of learning the article system. However the study is different from the present study in a number of ways. It examined morphological/syntactic transfer in the acquisition of the English article with learners whose L1 has an article system and it was purely quantitative whereas the current study was a mixed one.

Bergeron - Matoba (2007) carried out a study among Japanese EFL students. The purpose of Matoba's research was to show the role of the notions of countability and definiteness in the acquisition of the English article system. He set out to demonstrate that for acquisition of the English article system, countability and definiteness are crucial yet they are a big problem for learners in their acquisition. Furthermore the

researcher argued that although learners with L1 that are articleless lack an overt article system in their languages, the notions of countability and definiteness are present in these languages and are only realized in different ways since these notions are universal. The notions are expressed in the sentence syntactically. Hence the problem of L2 learners whose first languages are articleless is to map these features on to their counterparts in the English language. The study was guided by Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Prevost & White, 2000). According to the hypothesis learners with –ART language have equivalent notions of countability and definiteness in their languages to lead them to assign the correct article conceptually since these notions are universal. But these notions are not represented on the surface. So the challenge they have is how to link these concepts on to the appropriate surface forms. The participants in this study were ; 8 Japanese learners and 1 L1 native speaker who was the control group. The learners were at an advanced level studying in Australia. The research instrument for the study was a forced elicitation task. The test items were 72 and were structured in a conversational style. The learners were required to insert the article a/an/the and zero article where appropriate. The task items were set in such a way that they covered the five most important contexts: anaphoric encyclopedic and larger situation for 'the'. Specific and non-specific indefinites were also included.

The results of this study were interesting They revealed that most Japanese learners were well acquainted with the English article system and even had mastery over the use of the definite article 'the' however the results also revealed that they had difficulty with countability and as a result they assigned 'a' and 'an' with mass nouns. The researcher explained the cause of this by arguing that -ART language

learners have the underlying knowledge of definiteness and count / mass distinctions which are crucial elements in assigning English articles but their real problem lies in their inability to map or transfer this knowledge on to surface structures. Another finding of this study was in the area of omission and association of the definite article with specificity. Findings showed that some lower level learners used 'the' in both [+definite/+specific] and [-definite/+-specific] contexts. They in most cases avoided to use 'the' in [-definite/+specific] contexts.

The researcher concludes with some remarks for English language educators by cautioning that the use of specificity should be taken seriously because it may lead to fossilization. The researcher cautions that teachers should treat specificity with caution and should not formulate the article system as rule patterns like "before the relative clauses, the definite article is used" as the article system is beyond simple rule formations and applications.

This study is relevant to my study because like my study the participants in the study had an L1 with −ART. The study was concerned with the semantic notions of specificity definiteness and countability which are the concerns of the last objective of the current study The current study sought to establish the semantic challenges Luhya learners face when learning the English article system. However the study was guided by Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis whereas the current study was guided by Fluctuation Hypothesis and focused on the notions of definiteness and specificity. In his recommendation the researcher cautions teachers on handling of the English article system but does not address the challenges teachers face in teaching the article system. My study on the other hand also addressed the challenges the English language teachers encounter when teaching the English article system. This was

aimed at enabling the researcher to look at the issue of learning the English article system from the perspective of the English language teachers in order to bring a deeper understanding of acquisition of the article system by L2 learners.

Ekiert (2004) carried out a study to investigate L2 development sequence of article acquisition byL2 learners of English who's L1 is Polish. Her findings revealed that the sequence of L2 acquisition of articles was similar to that of L1 natural order of article acquisition. Over all, the developmental sequence was found to be a> the>ø. This finding is different from the findings of other studies; (Master 1990), Heubner, (1979) where 'the 'was reported to be the earliest to acquire. In addition, there was evidence of overuse of the zero article which was overused by all the levels. Overuse of ø was also reported in the study of Thomas (1989) who attributed it to L1 influence. The results also revealed the overuse of 'the' mostly in in intermediate level learners. This finding concurs with the finding of Atay (2010); Butler (2002); Lu & Fen, (2000) where the intermediate level learners were reported to have registered higher levels of fluctuation than the elementary learners. The findings also revealed that the sequence of L2 article acquisition mainly followed the L1 natural order of article acquisition.

Ekiert's study addressed the issue of article acquisition in the context of Polish learners. For the current study, the researcher saw the need to carry out a research in the context of Luhya learners. Furthermore both Polish and Luhya languages realize the notions of definiteness and speficity through demonstratives. This similarity in the two languages prompted the researcher to carry out the study to find out whether learners with Luhya L1 would face similar difficulties in learning the English article system. Furthermore Ekiert pointed out that her findings were contrary to the findings

of many of L2 article acquisition studies where 'the' is acquired earlier than 'a'. This prompted the researcher of the current study to carry out a study with Luhya L1 learners to find out whether her findings would support or contradict earlier studies. In her concluding remarks, Ekiert pointed out that her findings were limited to only cloze type written data and she recommended that a similar study could be done with oral data which could enrich the scope of the research. Secondly she stated that her data was analyzed quantitatively and pointed out that there was a pressing need for a qualitative analysis of learners' behavior. In view of her recommendations, the current study was initiated.

Fen and Lu (2001) conducted a study on article use. The aim of the study was to investigate the order in which articles are acquired and to establish the underlying processes involved in article accuracy and use by Chinese learners. The findings of the study revealed that acquisition order across the groups as the > a>ø. The results of the study also revealed that 'the' is associated with (+SR) contexts than with (+HK) contexts in other words 'the' is associated with specificity rather than definiteness. Therefore Fen and Lu concluded that the context (+SR -HK) was the main cause of the overgeneralization of 'the' and therefore the most problematic and least article to acquire is in the (+SR –HK) context where learners choose 'the' instead of 'a'. This finding concurs with the findings of Butler (2002) and Ekiert (2004). The study also observed that for Chinese learners the notion of countability causes them a problem since in Chinese there is no distinction between mass and count nouns. Thus the article 'a' which plays a crucial role in marking countability causes these learners' problems. For the current study, although the learners' Luhya L1 is articleless it makes a distinction between mass and count nouns and therefore it would be

interesting to also investigate how learners with Luhya L1 fair on with the article 'a' in relation to the notion of countability.

Gunzhao Sun (1916) was interested in the acquisition sequence of the article system. Before his study there had been a number of studies carried out on the sequence of article acquisition with divergent results. He investigated the acquisition sequence differences and difficulties of English articles among learners of English as a second language. His study included 18 participants with different L1 backgrounds. In addition he included both [–ART] and [+ART] learners. He used a cloze test as a tool for data collection. The findings revealed the following sequences: a>the>zero for levels A and C and the>a>zero for level B participants in (–ART) group. For (+ART), the sequence was a>the>zero for levels A and B participants; a>zero>the four level C participants. The results of his study were interesting in two ways: first 'a' was the easiest article to acquire for both the groups; secondly the most difficult article to acquire for both the groups was zero article. Thirdly the +ART group also had difficulties with 'the'. This was a breakaway from the findings of most studies where the +ART group had less difficulties with the definite 'the'. The findings also dispelled the belief that learners with +ART Ls acquired articles faster than those with –ART L1s.It was also evident from his findings that when two languages are similar it does not necessarily lead to positive transfer.

Kwame (2018) carried out a study of article acquisition among L1 Dagbani speakers of Ghana. The most striking thing about Kwame's study was because of the L1 of the group he was studying. .Dagbani language the L1 of his subjects unlike Luhya has articles to mark definiteness and like Luhya has no grammatical markers for indefiniteness hence indefiniteness just like in Luhya language is marked by bare

nouns. The article system of the Dagbani language works differently from the English article system in the sense that articles occur post- nominally.

To guide his study Kwame based it on three hypotheses: the FH, FT/FA and FRH. Participants in the study included two schools in Yendi, Northern Ghana; a junior high school and a senior high school. The participants included 41 Dagbani learners and 8 native speakers of English. The study employed three methods of data collection; a written forced choice elicitation task,; acceptability judgement test and a proficiency test. The results revealed that the learners L1 impacted on L2 English article acquisition. The results also showed that Dagbani learners fluctuate in the course of acquisition of the English article system. The study also confirmed the proposals of the Full Transfer/Full Access Hypothesis and Feature Reassembly Hypothesis.

2.10.2 Review of Systematic Errors of English L2 among learners in the course of learning the English Article System

Owing to the complexity of the English article system, learner errors during the acquisition of the English article system have been a subject of study and discussion among researchers in the recent past. In the following section some of the literature on the subject is reviewed.

A study carried out by Trenkic (2007) with regard to the English article system sought to investigate the claim that learners whose L1 lacks an article system tend to make omission errors in environments where NPs are modified by adjectives. Trenkic was testing the Syntactic Misanalysis Account Hypothesis (MAH)according to which the errors in article use are a result of learners incorrectly misanalysing determiners including articles as adjectives. Such learners are said to omit articles in contexts

where NPs are modified by adjectives than in contexts where NPs are not modified by adjectives (Pongpairo 2007). His study subjects were Serbian learners whose L1 is Serbian and is articleless. The results of this study revealed that learners indeed omitted articles in contexts where NPs were modified by adjectives. The results of this study were in line with the findings of Goad and White (2004) who reported a higher frequency of omission errors in contexts where nouns were modified by adjectives. Evidence also showed that learners in this study were more competent in their use of the definite article than the indefinite article. In this finding Trenkic's study concurs with those of Atay (2010), Zdorenko and Paradis (2011), Lardierie (2005) Sarko (2009).

The study of Trenkic is of interest to the current study because Trenkic specifically focused on omission errors that the learners make during acquisition of the article system.The current study also focused on articles and one of the objectives was focus on errors. Trenkic's study however was carried among Serbian speaking learners while the current study was conducted among Luhya speaking learners.

Lardiere (2005) is also one of the researchers who were concerned about the errors learners make in the course of learning the English article system and does not support the notion of parameter setting. Rather she is of the view that L1 plays a role in the course of learning articles. Lardiere set out to investigate whether learners' L1 influences L2 acquisition. Her study was guided by Representational Deficit Hypothesis (RDH) proposed by Hawkins and Chan (in Lardiere 2007). The main point of RDH hypothesis is that L2 learners with articleless L1 lack the syntactic representation of features not present in their L1and therefore will struggle to acquire

articles. This hypothesis stands in sharp contrast to FT/FA hypothesis which supports the existence of UG and supports the notion that L2 learners have full access to UG.

In her study Lardiere (2005) set out to investigate how article- less (–ART) L1 learners acquire definiteness in English. Hers was a case study that focused on only one Chinese learner. Lardiere's findings revealed that the learner made lots of omission errors in her oral productions than written productions; moreover omission errors were more than substitution errors meaning there were less fluctuation errors.

Lardiere's study interested me because although she was investigating L1 influence on article acquisition her views on what she thought underlies LI influence are in contrast to the hypothesis which guided the current study. She rejects the idea of parameter setting and FT/ FA hypothesis.

El Wefarlli (2013) conducted a research on the acquisition of the English article system by Libyan learners of English. She employed the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) to compare the article system in both English and Arabic with the intention of predicting the problems that Arab students might encounter in the course of learning the English article system. The study tested the effect of L1 on L2 Libyan students of English during acquisition of the English Article system. Her research instruments were a multiple choice and a composition task. In addition she investigated the effectiveness of three teaching strategies used to teach articles with the aim of establishing which of the strategies is more effective in assisting Libyan learners to correctly use the article system. They were implicit, explicit and enhanced input strategies.

Her study revealed three categories of errors made by Libyan students; omission, overuse and substitution errors. She attributed the omission of 'a/an' to the fact that Arabic the L1 of her learners, lacks the indefinite article 'a/an'.

El Wefarlli's study differs from the current study in terms of methodology. The study employed contrastive analysis to compare the article system of Arabic and English and her subjects were Arab students whose L1 is Arabic. El Wefwarlli also used a quantitative approach to her research and her results could therefore be generalized. The present study however is a mixed study and the participants are Kenyan students whose L1 is Luhya, a Bantu language which completely lacks articles unlike Arabic which has one article equivalent to the English definite 'the'. The researcher saw the need to carry out a study with learners with a different L1. In addition the mixed study approach employed by the current study yielded different but complementary data.

2.10.3 Review of Studies on the Causes of Systematic Errors among English L2 learners in the course of learning the English Article System

Among the areas frequently studied with regard to the English article system is the question of what causes the article errors learners make during the acquisition process. In fact the current debate in literature on article acquisition by L2 learners of English is centred on the question of the real underlying cause of article errors during the process of learning. This arises from the fact that some researchers argue that the problem of incorrect use of articles during the acquisition process stems from UG. These researchers claim that learners have access to the two settings of the ACP and the errors they make are as a result of their accessing the two settings of the ACP simultaneously in the course of learning which leads them to fluctuate .On the other hand are researchers who oppose this view and advance several hypotheses: There are

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those who argue from the perspective of Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis. (MSIH)(Provost & White 2000) according to which ''the absence of the surface forms in L2 production does not imply that the corresponding underlying knowledge is lacking from the learners' grammar Bergeron 2007,p.3) rather the actual problem lies with the surface forms of the articles themselves that actually results in such errors as omission but doesn't mean that notions such as specificity, definiteness are not present in the learners' IL grammars. Others argue that what causes L2 learners' errors has to do with L1 transfer which results from misanalysing articles as adjectives (Trenkic, 2007; 2008). Then another argument is advanced by the Representational Deficit Hypothesis (RDH) proposed by Hawkins and Chan (in Lardiere 2007). The main point of RDH hypothesis is that L2 learners with articleless L1 lack the syntactic representation of features not present in their L1and therefore will struggle to acquire articles. The debate discussed above resulted in research geared towards examining L1 transfer on one hand and on the other hand testing fluctuation hypothesis.

One of the studies that addressed L1 transfer was the study conducted by Ionin, Zubizerrata &Maldonado (2007). The main aim of the study was to examine the role played by L1 transfer and the UG input. Their main concern in the study was whether learners' native language affects the acquisition of the article system and whether learners can deduce form meaning mappings from what they learn or whether they require an innate knowledge. The participants in their study comprised of 23 native Russian speakers and 24 native Spanish speakers. The main research instrument was an elicitation test to determine the accuracy of participants in article use. The results of the study revealed that Russian participants had problems with specificity and

definiteness. The Spanish participants on the other hand were not affected by specificity and definiteness and used articles correctly based on definiteness. When all was considered, the results revealed that L1 overrides fluctuation. This is because the Russian participants were operating in ESL context where they had more exposure to the target language on the other hand the Spanish participants operated in the context of EFL where they only learned the target language during classroom instruction. The Russian participants were therefore expected to perform better than their Spanish counterparts but this did not happen. The Spanish participants showed higher accuracy levels than the Russians. Spanish participants also registered significant instances of omission errors and this was also attributed to their L1 where zero article is used in some contexts. From these findings, it was revealed that L1 impacts on acquisition of articles regardless of the exposure and frequency of L2 input. The findings also revealed that L2 learners whose L1 is articleless have access to UG.

Butler (2002) is one of the researchers who addressed the question of the causes of errors during article acquisition in a unique way. She carried out an analysis of the meta-linguistic knowledge of the English article system employed by learners in their choice of articles to use in certain contexts. The purpose of the study was to get a deeper understanding of why and how the learners select given articles in given contexts. The participants in her study included Japanese college students with varying levels of English proficiency and native English speakers who served as a control group. The study findings revealed that learners with higher proficiency level performed better than learners with lower proficiency level. The results of the interview revealed that for lower proficiency learners their errors emanated from a set of rules they believed had been taught by their teachers or were learned from their text

books. The results also revealed misdetection of referentiality as an area that presented the greatest number of problems for Japanese learners in this study. Other problem areas had to do with the notion of countability resulting from over-generalization.

Butler's study is relevant to the current study because both the studies focused on the causes of article errors and only differ in terms of their subjects and one of the data generation techniques. The current study tried to understand the causes of learners' errors from their written tasks and from the perspective of teachers.

Humphrey (2007) carried out a study on article use by Japanese EFL students. His main concern was to find out whether the neighbouring lexical items in the immediate environment of the article in question determined the learners' use of articles and whether the problem affected both elementary students and intermediate students. The findings revealed that the choice of articles was to a large extent influenced by the lexical items in the environment; most of the learners from both groups tended to base their choices on the local contextual cues of lexical items appearing immediately before or after the 'node article'. But the acquisition sequence was rather different between the two groups. The acquisition sequence for the elementary group was; the > ø.> a/an and for intermediate group was> the > a/an >ø

The study like the current study raised concerns over article use by learners whose L1 is articleless. And like the current study it was also concerned with the sequence in which learners acquire articles. However, it differed from the current study in its approach. Its approach was purely quantitative while the current study employed a mixed approach.

A recent study on article use and acquisition by Russian and Chinese learners in second year of study at the university was undertaken by Olena Martynchuk (2010).Her study compared learners with different L1 backgrounds that is, Chinese and Russian. Her findings revealed that both Chinese and Russian learners use zero article most accurately. The researcher concluded that since both Russian and Chinese learners belong to (-ART) group of learners then their accurate use of the zero article is an indication that zero article is acquired first and this is due to influence from L1. Another finding she made was that Chinese learners acquire the indefinite article earlier than the definite article and therefore use the indefinite article more accurately than the definite article while Russian learners seem to acquire the definite article earlier than the indefinite article. This finding was similar to a finding by Diez-Bedmar and Pappi(as cited in Martynchuk 2010) whose study of the Spanish and Chinese learners revealed that both the groups acquire the indefinite article before the definite article.

Olena's study is relevant to the current study in that it is addressing the order of acquisition of the English article system by learners whose LI is articleless. However the two studies have different contexts; Olena's study focuses on learners with Russian and Arabic as their L1s while the current study focuses on learners with Luhya language as L1 .Furthermore, Olena in her submissions states that her study was prompted by the research done previously on article acquisition. She points out that many studies on article acquisition have tended to deal with acquisition orders,accuracy hierarchies and measure systems, and argues that "for non-native speakers of English, the knowledge of the acquisition order does not help to improve article mistakes nor does it help to understand which aspect of article use should be

paid more attention" (p.79). So she proposes that for further research on articles by Russian learners, researchers concentrate more on the analysis of the errors and the reasons causing these errors. Although she made the proposal with Russian learners in mind, the current study took this as a cue for formulation of research questions that would guide the study in finding answers to the kinds of errors learners make, the causes of these errors and further questions on the kinds of challenges teachers encounter during instruction of the English article system to students learning English as a second language and whose L1 is articleless.

Crompton (2011) was of the view that learners' first language often interferes with their acquisition of a second language. He therefore carried out a study to determine whether during the learning process learners' L1 indeed affected their acquisition of L2. His study subjects were advanced second and third year students at the American University of Sharjah. They all had Arabic as their L1. His main instrument for data generation was an argumentative essay and his main concern was identifying and classifying the errors the students made from the corpus. The results of the study revealed a number of errors but the most frequent error was overuse of the definite article 'the'. The definite article was frequently misused in contexts where indefinite articles including 'a'/'an' and zero article were required. The misuse was mostly in contexts where NPs were generic and non-count. These were contexts in which the 'the' equivalent in Arabic was always used. Crompton therefore attributed these errors to the influence of learners L1 Arabic.

Crompton's study is similar to the current study in the sense that both studies are examining L1 influence in the acquisition of the English article system. However his

subjects had an L1 with an overt article system. What was notable about his study was the findings which revealed that learners made overuse errors and this was attributed to their having the equivalent of the article 'the ' in their Arabic L1. It then follows that a language being (+ ART) does not always influence the acquisition process positively. Crompton's finding is similar to that of El Wefarlli (2013) who also reported overuse of 'the' in generic contexts.

2.10.4 Review of Studies on the Challenges Teachers Face when Teaching the English Article System

The English article system has been described as one of the most difficult structural elements for L2 learners of English (Ekiert, 2004) Studies in second language acquisition have revealed that L2 learners encounter difficulties in mastering the English article system. These difficulties arise from the fact that articles are some of the most frequently occurring function words in English (Murcia&Larsen –Freeman 1999) making continuous rule application difficult over an extended stretch of discourse.In addition there are other difficulties which arise from such issues as referentiality, countability, uniqueness genericity definiteness and specificity (Kwame 2018).These difficulties not only affect the learners but also become challenges for teachers of English in ESL classrooms.

Some studies have been conducted to find out teachers' attitudes towards the teaching of articles and others have been carried out to investigate the effectiveness of various teaching strategies. Studies on teaching strategies have been conducted in view of the difficulties of learning the article system. Several studies have been conducted to find out the impact of implicit and explicit teaching on the development of grammatical structures. Since the article system falls under grammatical structures, a look at some

of the studies done on the teaching of grammar can provide an insight into the teaching of the article system which is important in understanding the challenges teachers face during instruction of the English article system.

Fujita (2004) carried out a study on how articles are taught and conceived by teachers in Japan. His aim was to find out the difficulties that Japanese learners face in mastering the use of articles. He focused on the teaching of articles and presented two charts for determining articles and categories and finally gave some ideas and practical suggestions for teaching articles. The participants in the study were teachers of different nationalities teaching at different levels in schools in Japan. His main research tool was a questionnaire. The findings of his study revealed that majority of the teachers did not think it was necessary to focus their lessons on articles and during their lessons, focused study on articles tended to be ignored.

The most interesting finding about his study were the divergent views of teachers regarding the importance of accurate use of articles by learners at their students' level. Some thought it was important for learners to be accurate and the majority did not think so; they were of the view that incorrect or use or omission of articles did not hamper communication. This implied that students' lessons and their experiences in the classroom solely depended on their teachers' attitudes and beliefs. There were those who believed articles should be taught only when students have reached advanced levels and those who thought articles should be taught from the beginning.

This study is relevant to the present study because it addressed the challenges teachers face in teaching of the English article system to L2 learners of English. However while the researcher used a questionnaire as the main tool of data collection the current study employed a semi- structured interview to generate data from the

teachers. The current study also addressed the challenges teachers face within Vihiga County in Western Kenya. This means that teachers in the two studies were different in terms of linguistic background and their training.

Kimambo (2016) conducted a study on the acquisition of (in) definiteness in English as a foreign language by L1 Swahili learners in Tanzania. His study comprised of 163 learners from public secondary schools in Tanzania whose L1 is Swahili and 10 teachers of English. The study employed four research instruments: a picture description task, acceptability judgement task, forced choice elicitation task and a semi-structured interview for teachers. The purpose of the interview was to elicit teachers' opinion regarding inaccurate use of articles among learners and how they taught articles and the difficulties their learners faced. The study reported that the Swahili L1 speaking learners fluctuate between definiteness and specificity only at elementary levels. Further findings revealed that learners in this study did not associate 'the' with specificity.

The study also revealed that learners in this study made more errors of substitution compared to omission errors and adjectival modification did not have an impact on the frequency of omission errors. Another significant finding in this study was that learners overall performance was far accurate in the written task than in the oral task. As for the interview with teachers ,the study revealed that most teachers did not have sufficient training and expertise to teach the article system using the communicative approach.

Like the current study, Kimambo's study was a mixed study and employed similar techniques in data generation .Furthermore the study was carried out in Tanzania with learners whose L1 is Swahili. Swahili and Luhya languages are closely related in

structure because they have Bantu as a proto language. This aroused the researcher's curiosity and prompted the researcher to find out if Luhya L1 learners would face similar difficulties in learning the article system as learners with Swahili L1. However, the linguistic backgrounds of the learners in the two studies were slightly different; whereas secondary school learners in Kenya are exposed to English earlier from pre-primary school, their counterparts in Tanzania tend to lack exposure to English in the early years of schooling.

Peter Master (1997) conducted a study with the main aim of finding out whether instruction on articles had any impact on article usage. He used a test as his data collection tool. The test was administered to47 subjects in four ESL classes 14 of the subjects served as an experimental group while 36 served as a control group. The experimental group was given thorough instruction in articles using both inductive and deductive approaches while the control group received no instruction in articles but were taught other areas and attention to articles was only done through correction of their compositions. The results of the study revealed that there was general improvement in article usage by both the groups although the experimental group improved by a statistically significant amount compared to the control group. The conclusion of the study however was that the control group made slower progress in acquiring competence in the use of the article system compared to the group that received instruction in articles. Master formed the view that systematic instruction is important in accelerating learners' acquisition of articles.

This study is similar to the present study in terms of the subjects and the instrument used to collect data. The major difference is however in its purpose which was to examine whether direct instruction has an impact on the article usage. One of the

concerns of the present study is to investigate the challenges teachers are facing in teaching the articles and in the process the study may discover whether the teaching strategies employed in Master's study could have implications for current approaches in teaching the article system.

Master (1994) also came up with another proposal. He argued that the linguistic features governing the usage of the articles are: specificity, definiteness and countability. As a result he came up with a schema made up of a hierarchical sequence of six questions based on these notions to be asked before selecting the appropriate article to be used.

He carried out a research with the help of this schema to teach the English article system to learners for whom English was a foreign language. The results of the study revealed that the learners whose lessons were based on this schema used articles more appropriately compared to learners who were not taught without using the schema. Master (1994, p.274) argued that the importance of the instruction was that it acted as a means of "accelerating that acquisition by making students aware of and increasing their conscious control of the way the article works." .

Borg (1998) carried out an interesting study whose aim was to investigate teachers' perspective on teaching grammar in general. His main concern was with teacher cognition with regard to instructional decisions in grammar teaching and analysis of the teaching of grammar in English L2 classrooms. This was a case study which focused on one participant who was a native speaker of English. To collect his data, he used two tools; interviews and observation methods. His findings had interesting revelations: first, that the teacher made use of errors from learners' work in every lesson for instruction in grammar. Secondly the teacher encouraged learners to use

their L1 as a resource to guide them in explaining grammatical terms and to direct their attention on functions while explaining content. Another strategy he used was to teach the rules of grammar implicitly.

This study did not target articles parse but it is still relevant to my study as it sheds light on teachers' perceptive on grammar teaching in particular. It also contributes to knowledge about strategies that can be employed to teach grammar and articles in particular.

El Wefarlli (2013) investigated the effectiveness of three teaching strategies used to teach articles with the aim of establishing which of the strategies is more effective in assisting Libyan learners to use the article system more appropriately. They were implicit, explicit and enhanced input strategies. Three groups were involved in the study. Each group was taught using a different strategy and one of the groups served as a control group. At the end of the sessions the learners were tested in article use. Her findings revealed that the enhanced input teaching strategy was most effective as learners who were taught using this strategy improved both in the use of the English article system and in their writing with the implication that, for effective teaching of the article, "teachers should pay attention to both linguistic forms and meaning by providing learners with enhanced input techniques in context to help them notice the target forms" (El Wefwarlli, 2013, p.227).El Wefarlli's (2013) study is relevant to the current study as it provides useful information with regard to the strategies teachers may employ in teaching the article system.

Njoroge and Gathigia (2014) conducted a study on acquisition of the English article system and nouns. The purpose of their study was to investigate the effect of use of songs as a pedagogical tool in acquisition of articles and nouns. Their sample was

drawn from Grade 4 classes in two primary schools in Kenya; one an urban school and the other a rural school. They used two tests as their research tool; a pre-test and a post-test. The students were given a pre-test before teaching. Then they were placed into two groups; an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group was taught using a task-based method of language teaching that employed a song as a teaching strategy. The control group was taught using the conventional methods. They were then given a post-test. The results revealed that the group who were taught using a song performed better than the control group who were taught using conventional methods.

This study is important as it gives an insight into the different ways which teachers of English can use to address the teaching of articles.

2.10.5Review of Studies on the Semantic Challenges Learners Face in Learning the English Article System

Learners without an article system often face challenges with regard to the notions of definiteness specificity and countability. This is because in their various first languages these notions are expressed differently. A number of studies carried out on acquisition of the article system by learners whose first languages lack an article system tend to agree that these learners face problems with the notions of specificity and definiteness .In this study the argument was that since the notions of definiteness and specificity are not realized through an article system then Luhya L1 learners would experience challenges with regard to these notions. In this section l looks at a few studies that have addressed the idea of semantic notions.

Atay's study (2010) which focused on Turkey English L2 learners established that Turkey learners fluctuated in their article use between definiteness and specificity using 'a 'and 'the' interchangeably in contexts where they were not required. According to this study Turkey learners experienced these difficulties because the notions of specificity and definiteness are realized differently in Turkey language which is their L1.

Bergeron- Matoba (2007) carried out a study among Japanese EFL students. The purpose of Matoba's research was to show the role of the notions of countability and definiteness in the acquisition of the English article system. He set out to demonstrate that for learners to be able to learn the article system the concepts of countability and definiteness are important yet they are a big problem for learners in their acquisition of the article system. The study employed a forced elicitation task to collect data. The results of this study revealed that most Japanese had difficulty with countability and as a result they assigned 'a' and 'an' with mass nouns. Another finding of this study was in the area of omission and association of the definite article with specificity.

The researcher concludes with some remarks for English language educators by cautioning that the concept of specificity should be treated seriously because it may lead to fossilization. He cautions that teachers should treat specificity with caution and in their approach to teaching articles should avoid sticking to rules.

This study is relevant to my study because like my study the participants in the study had an L1 with −ART. The study was concerned with the semantic notions of specificity definiteness and countability which are the concerns of the last objective of the current study. However Matoba's study was guided by Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis whereas the current study was guided by Fluctuation Hypothesis.

Kaku, (2006) carried out a research on the acquisition of the English article system by Japanese learners. The purpose of Kaku's study was to find out the effect the first language has on the learning of the English article system. His research tool was an elicitation task and a translation task.

This study presented interesting results. Contrary to the expectations that learners would have problems with the articles, the learners exhibited high levels of accuracy in their choices of articles. Also intriguing was the fact that the Japanese learners did not opt for zero as frequently as they did other articles meaning it was not the main choice and this is also interesting given that Japanese lacks an article system. The results were contrary to the findings of Bergeron Matoba (2007) and of Fen & Lu (2001).The fact that the findings of this study went contrary to the findings of Matoba (2007) and Fen and Lu (2001) prompted the current study on the grounds that another study with a group with a different -ART L1 was necessary.

Kim and Lakshmanan (2009) carried out a study on English article acquisition. The purpose of their study was to look into the processes of learners' article acquisition development. The participants in the study were Korean L1 speakers. The researchers employed a number of data collection instruments which included a written questionnaire, an online and off-line reading experiment, a cloze test and an article insertion pre-test. Their findings revealed that in one of the instruments that is on-line task both groups fluctuated. They fluctuated between definiteness and specificity. But in off-line task the advanced learners did not fluctuate.

Thomas (1989) conducted a research with 30 adult learners having different first languages including both (+ART) and (–ART). The study sample included: adult learners from 5 languages with an overt article system namely; French, Italian,

German, Greek, Spanish and 4 languages without an article system namely; Japanese, Finish, Chinese and Korean. He used picture prompts as a research instrument. The findings of this study revealed that the learners with Chinese, Japanese, Finish and Korean (-ART) L1 tended to omit articles. The findings further showed that both groups tended to overuse the definite 'the' in indefinite specific contexts. This was because both groups associated *the,* with specificity instead of with definiteness.

The current study investigated the role of L1 semantic notions in article acquisition and pedagogical implication of these. The above study is quite important to this study because it touches on the notions of definiteness and specificity: the semantic notions that come into play when looking at the use of articles by learners with articleless L1 which is the main concern of the current study. The study mainly employed picture prompts for data generation The current study saw the need of using different methods in collecting data for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding the role of   semantic notions in the acquisition of the English article system

Kambou (1997) undertook a cross sectional study which focused on the acquisition of the English article system by learners in Burkina Faso. A cloze test was employed as a tool of data collection. The findings revealed that the overall rate of accuracy in article use was above average. The results also revealed that learners had difficulties in all the four semantic categories proposed by Huebner. That is, generic, referential definite, referential indefinite and non-referential contexts. There was also evidence of L1transfer. This result concurred with the findings of Atay, (2010), Ekiert (2007), Crompton, (2011).

2.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with literature review on the English article system. The review of literature informed the study by first finding the focus of the study. The review revealed that the value of a well learned and well developed article system cannot be ignored since articles are an important part of the English system for information referencing and identification. However the article system has been identified as one of the areas of grammar that is most difficult for learners during the acquisition process. For this reason, articles have in recent times become one of the areas of grammar to which focus has been directed by many studies. Literature reveals that the article system is not only difficult to acquire but is even more difficult for learners whose first language does not have an overt article system. For this reason, numerous studies have been done with learners whose native languages lack an overt article system particularly in Western countries, Middle East and Far East countries. Others have been done with languages that have articles but only a few studies have been conducted in Africa and in Kenya. No studies were found to have focused on learners with Luhya dialects, the L1 of most learners from western Kenya.

Secondly, literature review indicated that languages with article system use articles to mark spefity or definiteness and that articleless languages realize these notions through other means. These notions in the English article system are responsible for ESL learners fluctuating during article acquisition. Again few studies from Africa and Kenya have addressed this gap. Lastly, although extensive research has been conducted on approaches to teaching of the English article system few studies have addressed the challenges that teachers could be facing in teaching the complex English article system. The review of literature therefore provided justification as to

why the present study was still a worthwhile venture. The next chapter deals with research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the design and the methodology that were used in the study. It specifically focused on the research paradigm, research design, the study area, the study population and the study sample and sampling procedures employed. The chapter also discusses data generation techniques and analysis procedure in line with the study approach and how data was analysed. Finally issues of ethical consideration and trustworthiness of the study are discussed in detail before a conclusion to the chapter is made.

3.2 Philosophical Paradigm

This study is guided by pragmatic paradigm. A research paradigm has been defined in various ways by scores of scholars. Guba (1990) defines a paradigm as a belief system or theory that guides the way we do things. A paradigm is therefore a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be studied.Bogdan &Biklan (1992, p.30) define a paradigm as "a loose collection of logically held assumptions concepts and propositions that orient thinking and research". According to these scholars, paradigms are therefore about our beliefs about how knowledge about the world is created and interpreted. A paradigm is the overall perspective from which a study is designed and carried out (Krauss, 2005).In other words, it influences a researcher in the choices he makes as he creates knowledge. For example, how a researcher chooses his research instruments; how he samples his respondents and how he goes about analysing his data.

According to Guba (1990) a paradigm is made up of three elements: ontology epistemology and methodology. Ontology deals with the nature of reality, what is said to exist in some world that which potentially can be talked about. Blaikie (2010) expounds on this description and asserts that ontology encompasses claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. This view of the world comes in two perspectives: one views reality as an objective reality that really exists out there; the other is a subjective view which sees reality as a creation of our minds. Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge and is intimately related to ontology; it addresses the question of how we come to know reality while methodology deals with how the inquirer goes about gaining knowledge or the particular practices used to attain knowledge .These three categories are important because they guide the researcher in coming up with a perspective from which he designs his study. Dill and Romiszowisk (as cited in Denzin 2001), explain the function of paradigms as follows: they define how the world works, how knowledge is extracted from this world and how one is to think, write and talk about this knowledge; they define the type of questions to be asked and the methodologies to be used in answering these questions. In other words, a paradigm reveals a researcher's philosophical leaning. It is therefore very important for a researcher to state his paradigm.

There are two paradigms epistemologically; realism and constructivism and two paradigms ontologically; relativists and positivists. In between the two extreme paradigms is pragmatic paradigm. It is a paradigm that advocates the use of mixed methods in research. This paradigm adapts a philosophical position between positivism and interpretivist which mixes methods from the two major paradigms on

the basis of what works and bears little regard for philosophical consequences Cherryholmes (1992), Howe (1988). According to Toshakkari and Teddie (1998, p.21), ''to most researchers committed to the thorough study of a research problem, method is secondary to the research question itself and the underlying worldview hardly enters the picture except in the most abstract sense''.

The paradigm suited my purpose because it provided me with a means of using both QUAN and QUAL in the same study and therefore a means of drawing on the strengths of QUAL as well as QUAN meant having at my disposal the methodologies of both the QUAN and QUAL approaches and drawing on the strengths of either without having to worry about any of their extreme philosophical leanings.

3.3 Research Approach

The study was based on a mixed method approach. There are many world views regarding research and from these world views there are many paradigms that guide various studies and from these paradigms various research approaches have emerged. The three main approaches to research are: quantitative research, qualitative research and mixed method research (Dornyei, 2007). According to Ong'ondo and Juan (2011) the worldview of a researcher will determine the approach a researcher adopts. Cresswell (2003) suggests that a researcher should always explain the reasons for the choice of the approach they take in other words, understanding the paradigm a researcher adopts is crucial in any study. This study adopted a mixed method approach. In the following section I explore the definition of this approach as presented by various scholars and I further explain the rationale for selecting this approach from the other approaches.

According to Johnson, Anthony and Lisa(2007, p. 123) ''mixed method approach is the type of research in which a researcher or teams of researchers combine elements of quantitative and qualitative research approaches''. Cresswell (2003) posits that the purpose of this form of research is that both quantitative and qualitative research in combination provide a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either when one employs one research approach alone. Dornyei (2007) argues that the main attraction of the mixed method research has been the fact that by using both QUAL and QUAN approaches researchers can bring out the best of both paradigms thereby combining qualitative and quantitative. He further observes that by using the mixed approach we can gain a better understanding of a complex phenomenon by converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data. Words can be used to add meaning to numbers and numbers can be used to add precision. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) give further information as to what is mixed. They explain that when applying a mixed method design many elements are mixed including methods, the stage of mixing and the purpose of mixing and the elements of mixing.

According to Johnson et al (2007)mixed methods research is the kind of research where elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches are combined for example; use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques, so that a broad and deep understanding of the phenomenon can be achieved.

The study employed the mixed research approach for a number of reasons: First the mixed approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to use several data sources leading to generation of a thick rich data that would answer the research

questions. One data source would not have been sufficient. Secondly the mixed approach was most appropriate for the study because it enabled the researcher to further explain the initial results; quantitative data was explained using qualitative data illustrations. Thirdly, the element of bias that comes through accommodation of personal interpretations of reality in qualitative approach was neutralized by quantitative approach because in quantitative approach the researcher remained in the background. So in the study the biases of qualitative approach were offset by quantitative approach. The study also needed the qualitative data from teachers' interviews to confirm and corroborate the quantitative findings of the first research question. Finally, the mixed approach model was deemed appropriate because it enabled the researcher to validate, confirm and corroborate quantitative results with qualitative findings. This resulted in valid and well substantiated conclusions about article learning and acquisition by Luhya L1 learners of English as a second language.

There are numerous types of mixed methods designs and they differ depending on the discipline or nature of study. Despitea few differences among them, they have many similarities. Basing on similarities, scholars have identified four major types of mixed methods designs with variants within types. These are: Triangulation Design; the Embedded Design; the Explanatory Design and the Exploratory Design (Cresswell &Plano, 2009; Clark, 2011). This study adopts the Triangulation Design. It is the most frequently used and well known approach to mixing methods (Cresswell& Plano 2009). The purpose of this design is to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem Morse (in Cresswell 2003).Within the triangulation design there are four variants namely: the convergence model; data transformation model; the validating quantitative data model and the multilevel

model. This study adopted the convergence model. This model represents the traditional model of a mixed method triangulation design .In this model the researcher collects and analyses quantitative and qualitative data separately on the same phenomenon and then the different results are converged by comparing and contrasting the different findings during interpretation. In this study data from the quantitative strands i.e. multiple choice task, story-telling task, composition task and data from the qualitative strand i.e. teacher interview were collected concurrently and analysed separately and were compared and contrasted at interpretation which was the point of interface in this study.

3.4 Research Design

The design adopted for this study is a case study. A research design is an overall strategy selected by a researcher to answer research questions. The research design explains the research paradigm, research approach and research method which refers to identification of procedures which includes sampling, data generation techniques, ethical consideration and how they are inter-connected. Juan and Ong'ondo, (2011).define a research design as the overall methodological plan that a study adapts so as to answer its research questions. They explain that a research design is a study plan that shows the link between philosophical paradigm-approach –method of data generation and discussion adapted for a particular study. These concepts are elaborated in the subsequent discussion showing how my study fits into them. A case study was selected for this study because it helped the researcher to arrive at a detailed understanding of the article system by concentrating on a few cases and examining them in detail. A case study was deemed appropriate because it is not the purpose of this study to generalize the findings to other cases or to populations

beyond the case but rather to understand a particular case as Stake (1995) argues: the purpose of a case study research   is particularization not generalization.

3.5 Study Area

The study was conducted in selected secondary schools fromVihiga County. The choice of schools from Vihiga County was deemed appropriate because it is one of the areas in which performance in English language in national examinations has been below average for most secondary schools. Another reason though not a major one was my knowledge of Luhya grammar. I must admit that my background biased the development of the research hypothesis and sampling strategies. As Patton (2002) points out admitting biases and feelings not trying to hide them which sometimes occurs in quantitative methods to maintain objectivity-adds validity. In addition, my earlier research on the 'Effects of English on the use of Mother tongue as a Language of Instruction in Hamisi, a sub-county of Vihiga County' (Khejeri, 2009), provided me with an opportunity to interact with teachers and learners who were using their Luhya L1 as the language for instruction in the lower primary schools. This further exposed me to the language and enriched my knowledge of its Grammar. For the kind of study I was carrying out, the researcher's knowledge of L1 of the learners was an added advantage.

3.6 Study Population

According to Ogula (2005), a population refers to any group of institutions, people, or objects that have common characteristics. The study population in this study comprised of teachers of English and students from secondary schools in Vihiga County. The schools included national, extra county, county & sub- County.

3.7 Study Sample and sampling Procedure

According to Mugenda &Mugenda (2012), there are two major ways of selecting a sample; random (probability)and non-random (non-probability). Sampling Non-probability sampling includes purposive sampling, convenient sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling. Hycer (1999) points out that the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa) including even the participants. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that, qualitative approach works well with non-probability sampling. On the other hand, quantitative approach works well with probability sampling. Teddlie and Yu (2007) points out that mixed methods sampling strategies may employ all the probability and purposive techniques meaning that with mixed approach both probability and non-probability techniques can be used. Probability random sampling was therefore employed in selecting the schools. The study then adopted basic mixed methods sampling strategies proposed by Teddlie and Yu (2007) from which stratified (quota) and purposive sampling was employed. Teddlie and Tashakkori(2009, p. 89) posit that ''the stratified nature of this sampling is characteristic of probability sampling whereas the small number of cases generated through it is characteristic of purposive sampling''. The purpose of quota sampling was to include specific schools in the study. Equal representation of both high and low performing schools was an important characteristic of my sampling. Quota sampling was used to identify the categories of schools from which the actual samples were purposively selected. Application of quota sampling ensures that the sample group represents certain characteristics of the population chosen by the researcher. In this study equal representation of high performing and low performing schools was an important characteristic. The schools were selected based on the following categories:

A i) National schools

   ii) Extra County schools

   iii) County schools.

   iv)Sub-county

B i) Girls

   ii) Boys

   iii) Mixed

The selection was based on these categories to ensure that learners of all abilities were included. Purposive sampling was then used in the selection of teachers and students who would participate in the study. The study used purposive sampling to get specific students and teachers from whom to get the kind of information needed. Teddlie and Yu (2007) argues that when using purposive sampling in a mixed research the researcher should be clear on the purpose of sampling; whether he is sampling to achieve representativeness or whether he is sampling for special or unique cases. Bearing this in mind, for this study a compromise was made between the requirements of QUAL and QUAN samples. This is what is referred to as the representativeness /saturation trade-off (Teddlie &Yu 2007). This trade-off means that the more emphasis that is placed on the representativeness of the QUAN sample the less emphasis there is that can be placed on the QUAL sample and vice versa. As already noted the aim of sampling in QUAN is to achieve representativeness and since the researcher wanted a sample that reflects the characteristics of the population interest this requires a sample of a certain size relative to the population.

In this study however the researcher was not interested in representativeness rather the researcher was interested in the saturation of information. This is an important sample issue in QUAL research. Therefore, in this study, the representativeness/saturation trade off meant more emphasis was placed on the saturation of the QUAL sample as such the sample size for this study was small even for the multiple choice task. Teddlie and Yu (2007) states that purposive sampling entails the researcher selecting cases that can yield as much information as possible for his/her purpose and that the sample size is small comprising of 30 cases or less due to the fact that the concern is usually on the depth of information generated from the cases.

Based on the above statement, the students included in the study were purposively selected from Form 1 to 4 classes. This is because it was crucial for the study to include students from both lower and upper intermediate levels. At form one and two students are just at a level where their interlanguage is still developing and thus they have not yet achieved the required competencies and are likely to draw on their L1 resource in the learning process. At Form 3 and Form 4 levels, learners are thought to have developed a slightly better command of English. Thus the study had two groups, lower intermediate level group comprising of Form I and Form 2 learners and upper intermediate group comprising of Form 3 and Form 4 learners. This was valuable in enabling the researcher in capturing the types of a variety of problems with regard to article learning. In addition, the first research question is about developmental features during the acquisition process of the English article system by Luhya L1 learners, to answer this question, inclusion of learners at all secondary school levels was important so that the study ascertains whether proficiency influences the process.

English language teachers were also purposively selected to participate in the study for the purpose of complementarity.

Guest, Bunge and Johnson (2006, p.59) during their study found out seven sources that provided guidelines for actual sample size:

a) Ethnography and ethno-science: Morse (1994, p.225) 30-50 interviews for both; Bernard(2000, p.178) states that most studies are based on samples between 30 -60 interviews forethno-science.

b) Grounded theory methodology: Cresswell (1998, p.64) 20 – 30; Morse (1994, p.225) 30 – 50 interviews.

c) Phenomenology: Cresswell (1998, p.64) 5 to 25; Morse, (1994,p.225) at least 6;

d) All qualitative research: Bertaux (1981, p.35) fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample.

In addition to these guidelines, there is another guideline proposed by Abbie Griffin and John Hauser in their study article "The Voice of the Customer" (1993) .The researchers have suggested that an N=30 formula should be a starting point for selecting a sample size in QUAL research and that the researcher's judgment is included. They hypothesize that 20 – 30 IDIs are needed to uncover 90 -95% of all customer needs of the product category needs which is the saturation point.

On the basis of the guidelines discussed, the sample size selection of this study is guided by Cresswell (1998) and Abbie Griffin and Hauser (1993). The number of public secondary schools in Vihiga County is 159. They are divided into the following categories: National schools 2, extra county schools 12, county schools, 14 sub county schools, 131. English language teachers in Vihiga County are 579 teachers (Ministry

of Education Vihiga County, 2019).These formed the sample from which the sample size was drawn. Purposive sampling was used to select 3 sub-counties from which 6 schools were purposively selected. The selection was done purposively to ensure inclusion of all categories of public schools in Kenya; 1 national school , 2 extra-county schools (1 boys only and 1 girls only) and 3sub- county schools (all mixed schools).The sample of schools also included high and low performing schools. Both national and extra county schools fell under high performing schools. For sub-county schools I decided to purposively pick mixed schools because the other two categories that is, national and extra county fell under only boys and only girls categories. The mixed schools were many so I based my selection on their performance and their population because the population of the students enabled me to get the number of teachers I wanted to get per school; the three schools with the highest population of students and the poorest performance for the last four years were purposively selected. Thus there were a number of considerations involved in selecting the sample for this case study as Johnson and Christensen,(2012, p.244) explain that despite the fact that researchers often face logistical constraints in their decisions about whom to study, they should select a sample that can be used to meet the purpose of the research study and answer research questions.

Thus I identified the following schools based on their category population and performance in English in the KCSE from the year 2015 to 2019; (KNEC: 2015-2019). The schools were given codes.

Table 3.1 Vihiga County KCSE results 2015-2019

Year	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
School	Mean	Grade	Mean	Grade	Mean	Grade	Mean	Grade	Mean	Grade
A	5.0	C,	5.2	C	4.57	C-	3.8	D+	5.3	C
B	2.38	D-	2.70	D-	2.72	D-	2.18	D-	2.20	D-
C	4.56	C-	2.77	D-	2.76	D-	3.0	D-	3,2	D-
D	3.85	D	2.38	D-	2.39	D-	2.55	D-	2.65	D-
E	5.32	C	4.56	C-	3.33	D+	5.5	C	5.7	C
F	5.4 2	B	5.22	C	4.55	C-	4.8	C	5.5	C

(**Source Ministry of Education - Vihiga County Education Office 2020)**

The students who participated in the study were 24. They were selected as follows: First a quick placement test was generated by the researcher. The researcher is an English language teacher with 15years' experience as an ESL teacher. The test was generated based on the learners' level of education. Two high school English language teachers with experience as KNEC examiners assisted in reviewing the test and confirmed its validity. The outcome of the test was that the lower secondary classes scored 40 and below out of 50 and the upper secondary learners (forms 3and 4) scored 35 and above. This helped the researcher to place them in groups based on their proficiency levels. This resulted in the following groups: Lower intermediate group made up of form1 and form 2 students and Upper intermediate group made up of form 3 and form 4 students.

A language background questionnaire was given to help select learners who had Luhya as their L1. They were 300. From these learners with Luhya L1, random sampling was used to select from each class 1 student in all the six schools. This gave

the researcher a total of 24 students. Therefore, all classes from Form 1 to 4 were represented; as Selinker(1967) points out a given L2 learner will have different ILs at different stages of learning.

Purposive sampling was used to select 4 English language teachers who participated in the study from the 6 schools. This meant a total of 24 teachers were selected for participation in in-depth interviews.

Table 3.2 Target Population and Sample Size

Categories	No. from each school	No of schools	Total
Secondary school teachers	4	6	24
Students	4	6	24
Total			**48**

3.8 Data Generation Techniques

The study used triangulation methodology as proposed by Denzin (2012) and Patton (2001). According to Denzin, triangulation involves using multiple sources in an investigation to produce understanding. Consequently, the study combined multiple qualitative and quantative methodologies to gather data. The methodologies included the following:

1) Multiple Choice Task

2) Story telling Task

3) Guided composition Task

4) Interview Guide

The researcher employed triangulation methodologies for a number of reasons: First it allowed the researcher to capture use of articles in different contexts and to be able to establish patterns of use. Second the researcher considered both oral and written forms of language use of the articles. Third the researcher employed triangulation of methodologies partly because multiple sources would provide verification and validity. Lastly, triangulation of methodologies would ensure that the data generated was comprehensive, rich, robust and well developed. Each technique carried additional source of information which helped me gain more insight from the study. These techniques are described in detail as follows:

3.8.1 Multiple - Choice Task

The multiple choice task is the most frequently used method in L2 article acquisition studies (El Wefarlli, 2013; Atia, 2014; Atay, 2010; Ionin, Ko&Wexler, 2003; Trenkic, 2007 among others). It offers researchers the opportunity to design contexts where

both definiteness and specificity can be made explicit to determine their influence in L2 article acquisition among speakers of different L1 backgrounds.I therefore used the multiple choice task to elicit data. In choosing this tool I was influenced by Ionin and Wexler (2003) although I wrote the items in my own way taking into consideration the learners' background. This tool was designed in such a way that it reflected a broad range of article usage. The purpose of using it was to answer the first research question(a)and the fifth research questions (e).The multiple choice task allowed me to have control over the contexts in which I deliberately wanted the articles to be used in order to achieve objectives (a) and (e).The reason for using this tool was to capture article use in some of the contexts which may not have been captured through spontaneous story-telling and composition writing tasks. The multiple choice task consisted of 30 questions. Two English language teachers and examiners in English language and my supervisors reviewed the multiple choice items and confirmed their validity and reliability.

The questions in this task were short dialogues. The dialogues were structured in such a way that they elicited use of a particular article. The test items were not randomly distributed as was the case in the test of Ionin and Wexler (2003)instead, the researcher adopted Atia's (2014) idea of contextualizing the test items semantically into six different contexts based on the notion of definiteness and specificity. Each category conveyed a given context and carried five questions which gave a total of 30 questions. For each question learners were given the four articles from which to select the most appropriate. That is 'a', 'an', 'the'and'ø'.The first context contained type 2 [+ SR, +HK] referential definites [+ definite +specific]. This context addresses previously mentioned NPs (anaphoric reference). The context had five questions that

required the use of *the.*The second context was type 2 [+ SR, +HK] referential definites [+ definite +specific**],** NPs specified by entailment and by definition where the speaker has explicit knowledge about the NPs in which '*the'* is the target answer. The context had five questions that require the use of' 'the'. The third context was type 3 [+ SR, -HK] [+definite, -specific] referential indefinites, which include explicit speaker knowledge about NPs, identifiable to the speaker and not to the listener. The context had five questions that required the use of *the.* The fourth context [-definite +specific] with explicit speaker knowledge about the indefinite NPs; had five questions that required the use of 'a'as the correct answer; the fifth context [–SR – HK]non-referential nouns; [-definite –specific]. These are nouns that are non-specific for both the speaker and the hearer. This context entailed five more questions in which the NPs are first mentioned in the context. The five answers required 'an'. The sixth context [–SR –HK] [-definite –specific] in which NPs are anonymous for the speaker and the hearer had five questions; all of them required 'ø' as the correct answer.

3.8.2 Story-telling Task

Story telling is a technique used in the ESL classrooms. Colon-Villa, (in Isabell,R,Sobol, J,lindauer,etal. 2004) notes that story telling helps ESL learners become more self-confident to express themselves spontaneously and creatively. The use of story-telling methodology was therefore preferred in this study for the following reasons: first, it helped yield authentic production and use of articles and therefore article errors that learners make in real life situations were contextualized. Second; it was ideal for exploring cross-linguistic differences and similarities in the realization of the notions of definiteness and specificity.

Third; in telling a story learners were expressing themselves freely therefore more information concerning the learning process could be discovered from their interlanguage features. In this way it was easier to find out the kinds of article errors learners make and the cause; whether the causes emanated from their L1influence.or from the target language.

To analyse the student's use of articles in narratives, picture prompts generated by the researcher were used for the elicitation of narratives which were designed to enable them tell a story (see Appendix B). The researcher devised the picture prompts herself taking into consideration learners' level and their experiences in real life situations by using locally well-known situations. Learners were required to tell a story from the series of pictures. The story was made up of 13 linearly ordered pictures depicting their respective events. The pictures told a cohesive story, with the complexity of the story increasing from the first picture to the last. Elicitation was conducted by the researcher and the students' teachers of English.

3.8.3 Guided composition

The reason for the choice of this task was to complement the other instruments. The purpose of guided composition was to find out the causes of systematic errors of the English article system made by Luhya learners in this study. This tool was used to address the third research question. In composition writing, the learners are freely using language and therefore a variety of errors can be made and so more information about the process of learning can be discovered. Guided composition can be used at any level of learning and since the researcher was examining article use at all secondary school levels the composition as a tool of data collection was quite appropriate. The participants were given a written task based on two topics as follows:

The two topics were:

     a) Describe your best friend

     b) Explain what you did during last Christmas holiday

These are presented in Appendix C

3.8.4 Interview Guide

The main purpose of using in-depth interviews was to help address the fourth research question; which sought to find out the challenges teachers face in teaching the article system. In-depth interviews are a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation (Boyce & Neal, 2006) thereby leading to understanding of the meaning people make of their lives from their own perspectives. Johnson (2000) notes that, deep understanding allows the researcher to articulate multiple perspectives and meanings because interviewees on a given subject may provide different points of view.

Considering these aspects, the researcher chose this technique in order to allow the teacher participants to express their views, opinions and experiences as English language teachers with regard to the teaching of grammar and the English article system in particular. The study was concerned about the modes of teaching they employ and challenges they encounter; what modes work for them and what modes do not; the nature of their learners and what they thought of their learners' L1 and how it affects the learners' article acquisition. The researcher also used this technique

to allow the participants to share their reflections on what they do in the classroom on how and why they do what they do. Moreover, in-depth interviews also had the advantage of face to face encounter of the researcher with the participants whereby both parties explored the meaning of the questions and answers provided, subjected them to scrutiny and easily ironed out any misunderstanding. Thus semi-structured interview provided room for questioning and clarification (Hancke2009). The in-depth interview also provided an opportunity for discussion especially in contexts where teachers clarified some points they were making or sought clarification from the interviewer as Gill,Steward,Treassure and Chadwick (2008) point out that the opportunity for more clarification is the biggest advantage of semi-structured interviews over structured interviews In addition the structured interview guide also made it easier for the researcher to organize and analyse interview data as Bowen (2005) points out; more structure makes the researcher's task of organizing and analysing interview data easy. Kimambo (2016) for example used a semi structured interview to find out detailed information on acquisition of articles using open-ended questions. Paulo (2014) also used semi-structured interviews to gauge pre-service teachers' preparedness to teach and evaluate learners via the competence-based curriculum in Tanzania

Bearing the factors discussed in mind, the researcher opted to use the interview guide strategy which provided more structure but at the same time helped the interviewer to create room for more interaction with the respondents as it is observed by Patton (in Rubin &Babbie 2001) that 'one can avoid a completely unstructured, informal conversational interview by use of the interview guide strategy. An interview guide

strategy has some structure that guides the researcher and at the same time ensures a relatively high degree of flexibility'' .

3. 9 Trustworthiness of the Research

In any given study the questions that usually arise are whether the study is trustworthy to warrant its use for making major decisions; whether it is honest and rigorous enough. In short trustworthiness refers to how much trust can be given that the researcher did everything possible to ensure that data was appropriately and ethically collected analysed and reported. To ensure that trustworthiness is achieved, the researcher did all that could be done to ensure that the research process was rigorous enough, careful, truthful and as honest as possible. Considering the fact that the data generation tools were mainly qualitative the following four key issues were given focus to ensure trustworthiness of the study:

a) Credibility

Credibility of the research refers to the extent to which the study investigates what it sets out to investigate; it refers to the confidence one can have in the truth of the findings. This was achieved through robust definitions of the concepts that the study addressed. It was also achieved through multiple sources of evidence and triangulation. Tiangulation afforded the researcher two sources of evidence; teachers and students. It also afforded the researcher multiple sources of data generation which included a multiple choice task, a composition, a story telling task and a teacher interview. All these techniques generated detailed data that helped to understand the phenomenon under investigation.

b)Transferability

The aim was not to generalize the findings to a wider population, but to use a few selected cases to generate knowledge. However when the cases are analysed there is an extent to which the context in which this study was done is similar to another one and therefore I can say they may be relevant to my context.

c)Dependability

This refers to the reliability of the findings. This was achieved through thick and rich description of the entire process from research questions through sampling and data analysis. Through the use of overlapping methods: interview, composition, story-telling and multiple choice tasks all the processes within the study were reported in detail.

d) Conformability

This refers to the extent to which the researcher was objective or the extent to which she influenced the research. One way the researcher used to ensure conformability was through member checking; member checking is an opportunity for the participants in the study to check and approve particular aspects of the interpretation of the data they provided (Doyle, 2007; Merriam, 1998). After data generation, the researchers report was taken back to the participants and read to them and audio-recording was played back to them and consent of participants sought before publication. This was one way of finding out whether the information given had been captured accurately.

3.10 Validity

The multiple choice task would yield QUAN data and therefore the tool had to be validated. Validity refers to how accurately an instrument or a measuring tool measures what it is designed to measure. The researcher used content validity to measure the validity of the data collection tool to be used (multiple choice task). The multiple choice task which carried the QUAN aspect was only used as a tool to support QUAL data. There are three types of validity: content validity, creterion validity and construct validity (Cooper and Schindler,2008).The researcher used content validity to measure the validity of the data collection tool to be used (multiple choice task)..Content validity is the extent to which the measurement device provides adequate coverage of the investigative question. Content validity is measured by relying on the knowledge of experts in the field of study .These experts are usually provided with access to the tools of measurement and asked to give feedback on how well each question measures the construct in question. After the analysis of the feedback an informed decision is made on the effectiveness of each question. The researcher in this study therefore discussed the multiple choice task, the composition task and the story telling task with the experts before proceeding to the field to collect data who helped to ascertain the validity of the instruments.

3.11 Reliability

A measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results (Kothari 2004).This means that the instrument should give the same results if administered repeatedly. Reliability test was carried out via multiple choice task. The study used internal consistency to ensure reliability. The construct multiple reliability is the Cronbach alpha. According to Rousson, Gasser and Seifer (2012) the standard acceptable

reliability coefficient is 0.7 and above. Crobanch's alpha coefficient was computed to determine how items correlated among themselves. Sekaran (2006) observes that the closer the reliability coefficient gets to 1.0 the better and further that in general ,reliabilities less than 0.6 are considered to be poor ,those in the range of 0.70 acceptable and those above 0.8 good.. A coefficient above 0.7 is considered sufficient for most cases (Sreevidya & Sunitha, 2011)

3.12 Pilot Study

In a pilot study the researcher tries out research tools on respondents from a different area with similar characteristics to those of the area under study. Consequently, the research instruments were piloted in two schools from Kakamega County with similar characteristics to the schools of the area under study. The selection of the learners and teachers who participated in the pilot study was done carefully to ensure that the learners' L1 was Luhya and the teachers selected were English language teachers. This was done to ensure that the selection process was in line with the sampling procedures and techniques and that the participants met the criteria and categories spelt out in the sampling procedure to meet the study objectives.

The schools were selected through purposive sampling and the students and teachers to participate in the pilot study were also purposively selected so that all classes were included in the sample. The purpose of piloting data generation tools was to evaluate their applicability and to test their appropriateness. The purpose was also to find out if there would be problems on the part of the respondents in answering the questions on the interview schedule. It was also important to find out if challenges connected to recording of the interview and the story telling sessions would arise. Therefore, one of the reasons for piloting was to minimise the likelihood of respondents having

problems in the questions on the interview schedule and the participants in the story telling task having problems in narrating the story. Above all, piloting was important in ensuring content validity and reliability. Yin (2003),Van Teijlingen and Hardley (2001) point out that a pilot study might give advance warning about where the main research project may fail and where the proposed research tools may not be suitable or complicated.

The pilot study included four English language teachers, teaching each of the four classes that is Form 1-4 and 8 students, four from each school. The four students from each school were drawn from forms 1 2, 3 and 4. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the four teachers, one at a time. Before beginning the interviews and administration of the written and oral tasks, the researcher explained to each group of the participants the purpose of the exercise in order to waylay any fears. The last instrument to be administered was the interview. Since the purpose of the interview was explained to them the respondents had no problem with the recording of the proceedings of the interview. During the interview the researcher ensured that the participants were relaxed and the interaction was friendly.

The multiple choice task was administered first to avoid prior experience with the student to lead to bias in judging the learners' compositions. The test was repeated after a week using the same respondents. In doing this I was following the test-retest reliability approach for determining reliability of this particular instrument as Tuckman (1978 p.161)notes: "One way to assure reliability is to give the same people the same test on more than one occasion and then compare each person's performance on both testing". This was because data generation and data analysis for this instrument would be done quantitatively. The composition task was then administered

next followed by the story telling task. The task was administered to learners with the help of their English language teachers .The teachers were involved during the recording sessions in order to re-assure the learners.

3.12.1 Pilot Study Results

During the piloting the researcher noted a few areas of concern that helped in the actual study: First in one of the schools there was shortage of rooms to use for the few participants in the study and there was at times noise emanating from the rest of students during short breaks between lessons which affected audio-recording of the story telling sessions . This helped the researcher to make the decision of visiting the target schools a day or two earlier to arrange with the concerned authorities as to how the research would be conducted with little interruption. Secondly the researcher took time to listen to the recordings of the interview with teachers to check for consistencies of responses and to adjust the questions where necessary. The researcher remained sensitive to the feelings of the respondents during the introduction of issues. From the interview it was noted that question 3 and 5(b) were raising similar answers. These questions were:

  3. What difficulties do your learners experience when learning the article system?

  5. (b)From your teaching experience in the classroom what are the particular problem areas in the article system for your students?

Therefore question 5 (b) was adjusted to read:

5(b). From your experience of correcting learners work what are the most frequent article errors in their work?

From the participants 'composition productions', it was noted that the learners would write a complete composition of 100 words without using any article. As a result the researcher decided to increase the number of the word limit for each composition from 100 to 200 in order to allow for article use. From the storytelling task it was noted that the participants exhibited long pauses in the course of the narration for this reason the researcher made a decision to give them picture prompts a day before the assessment.

These alterations were made in consultation with my supervisors. Bell (1999) stresses the importance of pilot study and enumerates the following points: assisting in finding the length of time for each interview, clarity of testing instructions, ambiguity in questions or clarity if any, questions which may cause uneasiness during response and topic omissions and the research protocol. After the alterations the instruments were deemed valid and reliable and ready for the actual research project.

3.13 Data Collection Procedures

The following section discusses the procedures employed by the researcher in collecting data. Data collection procedures are presented according to each research instrument.

The researcher administered the multiple choice task in each school with the help of the English teachers. The task was distributed and the participants were given 50 minutes to do the task. This was considered sufficient time for each individual participant to complete the task. The participants were also given further instructions orally and informed that they were to select the article that first came to their mind.

For the story telling task, the participants were given the pictures a day to the oral assessment to familiarize with the events. This was because during piloting, learners in the pilot study had exhibited long pauses during narration. This was attributed to the fact that they were trying to familiarize with the story first hence in the actual study it was necessary to give them the pictures earlier. On the day of administration of the task, each participant was asked to tell the story looking at the pictures. The researcher and the English teacher assisting to administer the task did not have the pictures during the story-telling sessions and participants were reminded that both the researcher and their teacher could not see the pictures. The story telling sessions were audio- recorded. The stories were then transcribed and typed for easy identification of article errors.

For the composition task, the participants were given a written task based on two topics and asked to write an essay of about 200 words for each topic. The two topics were:

(1) Describe your best friend

2) Explain what you did during last Christmas holiday

The task was administered in the classroom with the assistance of the English language teachers. Participants were given a time limit of one hour.

With regard to the interview session, the researcher visited the schools two days before data collection date to make prior arrangements for data collection. The researcher conducted twenty four interviews within the school premises ensuring that the venues for the interviews were conducive for discussion and private for confidentiality. All the interviews conducted lasted between 35 to 50 minutes per

respondent. During the interview sessions a tape recorder was used to capture detailed information from the respondents as it actually occurred. Gay et al (2009) advocates for audio or video tape recording on the grounds that they provide a verbatim account of the interview sessions as they actually occur. Later all the interviews were transcribed and an analysis was done.

The data raised from the interviews with 24 teachers was important to the study as it enabled data source triangulation, (through teachers) and site triangulation (via schools).This helped to determine the similarities and differences in the teachers' points of view. Johnson (2000) notes that interviewees on a given subject may provide different points of view. Such similar and different points of view helped me to identify the themes presented in chapter four.

3.14 Data Analysis

This section describes data analysis procedures based on each tool and objective. It covers the procedures that were employed to analyse data under the multiple choice task, the story-telling task, the composition task and the interview. Data generated through teacher interview was analysed thematically. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying analysing and reporting pattern themes within data. It minimally organizes and describes data set in rich detail. It is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kelleher& Gliksman, 1997).So I analysedthe interview data by reading through it carefully and identifying the themes that emerged as Rice and Ezzy, (1999) point out that the process involves identification of themes through reading and re-reading of data . The themes that emerged from my reading became categories for analysis. Data for composition and storytelling tasks was collected using qualitative methods however, there was

inclusion of descriptive statistics at data analysis level in order to facilitate pattern recognition as Sandelowski, Voils and Knafl (2009, p. 10) state: "Quantitizing' qualitative data is done in qualitative research to facilitate pattern recognition or otherwise to extract meaning from qualitative data, account for all data, document analytic moves and verify interpretations".

3.14.1 Data analysis for the multiple choice Task

This task tested learners' selection of articles in various contexts. The analysis technique performed was the descriptive analysis of the SPSS 17.0 packet program. This analysis indicates at what percentages learners assign the target article and make errors. The first step before analysis was marking the learners' work. For each group the researcher marked the multiple choice task and identified the articles used correctly and incorrectly by both the lower and upper intermediate groups. She placed them in their various contexts and also identified the types of errors made and the causes from the context. To obtain the frequencies and percentages of errors for each group, and the correct use of articles, the SPSS statistical software was used and results were displayed through descriptive statistics.

3.14.2 Data Analysis for the Story-telling Task

The stories were transcribed then typed. The typed stories were read through by the researcher identifying and highlighting areas where article use occurred whether correct or incorrect and the context in which the article was used. The stories were given to two other English language teachers to mark and agree on the correctness and incorrectness of article use. A table for each group was drawn and divided into four columns. The first column was headed correct use and here all the NPs were written with articles correctly used indicating the context beside each NP. The second column

was headed incorrect use and here all NPs with articles incorrectly used were written and the context in which they were used also indicated. The third column contained the type of error and the fourth column the cause of the error.

To obtain the frequencies and percentages of errors for each group, and the correct use of articles, the SPSS statistical software was then used and results were displayed through descriptive statistics.

3.14.3 Data Analysis for the Composition Task

Once the task was done, the compositions were corrected by the researcher who is a teacher of English language. Then the compositions were remarked by two other teachers of English and the three of us reached an agreement on the article errors made. Then just like it had been done with the story telling data, a table was drawn for each group which was divided into four columns. The first column was headed correct use and here all the NPs were written with articles correctly used indicating the context beside each NP. The second column was headed incorrect use and here all NPs with articles incorrectly used were written and the context in which they were used also indicated. The third column contained the type of error and the fourth column the cause of the error.

To obtain the frequencies and percentages of errors for each group, and the correct use of articles, the SPSS statistical software was used and results were displayed through descriptive statistics.

3.14.4 Data Analysis for the Interview Guide

Data generated through teacher interview was analysed thematically. I thematically analysed the data using the step-by-step guide as provided by Clarke and Braun

(2006); and a six stage procedure, Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011). Data analysis involved looking at the data, assigning categories and putting together emerging issues into themes to enable me answer my research question, Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011). The steps involved were; transcription of the data, organizing the data, first phase coding, second phase coding, third phase coding and producing a report. The data constituted of transcripts and observation notes. Analysis was done in a non-linear recursive manner. In the following sections I discuss each of the steps that I followed.

a) Transcribing the Data

I transcribed the data collected from interview sessions through audio recording .This means the verbal data was changed into written form. I did the writing myself because this was important to help me understand the data as pointed out by Dornyei (2007), this process though time consuming and frustrating is a key phase in data analysis within the interpretive qualitative methodology and helps in familiarsing with the data. I transcribed the information verbatim to avoid bias. I read through the transcribed interviews and any ideas emerging from the different participants, as challenges were noted. I later typed the transcribed data in order to produce a soft copy that was easy to work with.

b) Organizing data (Pre-coding).

Iread through the interview transcripts a number of times to internalize the data.The reading was to enable me get general information on what each contained. This stage is referred to as pre-coding and revealed some initial ideas and helped in removing some fillers, repetitions, false starts and other sections that were not relevant. This is called winnowing. Winnowing was important to ensure that only relevant data was retained. Also at this stage a folder for each of the participants was opened where their

initial thoughts were captured. By re-reading the transcripts I familiarized myself with the data and started noting emerging issues from the data. Hence, coding which means highlighting and labelling extracts of transcribed data in a way that they can be retrieved and grouped . Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011) define a code as a label or headline given to a particular chunk of data in a way that is highlighted and grouped as making a particular pattern. Other terms used in data analysis are categories and themes. Therefore a category is a homogeneous grouping of data. A theme is major topic within the study under which a set of categories may be grouped. In this study therefore categories were identified and grouped into themes. I coded my data manually as discussed in the next subsection**.**

c) Familiarization: This is the stage where the researcher familiarizes with the data. I familiarized with the data by reading the entire data to ensure familiarity with the breadth and depth of the content. This involved reading of the data repeatedly listening to taped interviews and making notes. This resulted in generation of thoughts and ideas about what was in the data. In addition, it helped me in identifying ideas for coding as Braun and Clarke (2006) observe; during this phase it is important to start taking notes or identifying ideas for coding that you will then go back to in subsequent phases.

d) Coding: Coding involved assigning codes to underlying concepts that emerged from the data. It involved creation of categories from the transcribed data. I developed a coding system that involved the following procedures: open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

e) Open Coding **(First Phase Coding):**I re-read all the transcripts word for word then I worked systematically through the entire data giving full and equal attention to

each data item so that identical terms could be recognized across the data set. The study objective was used to as a guide and this led me to first identify and this led me to first identify the codes from sections of data from the different transcripts which conveyed an idea and I assigned it a word or phrase that conveyed its essence. The codes were derived from the data itself .Sandleloski (2000) These were grouped together and assigned a label according to the issues they addressed that is, teaching techniques, challenges and difficulties teachers encountered. The labelled chunks were grouped together and assigned codes. These became open codes and then I moved to the next stage referred to as second face coding or axial coding.

f)Second Phase Coding (axial coding): This is the stage where I tried to identify the similarities within the codes created during the first phase coding. I grouped similar codes together but ensured that any meaning brought out in the first phase coding was not lost. The purpose was to avoid unnecessary repetition or overlap.

In the process of assigning of codes I was aware that I was making an interpretation and so caution was taken to ensure that the codes do not change the original meaning of what was said. The main task at this stage was to eliminate reduncies and overlaps and create hierarchies of codes and reduce the bulk data. By the end of this stage I had created categories from the elaborate groupings.

g)Third Phase Coding (Selective Coding): This was the last phase of coding. At this point the various categories which I had grouped together were assigned themes. The themes formed the major issues that the respondents had raised during the interview. They were the various techniques that they employed during instruction and the challenges and concerns that face teachers during the teaching of the English article system. Once more I scrutinized the themes and came up with a set of candidate

themes; this resulted in refining the themes. Some themes were merged others were discarded and others were separated, as suggested by Clark and Braun (2006). Once this was done data was analysed within these themes in chapter four.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

Manson (2000) stresses the importance of all researchers to do research morally; knowledge must be produced in a manner that is moral. He notes that respect for ourselves as researchers, for participants, and for the profession should be observed at all times.

Bearing this in mind there are a number of ethical considerations that the researcher observed: The proposal was forwarded to Moi University for review and approval and to National Commission for Science ,Technology and Innovation (NACOSIT) for approval and acquisition of a research permit before embarking on the research at the selected institutions. The issue of express informed consent was among the priority issues. Informed consent, maintenance of confidentiality and anonymity and adequate considerations were done before the study began. Confidentiality of the respondents was emphasized all through. Participants were given a chance to opt out of the study if they wished. Students who participated in the study were given a chance to discuss any concerns with their teachers before giving their consent. The findings of the study were made available to the participating departments. The respondents were informed of the benefits and the implications of the study.

3.16 Chapter Summary

This chapter has placed the research area of this study in its geographical context and provided an outline of methodological and analytical procedures that were employed

in research preparation and data analysis respectively. The following chapter deals with data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of data gathered in the field. The data analysed was gathered by employing four data generation techniques namely; multiple choice task, picture story telling prompts, composition and teacher interview. Using these instruments the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

a) What are the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the learning of the English article system?

b) What are the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system?

c) What are the causes of the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners when learning of the English article system?

d) What challenges do the teachers of English face when teaching the English L2 article system?

e) What are the semantic challenges faced by the Luhya L1 learners when learning the English L2 article system?

The findings of this study are therefore presented according to the research questions raised above. For the purpose of analysis, data gathered from the multiple choice task is presented quantitatively in tables, graphs, frequencies and percentages to facilitate

comparison. Information elicited through the story telling task, composition and interviews is transcribed and converted into numerical data for statistical analysis.

4. 2 Systematic Developmental Features in the Acquisition of the English Article System by Luhya L1 Learners

The first objective of this study was to investigate the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners of English in the acquisition of the English article system. To help address this objective, a multiple choice task was given to elicit answers from various contexts in order to be able to find out students' accuracy in each context and to determine the developmental features and the acquisition sequence of the English articles for the participants. In the analysis of students' performance the researcher used the descriptive analysis of the SPSS Packet Program. This analysis reveals at what percentages learners assign the correct article and make errors.

The respondents' answers from the lower and upper intermediate classes were categorized into six contexts according to the way the articles are used. The first context involved five questions in which all the NPs were [+definite and +specific] (previous mentioned) therefore requiring the use of 'the'. The second context comprised of five questions in which also all the NPs were +definite +specific (with speaker explicit knowledge of NPs) also requiring the use of 'the'. The third context had five questions in which all the NPs were +definite -specific (with complete denial of the speaker knowledge) requiring the use of 'the'. Therefore for the first three contexts, the target answer was 'the' since the NPs were definite regardless of the speaker's state of knowledge and the specificity of the NPs. The fourth context comprised five questions in which all the targeted NPs were –definite +specific (with

explicit speaker knowledge about NPs) and the target answer was 'a'. The fifth context had five questions in which all NPs were –definite, -specific (first mentioned NPs) and the target answer was 'an'. The final context contained five questions in which the NPs were –definite –specific (with complete denial of speaker knowledge), the targeted answer was ø.

Scrutinizing the collected data from both the lower and upper intermediate classes the following is the presentation and discussion of the findings:

The following sections show the percentage scores and the errors that learners made in the multiple choice task and details of the particular areas in which the articles were inappropriately used or omitted. Along with the incorrect use is also information regarding the correct use. The reason for inclusion of information on the correct article use was to be able to compare and assess to what extent learners used articles correctly and therefore how much they deviated from the actual correct use or to what extent they fluctuated as was predicted in chapter one. To arrive at the percentages of each group use of articles in various contexts, the total number of articles per context was taken and the percentages calculated for correctness and incorrectness. Each context had 5 items. A score of all the five items was equivalent to 100% score and there were 12 students per group therefore for each context the total number of articles produced by learners was 60. Production of articles, correct and incorrect in the 6 contexts was computed and the total of articles was 360 for lower intermediate group and another 360 for upper intermediate group. Percentage scores per context and per group were computed and the information is graphically captured in the following sections.

From Table 4.1, the following observations can be made: The results indicate that the highest percentage of accuracy is observed in upper intermediate group across all the settings while the lowest percentage is observed in lower intermediate group across the settings. The findings also reveal the correct article usage for most of the items was observed in [+Definite + specific].The highest score for both the groups being in[+definite +specific] previous mentioned NPs: 91% for upper intermediate and 83% for lower intermediate. The second highest score is in [+definite +specific] 'explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs: 83% for upper intermediate group and 67% for lower intermediate group. The lowest score is in the [-definite-specific] at the rate of 50% for lower intermediate and 58% for upper intermediate group.

In[+ definite –specific] context, there was a sharp decrease in the level of accuracy for both the groups. In[-Definite + specific] context there was some improvement in performance compared to the previous context where the scores were75% for upper intermediate group and 67% for lower intermediate group. In[–Definite –specific] context where NPs are first mentioned requiring the use of indefinite 'an' the upper intermediate learners scored much higher than the lower intermediate learners. The lower intermediate learners tended to fluctuate between 'an' and 'the' article whereas the upper intermediate learners had control over the indefinite 'an' and answered most of the items correctly scoring 75% against 67% score of the lower intermediate group. The last context[– definite – specific] requiring the use of zero article was most difficult for all learners at both levels, their percentage scores being 50% for lower intermediate group and 58% for upper intermediate. Lower intermediate learners were able to produce correct answers for just half of the items whereas the upper

intermediate class produced correct instances for just over half of the items. Both the groups tended to supply 'the 'in the contexts where zero article was required.

In the following section group scores in each context are presented in detail showing percentages of correct use and incorrect use along with the articles that were used erroneously as substitutions for correct articles.

In context I (+Definite +specific) both groups of learners performed well and their scores are shown in figure 4.1

Table 4.1: Article choice percentage scores in all contexts

Group	[+ Definite +specific] (previous mentioned NPs)	[+ Definite +specific] (speaker has explicit knowledge about NPS)	+Definite -specific (speaker has no knowledge about NPs	[-Definite +specific] (Explicit speaker knowledge about the indefinite NPs	[-Definite -specific] (NPs are first mentioned in the context)	[- Definite -specific] (NPs are anonymous for the speaker)
	The	The	The	A	An	∅
Lower intermediate Group	83%	67%	58%	67%	58%	50%
Upper intermediate Group	91%	83%	58%	75%	75%	58%

In the following section group scores in each context are presented in detail showing percentages of correct use and incorrect use along with the articles that were used erroneously as substitutions for correct articles.

In context I (+Definite +specific) both groups of learners performed well and their scores are shown in Figure 4.1. From Figure 4.1 the following observations can be made: the performance of both the groups in this context is above average although the upper intermediate group scores higher than the lower intermediate group. The upper intermediate group were able to assign the correct article at the rate of 91% while the lower intermediate group scores 83% this means both the groups of learners have control over the article 'the 'in anaphoric context. However they still fluctuate between the definite and indefinite articles though in low proportions. The lower intermediate group fluctuated between their choices of 'the' and 'a'; they chose 'a' instead of 'the' 8.4% while the upper intermediate group did not fluctuate between 'a 'and 'the'. Both the groups however underused 'the' meaning they use the zero article instead of 'the' and they did this in equal proportions of 8.4%.Both the groups did not fluctuate between the definite 'the' and the indefinite 'an' probably because 'an' is the least frequently used article. From this results it is noted that the lower intermediate group fluctuates between 'the', and 'a'They chose 'a'instead of the 8.4%.
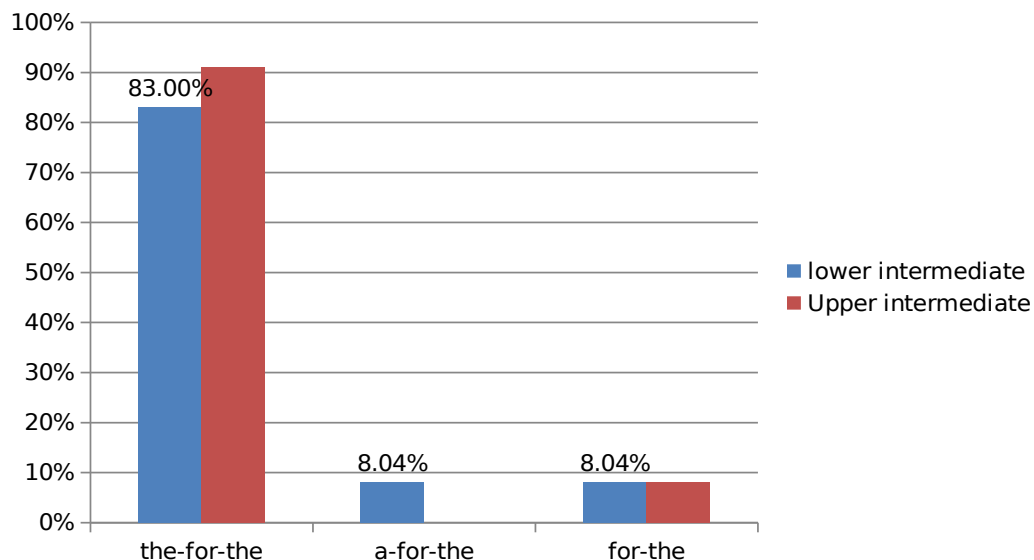
Figure 4.1 Group Scores in Context I

However one item with which most learners scored inaccurately was item 3.

Item 3: Two students chatting on their trip to a town

Tim: Look we will need a snag on our way to Nairobi

Ben: Don't worry, I brought along cookies from my mother's kitchen

Tim: That was a great idea. What shall we have with……….cookies?

   a) The b) a   c) an   d)ø

For this item most of the learners from both groups selected 'ø' instead of 'the'. This could be attributed to misapplication of the rule which requires plural count-nouns in generic contexts to take a zero article and also to the learners not having mastered the first and second mention rule.

In context II (+ Definite +specific) where speaker has explicit knowledge about NPs the performance was also good .The scores are captured in figure 4.2 From figure 4.2 the performance in the second context dropped slightly although the scores are still

high with the upper intermediate group scoring 83% and the lower intermediate 67%. Both classes fluctuated between their choices of 'the' and the rest of the articles. The lower intermediate class selected 'a' instead of 'the' 17% of their answers 'an' for 'the' 8.4% of their answers and 'ø' for 'the' in 8.4 % of their answers. Their choice of 'ø' for 'the' was the same as in the second context. A similar pattern occurred for the upper intermediate   group. Their rate of fluctuation in the second context is higher. They chose 'a' instead of 'the' in 8.4% of their answers, and 'ø' for 'the' in 8.4% of their answers. They again did not fluctuate between 'the' and 'an'. These findings suggest that both groups perform poorly when the answer is 'the' and the NPs are not anaphoric but only recognized by the speaker. The following example from the data supports this assertion:

Item 7: Two classmates in a conversation

> *Mwangi: The trip to Mombasa was very interesting*
>
> *Mbotela: Yes, I was told you learned a lot about domestic tourism and I regretted to have missed the trip*
>
> *Mwangi: Indeed you should have been there to watch the local dancers performing.*
>
> *They performed …………. famous 'sukuti' dance from Western Kenya*
>
> *a)   The   b) a   c) an   d) ø*

In this item some of the learners chose 'ø' and others chose the indefinite 'a'. Their choice of 'a'could be attributed to their not having mastered the cultural use of 'the' where if an NP is well known to the community it takes the definite' the'
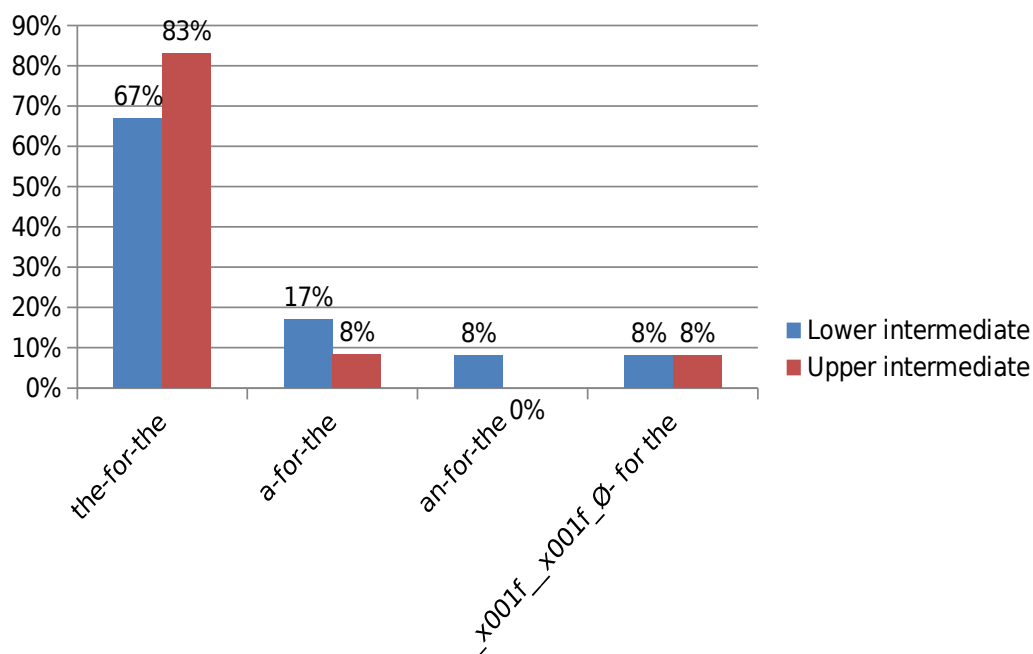
Figure 4.2 Group Scores in Context II

In this item some of the learners chose 'ø' and others chose the indefinite 'a'. Their choice of 'a'could be attributed to their not having mastered the cultural use of 'the' where if an NP is well known to the community it takes the definite' the'

In context III (+ Definite – Specific) where the speaker has no knowledge about the NPs , learners were required to use 'the' in non specific context , performance was poor compared to the firs two contexts; I and II. Their scores are captured in figure 4.3

Results from Figure 4.3 reveal that both the lower and upper intermediate classes fluctuated. Both the groups scored only 58% correct answers. The lower intermediate class chose 'a' instead of 'the' 25 % 'an' for 'the'8.4% and 'ø' for 'the'8.4%. The upper intermediate group chose 'a' for 'the' 17%, and 'an' for 'the'8.4% and 'ø'for'the'17%.From the results it is observed that the performance in this context is

relatively poorer compared to the first and second contexts. It is also observed that the lower intermediate group scores at the rate of 58% are equal to that of the upper intermediate group contrary to the expectation that the upper intermediate group would outperform the lower intermediate group. This implies that there is a decrease in the level of accuracy for both groups in this context. However, the rate of substitution of 'a'for 'the' was much higher for the lower intermediate group at 25% compared to the upper intermediate group at 17%. Also notable is the choice of 'ø' for 'the' by the upper intermediate group which is markedly higher at the rate of 17% compared to the rate of the lower intermediate group at 8.4%.The cause of the decrease in achievement in this context is to some extend due to the fact that that both the groups of learners associate definite 'the' with specificity. Therefore, in [+ Definite – Specific] contexts they fail to use 'the' correctly and instead choose 'a' because they are only considering the notion of specificity and generalizing it to definiteness hence in their thinking what is not specific is also not definite. This leads to fluctuation. In the following item most learners

Item 11:**A mother talking to her daughter's friend**

Jebet: I am looking for Jerome. Is she home?

Jelegat: No, she went to St. Luke's hospital. She wanted to have her tooth removed by …………..dentist at the hospital. I do not know who that dentist is but I know that she wants her tooth removed urgently. She didn't sleep last night

a)   The   b) a   c) an   d) ø

For this item most learners from both groups chose 'a' instead of 'the'. In both cases learners are failing to use 'the' in this context because they are associating 'the' with

specificity and since the context has '–specific' the learners assign 'a 'because it is used in non-specific contexts.

However, substitution of 'a 'for 'the 'is not the only cause of regression in this context. It is observable that there is also the overuse of 'ø' by both groups at 17% for the upper intermediate group and 8.4% for the lower intermediate group. The overuse of 'ø' means that the learners are making errors of omission. For the following item most upper intermediate learners opted for 'ø'

Item 14: Two teachers chatting about recently concluded national drama festivals

Oliwa: Our drama club group was in Nyeri last week for drama festivals.

Waswa: How did they perform?

Oliwa: .They won the competitions in most of the items

Waswa: Wau, your school must be in a celebratory mood!

Oliwa: Indeed we are, the principal is going to reward …..winners

a) The   b) a   c) an   d) ø

Since the use of 'ø' is in considerable proportions in this context particularly for the lower intermediate group, the possible explanation is that there could be a strong influence necessitating the choice of 'ø'. Omission errors can be traced back to the learners' L1 which is articless. Luhya language is article-less and NPs are bare. This could be having an influence on the learners' choice of 'ø' .Contrary to the expectations of the study that the upper intermediate class would outperform the lower class in this context, the upper intermediate group scores poorly at the same

level of accuracy with the lower intermediate class. This is an indication that the generic reference of 'the' is difficult for all L2 learners regardless of their level.
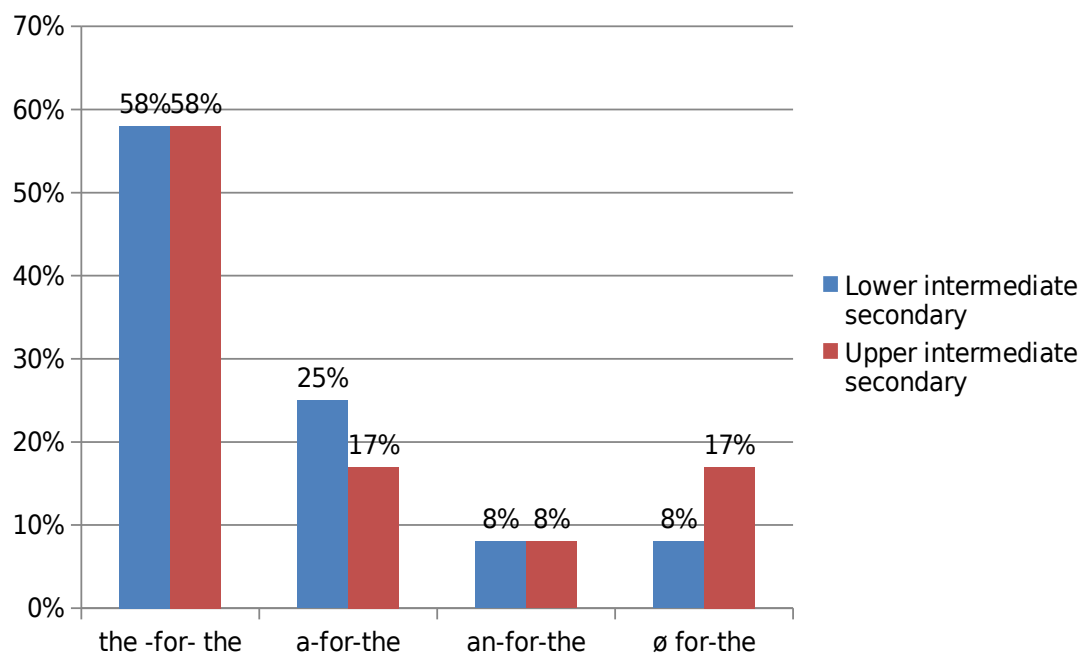
Figure 4.3 Group Scores in Context III

In context IV (-Definite + specific),where the speaker has explicit knowledge about the indefinite NPs, learners were required to use 'a' .Performance in this context was better compared to context III. The results are shown in Figure 4.4 .From figure 4.4 it can be observed that the performance of the two groups in this context is higher compared to the third context but still lower compared to the first and second contexts. In this context the upper intermediate group assigned the correct article at a considerably high rate of 75%.Thelower intermediate group scores 66%. However both groups fluctuate between 'a' and 'the'. Their choice of 'the' for 'a' is 17% for both the groups and 'ø 'for 'a'17% for the lower intermediate group and 8.4% for the upper intermediate group.The confusion of 'an' for 'a' is nil for both the groups. According to fluctuation hypothesis there should be overuse of 'the' mainly in [-

Definite +specific] contexts. Below is an item with which most of the learners had

difficulty

Item 16: A conversation between a tourist and a tour guide

Smith: There are many lions in this park

> *Lelei: Yes, they are a big attraction to the tourists but they are also a menace to the Masaai people who live around the park*
>
> *Smith: Oh, is that so?*
>
> *Lelei: Oh yes, in fact last week a young Masai man killed …… lion from this park.*
>
> *a) The   b) a   c) an   d) ø*

Many
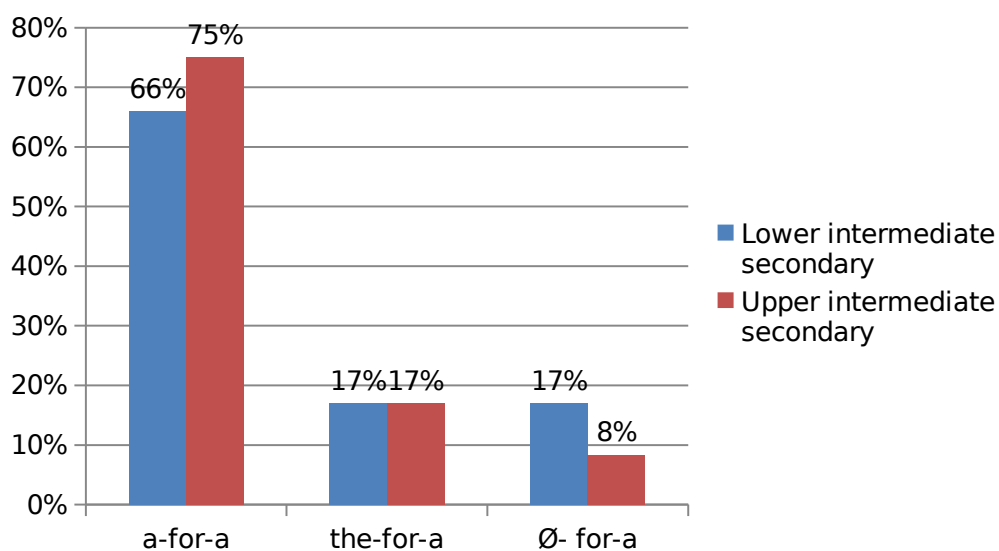
learners both lower and upper intermediate opted for 'the' instead of 'a' for this item.

Figure 4.4 Group Scores in Context IV

The reason could be misapplication of the rule with regard to anaphoric use of 'the'

Context V (– Definite –Specific) where NPs are first mentioned in the context, required learners to use 'an'.The results are presented in Figure 4.5

Figure 4.5 shows that the performance for both groups dropped slightly in this context. The upper intermediate scored 75% while the lower intermediate group scored 58%. For both groups 'the' was over-used in higher proportions than the other articles. Both groups overused 'the' where 'an' was required at the rate of 25% for the lower intermediate group and 17% for the upper intermediate group. Both the groups also overused 'ø' article where 'an' was required in the same proportions of 8.4%. However while the lower intermediate group fluctuated between 'a' and 'an 'choosing 'a' instead of 'an' in 8.4% of their answers, the upper intermediate group did not fluctuate between 'a' and 'an'.

The lower intermediate group performed poorly in this context. They failed to assign the correct article at a rate of 42%.The reason for this poor performance could be attributed to the late acquisition of the indefinite 'an'. Many lower intermediate learners initially have difficulty with 'an' although in this context their choice of 'the' for 'an' could also be attributed to the notions of specificity and definiteness. Following is an illustration from the data:

Item 22: A conversation between two classmates

Joyce: Let's go to the library on Saturday and revise for our exams

Lilian: Saturday will not be good for me
Joyce: Why not?
Lillian: I have to attend …..…...engagement party of a friend on
Saturday
    a) The   b) a c) an   d) ø

For this item many learners from the lower intermediate group opted for 'the 'instead

of 'an.' the better performance of the upper intermediate group also shows that levels

of performance improve as proficiency of the learners improve
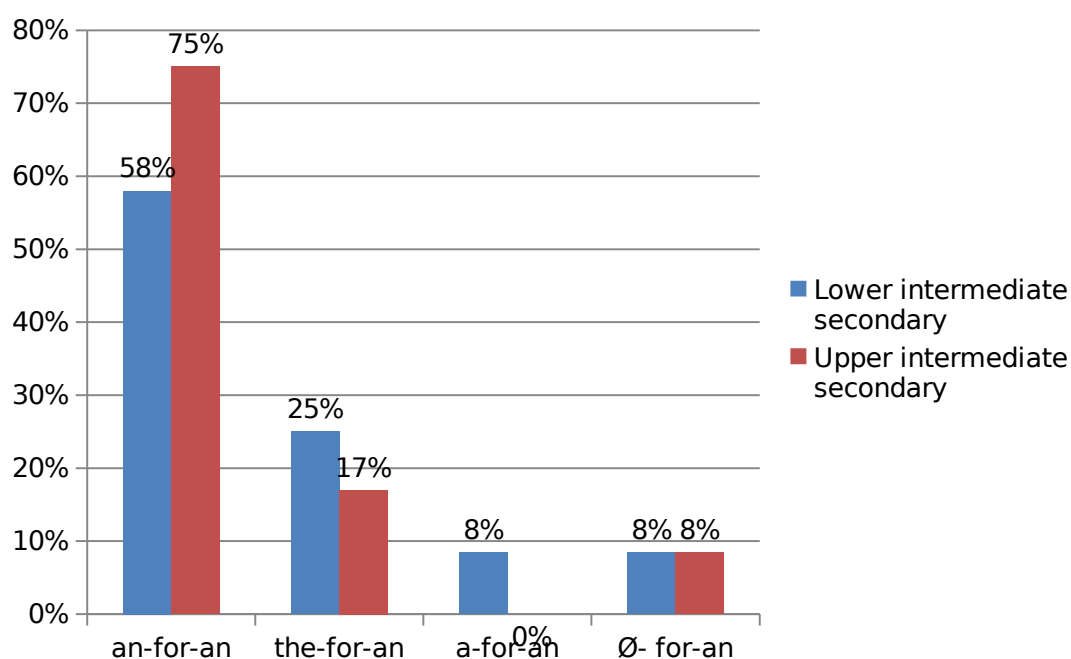
Figure 4.5 Group Scores in Context V

The sixth context (–Definite –Specific) where the NPs are anonymous for the speaker

presented difficulties for the learners which reflected in their poor performance. The

results are shown in Figure 4.6The analysis of the sixth context as shown in Figure

4.6,presents a scenario almost similar to context III, both groups register poor

performance; with the upper intermediate group only performing slightly better than

the lower intermediate group. In this context the lower intermediate group scored 50%

against 58% for the upper intermediate group. An interesting aspect of the data

reveals that both the groups misused' the' for 'ø 'in high proportions; 25% for the upper intermediate group and 33% for the lower intermediate group. This is the context in which 'the' is overused the highest. A look at the items in which 'the' was used instead of 'ø', shows that this was in contexts where the NPs were generic mass nouns and generic plural countable nouns. Both groups faired on poorly in the following items from the data: Use of 'a' for 'ø' was also evident for both groups in equal proportions of 17%. Items 26 and 27 illustrate this problem.

Item 26: A conversation between secretary and manager

Secretary: Which edition of the book did you say should be sold?

Manager: Only the new edition of the book should be sold, and I have already sent all our salesmen …………….instructions to that effect

    a) The   b) a c) an   d) ø

Item 27: A conversation between husband and wife

Anyolo: Can you prepare us some tea, my dear?

Nandwa: I'm afraid I can't

Anyolo: why not?

Nandwa: The dry season has led to shortage of …………milk. We hardly have enough to spare for evening tea. Would you mind black coffee?

    a) The   b) a c) an   d) ø

In both the items most learners chose 'the' instead of 'ø'. Use of 'a' for 'ø' was also evidence for both groups in equal proportions of 17%.
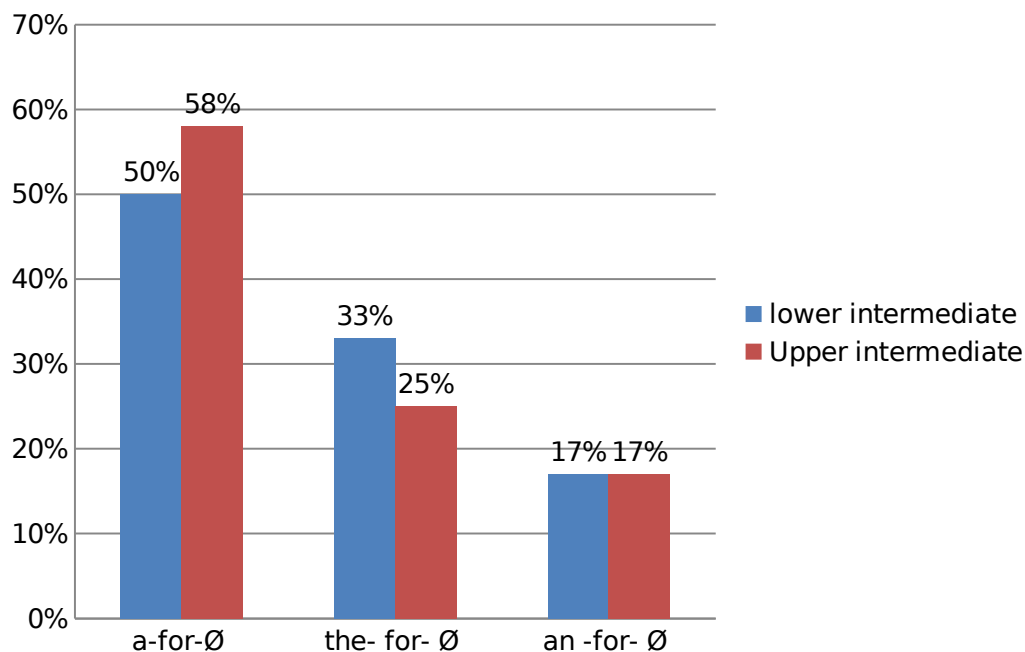
Figure 4.6 Group Scores in context VI

From the foregoing analysis it is noted that, fluctuation, overuse and omission are the developmental features of the English article system for these learners. It is also observed that the upper intermediate learners perform better in all the contexts except context III. This means as learners' progress from lower levels to higher levels their performance improves as a result of more exposure to the target language. However the sequence in which the article system is acquired is also an important developmental feature. For further details to establish developmental features the collected data was further analysed for performance in every article per group. The total answers per context for each group was 60 and the sum total of articles produced per group was 360 accurate; inaccurate answers included. The information was computed and is captured in table 4.2:It should be noted that the definite 'the' was tested in three contexts so the total number of articles for 'the' is 60 x3= 180. Therefore the figure 125 for lower intermediate and 140 for upper intermediate group are the totals of articles used correctly in the three contexts requiring the use of 'the'.

From table 4.2 the following facts emerge: both groups fluctuated between the definite article 'the' and 'a/an'. The lower intermediate group chose 'a' instead of 'the' 25 (7%), 'an' instead of 'the' 10 (3%). Use of 'a' for 'ø' was also evident for both groups in equal proportions of 17%, 'the' instead of 'a' 10 (3%) 'the' instead of 'an' 15 (4%); the upper intermediate group chose 'a' instead of 'the' 10(3%) 'an' instead of 'the' (5) (1%)' 'the' instead of 'a' 10 (3%) and 'the' instead of 'an' (3%).

The highest fluctuation rate was however realized in context III where the definite article 'the' was required and learners chose the indefinite 'a' instead. This is as predicted by the fluctuation hypothesis which advances the view that in the process of acquisition of the article system, L2 learners will fluctuate between definiteness and specificity as they try to set the correct parameter. Initially they are in a dilemma as to whether to assign articles on the basis of definiteness or specificity. So at one time they assign articles on the basis of specificity and at another time they assign articles on the basis of definiteness. Thus for L2 learners fluctuation between definiteness and specificity is a common developmental feature.

However, also observed in the data is overuse and underuse of 'the' 'a' and 'an'. The highest rate of overuse is realized with the article 'the'. The lower intermediate learners overuse 'the' instead 'ø' 20 (5%) and 'an' instead of 'ø' 10 (3%) . The upper intermediate overuse 'the' instead of 'ø''15(4%) and 'an' instead of 'ø' 10 (3%).Use of 'a' for 'ø' was also evident for both groups in equal proportions of 17%.

Both the groups also underused 'the'. The lower intermediate learners select 'ø' instead of 'the' 20(5%); 'ø' instead of 'a' 10 (3%) and 'ø' instead of 'an' 5 (1%). The upper intermediate learners select 'ø' instead of 'the' 25 (7%); 'ø' instead of 'a' 5 (1%) and 'ø' instead of 'a' 5 (1%). Underuse means that learners are omitting a given article

in contexts where it is required therefore omission is also a developmental feature exhibited by these learners.

Table 4.2 also reveals that the lower intermediate group registered a higher number of errors at 36%. The upper intermediate class registered less errors at 26%. The upper intermediate group scored higher at 74% compared to the lower intermediate group which scored 64%.It can therefore be concluded that learners' proficiency levels improve with more exposure to the target language. The upper intermediate group has obviously had a longer period of exposure to the target language which is reflected in their performance which is better compared to the lower intermediate group who have had less exposure to the target language. This performance is again defended by the Fluctuation hypothesis view according to which learners do not continue fluctuating but rather the fluctuation decreases or completely disappears after they have received sufficient input.

Table 4.2 Required Articles and selected Articles.

	Required Articles	Selected articles				Total	
Lower Intermediate		the	A	an	Ø		
Group	The	125	25	10	20		
	A	10	40	0	10		
	An	15	5	35	5		
	Ø	20	0	10	30		
Correct		125	40	35	30	230	64%
Incorrect		55	20	25	30	130	36%
Upper intermediate		the	A	an	Ø		
Group	The	140	10	5	25		
	A	10	45	0	5		
	An	10	0	45	5		
	Ø	15	0	10	35		
Correct		140	45	45	35	265	74%
Incorrect		40	15	15	25	95	26%

Article representation for accurate and inaccurate use was then analyzed per group and results displayed graphically again per group. The results for lower intermediate group are shownin figure 4.7. For the group, .the total answers were 360 (100%).

From figure 4.7 the correct answers are 225 (68%)and the incorrect answers are 120 which is (32%).

From the analysis it was noted that the lower intermediate group registered the highest score in the use of the article 'the'(when all the contexts in which 'the' was tested are put together) in which the score is 125 (69%) out of 180 (100%).This is followed by 'a' where the score is 40 (67%) out of 60 (100%).The third article in the range is in the use of 'an'; where the score is 35 (58%) of 60.
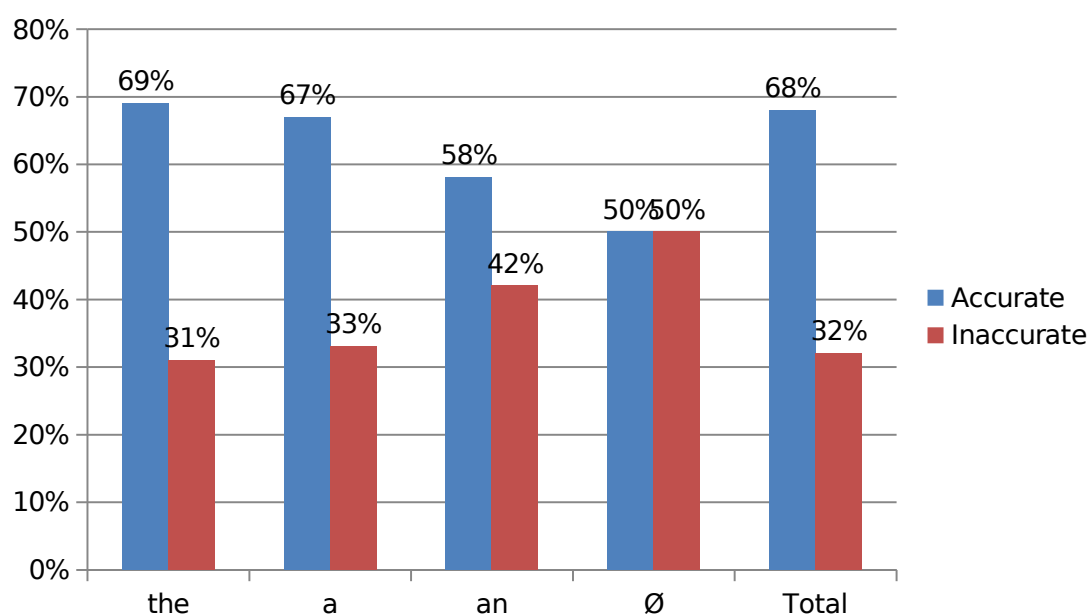
The least score is registered in the use of ø. Lower intermediate group use ø correctly in 30 (50%) of their answers.

Figure 4.7 Article Representation accurate and inaccurate Lower Intermediate
Group

From figure 4.8 the total answers are 360. The correct answers are 265 (74%) and the incorrect answers are 95 (26%).

From Figure 4.8 the following conclusion is arrived at: The upper intermediate group registered the highest score in the use of 'the' they used 'the' correctly in 140(78%) of their answers out of 180(100%). The second highest score is in the use of 'a/an' where the group scored 45 (75%) out of 60 (100%) for correct use of 'a' and45 (75%) for correct use of 'an'. The last in the sequence is the acquisition of 'ø' in which the group registered the lowest score of 35 (58%) out of 60 (100%).
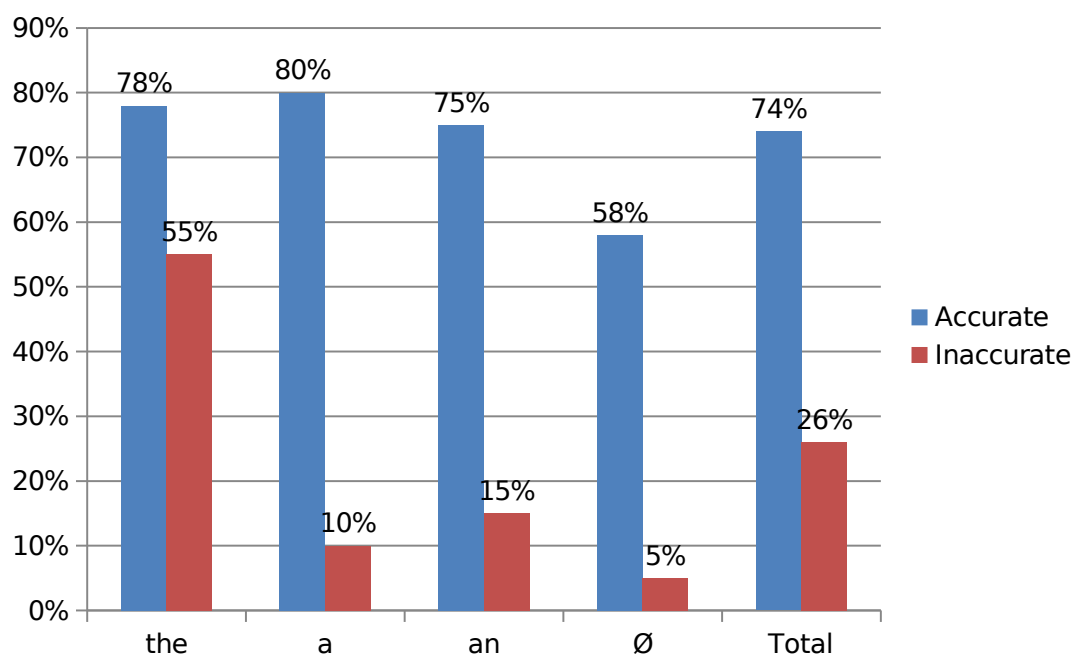
Figure 4.8 Article Representation Accurate and Inaccurate Upper intermediate
Group.

From this analysis it is observed that the acquisition sequence of the English article system for the lower intermediate group is the> a>an> ø and for the upper

intermediate group it is the> a/an >ø. One of the reasons for the late acquisition of 'ø' could be that learners don't consider it as an article since it is not visible in the input; in fact teachers often only focus on the three articles 'a' 'an' and 'the' and rarely teach the zero article.

When the difficulties, the differences and the sequence of the article acquisition by the two groups are considered the following observations can be made based on the findings: the earliest and easiest article to acquire for both groups is 'the' followed by 'a', 'an' then lastly 'ø'.

For the high proficiency levels in the use of 'the 'it is noteworthy that the best performance is in context1 [+definite +specific]the anaphoric use, where the groups register 91% and 83% answers correct for upper and lower intermediate groups respectively. Here both the groups had native-like performance probably due to the fact that teachers often focus their teaching on anaphoric use. The worst performance in the use of 'the 'for both the groups is in context 111[+Definite -specific]. This is the most problematic area in the use of 'the 'and it shows the least observed percentage of accuracy for both the groups 58% and50% correct answers for upper and lower intermediate groups respectively.. Two articles tied in the sequence for the upper intermediate group that is, 'a' and 'an'. They are the second articles to acquire for the upper intermediate group. This could also be as a result of more exposure to L2 by the upper intermediate group compared to the lower intermediate groups who have had less exposure.

Another observation from the results is that the most difficult article to acquire for both the groups is 'ø' article. This is surprising because the study predicted that since the L1 of the learners has no article system and the structure of their Luhya L1 mostly

consists of bare nouns then the learners would acquire the zero article earlier than others but this is not the case. This finding however tends to agree with Master's (2007) observation that in the course of acquisition of the English article system, L2learners particularly those who do not have an article system in their L1 have a problem with the zero article in all environments as they tend to overuse it. In this particular context the problem learners had with the article system emanated from two areas: use of 'ø' where it was not required and substitution of 'the' for 'ø'.

4.3 Types of Systematic Errors of the Multiple Choice Task

To further analyse the developmental features exhibited in the learner language, the errors learners made based on the multiple choice task were classified guided by Tomiyana,Wang, Rachanee (in Elwefarlli, 2013). The following types of errors were made: omission errors, unnecessary insertion of articles and confusion errors. They are explained below:

i) Omission Errors (underuse)

In omission context, a learner fails to use an article where it is required.

ii) Unnecessary Insertion of Articles (overuse)

These kinds of errors occur when a learner inserts an article where it is not required. In other words a learner inserts an article where a zero article is required.

iii) Confusion Errors (fluctuation and overuse)

Confusion errors occur when a learner uses an article in a context where another article would have been more appropriate leading to overuse of that particular article.

To arrive at the percentage of each type of error, the number of errors per group was multiplied by 100 and divided by the total number of all errors. Table 4.3 displays   a summary of article errors by type in the multiple choice task.

From Table 4.3 the total number of errors is 225, of this omission errors are 65 (29%). Confusion errors 100 (47%) and errors of unnecessary insertion of articles are 55(24%). Unnecessary insertion of articles results in overuse. From table 4.3 it is evident that confusion errors are the highest. Confusion errors are a result of fluctuation between 'the' and 'a'/'an'. This is in line with the propositions of the fluctuation hypothesis that L2 learners with an articles L1 tend to fluctuate between the definite 'the'and indefinite 'a'/ 'an' initially until more exposure to the language helps them to set the parameters right. Confusion errors also often result in overuse and in this study they have resulted into the overuse of 'the'.

Table 4.3 Summary of Article Errors by Type in the Multiple Choice Task

	Total number of errors	**Types of errors**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
		Omission errors (underuse)	70	29%
		Confusion errors (fluctuation)	100	47%
		Unnecessary insertion errors (overuse)	55	24%
Total	**225**		**225**	**100%**

The errors were further grouped based on the type and per group in order to ascertain the percentages of errors made by each group and the type of errors made. This helped to establish the most frequent errors and the least frequent errors. The categories of errors and their frequencies are displayed based on the group in table 4.4

Table 4.4 reveals a detailed categorization of the errors; the frequency and percentages of these errors per group. From table 4.4 it can be observed that the lower intermediate group had a higher number of article errors, 130 (58%) compared to the upper intermediate group which had 95 (42%). It can also be observed that the lower intermediate group had higher percentages of confusion errors at 70 (31%) and unnecessary insertion errors at 30 (13%) compared to the upper intermediate group which had 35 (16%) confusion errors and 35 (16%) of unnecessary insertion errors. However, with omission errors, the upper intermediate group had a higher number of this type of errors at 35 (16%) compared to the lower intermediate group at 30 (13%).

Table 4.4 Summary of Article Errors of the Multiple Choice Task by Type and Group

Group	Total number of errors	Types of article errors	Frequency of errors per type	Percentage of errors per type.
Lower intermediate	130	Omission errors	35	13%
		Confusion errors	65	31%
		Unnecessary insertions	30	13%
Upper intermediate	95	Omission errors	35	16%
		Confusion errors	35	16%
		Unnecessary insertions	25	11%
Total	**225**		**225**	**100%**

In the next section the number of errors per type and an explanation of the causes of these errors is presented.

a) Omission Errors

Omission errors occur when an article is left out in a context where it is required. Table 4.5 shows the number of omission errors and their categories.

i) Omission of 'a'/'an'

The omission of 'the' was more frequent than the omission of "a/an"as revealed in table 4.5. The frequency of 'a' 'an' omission was 10 (4%) among the lower intermediate group and 10 (4%) in upper intermediate group. The performance of both the lower and upper intermediate groups was similar. The number of errors of omission of 'the' is higher than the omission of 'a' 'an' at7% for lower intermediate and 11% for upper intermediate. The omission errors were partly due to learners L1 which has no articles and also due to the complexity of the article system as is illustrated in the following excerpt:

Item 17: Friends chatting

Rono: How is the situation in Baringo?

Yatich: People have stopped fighting, in fact there's……..strong desire for reconciliation.

a) The   b) a   c) an   d) Ø

Use of articles with count and non-count nouns usually poses problems to learners. There are several non-count nouns used as countable nouns like 'desire' in item 17. Such abstract nouns are in many cases a problem to learners where learners rob them

of their indefinite article when it is required. Learners tend to think such NPs with abstract nouns are non-count. But it also could be an influence from the learners' L1. In both the cases however the errors mainly arise from the target language so they are intra-lingual.

ii) Omission of 'the'

From table 4.5 the number of errors of omission of 'the' is higher than the omission of 'a' 'an' at 7% for lower intermediate group and 11% for upper intermediate group. Omission of the definite article 'the' was more frequent than the omission of 'a' 'an' for both the upper and lower intermediate groups. The omission of 'the' for the lower intermediate group was (7%) and for the upper intermediate (11%) whereas the omission of 'a'/ 'an' for both groups was (4%). Some of the omissions of 'the' were evident in cases where the referents required definiteness since they but some learners omitted 'the'. This is evident in the following items:

Item 2: A woman and house-help are talking

> *Terry: Did you pack for Ivy some bananas to carry to school?*
> *Lena: Yes I did but she left ………… bananas and took popcorn instead*
> a) the   b) a   c) an   d)) ø

Item 15: Friends are chatting at a restaurant

Owino: I dont like tilapia served in Nairobi hotels

Mulama: I too; it doesn't have the same flavour as the one served in Western

Owino: I'm told it does'nt come from the lake but from artificial fish bonds

Common in the country nowadays but many customers still prefer it to 'mbuta'

Mulama: Oh yes; among ……………. fish tilapia is the most popular sea food

a) The   b) a   c) an   d) ø

In item 2 the omission occurs in a case where a noun has been mentioned earlier (previous mentioned) and therefore requires a definite article but this was omitted. A look at the learners L1 structure tends to point at its influence in these cases. For example, item 2 in the learners' L1 the NP bananas is bare so the learners could be directly translating the structure of L1 to L2 resulting in an omission error.

Table 4.5 Omission Errors

Group	Number of Omission Errors	Category					
		Omission of 'a' /an		Omission of 'an'		Omission of "the"	
		Frequency	Percentage	Freq.	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Intermediate	35	10	4%	0	0%	20	7%
Upper Intermediate	35	5	2%	0	0%	25	11%

b)Unnecessary insertion of articles

Unnecessary insertion of articles occurs when learners insert an article (usually 'a' 'an' and 'the') where an article is not required. Table 4.6 reveals that learners made these kinds of errors. In this task the unnecessary insertion of articles occurred in context IV where a zero article was required but the learners inserted either the definite 'the' or indefinite 'an'. Unnecessary insertion errors in the multiple choice

task only occurred in the last context where a zero article was required. Both the lower and the upper intermediate groups made this error. The scores are shown in table 4.6

From Table 4.6 it is evident that the lower intermediate group has a slightly higher percentage of unnecessary insertion errors at 12% compared to the 11% of the upper intermediate group. Unnecessary insertion of articles is evident in situations where learners are required to use a zero article but instead insert a definite or indefinite article. In this task only the definite article 'the 'and indefinite article 'an' were erroneously inserted. The following excerpts from the task are illustrations:

Item 27: A conversation between husband and wife

> *Wasike: Can you prepare us some tea dear?*
> *Rose: I'm afraid I can't*
> *Wasike: Why not?*
> *Rose: The dry season has led to the shortage of …………… milk. We*
> *   hardly have enough to spare for evening tea.*
> *a) the   b)a   c) an   d) ø*

Item 26 A conversation between manager and secretary

> *Secretary: Which edition of the book did you say should be sold?*
> *Manager: Only the new edition of the book is to be sold and I*
> *   have   already   sent   all   our   salesmen…………...*
> *   instructions to that effect*
> *   a)   the   b) a   c) an   d) ø*

In both items 27 and 26 the article 'the' is erroneously inserted. The nouns milk and instructions are first mentions therefore "milk" being uncountable and "instructions" plural, both require a zero article instead of the definite "the". The overuse of 'the' could be a result of learners having a problem with the generic use of zero before plural count nouns and non- count nouns. Or it could be due to overgeneralization and transfer of training. In most text books for secondary school learners in Kenya,

definite and indefinite articles are given more prominence than the zero article, learners may therefore over-generalize the use of the definite and indefinite articles, incorrectly using them in situations that require the use of the zero article.

Table 4.6 Unnecessary Insertion of articles (overuse)

Group	Number of Unnecessary insertion Errors	Category					
		Insertion of 'a'		Insertion of 'an'		Insertion of "the"	
		Frequency	Percentage	Freq.	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Intermediate	30	0	0	10	4%	20	8%
Upper Intermediate	25	0	0	10	4%	15	7%
TOTAL	**55**	**0**	**0**	**20**	**8%**	**35**	**15%**

c) Confusion Errors

Confusion errors occur in contexts where a learner does not know the correct article to use so he/she uses the definite and indefinite articles interchangeably. The learner substitutes the indefinite 'a'/'an' for the definite 'the' or the definite 'the' for 'a' or 'an'. In other cases the learner substitutes 'a' for 'an' or 'an' for 'a'. In the multiple choice task the errors of confusion were the highest at 105 (47%). Table 4.7 shows the details of percentages of confusion errors per group.

From table 4.7 the following facts emerge: The frequency of confusion errors is higher in the lower intermediate group at 70% (31%) against the upper intermediate group 35(16%). This result possibly shows that confusion errors are more frequent in the relatively low proficiency levels of students than in advanced learners. Fluctuation between 'a 'and 'the 'was the highest in both the groups. The lower intermediate group chose 'a' instead of 'the' 13% and the upper intermediate 10%.The lower intermediate group chose 'the' instead of 'a'/ 'an'11%.And the upper intermediate group chose 9%.This results confirm the prediction advanced by the fluctuation hypothesis that L2 learners initially fluctuate between 'a' and 'the' in [+definite –specific] and [–definite +specific] contexts in the process of article acquisition. These two were the contexts in which the learners experienced the highest level of confusion.

Table 4.7 Confusion Errors

Group	Number of Errors	Category							
		'a' '' instead of 'the'		'an' instead of the		the instead of 'a' an'		"a " instead of 'an'	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Lower Intermediate	65	25	13%	10	4%	25	11%	5	2%
Upper Intermediate	35	10	4%	5	2%	20	9%	0	0%
TOTAL	100								

4.4 Causes of the Errors of the multiple choice Task

The causes of the errors were errors of the multiple choice task were anlyzed and computed according to type. The causes and frequency of the errors are shown in

table4.8 .From table 4.8 the following findings emerge: Most errors the learners made were caused by the complexity of the article system itself meaning they emanated from the target language and are therefore intra-lingual. Errors resulting from L1influence are much less in this task (33%) probably because learners were conditioned to use articles in specific contexts. It is also noted that the notions of specificity and definiteness where learners are uncertain as to whether to use definite and indefinite articles in specific and non-specific contexts played a significant role in influencing article choice in this task accounting for 45% of the errors.

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Table 4.8 Summary of the Causes of Errors of the Multiple Choice Task.

Cause	Error type		Freq.	Percentage
Overgeneralization	Confusion	'The' for 'an	25	11%
(Intra-lingual)		'the' for 'a'	20	9%
		'a' for 'the'	35	15%
		'an' for 'the'	20	9%
			100	45%
		'		
Overgeneralization	Unnecessary insertion	the' for 'ø'	35	11%
(Intralingual)		'an' for'ø'	20	9%
			55	23%
Total			**155**	**67%**
L1 Influence	Omission errors	'ø' for 'the'	45	
(Interlingual)	-	'ø' for 'an'	20	
		'ø' for 'a'	10	
Total			**75**	**33%**

4.5 Summary of the Findings of the Systematic Developmental Features among Luhya L1 learners in the Acquisition of the English Article System

The aim of this section was to address the first research question which was to establish the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the learning of English L2 articles. The findings reveal the following features: fluctuation overuse and omissions. Fluctuation in this section is exhibited by learners' substitution of incorrect articles for correct articles. This was evident in context 111 where learners used 'a' instead of 'the' and in context IV where 'the' was used instead of 'a'. However the misuse of 'a' for 'the' was more frequent indicating that learners have more difficulties in contexts where 'the' is used generically. There was evidence of overuse of 'the' more frequently in contexts where 'ø' article was

required and omission of 'the' also in contexts where it was required. Overall learners fluctuated between definiteness and specificity as was predicted. Considering their performance, upper intermediate learners exhibited a higher level of proficiency compared to lower intermediate learners. However both the groups tended to be more at home with the definite contexts than indefinite contexts.

4.6 Types of Systematic Article Errors of the Storytelling Task

The second objective of this study was to investigate the systematic errors of English L2 among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system. To realize this objective, a story-telling task was used. The purpose of the story telling task was to allow learners to express themselves freely and enable the study to capture a variety of types and sources of errors including the errors that were or may have been missed in the multiple choice task and thus enhance the results of the study. The results are discussed in the following sections.

The study computed the total number of errors made by learners in their oral productions and came up with the total number of articles used correctly and incorrectly and the percentage of errors per group. Table 4.9shows a general view of the number of articles used by both the lower intermediate group and the upper intermediate group. Correct usage for the lower intermediate group is 27% and for the upper intermediate group is 37 %. While incorrect use for lower intermediate group is19% compared to the upper intermediate group which is 17%. From these results it can be concluded that the upper intermediate group seems to perform better

Table 4.9 Total Number of Articles Used in the Story- telling Task correctly and incorrectly

Group	Total No. of Articles	Correct use	Percentage	Incorrect use	Percentage
Lower intermediate	660	390	27%	270	19%
Upper Intermediate	712	520	37%	242	17%
Total	**1422**	**910**	**64%**	**512**	**36%**

The study computed and put into categories the article errors made by learners in oral productions. Once the total number of articles used correctly and incorrectly was arrived at it was found necessary to place them in contexts in which they were used as was done with the multiple choice task for the purpose of corroboration. It was noted that both groups performed poorly when they were required to narrate a story from picture prompts. Both groups registered less percentages in their scores compared to their performance in the multiple choice task. In the following section the information is graphically displayed showing the contexts in which articles were used. The study begins by examining the contexts in which articles were used in figure 4.9

From Figure 4.9, it is observed that both groups performed poorly when they were required to narrate a story from picture prompts. Both groups registered less percentages in their scores compared to their performance in the multiple choice task in the same contexts. It is also notable that in (+definite +specific)contexts there was frequent use of demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions to express specificity leading to substitution of "that" "this" and "in" for "the". Results reveal that correct use of "the" in (+definite +specific) where NPs are mentioned previously is 58% for the lower intermediate group and 62% for the upper

intermediate group. The lower intermediate group substituted 'a' for 'the' 6%, 'an' for 'the' 2% and ø for 'the' 19%. They use 'this' 'that' and 'those' for 'the' 8%, 'in' for 'the' 4% and 'his' for 'the' 4%. The upper intermediate group substituted 'a' for 'the' 5%, 'an' for 'the' 4%, 'ø' for 'the' 15%, 'this' 'that' and 'those' for 'the' 8%, ø' for 'the' 15%, 'in' for 'the' 3% and 'his' for 'the' 2%. It is also evident that in this context there is omission of 'the' in high proportions In this context there is fluctuation between the indefinite 'a/an' and 'the' and there is also omission of 'a' and 'the'. It can therefore be concluded that fluctuation and omission are the most outstanding developmental features in this context leading to errors of confusion and omission.
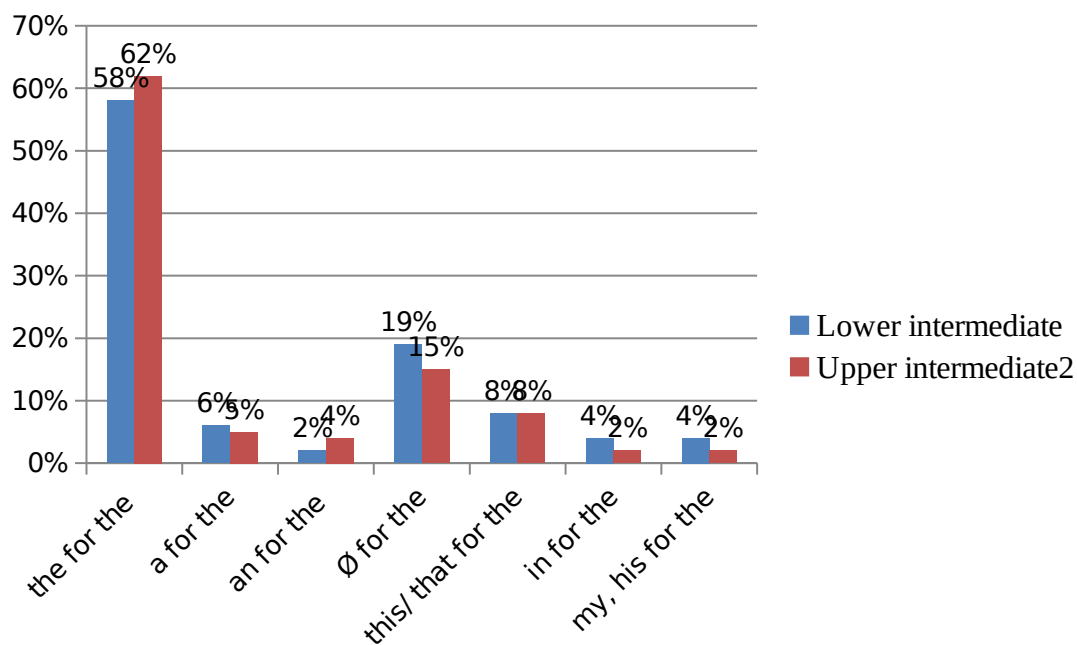
Figure 4.9 Group Article Use in context I

Figure 4.10 reveals that both groups registered higher scores in this context than in the first context. The lower intermediate group used 'the 'correctly 73% and the upper intermediate group used 'the' correctly 71%. Their substitutions rates were low. The lower intermediate group substituted 'a' for 'the' in 8% of their answers 'an' for 'the' 8% and 'ø' for 'the' 9%. The upper intermediate group had a higher proportion of substitutions than the lower intermediate. They substituted 'a' for 'the' 14% and 'ø' for 'the' 15%. They however did not fluctuate between 'an' and 'the'. Although the percentage scores in this context are higher than the first context, it was noted that production of articles in this context was minimal and substitutions were also minimal. Minimal use of articles in this context means that learners were influenced by their LI as there isevidence of use of demonstrative and possessive pronouns instaed of 'the'
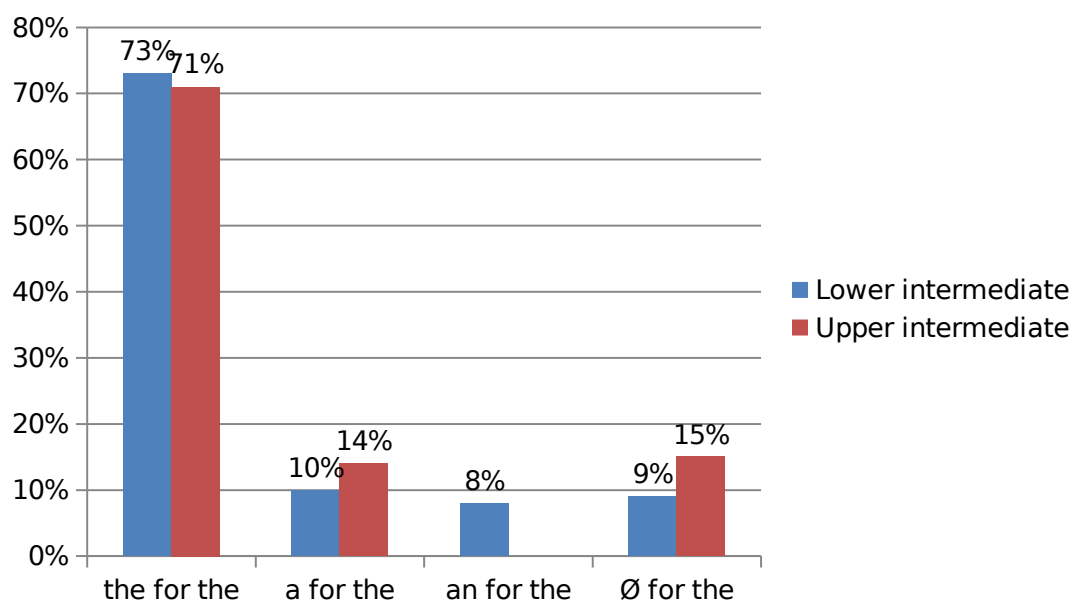
Figure 4.10 Group Article Use in Context II

Before I move on to the next context I should note here that use of 'the' in context III was conspicuously lacking in this task .

Group Article Use in Context IV (–Definite +Specific) which shows explicit speaker knowledge about NPS reveals that learners in oral productions did best compared to other contexts. From figure 4.11 the following facts emerge; the performance of the groups in this context is better than the performance in the previous contexts. However, the upper intermediate group registered a higher performance than the lower intermediate group in this context (-definite + specific) where the required article is 'a'. The lower intermediate group used 'a' correctly 53% whereas the upper intermediate group used 'a' correctly 77%. However, both the groups also deviated from correct use of 'a' and expectedly the lower group had a higher number of incorrect uses, the group used 'the' instead of 'a' 15%, and 'ø' instead of 'a' again 20%. The upper intermediate group used 'the' instead of 'a' 14% and 'ø' instead of 'a' 3%. The lower group used the possessives 'his 'my' for 'a' 11% and the upper group 6%. Both groups did not misuse 'an'.In this context both the groups perform well but still their performance was lower compared to their performance in the multiple choice task. It can therefore be seen that confusion and errors of omission are evident in this context.
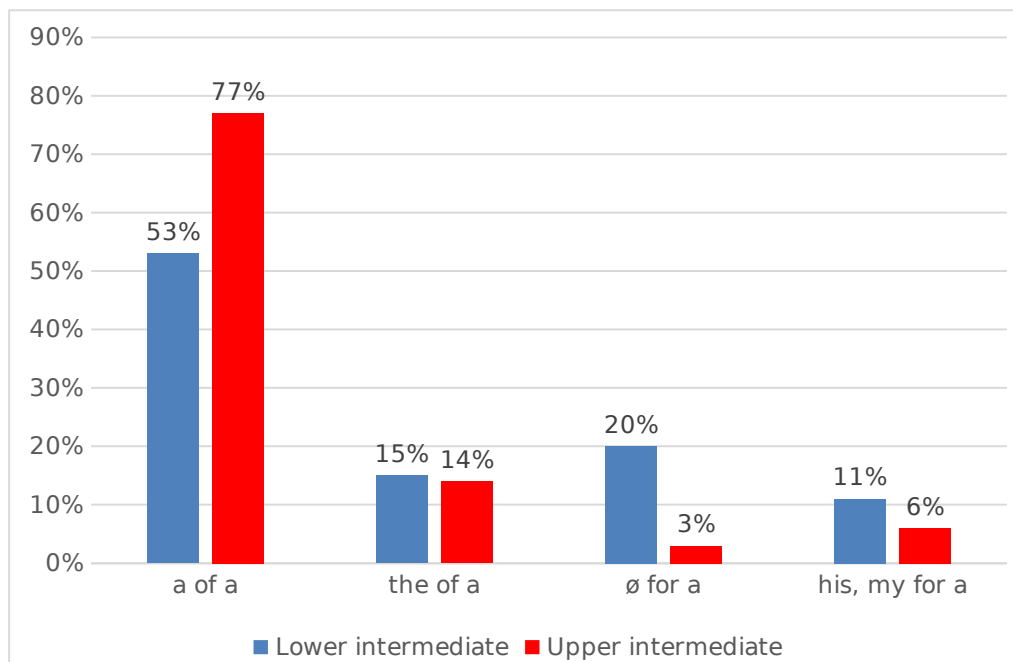
Figure 4.11 Group Article use in Context IV

From Figure 4.12 the results for context V(-definite -definite) where the required article is 'an' are interesting. The upper intermediate group out performs the lower intermediate group by far. The lower intermediate group registered 50% of 'an' uses correctly while the upper intermediate group registered 79% of 'an' uses correctly. However they both still fluctuate. The lower intermediate group substituted 'the' for 'an' 25% and 'ø' for 'an' also 25%. The upper intermediate group substituted 'the' for 'an' 11% and 'ø for 'an'9%. The reason for the differences could be attributed to the fact L2 learners initially have a problem with the indefinite 'an 'particularly with uncountable nouns. Their use of 'an' however improves as their proficiency level also improves. This could explain why the lower intermediate group that has had less exposure to the target language perform dismally compared to the upper intermediate group. Notable also in this context are errors of omission in high proportions and

confusion errors arising from fluctuation. However, when we compare the performance of this context of the story telling task, the lower intermediate group performed better in the multiple choice task than in the story-telling task, whereas the upper intermediate group performed slightly better in the story-telling task than in multiple choice task. The explanation could be that due to exposure to more input and a higher level of confidence the upper intermediate group can express themselves better orally than the lower intermediate group.
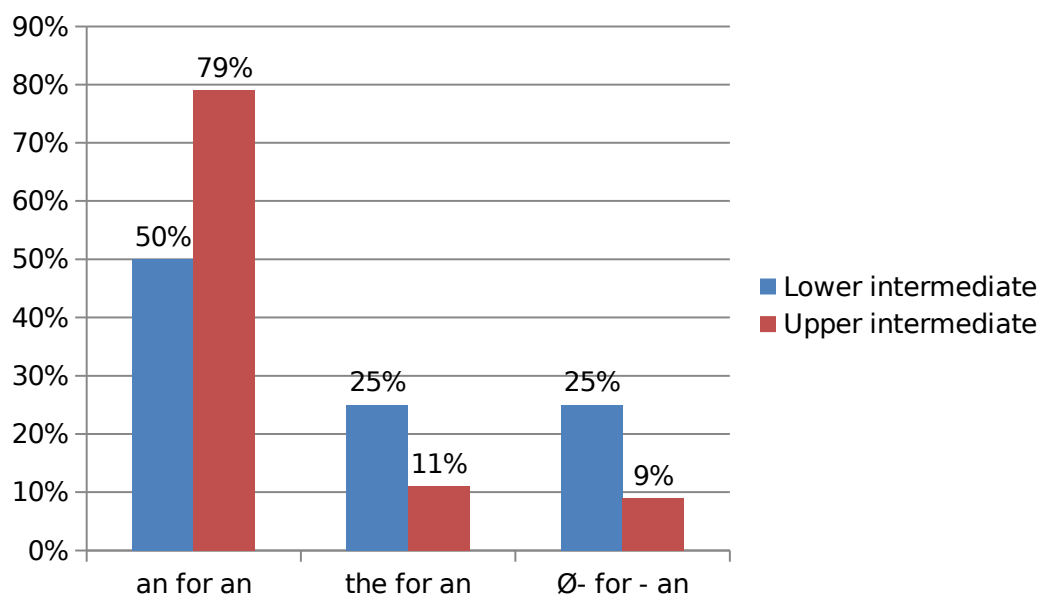
Figure 4.12 Group Article Use in Context V

The performance in   context V1 (-definite -specific) where zero article is required presents interesting findings as revealed in Figure 4.13 In this context the two groups register a higher performance level than they did in multiple choice task where the performance was very low. The difference in the performance of the two groups is insignificant meaning they performed almost at the same level of proficiency. In this

context the required article was ø'. The lower intermediate group used 'ø' correctly 62% while the upper intermediate group registered 64% for correct use of 'ø. The two groups however made errors of overuse with the lower intermediate group using 'the' instead of 'ø' at 21% 'a' instead of 'ø' at 11% and 'an' instead of 'ø' at 6%. The upper intermediate group used 'the' instead of 'ø' 18%, 'a' for'ø'10% and 'an' for'ø'8%.The good performance in this context in this particular task could be attributed to L1 influence. Placed in a position that requires them to use language freely they tend to leave out articles and by default get it right in contexts where 'ø' is required. However, there is also evidence of overuse as both groups overuse 'the' where 'ø' is required insignificant proportions.
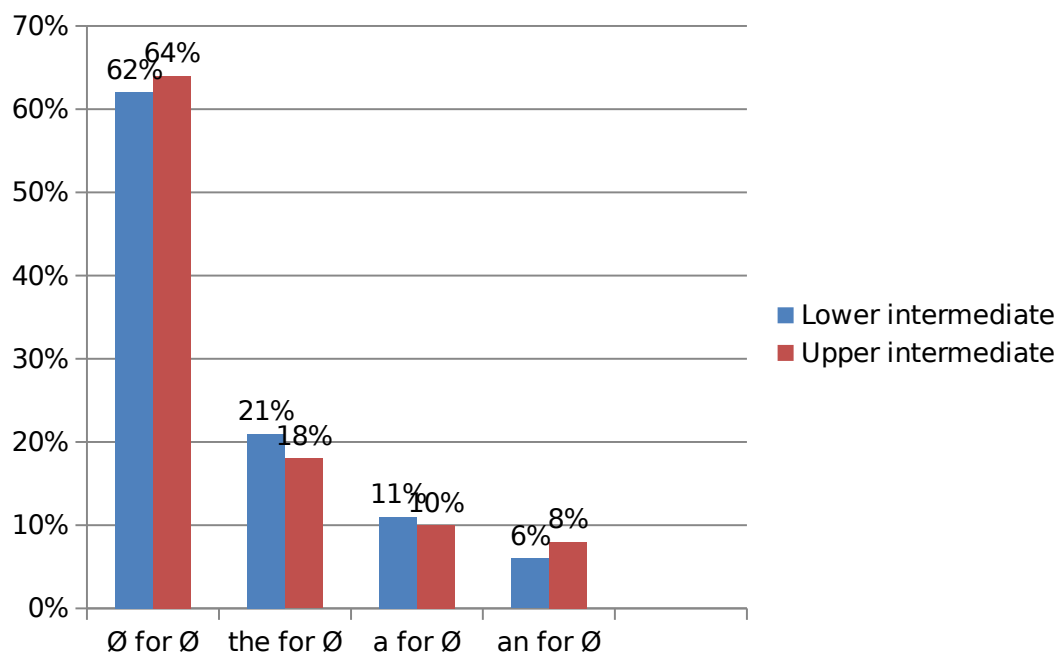
Figure 4.13   Group Article Use in Context VI

As shown from data analysis both groups performed poorly when they were asked to narrate a story from picture prompts. Both the groups registered less percentages in their uses compared to their performance in the multiple choice task. What is more the groups' use of articles was not evident in some contexts. From the above representations it is notable that use of articles in context III (+ definite – specific) where speaker has no knowledge about (NPs) was not evident. When we compare the performance with the multiple choice task, this context was one of the contexts in which learners' registered low correct use of articles. where it is non- specific. This confirms the fluctuation hypothesis because when learners were forced to use articles in this context in the multiple choice task,, they fluctuated between 'a' and 'the' in significant proportions and where they were left to use articles in their own way; they avoided using articles in this context either by default or consciously. Use of 'the' in type 2 context was minimal. There was however frequent use of 'the' in type 1 contexts that is (+definite + specific) where the NPs were previously mentioned in their oral presentations. Use of demonstrative, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions instead of the definite 'the' was also evident pointing to influence from learners 'L1'.

4.6.1 Types of Errors

Once the errors were highlighted the researcher then revisited each story to identify the type of errors learners made. In the story-telling task the data collected was based on learners' own productions; that is, learners told a story based on picture prompts using their own language. As a result learners used language liberally without being conditioned to focus attention on article use. As was expected incorrect use of articles was evident in a more variety of ways than it was in made up contexts.

The errors were compiled computed and classified. To ensure no article problem was overlooked, a thorough analysis of data was done to make certain of the inclusion of all article errors

Omission errors (underuse)

Unnecessary insertion errors (overuse)

Confusion errors (fluctuation)

They are explained as follows:

a) Omission errors

In omission context, a learner fails to use an article where it is required.

b)Unnecessary insertion errors (Overuse)

Unnecessary insertion means using articles in places where they are not required for example using the indefinite article before marked and unmarked plurals and before uncountable nouns.

c) Confusion errors (Substitution or fluctuation)

Confusion error means substituting a wrong article or another word such as a demonstrative, a possessive pronoun or a locative preposition for the right article.

Table 4.9 captures the type of errors in the story telling task. The table reveals that confusion errors were the most frequent with the lower intermediate group having 120 (25%) and upper intermediate group at (100)20%. The next most frequent errors are omission errors with the lower intermediate group having 105 (20%) and the upper intermediate group 75 (15%).The least number of errors were the unnecessary

insertion of articles. Both the groups make less of unnecessary insertion of article errors compared to the other type of errors with the lower intermediate group registering a higher percentage of 60(13%) than the upper intermediate group with 45 (9%).

Table 4.10 Summary of Systematic Errors of the Story-telling task by Type

GROUP	Total number of article Errors	Type of article Errors	Number of errors per type	Percentage of errors per type
Lower intermediate	270	Omission errors	105	20%
		Unnecessary insertion errors	45	9%
		Confusion errors	120	23%
Upper intermediate	242	Omission errors	75	15%
		Unnecessary insertion errors	67	13%
		Confusion errors	100	20%
TOTAL	**512**		**512**	**100%**

In the next section the details of the types of errors that learners made in the story telling task are captured.

4.6.1.1 Omission of Articles

From table 4.11 the findings reveal that the errors of omission were the second most common in both the groups of learners. However for the lower intermediate learners

the omission of 'a' was more common at 8% compared to upper intermediate learners who had 6%. The omission of 'the' is highest for both the groups 11% for the lower intermediate group and 10% for the upper intermediate group and it is slightly higher for the lower intermediate learners. Following are examples of omission errors emanating from the data.

i) Omission of the Definite Article 'the'

Using the first person point of view a form three student narrating what happened the morning before he left for school said:

> *My father called me back and gave me some money then he asked me whether I had forgotten that it was beginning of term and I would soon be sent home for school fees (L14)*

In this sentence the learner omits 'the' before the NP "beginning of term". This is a (+definite +Specific) item and it is an example of cultural use of 'the' in this context the hearer and the speaker share mutual knowledge about school terms 'beginning of the term' belongs to the DPs that are used with the definite article even if they may not have been mentioned in the previous sentence and therefore requires use of 'the'.

Another learner narrating the story from a third person point of view said:

> *Ian said he wanted to leave for school early because he did not want to be attacked on road by thieves in the evening. (Lr. 17)*

In these excerpts there is evidence of omission of 'the'. The omission of 'the' before the NP 'road' is incorrect as both 'road' is a thing we think of as one of a kind therefore in this context the learner should not have omitted the definite 'the'.

Yet another learner narrated:

> *As we walked out of school with our parents, other students who were in class were looking at us through windows (Lr.8)*

Still another learner narrates:

> *Then two police men came and arrested him. He was taken into cells where he found other friends there (Lr.12)*

In these excerpts the learners are making errors of omission of 'the'. Omission of 'the before the NPs ''windows'' and 'cells' is a result of learners not knowing how to use the associative anaphoric and the cultural use of definite the respectively. Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) argue that in contexts where such definites are applied the speaker and hearer in most cases have knowledge that they share concerning the relations between given objects and their components, associative anaphoric uses consisting of definite descriptions often make use of this knowledge.

ii) Omission of the Indefinite Article 'a'/'an'

The omission of 'a 'and 'an' were more frequent among the lower intermediate classes in this task than the upper intermediate classes. The following are examples from excerpts from the learners' transcribed narrations:

> *Then my friend said we don't go to school it was very early and said that he had good plan*(Lr.12).

> *David fell into deep sleep at the room in the lodging (*Learner 19)

> *John told me not to be in rush for school, after all we were going to be there this whole term (Lr.4)*

Then John whispered to his friends that he had interest in the girl. (Lr 8)

In the above examples, the learners omit 'a' before 'good plan' 'deep sleep' and 'rush' . These NPs are being mentioned for the first time therefore the indefinite 'a' is required. Lastly, 'an' is omitted before the NP 'interest'

Omission errors were the second most common in the story telling task. Table 4.10 reveals that the omission of the indefinite 'a' and 'an' was quite frequent for the lower intermediate group. This group had considerable problem with the indefinite 'a/an'. Omission of indefinite article 'a' occurred mostly in environments where uncountable nouns were used or before NPs that were pre-modified by adjectives. For instance "deep sleep", "good plan". The NPs 'sleep'and 'interest' are uncountable.But 'sleep', in this context is pre-modified by the adjective ''deep'and therefore can take the indefinite article 'a'and 'interest' can be countable and uncountable depending on the context. This variation in article use confuses the learners who have learnt that uncountable nouns often are not preceded by indefinite articles 'a' and 'an'. The chief cause of errors of omission of 'a'/'an' in this context is complexity of the article system.

Two types of errors of omission of articles were evident in the story telling task:

i)   Omission of the definite article 'the'

ii)   Omission of the indefinite article 'a' 'an'

Table 4.11 shows the types of omissions per group and frequencies and percentages of the omission errors.

Table 4.11 Category of Omission Errors

GROUP	number of omission Errors	Category

Lower	105	Omission of the		Omission of 'the'	
intermediate		indefinite 'a'/an			
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
		50	10%	55	11%
Upper	75	25	6%	50	10%
intermediate					

4.6.1.2 Unnecessary Insertion of Articles

There were two categories of unnecessary insertion errors: unnecessary insertion of 'the' and unnecessary insertion of 'a' 'an'. This is captured in table 4.12

From table 4.12 the upper intermediate group has the highest number of unnecessary insertion errors 67(13%) while the lower intermediate group has 45 (9%).This is contrary to the trend where the upper intermediate has all along outperformed the lower intermediate group. The upper intermediate group tended to use a lot of 'the' in constructions where it was uncalled for leading to overuse of 'the' for example a form three student narrated as follows:

> *Then Peter left for school. When he reached the road he stopped the matatu and got in. They reached the market and he got out of the matatu, he met his friends then they left their bags at the shop. They went into the bar and started drinking the beer (Lr.3).*

In this excerpt the learner is overusing 'the'.

Following are examples of unnecessary insertion errors emanating from the data.

i) Unnecessary Insertion of 'the'

A form three student narrated:

> *After taking his break-fast he took- he- he- he wore the sweta and the*
>
> *father was ready to give him his pocket money and- fare (Lr 16)*

Another form one student narrating what happened to John that day wrote:

> *Then John reached at shop John meet there with his friends where they*
>
> *left their bags. Then John went to the bar and they have drinks and*
>
> *John smoked. John went to the bed with the girl. When John was*
>
> *sleeping the girl took his shorts and stole the money (Lr.2)*

In both excerpts the use of 'the' before NPs 'the one seat', 'the bed' 'the money 'is incorrect.

   iii)   **Unnecessary Insertion of 'a/an'**

Examples of unnecessary insertion of 'a/an' include the following:

> *Then after punishing   the students, the principal gave them an advice (Lr 19)*

Then the principal said the two boys did not have a permission to leave school (Lr 5)

Unnecessary insertion errors were the least in the story telling task. Most errors of unnecessary insertion were with the definite article 'the 'for both groups although the lower intermediate group registered a lesser percentage. The causes of unnecessary insertion of 'the' were due to misapplication of the rules governing article use. The overuse of the indefinite 'a, an' in this context may have been due to the learners having a problem with the concept of uncountable nouns as can be seen in the two examples learners tend to think the abstract nouns, ''permission' 'and ''advice'' are

count nouns. The fact that unnecessary insertion errors are fewer compared to other categories of errors may also be attributed to learners' L1 which lacks articles.

Table 4.12 Category of Unnecessary Insertion Errors

Group	number of Errors	Category			
		Insertion of 'a'/ 'an'		Insertion of 'the'	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lower intermediate	45	17	4%	28	6%
Upper intermediate	67	27	5%	40	8%

4.6.1.3 Confusion Errors (substitution/fluctuation)

Confusion errors occur when a learner uses a wrong article or another word such as a demonstrative pronoun, a locative preposition or a possessive pronoun instead of the correct article. As already established confusion errors were the most frequent errors made by both groups of learners in this task. Confusion errors were of four types:

i)   Use of 'a'/ 'an' instead of 'the'

ii)   Use of 'the' instead of 'a'/'an'

iii)   Use of demonstrative pronouns, and locative prepositions instead of 'the'

iv)   Use of possessive pronouns instead of the 'a'

The information is captured in Table 4.13.From Table 4.13 the following facts emerge: both the upper and lower groups fluctuate in their use of all the articles. There is little difference in the number of confusion errors made by the two groups. The lower upper intermediate has 120 (23%) of confusion errors while the upper intermediate group has 100 (20%).Table 4.13 also reveals that a higher percentage of learners use 'the' instead of 'a'/'an' 50 (10%) for lower intermediate group and 41

(8%) for upper intermediate group. There is also use of demonstratives and locative prepositions instead of 'the' at 40 (8%) for lower intermediate group and 34 (7%) for the upper intermediate group. In the following section are excerpts taken from the data illustrating the way learners' confused use of articles in various contexts.

i) Substitution of 'a'/ 'an' for 'the'

Narrating how John left home, a form three student said:

> *When he reached a road, he stopped the coming 'matatu'. He got inside and the 'matatu' started at high speed (Lr.8).*

From the above excerpt, it is evident that the learner is making confusion errors. He talks of 'a road' instead of 'the road'.

ii) Substitution of 'the' for 'a'/'an'

A form one student narrating what happened towards the end of the story said:

> *So the three boys were given suspensions by the principal. Then the principal called the assembly and said the three boys were the bad example to the school (Lr.5).*

The matatu was full of people and John looked around for the seat and was lucky to find the empty one at the back Lr 17

The learners are using the definite 'the' incorrectly. Learner 5 uses 'the' before the NP ''assembly'' 'instead of 'an' and 'the' before the NP, ''bad example'' instead of 'a'. The cause of 'the' overuse in this context is a result of the learner having failed to learn the first and second mention rule probably due to insufficient exposure to the structure of the language.

iii) Substitution of Demonstrative Pronouns and Locative prepositions for the Definite Article 'the'

Explaining how he was convinced not to go to school by his friend, a form two learner in his story said:

John told me not to be in rush for school, after all we were going to be there this whole term (Lr.4).

*I entered in matatu and sat down (*Lr 13)

Learner 4 uses the demonstrative 'this' before the NP 'whole term' instead of the definite 'the' and learner 13 uses the locative preposition 'in' before the NP ''matatu'' instead of the definite 'the'. In both the cases the learner intends to be specific.

d) Substitution of Possessive Pronouns for the Indefinite Article 'a'

Another learner in his narration said:

Early in the morning David woke up ran to the bathroom and took his shower quickly worried that he would be late for school (Lr.23).

In this sentence learner 23 is using the possessive pronoun 'his 'before the NP ''shower'' instead of the article 'a'

Table 4.13 Category of confusion Errors.

Group	number of confusion Errors	Category		
Lower intermediate	120	Substitution of 'a'/ 'an' for	Substitution of 'the' for 'a' 'an'	Substitution of demonstratives/possessives, locative prepositions for

		'the' Freq.	%	Freq.	%	'the' Freq.	%
		30	6%	50	10%	40	8%
Upper intermediate	105	30	5%	41	8%	34	7%

The causes of the story telling task were identified as revealed in table 4.14.The findings From table 4.14 it emerges that 47% of the errors learners made were a result of over generalisation that is to say the errors from within the target language,53% of the errors arose from the learners L1. This shows that for this oral task learners' L1affects article acquisition more than the target language itself. From table 4.14, it is also revealed that the highest number of errors learners made were confusion errors with 47% followed by omission errors at 33%. Omission errors arise from the fact that learners L1 lacks articles and the NPs of their Luhya L1 are bare, hence learners tend to transfer this notion on to the target language. Use of demonstrative and possessive pronouns, instead of articles also points to influence from learners L1 where demonstrative pronouns are used to mark speficity.

Table 4.14 Summary of the causes of Errors of the Story Telling Task

Cause	Error type and cause		Freq.	Percentage
Intra-lingual (complexity of the article system)	- Confusion Notions of specificity and definiteness	- the for a	40	8%
		the for an	36	7%
		a for the	40	8%
		an for the	20	4%
Overgeneralization	Unnecessary insertion - Misdetection of	the for ø	68	13%
		an for ø	10	2%

	countability	a for ø	26	5%
Total			**240**	**47%**
L1 Influence (Inter-lingual)	Omission errors- Transfer of the NP structure of L1 to the target language	Ø for the	105	21%
		Ø for a	30	6%
		Ø for an	33	6%
Total			**168**	**33%**
	Confusion Errors - .direct transfer of the notions of specificity from L1 to the target language.	Demonstratives	104	20%
		Possessive for 'the'/'a'		
		Prepositions for 'the'		
Total			**272**	**53%**

4.6.3 Summary of the Findings of the Types of Systematic Errors in the course of Acquisition of the English Article System in the Story- telling Task.

The second objective of this study was to find out the types of systematic errors made by Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system. The data indicated a number of errors which included confusion errors, omission errors and unnecessary insertion errors. As for the incorrect use, learners demonstrated more incorrect substitution and less unnecessary insertion. They also demonstrated omission errors in considerably high proportions.

4.7 Results of the Causes of Systematic Errors

The third objective of this study was to investigate the causes of systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the acquisition of the English L2 article system. To obtain this objective a composition task was given to the participants. To be able to compare article use in multiple choice task, story- telling task and the composition task, it was necessary to present data elicited from the composition task graphically just in the same way it had been done with the multiple choice task and the story-telling task. It was also found necessary to scrutinize the NPs in the composition task so that they could be classified according to the type of definiteness and specificity that they addressed. This helped the study to group them into the six major types of contexts addressed in the multiple choice task. It also helped the study to identify and trace the causes of errors in the composition task.

To obtain the frequencies and percentages of errors for each group, the following steps were taken. The total number of articles used by each group was computed. The percentages of correct use and incorrect use were calculated based on the total number of articles used correctly and incorrectly. The information is captured in table 4.15

Table 4.15 shows the total number of articles used and correct and incorrect use by each group. It can be observed from the table that the total number of articles used in the composition task was 1394. This number includes the articles that were used correctly and incorrectly by both the groups. Articles that were omitted were counted as omissions and treated as incorrect. Of the 1394 articles,1009 (72%) were used correctly and 385 (28%) were used incorrectly. There were cases where the learners used demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions instead of articles. These cases were counted as incorrect use and included under confusion errors.

From Table4.15 it can be seen that the lower intermediate group had a higher number of articles because they tended to be repetitive. From the results it is also evident that the lower intermediate group has a higher percentage of incorrect use 236 (17%) compared to the upper intermediate which has 152 (11%).

To arrive at the percentages of group use of articles in various contexts the total number per category for each group was taken and the percentages calculated for correctness and incorrectness

Table 4.15 Articles used in the composition task correctly and incorrectly.

Group	Total No. of articles	Correct use	percentage	Incorrect use	Percentage
Lower intermediate (N= 12)	712	479	34%	233	17%
Upper intermediate (N =12)	682	530	38%	152	11%
Total	**1394**	**1009**	**72%**	**385**	**28%**

The findings from the composition task reveal that both groups register higher levels of proficiency in the written task than in the oral (story-telling) task.

From figure 4.14 it can be observed that the two groups, lower and upper intermediate register highscoresof75% and 82% respectively for correct use of 'the' in + definite +specific context; where the NPs are used in anaphoric reference contexts. However both the groups also fluctuate between 'a' and 'the' substituting 'a' for 'the' 4% and 2% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively. Demonstrative pronouns, 'that' 'this' and 'those' instead of 'the' are also evident in the data where the lower intermediate group registered 8% and the upper intermediate group 4%.There is also use of locative prepositions instead of 'the' in proportions of 4% and 3% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively. Use of demonstratives, possessives and locative prepositions tends to emanate from influence from learners' L1.Fluctuation between 'an' and 'the' though not in high proportions is also evident. The lower intermediate group used 'an' instead of 'the' 2%, 'and the upper intermediate

1%'.The reason for the low fluctuation between 'an' and 'the' could be attributed to the fact that 'an' is rare in the input and learners use it rarely. Notable apart from fluctuation, is the use of 'ø' where 'the 'is required with lower intermediate group registering 8%, and the upper intermediate group 7%. Use of ø' where 'the' is required translates to omission errors. From these findings, it can be observed that the performance in context 1(+definite + specific)is good. This means that learners have a good command of use of 'the' when it is used in anaphoric context. But fluctuation and overuse are observed as developmental features in this context. The causes of fluctuation omission and use of pronouns, possessives and locative prepsitions are dealt with in the subsequent sections.
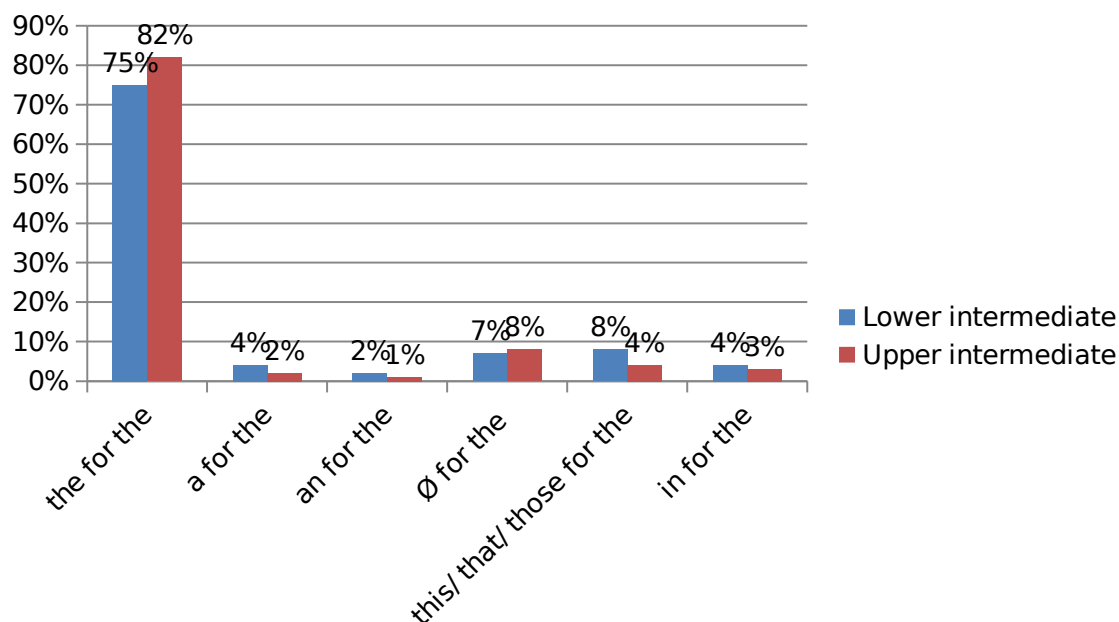
Figure 4.14 Group Article Use in Context I

From figure 4.15 the analysis reveals that the performance in context 11 is as good as the performance in the first context with lower intermediate group scoring 75% and upper intermediate 85% but they also fluctuate between 'the' and 'a' in proportions of 3%and 4% for the lower intermediate group and upper intermediate group respectively. Substitution of 'an' for 'the' is also evident in small proportions of 2% for both groups. There is also misuse of demonstratives instead of 'the' where the lower intermediate group uses demonstratives instead of 'the' 4% and the upper intermediate group 3%. Notable however in this context is a high level of incorrect use of 'ø' instead of 'the' which translates to omission errors. The lower intermediate group omitted 'the' 12%'. A similar pattern of omission is notable in the upper intermediate group where 'the' is omitted 10%.Thus omission and fluctuation are evident in this context.
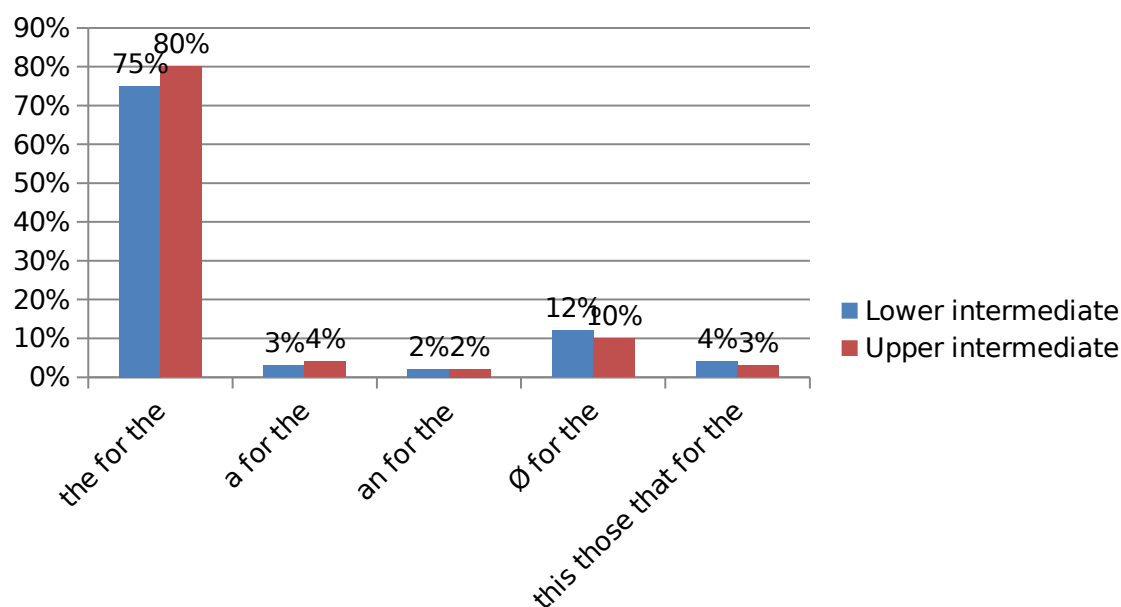
Figure 4.15 Group Article Use in context II

Figure 4.16 captures results for the third context (context 111) where 'the' is required and the speaker has no knowledge about NPs (+definite – specific). It presents interesting findings. Both groups registered below average performance and both groups fluctuated in very high proportions. The lower intermediate groups used 'the' correctly 49%, and fluctuated between 'the' and 'a' 16%, the same group used 'an' instead of 'the' incorrectly 3%, 'a' instead of 'the' 16%, demonstratives 'this'/ 'that'/'those' for 'the' 10%, possessives; 'my/his' for 'the' 6%. The upper intermediate group also registered dismal performance in this context. Their correct use of 'the' was 59%, but they used 'a' for 'the' 6%, 'an' for 'the' 4% and 'ø' for 'the' 17%. The group also used demonstrative and possessive pronouns, instead of 'the'. They used 'this'/ 'that'/ 'those' for 'the' 6% and 'my' instead of 'the' 8%.The performance in this context is the lowest. Learners fluctuated and misused 'ø' article with higher percentages than in other contexts.
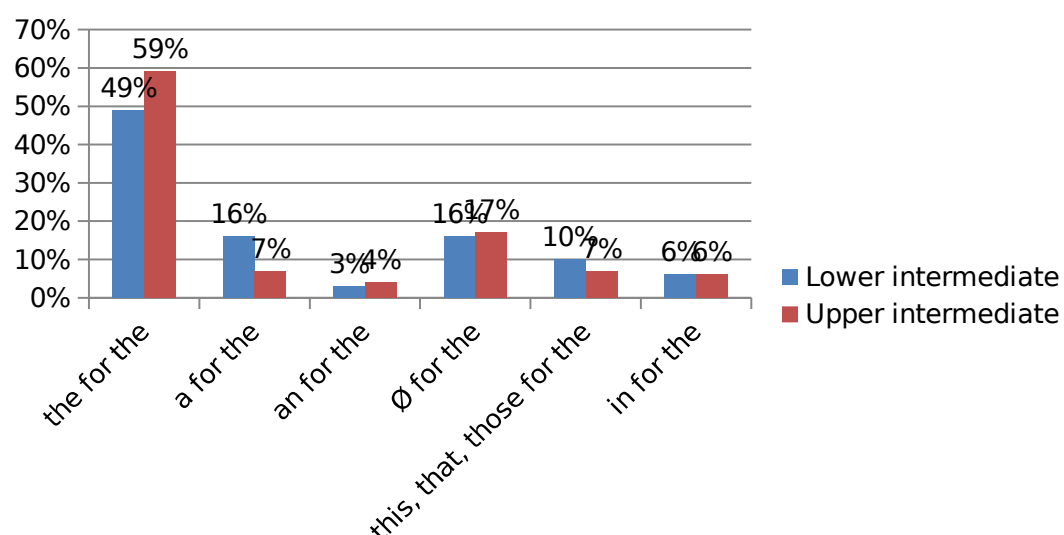
Figure 4.16 Group Article Use in Context III

Figure 4.17 shows group performance in context IV (-definite + specific) where the speaker has explicit knowledge about the NPs, was the highest. The lower intermediate group registered 80% for correct use of 'a' while the upper intermediate registered 75%. Both groups however fluctuated between 'the' and 'a'. The lower intermediate group used the instead of a in 4% of their written work and 'ø' for 'a' in 13%.The upper intermediate group also fluctuated. They used 'the' for 'a' in 3% of their written work and 'ø' instead of 'a' in 6% of their work. There was also the use of possessives 'my', 'his' for 'a' in equal proportions of 3% for both groups. There was however no fluctuation between 'a' and 'an' in the use of 'a' for both the groups. The kinds of errors in this context are mainly substitution and omission.
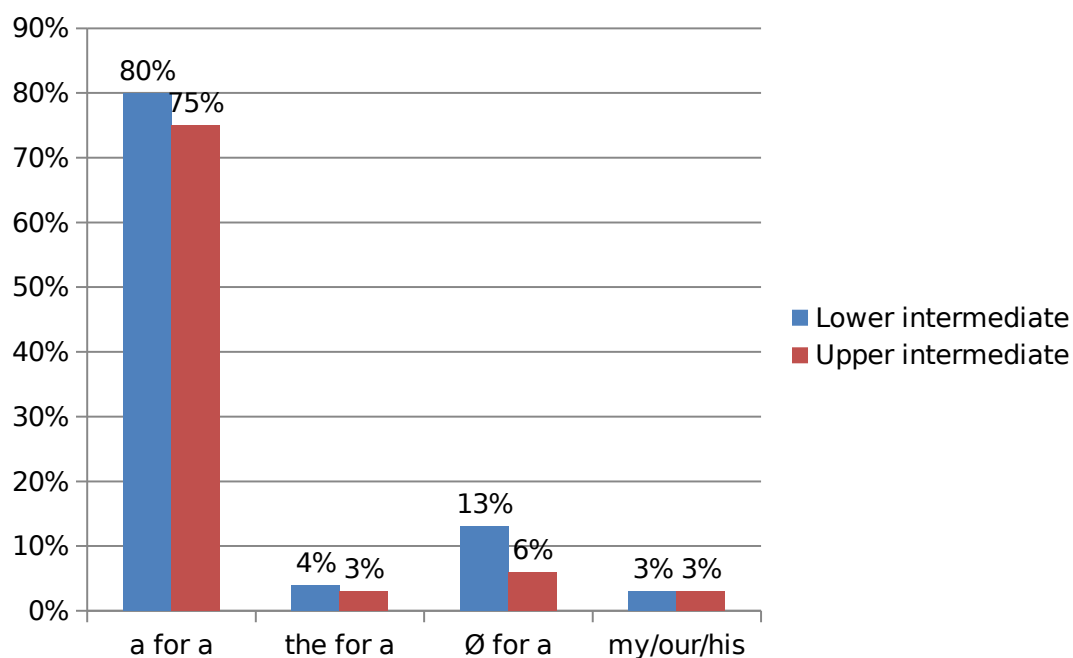
Figure 4.17 Group Article Use in Context IV

From figure 4.18 it can be observed that there is marked difference between the performances of the two groups in this context. The lower intermediate group had 58% for correct use of 'an' and the upper intermediate group had 81% for correct use

of 'an'. The lower intermediate group used 'a' instead of 'an' 6%, 'the' instead of 'an' 13% and 'ø' for 'an' 23%. The upper intermediate group out-performed the lower intermediate group in this context as they registered 81% for correct use of 'an' although they also fluctuated. The group used 'the' for 'an' 7% and 'ø' for 'an' 12%. The group however did not fluctuate between 'a' and 'an' in this context.
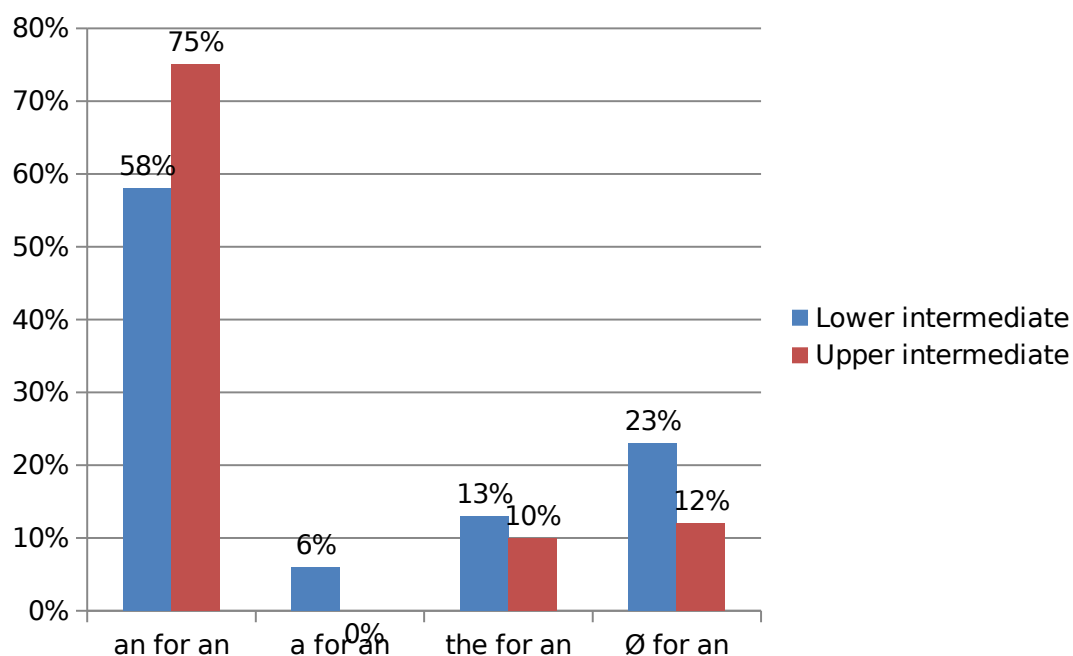
Figure 4.18 Group Article Use in Context V

Figure 4.19 reveal performance of the group in a way that was not anticipated. The study anticipated that since learners lack articles in their L1 their use of 'ø' article would pose less problems but contrary to this expectation, context VI (-definite – specific) where learners are expected to use zero article posed a problem for both groups since both groups performed poorly. The lower intermediate registered 49% for correct use of 'ø' while the upper intermediate group registered 58%. Both the groups overused 'the' in the place of 'ø' in big proportions with the lower intermediate group registering the highest proportions of overuse of 'the' for 'ø' at

37% and the upper intermediate group at 25%.The indefinite 'a' was also overused in contexts where 'ø' was required. The indefinite 'a' was used instead of 'ø' at the rate of 6% for the lower intermediate group and 9% for the upper intermediate group. There werealso cases of misuse of the possessives 'my'/'his' for 'ø' in equal proportions of 8%.Therefore in this context it is evident that the major errors the learners make are errors of unnecessary insertion leading to overuse. Overuse of 'the' is registered in high proportions of 37% and 25% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively.
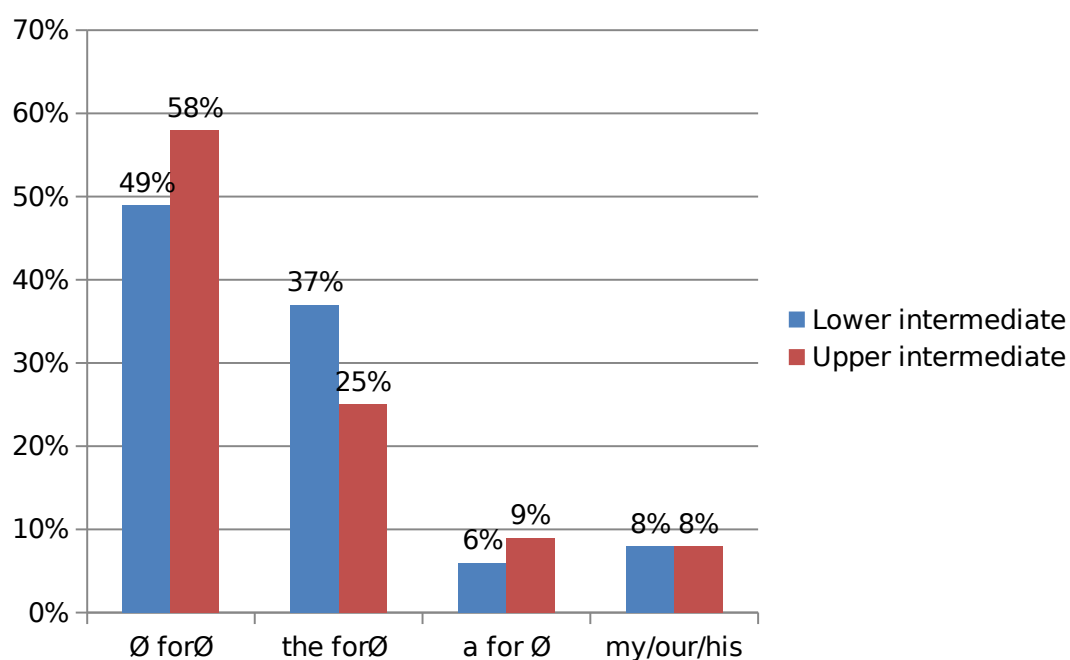
Figure 4.19 Group Article Use in Context VI

When the performance of the two groups is analysed generally, the results reveal that the upper intermediate group performed better than the lower intermediate group. From Table 4.16, it is observed that the upper intermediate group register a higher level of accuracy at 77% than the lower intermediate group which registered 69%.

Table 4.16 Required Articles and the Actual Articles Used in the Composition Task

Group	Required Articles	Actual article used							Total No. of Articles	Correct use %	%	Incorrect use	%
Lower Intermediate		The	A	a n	Ø	this that, those	my	In					
	The	216	20	7	30	20	8	6		216		90	
	A	7	130	0	20	0	0	0		130		27	
	An	11	5	50	20	0	0	0		50		36	
	Ø	60	10	0	80	0	13	0		80		83	
									712	479	67%	233	33%
Upper intermediate		The	A	a n	Ø	this, that, those	my	In					
	The	240	6	6	32	8	6	5		240		63	
	A	5	140	0	10	0	0	0		140		15	
	An	6	0	70	10	0	0	0		70		16	
	Ø	35	13	0	80	0	10	0		80		58	
									682	530	77%	152	23%

4.7.1   Causes of Systematic Errors

In this section the study however explains the causes of the errors based on the context of use. Before the analysis   and interpretation of the cause an overview of the types of errors in this task is provided.

4.7.2 Systematic Errors of the Composition Task

When the errors learners make are examined, for some reason it is not easy to come up with a perfect explanation for the causes of these errors. The study however will try to explain the causes of the errors based on the context of use. Before the analysis and interpretation of the cause an overview of the types of errors in this task is provided.

From table 4.17 the following facts emerge; all the three types of errors were common but as can be observed, unnecessary insertion of article errors was the most frequent in this task however they are more frequent in the lower intermediate group at the rate of 22% than in the upper intermediate group at the rate of 15%. Omission and confusion errors occur in similar proportions 32% for each type. However the proportions in which they occur differ according to the level of the learners. Omission errors are higher among the lower intermediate group at 18% and lower for the upper intermediate group at 14%.Confusion errors are also higher in the lower intermediate group at 21% compared to the upper intermediate group at 11%.Unnecessary insertion errors were more common in contexts where learners used the article 'the' where no article was required. Confusion errors were as a result of substitution of 'the' for 'a'/ 'an' and 'a'/'an' for 'the'. There were also cases of use of demonstratives, possessives and locative prepositions instead of 'the'. This was most frequent in context I and II

(+ definite +specific) where use of 'the' was required.

Table 4:17 Types of Systematic Errors of the Composition Task

Group	Total number of article errors	Percentage	Types of article errors	frequency	Percentage
Lower intermediate	233	61%	Unnecessary insertion	83	22%
			Omission	70	18%
			Confusion	80	21%
Upper intermediate	152	39%	Unnecessary insertion	58	15%
			Omission	52	14%
			Confusion	42	11%
	385	100%			

4.7.3 Causes of Errors in the Composition Task

The next section presents the causes of the errors discussed under each type of error and the categories: The causes of the errors are examined under the two major sources of errors: intralingual and interlingual. Intralingual errors arise from the target language whereas interlingual errors arise from the learner's first language. The causes of errors arising from the target language included all types of errors; omission errors, confusion errors and unnecessary insertion errors. The causes of errors arising from learners L1 were mainly omission and confusion types. They are discussed in the following sections.

4.7.3.1 Causes of Omission Errors Arising from the Target Language

Omission of these articles occurred in contexts where they were required but were left out. The causes of the errors were due to the notion of countability, the structure of the target language and the complexity of the article system.

a) **Omission Errors**

From table 4.18 it is observed that both the upper and lower groups made omission errors although they were more prevalent among the lower intermediate class at 19% compared to the upper intermediate group at 14%. It is also revealed that omission of' 'a'/ 'an' was more frequent than omission of 'the' at the rate of 11% for the lower intermediate group but omission of 'the' was slightly higher for the upper intermediate group at 9%.

Table 4:18 Omission Errors

Group	Total number of errors	Number of omission errors	Percentage	Category			
				Omission of 'a' 'an'		Omission of 'the'	
	385			Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Lower intermediate		70	18%	40	11%	30	8%
Upper intermediate		52	13%	20	5%	32	9%
Total	**385**	**122**	**31%**	**60**	**16%**	**62**	**17%**

b)Categories of Omission Errors Arising from the Target Language and their causes

In the following section, the categories of errors and the possible causes are discussed with illustrations from a few extracts from the participants' compositions.

i)   **Omission of 'a'/ 'an'**

Omission of 'a'/'an' occurred in contexts that require the use of 'a'/'an' but the articles were left out.

> *After service we were invited to the pastor's house by his wife. Pastor's wife takes interest in all church members and all church members love her* (Lr.4)
>
> *He has desire to help her* (Lr. 17)

A closer look at the sentences produced by learners 4 and 17 in the above examples reveals that the learners are making omission errors as a result of poor mastery of the concept of countability. The omission of the article 'an' before the NP "interest" shows that the learner assumes the NP 'interest' is a non-count noun meaning he can only use a/an with nouns he thinks are countable. According to this learner "interest" is a quality which is uncountable and therefore it does not require an indefinite article so he omits the article 'an'. This kind of error is therefore a developmental error. In the same vein Learner (17) is omitting 'a' before the NP ''desire.'' There are some nouns normally used as countable which learners erroneously consider as uncountable and therefore rob them of their indefinite article. Learner (17) could be thinking that 'desire" is a non-count noun and therefore omitting the indefinite 'a' before it.In both the cases the notion of countability is the problem.

Omission of a/an was also caused by the complexity of the target language   as is illustrated in the following excerpts:

1.*After service we were invited to the pastor's houseby his wife.Pastor's wife takes interest in all church members.*

Another learner describing her best friend wrote:

2. *I like my friend Vivian because she never keeps grudge against anybody (Lr.7).*

Avikha likha khu mundu wosi tawe

(She keeps grudge on any person no)

Yet another one describing the excitement on Christmas day states:

3.*I was woken up by the bubbling of stream from nearby river (Lr6)*

And in the same composition the same learner writes:

4. *I did household chores in organized manner (Lr.6)*

5.*My friend Deborah enjoys playing the piano and singing. On the Christmas day shesang a   solo in Church and everybody applauded her. Then the pastor told her she has amazing talent which she should make use of. Lr (14)*

In the five excerpts, learners are making omission errors of the indefinite articles 'a' and 'an'. Sources of omission errors can be traced to their L1.These errors occurred in environments where the NPs were preceded by adjectival pre-modifiers. (Lr 6 and Lr 14).In the sentences, the learners have a problem in assigning articles to NPs that have adjectival modifiers in a pre-nominal position.

ii)   Omission of 'the'

Describing how they spent their Christmas holiday learners wrote:

> *We got into the dancing hall. Our friends directed us into another*
>
> *room and said it was private and quiet. I didn't like the room because*
>
> *it was stuffy I asked my friend to open windows and she did*(Lr12)
>
> *She welcomed us in her house and served us scones and juice we told*
>
> *her we could not eat scones since we had already eaten lunch but we*
>
> *drank juice* (Lr.5)

In sentence by learner12, the cultural use of 'the' was required before the NP ''windows' 'but the learner omitted it. In the next sentence learner 8, omits the article 'the' before the NPs ''scones'' and ''juice''. In this sentence the learner is referring back to things she has been talking about before but still retains the generic plural. She thus violates the principle of first second mention and misuses the zero article. In both cases the errors can be attributed to poor grasp of the rule governing the use of the definite article 'the' because the learners have been only partially exposed to the target language.

4.7.3.2 Causes of Confusion Errors Arising From the Target Language

b) Confusion Errors

From table 4.19 it is observed that the highes number of confusion errors comes from the lower intermediate group at 20% compared to 11% of the upper intermediate group. It is also observed that the highest number of confusion errors comes from confusion of demonstratives possessives and prepositions for 'the' at the rate of 7%

and 5% for lower and higher groups respectively. This is followed by substitution of 'the' for 'a'/ 'an' at the rate of 6% and 3% for the lower intermediate and upper groups respectively and substitution of 'a/an' for 'the' in the proportions of 6% for the lower intermediate group and 3% for upper intermediate group.

Table 4.19 Confusion Errors

Group	Total number of errors	No. of Confusion errors	%				
	385	Freq	%	a instead of/an'	'a'/'an'' instead of 'the'	'the' instead of 'a'/'an'	Demonstratives/ possessives/ prepositions for 'the'
				F %	F %	Freq %	Freq %
Lower intermediate	80	20%		6 1%	25 6%	23 6%	26 7%
Upper intermediate	42	11%		0	12 3%	11 3%	19 5%

a) Categories of Confusion Errors Arising from the Target Language and their Causes

The categories of confusion errors arising from the target language and their causes are explained with extracts from the learners' compositions.

i) Substitution of 'the' for' 'a' 'an'

These were few; the frequencies of these errors for both the groups were low; 18% for lower intermediate and 11% for upper. The following are sample of statements that reveal that learners in some cases use 'the' instead of 'a' or 'an':

Describing his best friend, a learner wrote;

He is not the perfect performer in terms of school work but he is average (Lr. 14).

He had the desire to help her (Lr. 17)

The learners in these sentence are misusing 'the' instead of 'a' before the NPs 'perfect performer 'and 'desire'. Since 'perfect performer' and 'desire were being mentioned for the first time the uniqueness presupposition does not apply in this context therefore the conditions on definiteness have not been met. Thus the use of 'the' is erroneous. The cause of these errors is that learners have partially learned the use of the definite 'the' and are overgeneralizing its use to contexts where it is not required. This is an error arising from the target language since learner has not mastered the rules governing use of 'the'

ii) Substitution of 'a' 'an' for 'the'

These kinds of errors also occurred in both the groups. Below are exercepts from data

Discussing how he spent his Christmas holiday a learner stated:

> *During Christmas holiday I like digging because it is a kind of work that I could do without supervision (Lr. 2)*
>
> *My friend always helps me when I need a helping hand. She gave me a book which our teacher had given her to use for homework* (Lr. 8)

In both these sentences the learners are using the indefinite 'a' instead of the definite 'the'. Learner 2 is using 'a' incorrectly because first 'work' is an uncountable noun and should not take indefinite 'a' secondly the noun 'work' is mentioned as a

hyponym of 'digging' that means it fulfils the rule of previous mentioned therefore the definite 'the' is required. Learner 8 is using 'a' before the noun 'book' that is followed by an adjectival (relative) clause describing it and therefore requires the definite 'the'. In both cases the learners are making developmental errors that are arising from not having learned the use of articles with adjectival clauses.

iii)   Substitution of 'a' for 'an'

These kinds of errors only occurred among the lower intermediate group and they were the least frequent.

4.7.3.3 Causes of Unnecessary Insertion of Articles Arising from the Target Language

Table 4.20 presents the number of unnecessary insertion errors and their categories. From the table it is observed that the upper intermediate learners had less unnecessary insertion errors than the lower intermediate learners. The unnecessary insertion of articles occurred with the indefinites 'a' 'an' and the definite 'the' but the insertion of 'the' was at the highest rate for both groups.

4.20 Unnecessary Insertion Errors

Group	Number of unnecessary insertion errors		Category			
	Freq	%	Insertion of 'a' 'an'		Insertion of 'the'	
			Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Lower intermediate	83	22%	20	5%	63	17%
Upper intermediate	58	15%	16	4 % 0	42	11%

a) **Categories of Unnecessary Insertion Errors Arising from the Target Language**

i) **Unnecessary Insertion of 'a'/'an'**

The errors of placing indefinite articles where they were not required were common with uncountable nouns .The following statements sampled from learners compositions reveal these kinds of errors:

Discussing a trip from home to Mbale town with her friends on Boxing Day a form two learner writes:

> *There were many people going to Mbale town to attend Maragoli Cultural Festival. Many vehicles were full but by a good luck a friend gave us a lift and we arrived on time (Lr8).*

Yet another learner talking about the stubbornness of her friend as to why her friend should not attend a party during Christmas states:

> *I tried to advise her but she refused to listen to an advice and because*
>
> *of this she found herself in hot soup (Lr10).*

The errors of insertion of 'a' and 'an' in this context where they are not required (in this context)is an indicator that the learners lack knowledge as to when to use indefinite articles with count and non-count nouns. In both the instances learners 8 and 10 have not yet mastered the use the zero article. The cause of these errors is therefore obviously intra-lingual.

ii**) Unnecessary insertion of 'the'**

Overuse of the article 'the' resulted from the learners inserting 'the' in contexts where it was not necessary. This error was the most frequent in both the groups ranking it first among the errors in this task. Both the groups inserted the definite article 'the' in places where it was not required. The lower intermediate group had the highest frequency of unnecessary insertion of 'the' at 18% while the upper intermediate had 11%. In this case learners, particularly the lower intermediate group had a problem with the first and second mention principle where they tended to insert 'the' before NPs which were being mentioned for the first time that is use of 'the' in generic contexts. The upper intermediate learners on the other hand tended to insert the definite article 'the' where a zero article is required.

Discussing the activities she engaged in during Christmas holiday a learner states:

> *A day before Christmas we went to church for choir practice when I*
>
> *returned back in the evening, mother wasn't at home so I went to the*
>
> *river and fetched the water (Lr13).*

Another learner discussing how she spent her Christmas with her aunt writes:

> *I enjoyed Christmas holiday at my aunt's place watching videos mostly but whenever my aunt sent me to the market I ran quickly to buy the house-hold items (Lr4).*

From the two excerpts there is an obvious overuse of the definite 'the'. In both cases the learners are over-generalizing the use of 'the' due to its frequency in the input but the overuse of 'the' before non-count nouns like 'water' also suggests that the learners have not mastered the use of the generic zero article with count and non-count nouns and they are therefore erroneously using 'the' before such nouns. In following excerpts 'the' overuse abounds

> *My friend is well behaved and is not like my other classmates who escape out of the school in order to go and drink* (Lr20).

> *My friend always tells me that we should not mix with the classmates who take drugs because they are a danger to the society* (Lr. 8)

> *I and my friend always work hard because we want to join the university as we have seen that many students join the university after the form four exams* (Lr20).

In this examples the learners are again making the same error made by learners (13) and (4).They are overusing 'the'. The errors in these contexts are a pointer to the fact that learners have not yet mastered the situations in which to use the definite 'the' so they are using the inadequate knowledge that they have hence they are inserting 'the' in areas where zero articleis required. Overuse of the article 'the' in these instances is a result of over-generalization.

4.7.4 Causes of Errors arising from Learners' First   Language (L1)

Apart from the target language, the first language of the learners was a source of various types of errors. The erros included omission and confusion and unnecessary insertion as shown in the extracts from the participants' compositions.

4.7.4.1Causes and categories of Omission Errors from Learners first Language L1

Learners L1 was also a source of most of the errors .Among them were omissionerrors. Some omission errors emanated from transfer of expressions or structures of the L1 of learners. The following sentences from learners' compositions illustrate this:

> *Me I did not like shoes that my sister bought me for Christmas they were low but l liked dresses she brought (Lr 17)*

The learners in this study have no article system in their L1 therefore they are imposing the Luhya L1 structure on English L2. The NPs that require articles have been left bare ;a concept carried over from the learners' L1 structure.

The omission of 'the' was also frequent with NPs that need a determiner phrase of the form (D NP) in which the speaker and the hearer assume the existence of a unique entity in the set denoted by the NP. A number of learners made omission errors of this type as exemplified in the following sentences;

> *In church Pastor's wife said a prayer and people sat down to listen to the sermon*(Lr3)

My friend is very clever last term he took first position. He had scored

highly even in subjects that all of us fear (Lr7)

In the first sentence of learner 3, the article 'the' is omitted at the beginning of the noun phrase, '*pastor's wife*' and people. It is also omitted before the NP 'first position' and NP 'subjects'.The cause the errors could be attributed to the learners' L1. In English a noun phrase is often preceded by a pre-modifier which could be a determiner such as an article or some adjective. The choice of the article in some cases depends on the notions of definiteness and specificity. But in Luhya L1 there is no such structure. The NP is not preceded by an article because the language has no articles. The notions of definiteness and specificity are realized through demonstratives and via discourse patterns. Thus an NP can be modified by post-modifiers. Semantically equivalent sentences 1 and 2 would be:

1. Mu-khaya wu-mwirwatsi yavola lisala

Wife of pastor said a prayer

2. Mulina wanje nu mujeri wa magana. Yali wukhuranga.Ya nyola makisi ki ikulu muno khali mu masomo ka vanyishi khukhutste varia.

My friend is very clever last term he took first position. He had scored

highly even in subjects that all of us fear (Lr7)

In the translation, the learners L1 is discernible. It is obvious that there is L1 influence as there is no article preceding the NP in the learner's L1.The notion of countability is realized through prefixation; the prefix 'mu' indicates singularity; if they are many it would be 'va-khaya' and 'wu-mwirwatsi' (of pastor). The second sentence by (Lr7)

also reveals L1 influence since he omits the definite article 'the' before the NP 'first position' and 'subjects'.

4.7.4.2 Causes and categories of Confusion Errors Arising FromL1

Confusion errors occurred in context where learners could not use a given article correctly and instead used a wrong article, a demonstrative/possessive pronoun or a locative preposition instead of the correct article. Both the upper and lower intermediate learners made confusion errors in almost the same proportion. Both the groups had the highest frequency in the use of demonstratives and locative prepositions instead of 'the'. Use of demonstratives and possessive pronouns was largely due to L1 interference as demonstrated in the following extracts from their compositions..

Writing about her best friend a learner states:

> 1.*My best friend is called Laura.. Laura is that kind of a girl who respects everybody* (Lr 16)

This learner is using a demonstrative 'that' instead of the definite article 'the' as the'. The incorrect use can be traced to the learner's Luhya L1. A translation of the sentence in Luhya is as follows:

> 1. *Mulina wanje alangwa Laura. Laura oyo nu mukhana yaria mundu wosi* (Lr8)
>
> *(Friend mine is called Laura. Laura that is a girl who respects person every)*

Another learner makes a similar error while discussing how she spent her Christmas. She writes:

> *The day before Christmas, my brother came home with his friends. I didn't like them because those his friends are very ill mannered* (Lr2)

The use of referential 'those' by the learner draws attention to the fact that she is referring to particular friends she has mentioned in the previous discourse therefore she should use 'the' but she uses' those'. The demonstrative pronoun 'those' has an equivalent in Luhya which is 'yavo' used as a marker of specificity when the NP is plural. In this situation the learner is using 'those' to refer to particular friends as she would have done in her L1as shown in the following translation of parts of the sentence;

> Mbotswa wanje yitsi ingo na valina veve.Valina vene yavo vali ni mima midamanu

> (Brother mine came home with friends his. Friends those his have bad manners)

Thus the sentence has a problem; the phrase "those his friends" should be 'his friends' or 'the friends' but the learner uses 'those' instead of 'the' because of influence from her L1.Note that 'those' in this context is meant to bring out the idea of specificity.

In English the possessive determiner follows the head of the NP and no other element comes between the head noun and the determiner. However, within the Luhya NP structure the possessive determiner can occur between a demonstrative and the head of the NP and it can also occur after the NP. A possessive determiner can also follow

a demonstrative before an NP. Therefore in this sentence the learner is obviously translating Luhya language into English. Therefore the cause of the errors is L1interference.

Use of locative prepositions instead of the definite article 'the' was also evident in the learners' compositions and this was as a result of learners' L1 transfer. In the following examples learners used locative prepositions instead of the definite article 'the'.

> *On our way to church we talked about many things but once we reached in church, we stopped chatting (Lr 9)*
>
> *My friend's mother is in business of growing and selling maize (Lr 10)*

These sentences are incorrect because locative prepositions have been used instead of the article 'the'. Influence from Luhya L1 is discernible in these excerpts. A translation of the sentences in Luhya is as follows;

> *Khunjira khuzaa mukanisa khwamoloma vindu vinyikhi, lwakhwatukha mu-kanisa khwalekha   khumoloma*

(On our way going to church we talked about many things, once we reached in church we stopped chatting) (LR 9)

Mama wu-mulina wanje ali mu viashara viukhuraka nu khukulitsa maduma

(Mother of friend mine is in business of growing and selling maize). (Lr10)

In Luhya the nominal locative prefix 'mu' meaning 'in' is used to realize specificity. So the phrases 'in church', and 'in business' are direct translations of Luhya 'mu-kanisa' and 'mu- biashara' respectively. Therefore by writing 'in church' and 'in business', the learners are transferring the notion of specificity directly from Luhya to English and therefore see no need for the definite article 'the' since the locative preposition 'in' has already carried out the function of ' the'.

From table 4.21 it is revealed that the sources of article errors are both intra-lingual and interlingual. The errors arise from the target language itself and also from learners' L1.The errors arising from the target language account for 51% of the errors in this task just slightly more than those arising from transfer of learners' first language at 49%.

Table 4.21 Summary of the Causes of Errors: Composition Task

Source	Cause	Frequency	%
Intra-lingual	complexity of the TL structure (confusion)	61	
	-Misdetection of Countability, -'the' overuse (unnecessary insertions)	58 63	
	Omissions	16	
Total		198	51%
L1 interference	- use of demonstratives, possessive prepositions and locative prepositions to realize the notion of specificity (confusion)	61	21%
	-the overuse (Unnecessary insertions)	20	
	Omissions - transfer of the L1 NP structure on to the target language	106	27%
Total		187	48%

From table 4.21 it is revealed that the sources of article errors are both intra-lingual and interlingual. The errors arise from the target language itself and also from learners' L1.The errors arising from the target language account for 51% of the errors in this task just slightly more than those arising from transfer of learners' first language at 49%.

The third objective of the study was to find out the causes of systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the course of acquisition of the English article system. The findings reveal a variety of causes of errors arising from both the target language and the learners' first language. The findings have shown that errors arising from the target language are higher at 51% compared to errors arising from learners' first

language at 49%. Among the causes arising from target language include misdetection of countability, complexity of the structure of the target language leading to omission and fluctuation. Results have further revealed that errors arising from learners first language are caused by the influence of the structure of the Luhya NP which is bare, the notion of modification of the NP which in Luhya language is realized mostly in post modification position and the notion of definiteness and specificity which in learners' Luhya L1 is realized through demonstratives, possessives and locative prepositions.

4.8 Comparison of Systematic Errors of the Multiple Choice Task, Story-telling Task and Composition Task

Once the errors and cause of the errors were identified in the composition, multiple choice and story-telling tasks, it was necessary to compare the types of errors between the three tasks in order to find out which errors are predominant. This would be used in determining the most difficult areas in the article acquisition for these learners and would also help in finding out whether the causes of difficulties would be traced to the learners'L1.Furthermore, second language learners often have great difficulty in understanding how to use various grammatical items in either written or spoken English; articles included. This is particularly so when the written style and conversations of their mother tongue are very different from English as is the case of these learners whose L1 is very different from English. A comparison was therefore necessary to help determine in which area of the language skills learners have frequent problems with in relation to articles: in writing or in oral skills. This would provide valuable information in the area of language education particularly for language educators. First it will help them identify the common problems in article

use on which focus should be placed, and what areas of language skills when planning writing and oral teaching programs.

The first step in comparing the performance in the three tasks was getting the total number of articles used in each task correctly or incorrectly. The following table shows the number of articles used by both groups in the three tasks correctly and incorrectly:

Table 4.19 gives a summary of the total number of articles used per group in each task correctly and incorrectly.   From the table, the total number of articles used correctly or incorrectly by the lower intermediate group 1732, out of this the total number of articles used correctly is 1,096 and incorrectly is 647. This translates to 63% correct usage and 38% incorrect usage for the lower intermediate group. The total number of articles used correctly and incorrectly for the upper intermediate group is 1804. Out of this, 1285 (71%) were used correctly and 519 (29%) were used incorrectly. The total number of articles used in the multiple choice task is 712, the total number of articles used correctly is 495 (70%) and the articles used incorrectly are 225 (31%).The total number of articles used in the story – telling task is 1422.The number of articles used correctly is 910 (64%) and the articles used incorrectly are 512 (36%). The total number of articles in the composition task is 1394 and the number of articles used correctly is 1009 (72%) and incorrectly 388 (28%).

When the results of the participants in the three tasks are compared, it emerges that learners' performance in the written tasks is better than the performance in the oral task. The score for multiple choice task is 70%, for the composition is 72% and for the story telling task it is 66%. The number of errors in the story- telling task is higher than the number of errors in the multiple choice task and in the composition task. In

the story- telling task the number of errors for the lower intermediate class is 270 (40%) and 242 (32%) for the upper intermediate group while in the multiple choice task the number of errors for lower intermediate group is 135 (38%) and for the upper intermediate 85 (24%). For the composition task the lower intermediate made 236 (33%) errors and the upper intermediate 152 (23%).

The analysis reveals that the two groups performed best in the composition task followed by the multiple choice task. The performance in the story-telling task ranks last.

The results also reveal that the number of errors vary in relation to the level of proficiency it implies that the lower the level of learners the higher the number of errors and the higher the learners advance the less the number of errors. From the table it is also observed that performance in the written task was better than performance in the oral task. This means that learners tend to show higher proficiency levels in written tasks than in oral tasks. This could be attributed to the fact that writing skills are generally given more prominence than other skills in language pedagogy and learners writing abilities are often tested in a variety of contexts.

 Another explanation could be that, in the composition task participants were given sufficient time to write the composition at their own pace. This explains why they show a higher proficiency level in composition writing than in the oral task. The spoken language often exhibits linguistic characteristics which are informal rather than academic. Therefore, learners' spoken corpora were characterized by typical spoken English; full of pauses and repetitions.

Table 4.22 Articles used correctly and incorrectly in the multiple choice, Story- telling and Composition Tasks.

GROUP	Total No. of articles used	TASK														
		Multiple choice Task					Story- telling task					Composition task				
		Total	Correct use	%	Incorrect use	%	Total	Correct use	%	Incorrect use	%	Total	Correct use	%	Incorrect use	%
Lower Intermediate	1,732	360	230	64%	130	36%	660	390	60%	270	40%	712	479	68%	233	33%
Upper Intermediate	1,804	360	265	74%	95	26%	762	520	68%	242	32%	682	530	77%	152	23%
Total	**3,536**	**720**	**490**		**225**		**1422**	**910**		**512**		**1394**	**1009**		**385**	

Table 4.23 Summary of the Type of Errors

Group	Error type	Task							
		Multiple choice Task		**Story-telling task**		**Composition Task**		**Total number of errors by type and group**	
	Total number of errors by task	225		512		385			
		Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Lower Intermediate	Omission Errors	30	3%	105	9%	70	6%	205	18%
	Unnecessary insertion errors	30	3%	45	4%	80	5%	155	14%
	Confusion errors	70	6%	120	10%	69	9%	259	23%
Upper intermediate	Omission Errors	35	3%	75	6%	52	5%	162	15%
	Unnecessary insertion errors	25	2%	67	6%	58	3%	150	13%
	Confusion errors	35	3%	100	9%	56	6%	191	17%
								1122	100%

Table 4.24 Error Arrangement from the Most to the Least Frequent by Type

	Lower Intermediate		Upper Intermediate		Total	
Confusion errors	273	23%	177	16%	450	40%
Omission Errors	205	18%	162	14%	367	33%
Un-necessary Insertion of articles	158	14%	150	13%	308	27%

From table4.21 the following facts emerge: The highest number of errors are confusion errors at 450 (40%) followed by omission errors at 367 (33%).The errors resulting from inappropriate use of articles, where learners fixed articles in places where they are not required are the least; these are unnecessary insertion errors at 305 (27%). In most studies carried out on article use in learners whose L1 does not have an overt article system, the findings have revealed confusion errors as predominant. Atay (2011) in her findings points out that cases of overuse are predominant in [+definite – specific] contexts and [– definite +specific] contexts. In these contexts the definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a' are substituted for each other. This is a clear indication that learners in this study associate the definite article 'the' with specificity and the indefinite 'a' with non-specificity. Atia (2014) also found out that misuse of 'the' in contexts where zero is required was the most predominant error among the learners. Other studies with similar findings include Ekiert(2004); Ionin& Wexler (2003); Snape (2005).In these studies overuse of articles tended to arise from learners inability to use articles appropriately in [+definite –specific] and [–definite +specific] contexts. In this study confusion errors are also predominant compared to other types accounting for 450 (40%) of all the errors. However they are more frequent in the

story- telling task with 220(20%) followed by the composition task with 125 (11%) least in the multiple choice task 105 (9%). In the two tasks; story-telling and composition, learners were not limited in their choices of articles in specific contexts nor were they conditioned to use articles as they were in the multiple choice task. This means they had freedom of using language the way they deemed fit. As a result learners tended to use demonstratives and locative prepositions and possessive pronouns.in their writings to express specificity rather than articles. Consequently, demonstrative pronouns and locative prepositions were used inappropriately in contexts where 'the' was required and possessive pronouns were used inappropriately where 'a' and zero article were required. This was as a result of L1 influence. This partly explains why in this study we have a much higher number of confusion errors as compared to the rest of the errors. According to Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis, in L2 acquisition the learner is guided by his L1 and he transfers all the L1 grammar on to L2 initially. The findings also revealed that the highest percentage (23%) of confusion errors belongs to the lower intermediate learners.

Omission errors are second commonest after confusion errors. They account for 367 (33%) of all the errors. In all the three tasks omission errors were most frequent in cases where 'the' was required, as is, in [+definite +specific] contexts. This kind of omission was also observed in several studies including Atay (2011), Atia (2014) and Ekiert (2004).Omission of 'the' in this context occurred in areas where 'the' was required, before generic mass nouns and before generic plural count nouns. Omission of 'a'/'an' was common with NPs that were pre-modified pointing to the complexity of the article system as the cause. Crompton (2011) reported that omission errors were most commonly produced by learners whose L1 lacked articles. Atay (2011) in her

study of Turkey learners whose L1 lacks articles also reported frequency of omission errors. The least frequent errors are errors of unnecessary insertion accounting for 305(27%). Since their L1 lacks articles, frequent use of articles may not be common in their output. However, for the cases of unnecessary insertions, the article that was frequently fixed where it was not required was the definite 'the'. Overuse of 'the' has also been reported by various studies including Huebner, (1983) ; Master, (1997); Ekiert, (2007) ; El Wefarlli, (2013); Atay, (2011). Elwefarlli found overuse among learners who were native Arabic speakers whose Arabic L1 has only the definite article but lacks the indefinite articles. Atay (2011) reported overuse among native Turkey speakers whose L1 has no articles.   In this study overuse could also be as a result of the frequency of 'the' in the input. In addition in most text books addressing the English language syllabus the article 'the 'is given more prominence.

Table 4.25: A Summary of Article Errors by Type

Error type	Multiple Choice Task				Story-Telling Task				Composition Task				Total	
	Group				Group				Group				Total	
	Lower intermediate		Upper intermediate		Lower intermediate		Upper intermediate		Lower intermediate		Upper intermediate		Freq	%
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Omission of 'a'	10	1%	5	0.5%	30	3%	12	1%	20	2%	10	1%		
Omission of 'an'	5	0.5%	5	0.5%	20	2%	13	1%	20	2%	10	!%		
Omission of 'the'	20	2%	25	2%	55	5%	50	5%	30	3%	32	3%		
Unnecessary insertion of 'a'	0	0%	0	0%	14	1%	12	1%	20	2%	16	1%		
Unnecessary insertion of 'an'	10	1%	10	1%	3	0.3%	15	1%	0	0%	0	0%		
Unnecessary insertion of 'the'	20	2%	15	1%	28	3%	40	4%	63	6%	42	4%		
Substitution of 'a' for 'the'	25	2%	10	1%	20	2%	20	2%	13	1%	6	0.5%		
Substitution of 'an' for 'the'	10	1%	5	0.5%	10	1%	10	1%	7	0.6%	6	0.5%		
Substitution of 'the' for 'a'	10	1%	10	1%	30	3%	20	2%	7	0.6%	5	0.5%		
Substitution of 'the' for 'an'	15	1%	10	1%	20	2%	16	1%	11	1%	6	0.5%		
Substitution of 'a' for 'an'	5	0.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	0.5%	0	0%		
Substitution of 'an' for 'a'	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%		
Substitution of demonstratives and possessives for 'the'	-	-	-	-	30	3%	25	2%	20	2	14	1%		
Substitution of locative prepositions for 'the'	-	-	-	-	10	1%	9	1%	6	0.5%	5	0.5%		

The findings from table 4.23 reveal that for these learners the most frequent article error is the omission of the definite article 'the' and the least frequent article error is the unnecessary insertion of 'an'. The second frequent article error is overuse of 'the'.

Table 4.26 Error arrangement from most common to least common

	Frequency	Percentage
Omission of the definite' the	212	19%
Overuse of the definite 'the'	208	18%
Substitution of demonstratives pronouns for' the'	91	10%
Substitution of 'a' for 'the'	94	8%
Omission of 'a'	87	8%
Substitution of 'the' for 'a'	82	7%
Substitution of 'the' for 'an'	78	7%
Omission of 'an'	73	7%
Unnecessary insertion (Overuse) of' a'	62	6%
Substitution of 'an' for 'the'	48	4%
Unnecessary insertion of' an'	38	3%
Misuse of locative prepositions	30	3%
Substitution of possessives pronouns for 'a'	19	2%
Total	1122	100%

The findings from table 4.23 reveal that for these learners the most frequent article error is the omission of the definite article 'the' and the least frequent article error is the unnecessary insertion of 'an'. The second frequent article error is overuse of 'the'.

The findings of various studies have reported omission errors. Crompton (2011)s reported that omission errors were most commonly produced by learners whose L1 lacked articles. Atay (2011) in her study of Turkey learners also reported frequency of omission errors. Overuse of 'the' has also been reported by various studies including Huebner, (1983) ;

Master, (1997); Ekiert, (2007) ; El Wefarlli, (2013); Atay, (2011). Elwefarlli found overuse among learners who were native Arabic speakers whose Arabic L1 has only the definite article but lacks the indefinite articles. Atay (2011) reported overuse among native Turkey speakers whose L1 has no articles.

From table 4.24 the following observations can be made; learners' errors are both intralingual and interlingual. This means their causes arise from both learners' first language (Luhya) and the target language (English). Errors arising as a result of over generalization are 593 (52%) and those arising from L1 transfer are 534 (48 %). It is therefore evident that learners' L1 interferes with article acquisition but the target language itself alsoplays a role. It is also observable that the percentage of errors arising from learners' L1 influence is higher in the story-telling task at 24% compared to the multiple choice task at 7% and composition task at 17%. This means learners spoken English is largely affected by their Luhya L1.

Table 4.27 Summary of the Causes of Errors of the Multiple Choice, Story-Telling and Composition Tasks.   (Total number of errors 1122)

Task		Multiple Choice Task		Story-telling task		Composition Task		Total	%
Source	Cause	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
Overgeneralization (Intralingual)	Fluctuation	100	9	136	12	73	7	309	28%
	Misdetection of countability	55	4%	104	9%	40	4%	199	18%
	Overuse			-		65	6%	65	6%
	Complexity of the TL structure					20	2%	20	2%
Total		155	13	240	21	198	18	593	52%
LI Influence (interlingual)	Confusion			104	9%	69	6%	173	15%
	Overuse					7	1%	7	1%
	NP structure of L1	75	7%	168	15%	106	9%	349	31%
Total		75	7%	272	24%	187	17%	529	48%

4.9 Challenges Teachers of English Face when Teaching the English Article System

This section dealt with the fourth research question. To find answers to this question, I generated data through an interview schedule and analysed it using Braun and Clark (2006) six steps analysis The research question provided responses on the challenges teachers face in teaching the English article system. In the following section the findings are presented thematically.

4.9.1Themes identified

The themes identified include:i) the focus of the English language secondary school syllabus ii)Complexity of the English article system   iii) Teacher Incompetence in teaching of the English article system iv)The invariability of teaching and learning strategies v)Problematic areas in article use.

4.9.1.1The Focus of the English Language Secondary School Syllabus

Many of the respondents (10) made reference to the English language secondary school syllabus as focusing on the communicative competence of the learner. They were implicitly referring   to the fact that the syllabus adapts a communicative approach to language teaching and learning. They pointed out that the main objective of this syllabus is to enable learners to communicate competently. However, their views as to whether the syllabus was useful in helping develop learners' mastery of the English article system were divergent. The participants raised a number of issues which were sorted out into various sub-themes as discussed in the following section:

a) Focus on meaning leads to poor mastery of the article system

The participants pointed out that since the communicative approach to language teaching focuses on meaning, articles are supposed to be learnt in context and the rules are ignored. They stated that this leads to poor mastery of article use as illustrated in the following statements from some of the participants:

One of the teachers noted:

The disadvantage of this syllabus is that it emphasizes the communicative competence of the student so we look at the communicative aspects of language and in so doing we let learners discover the rules governing article use instead ofteaching these rules in most cases. As a result, I think this is why the learnersget problems in using articles; we don't teach them enough about article rules (Tr4).

Another teacher stated:

*Okay our syllabus is communicative in nature meaning that when we teach language we should let our students use articles in communicative contexts. This is okay but I feel relying on this approach alone doesn't help because those communicative contexts may not offer sufficient exposure to all contexts of article use (*Tr15*).*

b) Inadequate coverage of Articles in the syllabus

Ten of the participants stated that the secondary school English syllabus focuses on certain grammatical items which do not include articles in their own right. They argued that this leads to superficial coverage of the article system which could easily lead to poor mastery of article use and results in article errors of all sorts in the students' work. This is illustrated in the following quotation from one teacher of lower secondary class:

I don't know but my take is that the syllabus is specific on the grammar items to be taught and when I look at it closely, articles are not adequately

covered like other grammar items. If I were to go by the syllabus, then I would teach articles only when I'm teaching nouns (Tr7).

While echoing the opinions of other respondents another teacher said:

The syllabus tends to ignore articles because it only mentions them in form one only(Tr.10).

These excerpts reveal that the English article system though important is not given adequate attention in the syllabus and that many of the errors learners make in the use of articles are due to lack of sufficient exposure to the articles.

The same excerpts show that teachers are of the view that the communicative approach to teaching grammar and articles in particular should be combined with some formal teaching of the rules governing article use so that the communicative proficiency of the learner as well as mastery of form is taken care of.

c) Inadequate coverage of articles in the current class text-books for English language

Sixteen (16)of the respondents stated that the text book they use as a class text is New Integrated English recommended by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) formally known as KIE. They were quick to point out that the text-books and many others currently in the market for Kenya secondary schools do not adequately address articles. Following are some of their opinions:

I use New Integrated English by KIE as my class text, unfortunately it has

very little on articles when I have to teach articles usually I use old books

(Tr.7).

Supporting her views another teacher had the following to say:

Well I don't see much of articles as a topic in the texts currently in the

market for English secondary schools but I think the authors assume

articles will be dealt with under nouns. In any case I usually deal with

articles when I'm handling nouns particularly when I'm dealing with

countable and uncountable nouns. I make up for lack of articles in theses

text books by preparing my own notes on articles though it's cumbersome

(Tr.18).

Question 2 (c) on the interview schedule was to find out the particular difficult areas that

give them problems when dealing with the English article system. The participants raised

a number of challenges in teaching the articles. The issues they raised were sorted out

into themes and sub-themes and are discussed in the following section:

4.9.1. 2Complexity of the Article System

a) Plethora of Rules Governing Article use.

A common thread through many of the narratives of the respondents was their explicit

and implicit reference to the many rules and exceptions to the rules that govern the

English article use. The respondents stated that the rules governing the article system

were many and an obstacle to learning. Their responses demonstrate their belief that the

many rules governing the English article system are a challenge to them as teachers of

English as they pose problems to their students. These rules and the problems arising from the rules are discussed as sub-themes in the following sections:

i) Patterning of Count and Non-Count Nouns with Articles

Participants indicated that the rule has many exceptions that lead learners to make confusion errors as demonstrated in the following statement by one teacher:

> *According to this rule the articles 'a' and 'an' are used before count nouns that are singular and the zero article before mass nouns and count nouns that are plural. A challenge arises where I have to draw my students' attention to the exceptions to these rules; for example, the same noun depending on the context can be considered as a count or non-count noun. This causes confusion to students. In their activities and practice exercises,some of the errors they make emanate from this confusion* (Tr 16).

ii) The first second mention Rule has exceptions that lead to overuse of 'the'

Participants also referred to the first second mention rule governing the use of the definite article 'the'. They argued that this rule usually leads to overuse of 'the' and also to omission errors as illustrated in the following example:

> *There is this first and second mention rule with regard to the definite article 'the'. According to this rule when we mention something whose name is a countable noun for the first time we normally put 'a' or 'an' in front of it; when we refer to it again we put 'the'. You see, this rule sounds easy but it has certain complications. In fact, it is usually the rule that my students master first. But with experience I have learnt that even if my students get it right there are cases where the rule will be overgeneralized*(Tr 17).

First and second mention rule is not applicable in cases where someone is referring to something in general. The indefinite article 'a' 'an' and zero is used even if the object being referred to is referred to many times. Let me give you the following example: 'all children need love. Love is important because it makes them feel secure. But most parents are too busy and don't have time to express love for their children'. Lower level students, I mean form ones and twos keep wondering why love in the second mention should not be preceded by the definite article 'the'. Thus for low level students this rule of generic reference contradicts first and second mention rule. This confusion usually results in 'the' overuse (Tr.14).

iii) The Rule Concerning Use of Articles with Proper Nouns

The rule governing use of articles with proper nouns was discussed by 20 interviewees as a problem for learners and viewed as a cause of confusion for most learners. One of the teachers pointed out:

> *But rules are not always adequate in explaining article use. The rule governing proper nouns is that singular proper nouns often do not take any article, however, the exception to this rule is that some proper nouns take the definite article 'the'. These include proper nouns referring to deserts, canals, rivers, seas currents, groups of islands, mountain ranges and so on. Frankly speaking, the rule governing the use of 'the' before proper nouns is not rational and we teachers have a problem in justifying it. The difficulties learners experience with the rules governing article use lead to errors in their work*(Tr. 3).

This argument supports the findings of the multiple choice, composition and story-telling tasks which revealed errors of omission, fluctuation and overuse. In the first excerpt, count and non-count nouns rule leads to confusion between zero article and 'a'/'an' resulting in omission errors. In the third excerpt the rule governing the use of 'the' and proper nouns leads to omission errors. The second excerpt supports the theory of fluctuation. First and second mention rule leads to fluctuation between the indefinite 'a' and the definite 'the' and results in 'the' overuse.

4.9.1.3 Learners'L1 interference

Eighteen teachers stated that a majority of their learners come from the catchment area and as such already have their mother tongue which is Luhya. They are able and often communicate with each other using their mother tongue. By the time they begin learning English their first language becomes an obstacle in the acquisition of articles. This was captured in the following statements from two of the teachers:

> *You see most of our students come from around this area, l mean from Vihiga County. They grew up here so most of them speak Luhya as their first language. This often influences their learning of English leading to errors in article use*(Tr.15).

> *When these students of ours read or write English you can always tell that they are Luhyas because their English is marred by translation from their Luhya mother tongue. Some omission errors they make are as a result of interference from the Luhya language*(Tr.12).

The findings revealed three types of challenges facing English language teachers in their teaching of articles as is captured in Table 4.28 As shown in table 4.28, 42% of the

respondents pointed to the secondary school syllabus as the problem, another 42% pointed to the current text books in the market as causing difficulties, 75% believed that L1 influence is a challenge in the teaching and learning of the article system and the majority 83% believe that the many rules governing article use are the biggest problem. It can therefore be seen that the rules regarding the use of articles seems to be the biggest problem. It can therefore be seen that the rules regarding the use of articles seems to be the biggest problem.

Table 4.28: Difficulties Teachers Experience in Teaching the English Article System

No. of respondents = 24

Type	Respondents frequency	Percentage
The secondary school syllabus does not adequately address the article system	10	42%
The current English secondary school class texts do not cover the article system	10	42%
The rules governing the use of the English Article system, exceptions and contradictions to these rules complicate the learning process and overtax the teacher	20	83%
Learners'L1 influence	18	75%

4.9.1.4 Teacher Incompetence in the Teaching of English Article System

Teacher competence in the English article system is about how teachers approach the teaching of articles during classroom instruction. Some of the participants stated that they do not pay as much attention to articles as they do to other areas of grammar. Other participants stated that they teach articles but not as a focus of the lesson; they only teach them in their grammar lessons when they are teaching nouns. Their views were captured in the following excerpts from the interview conversations:

> *I do not spend time on teaching articles because there are other areas of grammar which in my view are more important since they will adversely affect my students' performance if not well taught but articles will not. So I concentrate on these other areas and let my students learn about articles through practice of the other language skills*(Tr. 12).

> *Yes, I teach articles but not as a main topic. I teach articles when I'm teaching nouns and often my concentration is on nouns* (Tr.17).

> *Yes I teach articles for sure, it would be suicidal to ignore articles because though they may appear unimportant they have an added meaning to a noun that they precede …………. but then I only address them in Form I and Form II*(Tr.20).

*I only address articles in Form I and Form II (*Tr 2).

It is therefore evident from the teachers' accounts that there is an obvious lack of focused instruction and by implication focused learning of articles. Articles are taught but not as a focus of the lesson. It is also evident that teachers do not pay much attention to articles in their English lessons.

The responses of the teachers are captured in table 4.29. From table 4.29, 75% of the respondents do not teach articles as a focus of the lesson, 8% only address articles when teaching nouns and 4% do not teach articles at all.13% only teach articles in lower forms, It is therefore evident that there is an obvious lack of focused instruction and by implication focused learning of articles. Articles are taught but not as a focus of the lesson. It is also evident that teachers do not pay much attention to articles in their English lessons.

Table 4.29: Responses as to whether the Article system is taught

Total No. of respondents =24

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Taught but not as a focus of the lesson	18	75%
Only addressed when teaching count and non-count nouns	2	8%
Not at all- students learn articles by exposure to language through natural contexts	1	4%
Only taught in lower classes (forms I and II)	3	13%

4.9.1.5. Teaching Strategies

Conversation on teaching strategies aimed at finding out whether teachers have significant content knowledge of articles as well as pedagogical content knowledge to enable them use the strategies that are effective in making the learning of articles easy.

Their narratives revealed that language teachers use a limited number of methods to teach the English article system. The methods that came out from their narratives were captured and sorted out into sub-themes discussed as follows:

a) Direct Instruction

16 of the narratives showed that the lecture method was employed in teaching grammatical items as illustrate in the following statements from the participants:

> *Anytime I teach grammatical items, I use lecture method. In many cases I do this when I'm introducing my students to articles, I use lecture method to let the students understand the rules governing article use. Once I have introduced them to articles, l let them learn about the rest through practice* (Tr.8)

Another teacher who also said he uses lecture method narrated:

> *I begin by teaching learners directly the types of nouns; common, abstract concrete, proper and collective nouns. It is when I group them into count and uncountable nouns and mass nouns that I introduce the use of articles. I then introduce the notion of indefinite and definite articles. At this juncture l usually take my time to explain to my students the difference between 'a' and 'an' and 'the'. I then outline the rules that govern the use of these articles and give learners practice exercises (*Tr.17)

From these two excerpts it emerges that the teachers are using a deductive approach in teaching articles. This is a method that teaches grammar rules at the start of a lesson.

From these narratives we can also tell that the teachers do not adequately cover all aspects of article usage. The first teacher tends to brush over the articles when he is teaching nouns whereas the second teacher does not look at all aspects of article use. First he ignores the null and the zero article as he does not include them in his teaching.

Secondly his handling of the indefinite variant 'a'/'an' and the rules governing article use are incomplete. Lastly the basic rules governing use of the definites and indefinites have been excluded. He does not also point out that the article 'the' has a generic and non-generic use; in fact, he stresses to his students the fact that the definite 'the' is used when we want to be specific which in a way can be misleading.

In of the narratives it was revealed a few teachers combine two or more methods in teaching the English article system as illustrated in the following quotations.

> *In my teaching of the articles I combine many methods. First I begin by explicit teaching using examples and question – answer techniques. Then I use communicative activities such as dialogues Interviews and role play .After they have an idea about articles, I let students learn more about articles and discover the rest of the rules through communicational activities like dialogues, interviews and role play. I feel this is the best way to approach the teaching of articles.* (Tr.20)

This excerpt reveals that some teachers use both the deductive approach and the inductive approach.

4.9.1.6   The Invariability of Learning and Teaching Activities

The following are a variety of activities that emerged from the interviews that teachers employ in their English language classes to teach the English article system.

i) Group Work

Two teachers stated:

> *Sometimes I put my students in small groups then I give them worksheets then l ask them to complete the worksheet marching definite and indefinite articles to sentences given appropriately*(Tr.7)

> *I use group work a lot. I sometimes let my students work in groups or in pairs at given problem solving tasks sometimes based on articles*(Tr.12)

i)   Filling- in Blanks

Sixteen participants stated that they use filling in blanks activities at all levels when teaching articles. They explained that after teaching them articles learners are given practice exercises. One participant stated:

> *I use many different activities when I am teaching grammar. But when it comes to articles I mostly employ the fill in blanks exercises*(Tr.10).

> *For my part I use filling in blanks with lower forms but when it comes to upper forms I prefer giving them passages with missing articles but without blank spaces left. I then ask them to rewrite the passage placing articles where they think they should be inserted* (Tr.15)

> *I use many different activities when I am teaching grammar. But when it comes to articles I mostly employ the fill in blanks exercises. These help*

me to taste various aspects of articles. For lower classes, forms one and two I usually give them short sentences with blanks and ask them to complete the sentences with the correct articles (Tr18)

iii) Re-write Exercises

Four (4) of the participants said that they prefer using rewrite exercises as activities to teach articles. One participant pointed out that rewrite exercises are best because they give learners the opportunity to think unlike the fill in blanks and the cloze tests where learners sometimes resort to guess work. He stated:

As I have said I use various activities in teaching grammar….. I also use some re-write exercises to find out if my students can think independently(Tr.2).

…but when it comes to upper forms I prefer giving them passages with missing articles but without blank spaces left. I then ask them to rewrite the passage placing articles where they think they should be inserted(Tr.15)

iv)   **Cloze tests**

Eight of the teachers mentioned that they frequently used cloze tests any time they wanted to involve learners in activities related to article use.They opined that this was a convenient way of coveraging avariety of contexts in which articles are used.

For form three and four I use cloze tests where I select passages which contain the articles to be tested. Sometimes it is not easy to get passages with all the articles that I want them to learn so I go for text books which have already prepared cloze tests on articles. The current text books don't

*have this so I have to look for other sources or create my own cloze tests I
find Austin Bukenya's texts particularly the Skills of English very good for
this (*Tr5).

*The most obvious activities for teaching articles are, fill in blank spaces
and cloze teststhey help learners to learn various uses in a short time.*(Tr
6)

v) Language Games

Afew teachers stated that they used language games in their lessons as illustrated in the
following excerpts from the interview:

*Teaching articles is rather tricky you know but despite my use of lecture
method I usually try to vary it with language games in which I involve all
my students. When I'm teaching countable and uncountable nouns for
example I like using sentence building games with lower forms. The game
lower forms enjoy is giving them part of a sentence and asking them to
finish it* (Tr.9).

*I like engaging my students in various language games particularly when
we are having an afternoon lesson. I don't mind which class. I often
prepare games with varying level of difficult according to the level of my
learners* (Tr 10).

vi)Quizzes and Flash Cards

Two participants said that they use quizzes and flash cards in their lessons when teaching
grammar articles as illustrated in the following example:

> *When I want to keep my students alert and involved in the lesson, I use flash cards. I like flash cards because I always customize them to teach any particular grammatical structure I'm interested in*(Tr20)

vii)Dialogues , Role -playand simulations

One teacher said,

> *Among the activities l use to teach grammar are dialogues and role play and I prepare the dialogues and topics for role play depending on the grammar topic I have covered. When my interest is in articles usually I ensure learners practice dialogues which have a variety of article use for example I could let them practice use of articles before countable and uncountable nouns. I also sometimes give a lot of filling in blanks exercises*(Tr 4).

From the data obtained and as can be seen from table 4.30, 13% of teachers use dialogues and role play, 42% use rewrite exercises, 83% use filling in blanks exercises, 50% use group work and 42% use cloze tests. This reveals that the activities teachers use are varied but the majority of them (83%) use filling-in the blanks exercises after direct instruction/lecture method. The rest use activities compatible with communicative approach.

Table 4.30. Learning and Teaching Activities and Tasks used in Classroom Instruction of Articles

No of respondents total =24

Activity	Respondents	
	Frequency	Percentage
Dialogues and role play	8	33%
Rewrite Exercises	10	42%
Filling - in blanks exercises	20	83%
Group Work	12	50%
Cloze tests	10	42%
Language games, quizzes and flash cards	3	13%

viii) Correction of Article Errors

In response to question 5 on the interview schedule, 14 respondents stated that they correct article errors but not often only when correcting learners' compositions. Another 6 respondents stated that they only correct grammatical items they are interested in and rarely pay attention to articles. 4 other respondents said they correct only when they have given an exercise involving articles. Their responses are captured in the following extracts:

> *I pay attention to article errors when I have been teaching nouns and articles and have given students work on the item taught* (Tr9).

> *I mark the students' grammar exercises and their compositions but I usually pay attention only to certain areas I consider important Yes, I do mark my students' work but I concentrate on grammatical areas I have*

*taught. However, when I mark compositions I correct all errors including article errors (*Tr13).

I pay more attention to areas like tenses, subject verb agreement and major parts of speech among others and ignore minor areas like articles. The reasons for doing so is to avoid discouraging students; you see when their work is over- marked they tend to give up (Tr15).

4.9.1.7 The   Problematic areas in Article use for Learners

The views of the participants as to the most problematic areas for learners in article use were established via question (5b) on the interview schedule. The purpose of this question was to establish the kinds of difficulties the learners experience when learning the article system from the perspective of teachers. This would help investigate whether learners' L1 had an influence. All the 24 participants who were interviewed stated that learners indeed experience difficulties in article use. They raised a number of difficulty areas for learners which included fluctuation and overuse (9 respondents) omission of articles (10 respondents) and insertion of articles where they are not required (3 respondents).Some of their statements are captured in the following excerpts:

In some cases, our students take too long to understand rules governing article use. So you find some of them using 'a' before a noun that has already been mentioned and using 'the' before a noun being mention for the first time. For example a student writes "My father bought me the new dress for Christmas" They also have issues when it comes to using articles with with count and uncountable nouns. (Tr3).

Learners often have a problem in deciding when to use the article 'the' and when to leave it out. In such circumstances they opt for 'the' for

instance they write sentences like these: ''this morning we had the eggs for breakfast 'and ''I had to fetch the water in the morning before coming to the school.'' Learners make such errors because they have a problem in mastering when to use 'the' and when to leave it out.(Tr.17).

Even after explaining to my students when to use the articles with proper nouns I still overhear them in their conversations saying things like 'I want to study hard and join University of Nairobi' and 'We crossed Nzoia river before we arrived Webuye town''. Such utterances in which they fail to use the definite 'the' with proper nouns are common among our students and very worrying and sometimes make me wonder what strategy I should use to help my learners master article use with proper nouns (Tr.17).

Quite often our students leave out the indefinite article 'a' and 'an'in places where it should be inserted. For example, when I'm marking students' essays I often come across sentences like these: 'I went to church for wedding'. 'I scored a B+ in Maths and this was encouragement for me'' ''He will eat banana for lunch' (Tr 20).

From the exercises I give to students, I have noted that our students tend to use demonstrative pronouns instead of the article "the" for example a student writes 'Our village was attacked by Sabaot warriors so we ran and hid in those hills behind our houses (Tr14).

Students often include articles in places where they are not wanted. For example a student writes "My father bought me the new dress for Christmas" My students often make errors associated with their mother tongue. Most of the errors they make are errors of exclusion. They exclude articles in places where articles are required. For example, a student

> *writes: "Our teacher divided us into two groups of boys and girls during games but when she left Joan decided to play with boys instead of us girls" (Tr 15).*

These excerpts summarize the errors learners make from the teachers' perspective. Table 4.31 captures these types of errors: ov As shown in table 4.31,the findings reveal that from their experience in the classroom, teachers believe the errors learners frequently make are omission errors 46%, followed by confusion errors 38%. The least common errors are unnecessary insertion errors 3 (13%).This finding concurs with the results of the story telling task and composition task where omission errors, errors of overuse and unnecessary insertion errors were evident.Teruse and unnecessary insertion errors were evident.

Table:4. 31 Problematic Areas in Article Use

Type		
Confusion between definite and indefinite articles	**9**	**38%**
Omission of articles where they are required	11	46%
Unnecessary Insertion of aricles where they are not required.	3	13%

4.9.1.8 The causes of Learners' Errors in Article use

i) Learners' L1 Interference

Having established the types of difficulties experienced by learners in article acquisition, the study sought to find out the causes of the problems. The answers to this question were elicited via question six on the interview schedule. The purpose of the question was to find out if learners' L1 was one of the challenges for teachers when teaching the article system. In 10 (45%) of the narratives, participants attributed article difficulties to the learners' L1.They posited that learners' Luhya L1 played a significant role in the article errors that they make. 12 (55%) attributed the difficulties to complexity of the article system. Some of their sentiments are captured in the following excerpts from the data:

> *Our students' first language which is Luhya for most of them plays a significant role in the article errors that they make. Any time our students speak or write you notice traces of their mother tongue in their work. I think it is because majority of them are Luhyas and at home and outside the classroom they use Luhya because they understand each other. There are times when I'm tempted to believe they think in their mother tongue first then they translate what they are thinking to English, otherwise how can you explain their frequent use of pronouns and omission errors that reflect direct translation from Luhya? Let me give you an example; a student tells another: ''Friday is holiday you know I'II sleep whole day''* (Tr 11).

> *My students are fond of using possessive pronouns instead of articles. In their work l come across errors as a result of misuse of pronouns. (Tr 12).*

Echoing similar sentiments another teacher stated:

> *Their first language usually interferes with article acquisition when learners try to construct sentences by translating directly from mother*

tongue to English. This leads to ungrammatical sentences that results from

excluding articles where they ought to have them included or using wrong

articles or demonstratives in contexts where they are not required (Tr.9)

This finding supports the results of the story telling task where learners' L1 interference also majored.

ii) Difficulty of the target language

Thirteen (13) of the respondents attributed the cause of article errors in learners language to the English language itself. They posited that some of the errors learners make in the use of the article system could be attributed to the fact that the rules governing the article system have many exceptions and even contradictions. In their view this confuses the learners leading to confusion and overuse errors. The following examples from the conversations with the respondents support their claims.

The problem our students have is confusing 'a' with 'the' and even using 'the' where it is not required.(Tr 8)

I have noted that our students particularly those in form I and II are fond of over using the definite article 'the' in places where it ought not be used. For example, a student will say: ''She has the plans to join university after completing the secondary school'' (Tr 6).

The article system is just complex, the rules are not consistent and as such learners face difficulties in learning it and we teachers try our best to help them deal with the difficulties and eventually they get it right (Tr6).

4.10 Semantic challenges Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English L2 Article System

The fifth objective of this study was to find out the semantic challenges the Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English L2 article system.

To find out the semantic challenges Luhya learners face when learning the English article system it was found necessary to set them a variety of tasks so that from their performance their problems in acquisition of the article system would be identified. Consequently, three instruments were used to elicit data from the learners: a multiple choice task, a story-telling task and a composition task. Results from these three instruments revealed that learners fluctuated between definiteness and specificity. These were evident in contexts III ([+ definite –specific] (speaker has no knowledge about NPs) and IV [- definite + specific] (explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs) as shown in Table 4.27

In the multiple choice task, article use was tested in the following contexts: [+ definite + specific] context (anaphoric reference) [+ definite + specific] (speaker explicit knowledge about NPs) [+ definite – specific] (speaker has no knowledge about NPs). In these contexts 'the' was required as the correct answer. Article use was also tested in the following contexts:[-definite + specific] (explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs); in this context the indefinite article 'a' was required, [-definite – specific] (NPs are first mention in the context) and the indefinite article 'an' was required; [– definite – specific] (NPs are anonymous for the speaker) and the zero article is required. Performances in these contexts are captured in Table 4.32

From Table 4.32 fluctuation levels were highest in context III (+ definite – specific) between 'the' and 'a' with the lower intermediate learners registering a fluctuation rate of 25% and the upper intermediate learners 17% and context IV[- definite+ specific] where both the lower upper intermediate groups register fluctuation between 'the' and 'a' in equal proportions of 17%.

Fluctuation was also evident in the story-telling task although in this task it was not evident in context III but it was evident in context IV where learners used 'the' instead of 'a' as shown in table 4.33

Table 4.32 Required Articles and selected Articles in the Multiple Choice Task

	Required Articles	Selected articles			
Lower Intermediate Group		The	a	an	Ø
CONTEXT I	The	83%	8.4	0%	8.4%
CONTEXT II	the	67%	17%	8.4%	8.4%
CONTEXT III	the	58%	25%	8.4%	8.4%
CONTEXT IV	A	17%	66%	0%	17%
CONTEXT V	an	25%	8.4%	58%	8.4%
CONTEXT IV	ø	33%	0%	17%	50%
		The	a	an	Ø
Upper Intermediate CONTEXT I	The	91%	0%	0%	8.4%
CONTEXT II	The	83%	8.4%	8.4%	8.4%
CONTEXT III	the	58%	17%	8.4%	17%
CONTEXT IV	a	17%	75%	0%	8.4%
CONTEXT V	An	17%	0%	75%	8.4%
CONTEXT VI	ø	23%	0%	17%	50%

From table 4.33 it is shown that use of 'the' in context III [+ definite – specific] where (speaker has no knowledge about NPs) was not evident. In context IV (- definite +

specific] (explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs) where 'a' was required the lower intermediate group used 'the' instead of 'a' 15%, and the upper intermediate learners used 'the'instead of 'a'14%. Fluctuation between ' a' and the was evident in this context. It is also observed that in this task where learners were not restricted to using articles in given contexts they used other ways to express themselves and as a result cases where demonstrative, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions were used incorrectly instead of articles were evident in the task. Thus the demonstrative pronouns 'that' 'those' and 'these' and locative preposition 'in' were used in context I [+Definite +Specific] to substitute for the definite 'the' in the following proportions: 'that', 'those', 'these' instead of 'the'8 % for both groups, the locative preposition 'in 'was used 4% by lower intermediate learners and 2% by upper intermediate learners. The possessive pronouns 'my 'and 'his' were used to substitute for 'a' 11% for lower intermediate and 6% for upper intermediate.

Table 4.33 Required Articles and the substitutions made in the story-telling task

Group	Required Articles	Substitutions made						
Lower Intermediate	the	the	a	an/a	ø	this, that, those	His/my	In
CONTEXT I								
CONTEXT II	the	58%	6	2%	18%	8%	4%	4%
	the	73%	10	8%	9%	0%	0%	0%
CONTEXT IV	A	15% 53%		0%	20%	0%	11%	0%
COTEXT V	an/a	25% 0%		50%	25	0%	0%	0%
CONTEXT VI	Ø	21% 11%		6%	62%	0%	0%	0%
Upper intermediate		The a		an	Ø	this, that, those	My	In
CONTEXT I	The	62% 5%		4%	15%	8%	4%	2%
CONTEXT II	the	71% 14%		0%	16%	0%	0%	0%
CONTEXT IV	A	14% 77%		0%	2%	0%	6%	0%
CONTEXT V	an/a	11%	0	79%	9%	0%	0%	0
CONTEXT IV	ø	18% 10%		8%	64%	0%	0%	0

Fluctuation was also evident in the composition task in context III where learners used 'a 'instead of 'the 'and in context IV where learners used 'the' instead of 'a' as shown in table 4.34

From table 4.33 the following facts emerge: both groups fluctuate in context III [+definite –specific](speaker has no knowledge about NPs)where they registered the highest level of fluctuation. The lower intermediate group learners substituted 'a' for 'the'18%, and the upper intermediate substituted 'a' for 'the'7% and in context IV [-definite + specific] (explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs) where 'a' was required the lower intermediate group used 'the' instead of 'a' 4%, and the upper intermediate group 3%.

It is also observed that just like in the story-telling task where learners were not restricted to using articles in given contexts, in the composition task learners also resorted to other ways of expressing themselves and as a result cases where demonstrative and possessive pronouns and locative prepositions were used incorrectly instead of articles were evident. Consequently the demonstrative pronouns 'that' 'those' and 'these' and locative preposition 'in' were used in contexts I and II [+Definite +Specific] to substitute for the definite 'the' in the following proportions: 'that', 'those', 'these' instead of 'the' was 8% and 4% for lower intermediate upper intermediate learners respectively and the preposition 'in' for 'the'4% and 3% for lower and upper intermediate learners respectively. There was also the use of 'my'/'his' and 'our' in context IV [– Definite +Specific] instead of 'an' in proportions of 3% for lower and upper intermediate learners respectively. Use of the possessives 'my' 'his' 'our' is also evident in 'context VI [–

Definite –Specific]where learners used these possessives instead of generic 'ø' in proportions of 8% for lower and upper intermediate learners respectively.

Table 4 .34 Required Articles and the substitutions made in the Composition Task

Group	Required Articles	Actual articles used							
		The	a	an	Ø		this those	that, My/our/his	In
Lower Intermediate									
CONTEXT I	The	75%	4%	2%	7%		8%	0%	4%
CONTEXT II	the	75%	3%	2%	12%		4%	0%	0%
CONTEXT III	the	49%	16%	3%	16%		10%	0%	6%
CONTEXT IV	a	4%	80%	0%	13%		0%	3%	0%
CONTEXT V	an	13%	6%	58%	23%		0%	0%	0%
CONTEXTV1	Ø	37%	6%	0%	49%		0%	8%	0%
Upper intermediate									
CONTEXT I	The	82%		2%	1%	8%	4%	0%	3%
CONTEXT II	the	80%		4%	2%	10	3%	0%	0%
CONTEXT III	the	59%		7%	4%	17%	7%	0%	6%
CONTEXT IV	a	6%		85%	0%	6%	0%	3%	0%
CONTEXT V	An	10%		0%	75%	15%	0%	0%	0%
CONTEXT VI	Ø	25%		9%	0%	58	0%	8%	0%

Based on the results of the three tasks it can be seen that the learners fluctuate in their article use but the highest levels of fluctuation are observed in [+definite –specific] and [–definite +specific] contexts in all the three tasks where 'a' is overused in [+definite –specific] context and 'the' is overused in [–definite +specific] context. This means

learners are overusing 'a' with non-specific definites and 'the' with specific indefinites. This clearly shows that learners with Luhya L1 have challenges with the semantic features of definiteness and specificity on their way to the acquisition of the English article system.

From the findings it can be argued that the semantic challenges revealed in the study are occasioned by the notions of definiteness and specificity. Luhya language does not have an overt article system like English language therefore the notions of specificity and definiteness as marked in English are alien to the Luhya L1 learners because in Luhya language these notions are marked differently not through an article system. In fact the notion of definiteness is not distinct in Luhya language. Therefore Luhya learners just like other learners of English whose first languages do not have an article system tend to overuse the definite 'the' and 'a' in contexts where they are not required. Lyons (1999 p.166) posits that "the relation between the definite and the indefinite articles is achieved via definiteness not specificity, so a NP can be either specific or non–specific regardless of its definiteness status". For Luhya learners however specificity and definiteness are not differentiated. Definiteness is associated with specificity. For these reasons any context in which the definite 'the' is required or used is construed to be specific and when the context is specific it is construed to be definite, meaning a definite context is construed as specific to these learners and an indefinite context is construed as non-specific. This leads to the overuse of 'the' in [-Definite + specific] contexts and overuse of articles 'a'/'an' in [+ Definite – specific] context.

4.12 Discussion of Findings

A number of important issues concerning learners Luhya L1 influence in the acquisition of the English article system and the instructional implications have emerged from the study. The study examined article choices of learners from lower and upper intermediate secondary school and the effects of the notions of definiteness and specificity on their article use. The study also examined the challenges teachers encounter during the teaching of the article system. The researcher study was guided by four hypotheses :fluctuation hypothesis; Transfer/ Full Access hypothesis,natural order hypothesis and acquisition/learning hypothesis..The findings of this study are therefore discussed based on the objectives of the study which were to:

a) Establish the systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the learning of the English article system

b) Describethe systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning of the English article system.

c) Examine the causes of the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning of the English article system

d) Identify the challenges teachers of English face when teaching the English L2 article system among Luhya L1 learners

e) Establish the semantic challenges the Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English article system

4.12 Developmental Features of the English Article System during the Acquisition Process

The first objective of this study was to investigate systematic developmental features among Luhya L1 learners in the acquisition of the English article system. The findings reveal three major developmental features namely fluctuation, overuse and underuse.

4.12.1Fluctuation

i)Substitution of 'a' for 'the'

One of the sharpest decreases in level of accuracy for both low and upper intermediate learners was observed in context III[+definite/-specific] where 'the 'was required. Results from the multiple choice task show that learners 'level of fluctuation was much higher .In this context both the groups scored only 58% correct answers leading to a significant decrease in the level of accuracy compared to the previous two contexts that is, context I and II. The lower intermediate chose 'a' instead of 'the'25%.'an' for 'the'8% The upper intermediate group chose 'a' for 'the' 17% and 'an'for 'the' 8%.A similar trend was evident in the composition task in the same context III (+definite -specific) where both groups registered below average performances although the upper intermediate group still scored at a higher level of accuracy compared to the lower intermediate group. The results reveal substitution of 'a for 'the' in the following proportions:The lower intermediate group used 'a'correctly 48% and substituted ' 'a' for 'the' 16 % the same group used 'an' instead of 'the' incorrectly 3%.The upper intermediate group also registered dismal performance in this context .Their answers for correct use of

'the'amounted to 59 % but they used 'a' instead of 'the' 7% and 'an'for 'the' 4% .The study also noted that use of articles in this context was avoided in the story-telling task.

From the findings it is observed that the lower intermediate learners' proportion of fluctuation is higher than the upper intermediate. They tend to overuse 'a' instead of 'the' more than the upper intermediate class in both the tasks. It can therefore be concluded that as learners advance, their proficiency level improves. As for the poorer performance of the lower intermediate group in the composition task, Master, (1987) points out that in cloze tests students are likely to be more careful in their choices and at least try to select the correct article. However, in situations where learners are not restricted to use specific articles, they may decide to use one particular 'safe' article and end up over generalizing or omitting articles all together when they are at a loss.In a nut shell, learners fluctuated in this context as was predicted. This finding is supported by several researchers in the field (IoninKo& Wexler, 2003; Ionin, Ko and Wexler, 2004; Hawkins, 2006; Sarko (2009); Atay, 2011). However Lardiere (2005) in her study had contrary findings. She found less cases of fluctuation instead omission errors were frequent.She argued that the problem learners have with articles is due to syntactic representation of features not present in learners' L1. She thus does not support the existence of UG and the whole idea of fluctuation.

The performance in context III (+definite –specific) for both the multiple choice task and composition task was generally poorer for both the groups despite a few differences in some areas. This is the context where we find generic use of 'the' and the poor

performance shows that the generic reference of 'the' is difficult for L2 learners regardless of their proficiency level. Ekiert (2007) argues that generics 'require the highest level of sophistication in article use as they both call for skillful placement of 'a' 'the' and 'zero' article' and Liu Gleason (2002) echos similar sentiments when she states that the the cultural use of articles is the most difficult.The cause of the poor performance in this context can be explained in two ways: first generics are rare in the input and secondly both the groups of learners may have associated definite 'the' with specificity. Therefore in [+ definite – Specific] contexts they failed to use 'the' correctly and instead chose 'a' because they are only considering the notion of specificity and generalizing it to definiteness hence in their thinking what is not specific is also not definite. This leads them to fluctuate. This results confirm the fluctuation hypothesis advanced in chapter one according to which there could be overuse of 'a' in [+ definite – specific] contexts.

ii) Substitution of 'the' for 'a'

In context IV [-definite + specific] where learners were required to use 'a' the overall results reveal high levels of accuracy in the three tasks and in both the groups.. The results for context IV (- definite +specific) shows that learners are more accurate in marking indefiniteness when it comes to the use of the indefinite 'a'. However learners still fluctuated in this context opting for 'the' instead of 'a' although the upper intermediate learners fluctuated in low prportions.This finding is in keeping with the expectations of the study that the upper intermediate would fluctuate in lower proportions. The lower intermediate learners' higher rates of fluctuation compared to the upper intermediate group in this context could be attributed to the fact that having had

more exposure to English language, through environmental input and classroom instruction, the upper intermediate group have better control of the definite and indefinite NPs whereas for lower intermediate group their interlanguage is still at an earlier stage and have more problems with indefinite NPs.

Similar results where the definite article 'the' is used in contexts where the indefinite article 'a' is required were reported in various studies including Atay (2010),Ekiert (2007),Ionin and Wexler (2003), Ionin, Ko and Wexler, (2004), Hawkins et al (2006), Huebner (1983), Master, (1987), Parrish, (1987). In the studies of Atay (2010) and Ekiert (2007) overuse of 'the' occurred in higher proportions in intermediate level learners compared to elementary level learners and advanced level learners. The two researchers interpreted this to mean that from the intermediate level, students begin to develop awareness of the syntactic properties of the definiteness and specificity which makes them more confused and this confusion results in fluctuation. However the higher level of accuracy in this context to a large extent concurs with the findings of Kimambo (2016) which revealed that learners did not associate 'the' with specificity and fluctuation between definiteness and specificity only occurred at elementary level. In Kimambo's study the use of 'the' where 'a' was required was not significant. Kimambo's finding is interesting given that the learners in his study had Swahili as their L1 which is closely related to Luhya language in structure and both the languages are articleless.Perhaps the explanation here is that in the case of the learners in this study , their exposure to English has began earlier that is from day one in school and in the course of learning English the

article 'the ' has been more frequent in their input while in the case of Kimambo's study, learners' exposure to English happens much later.

4.12.2 Overuse

i) Overuse of 'the'

Overuse of 'the' also referred to as 'the flooding' Butler (2000), was observed in context (–definite +specific) under fluctuation. Learners across the board fluctuated in this context as they opted for 'the' instead of 'a' in the multiple choice and composition tasks. The results of this study also revealed overuse of 'the' in context IV [-definite-specific] where 'ø' is required. The overuse 'the' where ø is required was evident in significant proportions in all the three tasks. The overuse of 'the' was contrary to the expectations of this study since it was expected that because Luhya L1 has no articles the learners would have less challenges with the use of 'ø' article.

The overuse of 'the' has also been reported in literature. Crompton 2011 reported overuse of the definite article where 'a' 'an' and zero article were required. The overuse was in context where NPs were generic and non-count. However for Crompton this was chiefly due to learners' L1 because the misuse was in contexts where 'the' equivalent in Arabic was always used.Atay (2011)in her study reported that Type 2 definite articles were the most overused where learners used definite articles with non-referential noun phrases. Other studies which have reported overuses include (Bergeron- Matoba 2007; Fen & Lu,2001;Ekiert, 2007; Ionin, Ko& Wexler,2004).

ii) Overuse of 'a'

Overuse of 'a' was evident in the multiple choice, composition tasks across the board. The overuse of 'a' was observed particularly in context III (+ definite –specific) where 'the' was required but 'a' was used instead of 'the'. There was also evidence of misuse of 'a' instead of 'ø'.The study however notes that the overuse of 'a' 'an' for 'ø' is in less proportions compared to the overuse of 'the'.The overuse of 'a' is a finding reported in many studies ;Bergeron –Matoba reported that learners frequently assigned 'a' 'an' Other studies which have reported a' overuse include:(Lu& Fen, 2001; Ekiert, 2004;Butler, 2002; Atay 2011). The study of Huebner (1979) also revealed overuse of 'a'although some of the overuse of 'a' was as a result of pause phenomenon since he was dealing with oral data only. In this study the cases of 'a' overuse resulted from a combination of written and oral data.Overuse of 'a/an' can be attributed to intralingual influence in the sense that learners had problems in the use of these articles with uncountable nouns. Some uncoumntable nouns can be both count and uncountable depending on the context for example the NP 'desire' was a problem for many learnes. Overuse of 'a' is therefore an intralingual error in that it stems from learners' inability to distinguish uncountable nouns from count nouns.According to El Wefarli overuse of a may reveal that learners were overgeneralising and probably under the impact of transfer of training.

4.12.3 Underuse (omission)

i) Underuse of 'the'

A developmental feature that turned out to be the most common was the underuse of 'the'and 'a' which translates to overuse of the zero article where 'the' or 'a' is required.

The overuse of zero articleis not done consciously because at this level most learners donot understand the concept of zero article.So here we describe this phenomenon as underuse or in Ekirt's words 'the failure to use any article'. The findings of the study reveal that learners underused articles in contexts where they are required in significant proportions. This occurred at both the levels.In the multiple choice task underuse is evident in all contexts however, the highest rate of underuse is evident in (+definite +specific) and (+definite-specific] contexts where the definite 'the' is required.

Underuse of articles or overuse of zero article is a common finding of most studies on L2 acquisition.Various studies including (Master, 1997; Erkiert, 2007; Parish 1987, Zubizerrata & Maldanado, 2007; Atay 2011; Thomas, 1989 have reported overuse or overgeneralization of the zero article and they have given different interpretations for the overgeneralization..Master 1997; Parish 1987, have purpoted that such findings are an indication of mastery of zero articleon the initial stages. However while this may be true of the learners in their studies, it is not true of the learners in this study since they are not aware of the concept of zero article and therefore their use of zero article is by default.Rather the cause of underuse could be traced to the learners' first language which lacks an article system and most NPs are bare and therefore learners must have transferred the concept of bare noun from their L1 to their interlanguage which resulted in omissions.

Thomas (1989*)*, attributed overuse of zero article to learners L1 stating thather [-ART]participants "produced the zero article more frequently (orperhaps…failed to use any article) in 'a'and 'the'contexts due to L1 transfer" (p. 349) .Ekiert (2004) has

explained this as a reflection of the differences between the target language and any other language previously acquired including the native language.The proposal of Thomas and Ekiert supports the hypothesis that negative transfer is playing a substantial role in the process of articleacquisition by adult learners.As noted by Jarvis (2002), the use of zero article by [-ART] participants should not be interpreted aseither carelessness or ignorance. Rather, it is "quite intentional, or at least rule-governed" (p.416). It may be an indication of learners avoiding redundancy in marking definiteness andindefiniteness (as perceived by [-ART] L1 learners who have some other system at work, e.g. word order).

ii)Underuse of 'a'/'an'

For the multiple choice task the lower intermediate learners underused 'a' in higher propotions than the upper intermediate group. Underuse of 'an' was also evident with both groups omitting 'an' in equal proportions.In the story-telling task the two groups also omitted 'a' the lower intermediate omitting 'a' in higher proportions than the upper intermediate group. There was also evidence of underuse of 'an' with the lower intermediate group under-using 'an'also in higher proportions compared to the upper intermediate group.The composition task presented a similar trend: the two groups also omitted 'a' 'an' in significant proportions. The reason for underuse could be attributed to the learners' L1which lacks an article system.It implies that the Luhya L1 learners of English show indefiniteness by an article at all. The fact worth noting here is that in their first language, Luhya L1 learners mark indefinitenss by using no article at all so this is a case where they are showing indefiniteness in English by also not using an article.It is an example of interlingual interference from the native language.In her study of Arab

learners El Werfalli (2013)reported similar findings and noted that Arab learners do not have the indefinite articles in their Arabic L1 and therefore it was a case of language transfer.But for 'an', there is also the idea that 'an'is less frequent in the input.

In summary,the first objective of the study was guided by fluctuation hypothesis as proposed by Ionin et al., 2004; Tryzna, 2009) The findings of this study revealed that Luhya-speaking SL learners seem to be accessing both parameter settings at both lower and upper intermediate levels as a result they fluctuate between definiteness and specificity. These results support Fluctuation hypothesis as proposed by Ionin et al (2004)

4.13 Developmental sequence of the English Article system

The, findings from this study suggest that the conclusions of the majority of L2 article acquisition studies in which 'the' emerges early, and'a'late (Fen and Lu, 2002; Master, 1987; Heubner, 1985; Parrish 1987) is replicated by the learners in the study who are native speakers of Luhya which is article-less.At the same time my findings contradict the conclusions of the majority of L2 article acquisition studies (Ekiert,2004, Gunzaho, 2016; Zehler & Brewer, 1982 in which 'a' emerges earlier and 'the'late.

To provide more information in response to my first research question it was necessary to find out the developmental sequence of the English article system. The analysis of the collected data yielded the following results. The developmental sequence of the upper and lower intermediate learners appears to take a similar pattern.

The upper intermediate group registered the highest score in contexts I, II and III where the required article was the definite 'the'. They used 'the' correctly out of 140 (78%) of

their answers out of 180 (100%). The second highest score was in the use of 'a' with 45 (75%) out of 60 (100%). The third highest score was in the use of 'an' where the group used 'an' correctly 45 (75%). The last in the sequence of acquisition is 'ø' in which the group scored 35 (58%). The lower intermediate group registered low scores but followed the same pattern with the highest score in the correct use of 'the' at the rate of 69%, use of 'a' correctly at the rate of 67% and 'an' 58%. The last in the sequence is 'ø' at 58%.

From the above analysis it is observed that the sequence of the English article system for both the upper intermediate group is 'the'>'a/an'>'ø' and for the lower intermediate group it is the'>'a'>'an'>'ø'. The difference being in the acquisition of 'an'.

When the sequence differences and difficulties of the article acquisition by the two groups are considered the following observations can be made based on the findings. The study reveals that the earliest article to acquire for both upper and intermediate learners is the definite 'the' followed by 'a' 'an' then lastly 'ø'. The earlier acquisition of 'the' results agree with the findings of Heubner (1985) who reported that his subjects performed better with 'the' than with 'a' and conclude that for L2 learners acquisition of 'the' comes first. This finding is further supported by Fena andLu (2001) in his investigation of acquisition sequence by Chinese speaking learners which was 'the'>'a'>'an'>'ø'. In addition the findings of this study are similar to the findings of Master (1987) and Parrish (1987) whose findings reveal that the emergence of 'a' in its appropriate environments in L2 learners is later and more gradual compared to the emergence of 'the'. However the findings contradict the findings in the studies of Ekiert, 2004, and Gunzaho 2016. Ekiert's findings revealed that the sequence of acquisition of

the English article was 'a'>'the'>'ø' and she even questioned the findings of the earlier researchers whose sequences were 'the' > 'a' >'ø'. For Gunzaho the sequences in his studies differed according to the level and to whether the L1 of the group was (–ART) or (+ART). His findings revealed that for (–ART) group Level A& C the sequence was 'a'> 'the' > 'ø' and for level B it was 'the'>'a'>'ø'. For (+ ART) group the sequence was 'a'>'ø' 'the' for level C and 'a'> 'the' > 'ø'for level Aand B. From his findings he concluded that the easiest and the earliest article to be acquiredis 'a' followed by 'the'. Humphrey Simon (2007) also noted that the acquisition sequence diferred among the groups according to the level of learners; for the elementary group the sequence was 'the'> 'ø' > 'a'/'an'and for the intermediate group it was 'the'>'a'/'an'>'ø'

For the use of 'the' in this study, it is noteworthy that the best performance is in context I [+definite +specific] the anaphoric use, where the groups registered 91% and 83% answers correct for upper and lower intermediate groups respectively. Here both the groups had native-like performance probably due to the fact that teachers often focus their teaching on anaphoric use. The worst performance in the use of 'the' for both the groups is in context III [+Definite -specific]. This is the most problematic area in the use of 'the' and it shows the least observed percentage of accuracy for both the groups 58% and 50% correct answers for upper and lower intermediate groups respectively. It includes the use of 'the' in non-specific contexts and it proved difficult for both upper and lower intermediate groups. In fact from the learners' performance in this context the study reveals that generally the most difficult article to acquire is 'the' in context III where speaker has no knowledge about NPs. This finding is also supported by the study

of Ekiert, (2004) in which she found that type 1 generics (which include use of 'the' in non-specific contexts) pose problems for both high and low ability learners. Two articles tied in the sequence for the upper intermediate group that is, 'a' and 'an'. They are the second articles to acquire for the upper intermediate group. This could also be as a result of more exposure to L2 by the upper intermediate group compared to the lower intermediate group that has had less exposure.

Another observation from the results is that the most difficult article to acquire for both the groups is 'ø' article. This finding tends to agree with Master's (2007) observation that in the course of acquisition of the English article system, L2 learners particularly those who do not have an article system in their L1 have a problem with the zero article in all environments as they tend to overuse it. Also in line with his observation about the zero article are the findings of Gunzaho (2016) which revealed that the zero article is the last and the most difficult to acquire. However the findings of Martynchuk (2010) contradict this finding. In her study of Russian and Chinese learners whose languages belong to (– ART) group, Martynhuk found out that both the Russian and Chinese learners use the zero article most accurately than other articles an indication that zero article is acquired earlier and she attributed this to learners L1 influence. This finding contradicts the findings of the current study where learners had difficulties with the zero article though their L1 belongs to [– ART] group.

In this particular context the problem learners in the current study had with the 'ø' emanated from two areas: use of 'ø' where it was not required that is omission and substitution of 'the' for 'ø'. Richards (2001, p.182) asserts ''errors are signs of

naturalistic developmental processes and during acquisition (but not during learning), similar developmental errors occur in the learners no matter what their mother tongue is''.

According to the natural order hypothesis on which this study is based, learners acquire certain elements of a language in a given predictable order (Krashen, 1987). Krashen states that for any given language certain grammatical structures or morphemes are acquired earlier than others in first language acquisition and a similar natural order is found in second language acquisition. Krashen further suggests that this order is not dependent on the learner's age or the learner's first language or even conditions of exposure. It is also not affected by deliberate classroom teaching. However according to the findings of this study, in the process of learning the English article system students tend to acquire the articles they are exposed to more frequently in the input earlier than others; these are 'the' and 'a'. Furthermore the 'ø' article which the results of this study reveal is acquired latest, is less transparent in the input and from the teachers' interviews, they do not devote a lot of time on teaching it or explaining to the learners the concept of the zero article. It is however rather intriguing that the zero article should give learners with Luhya L1 a problem given that their Luhya L1 has no articles but again according to Krashen's theory, the order of acquisition does not take into account the learner's L1 background otherwise if it did then the zero article would have been the first to acquire. Krashen however cautions that the implication of the natural order hypothesis is not for language educators to develop curricula or language programs based on the order found

in the studies. In fact, he rejects grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition.

From the findings of various researchers and the findings of this study, it is obvious that the acquisition of the English article system does not follow a uniform order rather it differs from group to group and depends on the level of learners. This study therefore does not concur with krashen's natural order hypothesis

4.14 Types of Systematic Errors

The second objective of this study was to investigate the systematic errors among Luhya L1 learners in the course of English article system acquisition. Based on this objective the results reveal that all learners endeavour to use articles correctly but in the process make errors of various types while attempting to use them.

 Errors of article misuse occurred in two areas overuse of 'the' with specific indefinites and overuse of 'a' with non-specific definites. These could be explained by fluctuation hypothesis according to which errors should come in two types. However errors of article misuse were also evident in other contexts which could not be explained by fluctuation hypothesis. Arguing that all errors cannot be sufficiently accounted for by the fluctuation hypothesis alone, Zdorenko and Paradis, (2006) posit that the FH was formulated to account for article misuse not omission. Based on this argument, this study also incorporated the Full Transfer/Full Access (FT/FA) hypothesis (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996) to help account for other types of acquisitions patterns outside the realm of the FH such as; unnecessary insertion of articles and omissions. Consequently the following

types of systematic errors emerged in the data: Confusion errors (overuse, substitution), omission errors and unnecessary insertion of articles.

4.14.1 Confusion Errors

Evidence from the study reveal that the highest number of errors were confusion errors; they account for 450 (40%) followed by omission errors at 367 (33%). The least number of errors were unnecessary insertion of articles accounting for 305 (27%) of the errors.

Confusion errors involving fluctuation between definite and indefinite articles lead to overuse. The findings of this study reveal that 308 (28%) of confusion errors involved fluctuation between the definite and indefinite articles. The rate of substitution was high across the board. Substitution of 'a' for 'the' accounted for 94 (8%) of the errors, 'an' for 'the' 48 (4%); 'the' for 'a' 82 (7%); 'the' for 'an' 78 (7%). In most studies carried out on article use in learners whose L1 does not have an overt article system, the findings have revealed confusion errors as predominant. Confusion errors involving fluctuation between definite and indefinite articles lead to overuse. Cases of overuse were predominant in [+definite – specific] contexts and [– definite +specific] contexts. In these contexts the definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a' were substituted for each other as learners were confused as to which article should be used in (+definite-specific) contexts and (–definite +specific) contexts leading to overuse of 'the' or 'a'. This is a clear indication that learners in this study associate the definite article 'the' with specificity and the indefinite 'a' with non-specificity. The findings also revealed that the lower intermediate class registered a higher percentage of confusion errors; 23% compared to 16% of the upper intermediate group. Other studies with similar findings include Ekiert, 2004; Ionin

& Wexler 2003; Atay, 2010; Snape 2005; El Wefwarlli 2013) .In these studies overuse of articles tended to arise from learners inability to use articles appropriately in (+definite – specific) and (– definite + specific) contexts. This finding however differs from the findings of Kimambo (2016) who reported that the rates of fluctuation for L1 Swahili – speaking learners varied according to their levels of English proficiency. In his study the elementary group fluctuated between definiteness and specificity but the intermediate group did not fluctuate as they used the English article system in line with the definite setting of the ACP.

Apart from fluctuation cases where learners fluctuated between the definite and indefinite articles, the study revealed substitution of articles with demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions. In the story-telling and composition tasks, learners were not limited in their choices of articles in specific contexts nor were they conditioned to use articles as they were in the multiple choice task as a result certain patterns of article misuse not evident in the multiple choice task emerged. Learners tended to use demonstrative and possessive pronouns, and locative prepositions in their writings to express specificity rather than use articles. Consequently demonstrative pronouns, and locative prepositions were used inappropriately in contexts where 'the' was required and possessive pronouns were used inappropriately where 'a' was required. This was evident in context I [+ definite + specific] and II [+ definite + specific] and (-definite +specific) In these contexts there was evidence of use of the demonstrative pronouns 'this', 'those' and 'that' instead of the definite article 'the' in proportions of 91 (10%). Use of possessive pronouns; 'this' and 'my' for 'a' was at 19 (2%). For individual

tasks the misuse was as follows; In the story telling task, there was evidence of use of the demonstrative pronouns 'this', 'those' and 'that' instead of the definite article 'the' for both groups. Use of possessive pronouns 'our' and 'my' were also evident. The lower intermediate group used 'his' possessive instead of 'the' at the rate of 4%; and the upper intermediate at the rate of 2%; 'his'/ 'my' instead of 'a' at the rate of 1% by the lower intermediate learners. The locative preposition 'in' was used instead of 'the' at the rate of 4% and 3% for lower and upper intermediate learners respectively. These kinds of errors were also evident in the composition task. In context I and II (+definite +specific) 'this', 'that' and 'those' were substituted for 'the' 5% by both groups; 'his'/'my' for 'a' 1% by both groups; 'in' for 'the' 4% and 3% by the upper and lower intermediate learners respectively. In context III (+definite -specific) 'that' 'those' was substituted for 'the' 10% and 6% by the lower and upper intermediate learners respectively. The possessives 'my'/'his' were substituted for 'the' 6% by the lower intermediate learners and 8% by upper intermediate learners.

Substitution of demonstratives, possessives and locative prepositions was as a result of Luhya L1 influence. In Luhya language demonstratives and locative prepositions are used to mark specificity and definiteness. This partly explains why in this study we have a much higher number of confusion errors as compared to the rest of the errors. This also demonstrates that the learners' L1 semantic notions play a role in the process of article acquisition though not a positive role for Luhya L1 learners. According to Full Access /Full Transfer hypothesis, in L2 acquisition the learner uses his L1 as a starting point.and consequently he transfers all the L1 grammar on to L2 initially. Use of demonstratives

and possessive pronouns was employed by learners in the studies of Trenkic (2007) and Lardiere (2001) to realize definite referents. However in Lardiere's study demonstratives and possessive pronouns had a positive effect; Lardiere argued that her subject Patty was accurate with the definite article 'the' as a result of influence from her first language in which demonstratives were used to realize specificity. It may be possible that use of demonstratives and possessive pronouns has a positive effect in the learners' accurate use of the definite 'the' but this study has not established this. Results related to substitution errors are in line with previous studies (El Wefarlli, 2013; Atay, 2010; Butler, 2002; Ekiert, 2007; Crompton, 2011;) . The findings of the study of white (2003) are contrary to these studies as they revealed that 'the' and 'a' were not used interchangeably rather they were omitted in some contexts.

This finding is of interest to this study particularly in the area of use of demostratives and possessive pronouns instead of articles because it brings out an aspect of article misuse not covered by the fluctuation hypothesis because according to the fluctuation hypothesis article errors should come in two types; overuse of 'the' with specific indefinites and overuse of 'a' with non-specific indefinites yet here the data is revealing acquisition patterns outside the realm of fluctuation hypothesis.

4.14.2 Omission errors

The results of the study show that the second highest frequent errors in the study were omission errors with a frequency of 367 (33% of all the errors. The findings reveal that learners omitted articles in contexts where they were required at considerably high percentages. Both the definite and indefinite articles were omitted. It is also noted from

the data that omission of 'the' ranked the most frequent error with 212 (19%). It was evident in contexts of cultural use, in contexts where NPs had been mentioned in an earlier discourse and the NPs were plural countable nouns and non-count nouns. In other words omission of 'the' was most frequent in non-generic contexts. Omission of 'a' ranked second to omission of 'the', occurring at a frequency of 87 (8%) of all the errors. Omission of 'a' was most frequent in environments where the NPs were pre-modified or were abstract nouns where the notion of countability was quite confusing to learners. The indefinite 'an' was the least omitted error. Perhaps one could attribute this to its infrequent occurrence. It was also omitted in environments where NPs were pre-modified. The findings also reveal that the lower intermediate group also had a higher percentage of omission errors that is; 18% compared to14% of the upper intermediate group.

The findings of various studies have reported omission errors.Among these studies include studies that were guided by the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (MSIH). Researchers who based their studies on this hypothesis were interested in finding out the reasons for omission of articles by L2 learners of English among other things. Some of these researchers were: (Trenkic, 2009;Sarko, 2009; Lardiere 2005; Crompton, 2011). Trenkic in his study reported that omission errors were evident where NPs were modified by adjectives and further noted a higher rate of omission errors among the lower proficiency group. Kimambo's study (2016) however showed omission errors were not occasioned by nouns which were pre -modified by adjectives. He attributed this to learners' Swahili L1 in which adjectival modification occurs in post-nominal position.

But he also cautioned that Swahili learners of English L2tend to avoid using articles with pre-modified nouns. In this study there were cases where learners omitted articles in contexts where nouns were adjectivally pre-modified. The Syrian Arabic group in Sarko's study made lots of omission errors. According to Sarko, they transferred the bare form of NPs for indefiniteness leading to omission errors. In the current study, some of the omission errors were also occasioned by the fact that in the learners' Luhya L1, the NPs are mostly bare. In some of their utterances one could discern direct translation of a bare NP. Lardiere (2005) in her study of her only subject Patty's use of articles also reported omission errors and noted that they resulted from her transfer of Mandarin an (– ART language)which was the L1 of her subject on to English. Paradis' findings are also in line with the findings of the current study since he reported that omission errors were most commonly produced by learners whose L1 lacked articles. Parish and Thomas (1989) reported overgeneralization of 'ø' in contexts where 'a' and 'the' were required and in their studies, this was more frequent in [– ART] group than in [+ART] group. Thomas (1989) therefore attributed the omission of 'a' and 'the'to interference of learners' L1. Master (1987) reported similar findings and agrees with Thomas that overgeneralization of 'ø' is largely due to transfer of learners' L1 on to the target language. Atay, (2011) in her study of Turkey learners whose Turkey L1 is articleless also reported frequency of omission errors and like this study the highest percentage of omission was in [+definite +specific] context. El Wefarlli, (2013) also reported omission errors but unlike the present study, her findings revealed a higher percentage of omission of indefinite articles and she attributed this to lack of indefinite articles in the Libyan learners' Arabic L1. This is interesting because Luhya L1 learners lack all articles

including the indefinite articles yet for the Luhya learners the highest omission errors occurred with the omission of 'the'. Perhaps the explanation could be that Arabic which is the L1 of her subjects has the definite article therefore learners were more comfortable with the definite 'the'

4.14.3 Unnecessary Insertion Errors

The least frequent errors in all the three tasks are errors of unnecessary insertion accounting for 305 (27%). Data analysis shows that learners inserted the definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a'/'an' where a zero article was required. Unnecessary insertion of article errors led to over production of some articles resulting in overuse. Since their L1 lacks articles, frequent use of articles may not be common in their output. However for the cases of unnecessary insertions, the article that was frequently fixed where it was not required was the definite 'the' leading to what could be described as overuse of 'the'and what Heubner (1983) and Master(1997) refer to as *'the flooding'*. Unnecessary Insertion of 'the' was at a frequency of 208 (18%). From the data it is also observed that there were cases where learners inserted 'a'/'an' in contexts where a zero article was required. This was evident in all the three tasks. Insertion of 'a' and 'an' were however in lower proportions 62 (6%) for 'a' and 38 (3%) for 'an'compared to insertion of 'the'

From the results it is observed that 'the' is the most overused in contexts where '*ø'* is required. Unnecessary insertion of 'the' has been documented in many studies in literature: Heubner's study revealed 'the' overuse in the early stages of acquisition in all contexts.; El Wefarlli,(2013) observed frequency of 'the' in contexts where NPs were generic uncountable nouns followed by generic plural countable nouns. Ionin and Wexler

(2003), reported overuse of 'the' in specific indefinite contexts. Other studies with similar findings include: Atay, 2010; Butler, 2000; Hawkins 2006; Fen& Lu, 2001; Kaku, 2006; Kim & Laksmanan, 2009; Ionin et al, 2003, 2004; Zdorenko & Paradis, 2007a, 2007b.

The overuse of 'the' in contexts where'ø' is required is fairly intriguing in this particular study. The study anticipated that since learners lack articles in their L1 their use of 'ø' article would pose less problems but contrary to this expectation learners overused 'the' in contexts where 'ø' was required in considerable proportions. Based on the findings of the study of Heubner (1983) it is argued by some researchers that in the early stages of language learning, use of 'the' in [+SR+HK] contexts is an unmarked feature for an L2 learner and that after an L2 learner has successfully learned using 'the' in [+SR+HK] contexts, they tend to over generalize the rule to all contexts(Heubner,1983; Master,1997) .This leads to 'the' overuse. Furthermore, learners are mostly exposed to the definite 'the' input as compared to other articles and this explains why they tend to overuse 'the'. In addition,in most text-books for secondary schools in Kenya, the definite 'the' is given more prominence than the 'ø' article. Learners may therefore over- generalize the use of the definite and use it incorrectly in contexts where it is not required. From the responses of 16 (72%) of the teachers who participated in this study, it was apparent that they concentrated on definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a'/'an' and paid little attention to the zero and null articles. This further confirms the assertion of this study that the definite 'the' is given more prominence hence its overuse. The cause of the overuse therefore could possibly be due to its frequent use in written texts and the fact that it is given more prominence in the treatment of articles by teachers. Lakshmanan, (2009) posits that the

selection of specificity setting for the definite article could also be a result of the input. Atay, (2010) argues that due to the frequency bias in the input, L2 learners of English associate the definite article with specificity.

The analysis reveals that the two groups performed best in the composition task followed by the multiple choice task. The performance in the story-telling task ranked last. The results also revealed that the number of errors vary in relation to the level of proficiency it implies that the lower the level of learners the higher the number of errors and the higher the learners advance the less the number of errors. It is also observed that performance in the written tasks was better than performance in the oral task. The implification here is that learners tend to show higher proficiency levels in written tasks than in oral tasks. This could be attributed to the fact that writing skills are generally given more prominence than other skills in language pedagogy and learners writing abilities are often tested in a variety of contexts. Another explanation could be that, in the composition task participants were given sufficient time to write the composition at their own pace. This explains why they show a higher proficiency level in composition writing than in the oral task. The spoken language often exhibits linguistic characteristics which are informal rather than academic. Therefore, learners' spoken corpora were characterized by typical spoken English; full of pauses and repetitions, full of fillers and fragmented sentences. This notwithstanding has implications for language teachers. The implication for language teachers is that they should revisit their treatment of oral skills and try to use a variety of approaches in teaching the oral skills to find out which ones work better for them. More importantly they should re-examine the time they devote to

writing skills and oral skills and try to balance so that writing skills are not emphasized at the expense of oral skills

   The second objective of this study was based on FT/FA hypothesis .The hypothesis proposes that second language acquisition relies on the L1 grammar at least at the initial stages of acquisition, where linguistic principles and parameters are transferred from the L1 and where learners have access directly from UG in the developing L2 interlanguage grammar until enough L2 input is received (Schwartz and Sprouse, 1994, 1996). They explain that on the basis of FT/FA hypothesis, L2 learners initially transfer the properties of their L1 grammar to their L2, but they are also able to acquire categories and features of the L2 grammar not instantiated in the L1 through direct access to Universal Grammar (UG) The findings of this study indicate that Luhya speaking learners transfer properties of their Luhya L1 grammar on to the English language that they are learning. Consequently they make omission and confusion errors. Omission errors arise from transfer of the bare Luhya NP structure on to English L2 .Errors also arise from use of demonstratives, locative prepositions and possessive pronouns in the place of articles which they mostly use to realise specificity. In addition results reveal that Luhya speaking learners make errors that are unrelated to their LI. this shows that they have access to UG. These results therefore support Swartz' and Sprouse's Full transfer/FullAccess hypothesis.

4.15.1 Causes of Systematic Errors Committed in the Study

The third objective of this study was to find out the causes of systematic errors of Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system. Based on this objective

the results reveal that there were two major categories of errors:errors that resulted from the target language described as intralingual (overgeneralization) and errors that resulted from the learners' Luhya L1 described as interlingual.In short the causes of errors arose from learners' L1 and the target language itself. The causes of the errors wereloosely categorized based on the error type and context in which an article was used and placed in any of the two major sources: intralingual and interlingual.These are discussed in the following sections.

4.15.2 Causes Arising from the Target Language (Intralingual Errors)

a) Fluctuation

One of the major errors in this study were confusion which resulted from fluctuation. The errors accounted for 309 (28%) of the errors. Errors of this nature were occasioned by the uncertainty on the part of the learners as to whether a NP is specific or non-specific and whether it is definite or indefinite. This also led to fluctuation, a situation in which learners at one time used 'the' where 'a' was required or 'a' where 'the' was required. The use of 'the 'instead of 'a' was at the rate of 3% and 4% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively in the composition task and 17% and 8.4% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively in the multiple choice task and 23% and 14% for lower and upper intermediate groups respectively. In the story-telling task. This was particularly frequent in contexts where the NPs were being mentioned for the first time and did not require anaphoric reference. In other contexts NPs did not have specific reference or assumed hearer knowledge and therefore did not require the use of the definite 'the'. In these contexts often the first and second mention principle was violated

as learners tended to insert 'the' before NPs that were being mentioned for the first time. The violation of this principle could be attributed to poor mastery of this rule. For example describe how she spent her Christmas a learner wrote:

We went camping because we always go camping when we go on holiday. Mother says it is cheaper than staying in the hotel. (Lr 13)

Vivian is my best friend and she is the only child (Lr 24)

In these cases 'the' has been used instead of 'a' and 'an' because the learners have not mastered the use of 'the' and 'a'/'an' in such a contexts.

There was also use of 'a'/'an' in contexts where 'the' was required. This was also as a result of not having mastered the first and second principle rule. The cause of overuse in these instances could also be due to poor mastery of the article system where low proficiency learners tend to over-produce articles in contexts that they have not mastered because they have only been partially exposed to the articles.. The use of articles imterchangeably was also reported by Ionin, Zubizarreta and Maldonado (2008). Their study revealed cases of fluctuation where the Russian speakers in the study fluctuated between definiteness and specificity. The Russian learners fluctuated between the semantic universals of definiteness and specificity because their L1 does not have articles. On the other hand the Spanish speakers in their study did not fluctuate because their L1 has articles. Kim and Lakshmanan (2009) also reported use of 'a'/'an' and 'the' interchangeably meaning the learners in their study fluctuated between definiteness and

specificity. On the other hand (White 2003a) reported that 'a'/'an' and 'the' were not used interchangeably.

The main cause of fluctuation is learners' problem with the notions of specificity and definiteness well expounded by Ionin in her fluctuation hypothesis. Luhya language, (the L1 of the learners in the study) has no articles and like other L2 learners of English. L1 Luhya learners mostly associate the definite articles with specificity and the indefinite articles with non-specificity. For this reason definite articles are in most cases treated as specific and indefinite articles as non-specific. For the composition task use of 'a' in contexts where 'the' was required was at the rate of 16% for the lower intermediate group and 6% for the upper intermediate group. There are several reasons for this; first both referentiality and specificity are common with definites but the former is marginal with indefinites Lyons (1999 P.172). This means that definites are in most cases specific in the input whereas indefinites are rarely specific.

Furthermore, in most text-books for secondary schools in Kenya, the definite 'the' is given more prominence than the 'ø' article. Learners may therefore over- generalize the use of the definite and use it incorrectly in contexts where it is not required. In addition from the responses of 16 of the teachers who participated in the study, it was apparent that they concentrate on definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a' / 'an' and pay little attention to the zero and null articles during instruction. The cause of 'the' overuse therefore could possibly be due to its frequent use in written texts and the fact that teachers tend to give it more attention in the treatment of articles. Atay, (2010) suggests that the reason for the

association of definiteness and specificity is because specificity distinctions are more basic than definiteness distinctions in the sentence.

Citing Lakshmanan and Kim (2009), she further argues that the selection of specificity setting for the definite article may also be triggered by the input. This implies that definiteness is less transparent in the input and it is difficult for learners to infer the meaning of definiteness than the meaning of specificity. Furthermore, she posits that definites are more frequently specific in the input. For this reason learners have a problem in making the difference between specificity and definiteness. Therefore when the context is + definite – specific they interpret it as indefinite and when it is – definite + specific they construe it as specific and as a result they fluctuate between 'a' and 'the' in [+definite –specific] and [–definite +specific] contexts. This finding of the study is in keeping with the notions expressed concerning article choice parameter and fluctuation hypothesis (Ionin 2003). According to the article choice parameter and fluctuation hypothesis, during the acquisition process all L2 learners of English have access to the UG which provides them with both the two settings of the ACP; definiteness and specificity. However, L2 learners have a problem in deciding which setting is the correct one for the target language so they show optional adherence to both settings of UG; definiteness and specificity. They therefore fluctuate between these two values. Some of the time they assign articles on the basis of specificity and other times on the basis of definiteness. This fluctuation lasts until the learners have been exposed to sufficient comprehensive input that leads them to set the right parameter for the article choice in the target language thus the results of this study concur with the propositions of the FH).

Other studies with similar findings include: Ionin, Ko& Wexler (2004) Ekiert (2007), Fen and Lu (2001) and Atay 2010

b) Misapplication of Rules Governing Article Use

Results also reveal that misuse of articles was also as result of misapplication of rules governing article use. This led to insertion of articles in contexts that did not require them and some of the insertions were as a result of the complexity of the target language. These accounted for 65 (6%) of the errors. There were cases of overuse of 'the' where it is not required. The following examples illustrate this point:

During Christmas I and my friend went to the church very early, then we sang and played the musical instruments. (Lr)

The following day was Boxing Day and we stayed at home where mom managed to produce the meal for everyone even though we had several guests who were just gate crashing.(L13)

In the first case the learner has not mastered the rule governing cultural use of 'the' and is erronously using 'the'before generic NPs 'church' and 'musical instruments'. In such a case, the learner is considering the NPs 'church' and 'musical instruments'to be unique and extending the rule of use of the definite 'the'before unique nouns to contexts in which nouns are generic. In the second sentence the learner is inserting 'the' before generic N 'meal' that need the article 'a' .The learner's overuse of 'the' in this context is an example of early *'the' flooding* in low proficiency learners. The learners breaks the second mention rule where ' 'the'should only have been used if the NP 'meal' had been mentioned earlier. Learner's .overuse of 'the 'is also reported in the studies of Heubner(1983). In his longitudinal study of one subject 'Ge' Huebner reported that at the beginning the learner used 'the' correctly in [+SR +HK] but as he progressed he began to overgeneralize 'the' to all referents. This is what he described as 'the' flooding.

Commenting on the process of language transfer, Selinker (1972) observes that there are other four crucial processes that are not related to mother tongue influence and suggests that they are a consequence of the learning process itself which in his view co-exist with transfer in the learners' L1 and he identifies them as transfer of training, concerning teaching techniques, strategies of second language learning, connected with the learners

attitude towards teaching materials. In a case study of an adult L2 learner, a native speaker of Hmong, Heubner's (1983) study revealed that at the beginning, the learner used the definite article 'the' almost in all contexts that required the use of articles although with time the overuse of 'the' reduced gradually and the learner began to use 'the' only in [+SR +HK] and -SR+ HK contexts. In this study low proficient learners tended to follow the same trend that is they overused 'the' indiscriminately in contexts that required articles with little regard for the context in which the article was being used. The same trend was observed in the study of Master (1987, 1988). He found out that learners whose L1 did not have an article system tended to overuse 'the' initially. Thomas (1989) also reported "the" flooding. However he observed that the nature of learners L1 did not matter: both groups in his study overused 'the' in indefinite specific contexts. El Wefarlli (2013) also revealed 'the' overuse among Arabic learners whose L1 has an article system with an equivalent of the article 'the'. The researcher observed that learners in her study overused 'the'with plural nouns in the target language regardless of the distinction between generic and specific.

c) Complexity of the Target Language structure

 Errors in this study also tended to be triggered by the structure of the target language. In some cases learners found the structure of English language rather complex. Thus it was noted that Luhya learners tended to have challenges in assigning indefinite articles to NPs that had pre-modifiers. It was observed in contexts where NPs were pre-modified by adjectives. In item 15, of the multiple choice task 'a' was omitted before the pre-modifier 'shipping'. The problem could be that 'shipping' is an uncountable noun used in

this context as an adjective where learners may have considered it instead of 'company' and therefore omitted the article 'a'. The learners may have assumed the pre-modifier does not need an article or functions as an article and this resulted in an omission error. The following examples from the composition and storytelling tasks further illustrate this:

I did household chores in organized manner (Lr 6)

I was woken up by bubbling stream from nearby river (Lr5)

After taking shower, he sat with his parents at the table where they ate balanced diet (Lr2)

Then my friend said we don't go to school it was very early and said that he had good plan (Lr12)

Ian came up with shocking idea that we go and drink at the bar before going to school.I said no but he said that we were only to take soda. Lr 22

David fell into deep sleep at the room in the lodging (Lr19)

Then as we were chatting we saw one of our classmates at the festival he also saw us and came towards where we were with exaggerated swagger (Lr20)

In this study pre-modifiers were frequently adjectives as exemplified in sentences of learners 6, 5, 2, 12, 19, and 20 .As can be noted the NPs in these sentences have been pre-modified by adjectives and learners omitted articles before them. Analyzed from this perspective it could be argued that L1 Luhya learners of L2 English have a problem with pre-modified NPs. The cause of this kind of errors could arise from the complexity of the

target language because most omissions in this context are occurring with participial adjectives. Article omission errors of this kind are intralingual; they result from within the target language. The errors can also be interlingual that is, from learners' Luhya L1 where NPs are bare and if any modification is required, it is often post-modification. This assumption can be used to account for article omission.

It is also observed that omission of 'a'/'an' also occurred mostly in environments where non-count nouns were preceded by adjectives for instance *"deep sleep" "balanced diet" 'exaggerated swagger'*. In these examples learners could be considering the notion of countability (the non-count nouns*'sleep''diet'* and *'manner'*)and ignoring the adjectives that modify them hence the confusion.

The cause of article errors resulting from omission due to pre-modification of NPs with adjectives was also reported by Trenkic (2007). In his study of Serbian learners he found out that the learners tended to omit articles more frequently in environments where nouns had been modified by adjectives than in contexts where nouns had not been modified. He attributed this to the fact that in their Serbian L1 adjectives precede nouns therefore Serbian learners were analysing articles as adjectives. In the current study however learners are not omiting the articles because of misanalyzing the adjectives as articles as was the case in Trenkic's study since the Lhya NP is not preceded by adjectives like the Serbian NP. What can be construed from the data is that most of the nouns where articles are omitted are non-count and most of the adjectives modifying them are participial. Therefore although this study concurs with trenkic's study regarding article omission before premodified NPs the explanation for this is different. Results related to errors due

to modification are also in line with previous studies; Lardiere (2005) reported omission errors as resulting from contexts where NPs were modified by adjectives. Humphrey (2009) in his study found that the locality of lexical items in the immediate environment of the article in question determined the learners' choice of the article to use. According to Humphrey having grammatical knowledge of grammatical rules is not enough; a learner consciously or unconsciously considers the lexical items in the environment. In his study learners from both elementary and intermediate groups tended to base their choices of articles on local contextual cues surrounding the NP. In this study this in not the case.In his study, Kimambo (2016) found that learners did not have a problem with nouns pre-modified by adjectives but pointed out that they may just have avoided using them in such contexts

In this study the cause of omission errors could also be due to L1 influence where learners' L1 NP structure mostly consists of bare nouns. In her semantic classification of languages, Ionin et al (2003) comes up with two main classes of languages namely: article-based languages and articleless languages. She posits that whereas article based languages have a determiner system, articleless languages do not have a determiner system. English language is article-based and therefore has a determiner system. The determiners in English are specifiers which must occur before the head of the NP. The NP also has modifiers which may occur before or after the NP. Luhya language being articleless does not have a determiner system. It lacks grammatical markers of definiteness but has modifiers which always come after the NP. In other words whereas English employs pre-modifiers and post modifiers. Luhya language uses post-modifiers

and in case of nominals which need marking for number it uses prefixation. In addition, most Luhya NPs are bare.

Learners also tended to have a problem with the cultural use of 'the' as such they omitted 'the' in contexts of cultural use. The following excerpts attest to this:

As we walked out of school with our parents other students who were in class were looking at us through windows (Lr8)

Then two police men came and arrested him. He was taken into cells where he found other friends there (Lr12)

In these sentences the learners are making errors of omission of 'the'. Where anphoric and cultural use of 'the'are required.. Ionin , Ko and Wexler (2004) argue that in contexts where such definites are applied the speaker and hearer in most cases have knowledge that they share concerning the relations between given objects and their components, associative anaphoric uses consisting of definite descriptions often make use of this knowledge.

d) Misdetection of Countability

One of the frequent cases of errors was the inability of learners to discern cases where an NP could be used both as count or non-count noun depending on the context. Misdetection of countability arising from the target language accounted for 18% of the causes of errors. Results revealed evidence of omission errors that resulted from the learners failing to detect whether a NP was count or non-count.

The definite article 'the' and the indefinite articles 'a'/ 'an' were frequently omitted in contexts that required their use. In a number of cases omissions could be explained as intralingual errors since they emanated from misdetection of countability or poor mastery of the structure of the target language. Misdetection of countability was common with count and non-count nouns which are abstract and which denote quality in generic contexts. Cases from the composition task reveal that the learners made omission errors as a result of misdetection of countability and poor mastery of the TL structure; for example learners omitted the article 'an' before the NP *'interest'* and 'a' before the NPs *'grudge'* and *'desire'* in their productions. Most abstract and mass nouns are uncountable but there are some that can be used as countable or uncountable nouns depending on the context. Learners in this study failed to make this distinction and ended up robbing some singular countable nouns of the indefinite articles because they tended to consider them non- count. The notion of misdetection of countability as being a cause of errors was also reported in Butler's study (2002) who pointed out that learners in his study had serious problems with count and non-count nouns as they tended to overgeneralize the notion of countability and he noted that misdetection of noun countability consitituted a major obstacle for all learners regardless of their proficiency level. Matoba (2007) whose study was based on MSIH argued that learners with [-ART]languages are aware of the notions of countability and definiteness because these are universal. He argued that the problem such learners have is mapping the concepts on to the surface layer. His study revealed that Japanese learners have a problem with mass count distinction which leads them to misuse'a' with mass nouns.

This problem is caused by their inability to map these concepts on to the surface layer as a result they make errors of omission. This finding is also supported by El Wefarlli, (2013). However in her study the problem Libyan learners had with countability was slightly different; they used 'a'/'an' with both countable and uncountable nouns and some of the reasons were that the nouns could be both countable and uncountable and they had the learners had not mastered this rule.

4.15.3 Causes Arising from the Learners' First Language

Data from the study reveals that the learners' L1 which is Luhya to a large extend interferes with their acquisition of the English article system. Errors arising from the learners' L1 accounted for 48% of all the errors just slightly below the percentage of errors arising from the target language which was (52%). For L1 influence, the highest percentage of errors was in the story-telling task. For this task learners' L1 influence featured prominently than for the written tasks probably because in oral productions the learners had no time to break off think or pause for long, as a result their oral productions were marred with repetitions hesitations and phrases that amounted to direct translations from their L1. There were three types of errors that could be traced to L1 influence in all the three tasks; confusion, omission, insertion and transfer of expression.

a) Confusion

One of the studies that addressed L1 transfer was the study conducted by Ionin, Zubizerrata &Maldonado (2007). The main aim of the study was to examine the role played by L1 transfer and the UG input. Their main concern in the study was whether

learners' native language affects the acquisition of the article system and whether learners can deduce form meaning mappings from what they learn or whether rhey require an innate knowledge.. From these findings, it was revealed that L1 impacts on acquisition of articles regardless of the exposure and frequency of L2 input. The findings also revealed that L2 learners whose L1 is articleless have access to UG.

i) Misuse of demonstrative pronouns and locative prepositions

The influence of Luhya L1 on English article acquisition was evident in the learners' misuse of demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions instead of the definite 'the'. It accounted for 173 (15%) of the errors. These were evident in the composition and story-telling tasks where learners were given an opportunity to express themselves freely. In other words they were not confined to using articles in given contexts. Data from the written compositions exemplifies such frequently occurring errors

> *My best friend is called Laura. Laura is that kind of girl who respects everybody (Lr 8)*

> *On Christmas morning we left home for church at 9 am and reached in church at 10 am (Lr5)*

> *The day before Christmas my brother came home with his friends. Those his friends were very ill mannered. (Lr 2)*

These kinds of errors which emerge in context I [+ definite + specific], were also evident in the story telling task for example:

John told me not to be in rush for school, after all we were going to be there this

whole term (Lr4)

The learners' use of the demonstrative pronouns 'that' 'those' 'this' 'in' instead of 'the' shows poor mastery of the English article system and an attempt to fill the gaps by borrowing terms from their L1 which they think are closer to the rules of English (L2) structure but which have equivalents in their L1. Transfer of L1 can also be detected in the learners' misuse of expressions that are obviously direct translations from their L1, for example the phrases '*those his fiends', 'this whole term*' used to express specificity are direct translations from the learners' L1.

The use of demonstratives and locative prepositions can therefore be traced to the learners' L1 where demonstratives and locative prepositions are used to express specificity. As noted earlier the misuse of demonstratives and locative prepositions mostly occurred in [+definite +specific] and [–definite +specific] contexts [where the definite article 'the' was required. In addition it is noted in this study that in many cases the definite 'the' is used in specific contexts and the learners' use of demonstratives and prepositions was to express specificity and definiteness. Because their L1 lacks 'the' , this explains why when they want to communicate specificity in English they use terms in English that have equivalents in their L1 to do this. Thus we find use of demonstratives and locative prepositions in contexts expressing specificity because these have equivalents in the learners' Luhya L1. Also noted is the learners' use of possessives in some cases to indicate non-specificity. Lardiere (2005 reported use of possessives and demonstratives in her study. She noted that sometimes learners employed alternative

mehanisms such as using demonstratives and possessive pronouns to realize definite referents. Yule (2006) points out that some errors in L2 acquisition could emanate from transfer of expression or structure of the L1 of learners. Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) posit that in the L2 acquisition process, the learner transfers all the L1 grammar to L2. White further explains that the entire L1 grammar with associated deep consequences such as parameters, syntactic consequences of functional categories and feature values are transferred to L2 as the initial state of the new grammar. Blum–Kulka Leveston (1983) views learners' use of their L1 as a strategy to increase their resources to realize their communication intentions. He observes that, many second language learners tend to think that for every word in L1, there's a single translation in equivalent in L2.

Learners' Luhya L1 also caused errors that were manifest in their use of possessive pronouns in indefinite contexts mostly where 'a'or zero articles were required. . These errors were evident in the composition and story- telling data. The following extracts from the story telling and composition tasks are an illustration;

1. From church we went straight home then the house maid served our meals and we all enjoyed (L13)

2. Early in the morning David woke up ran to the bathroom and took his shower quickly worried that he would be late for school (L23)

My father arrived on the eve of Christmas with boxes of gifts for everybody. I opened my box and was excited to find my new pair of shoes. I gave my father many thanks for the shoes (.Lr1)

In the first sentence learner (13) talks of 'our meals' instead of just 'meals' In the second sentence learner (23) is using the possessive pronoun 'his' instead of the indefinite article 'a' so that instead of saying 'he took a shower' he says 'he took his shower' .lastly learner 1 is using the possessive 'my' instead of 'a' . She says I was excited to find *my* new pair of shoes instead of *a* new pair of shoes.

The results from teacher interview also reveal that L1 has an influence, on learners' acquisition of the English article system. 13 of the respondents posited that the problems learners encounter in learning the English article system emanates largely from their L1 structure.

This finding contradicts the study of Lardiere (2005) where she reports that her only respondent Patty, performed better in definite than in indefinite contexts and argued that her good performance in definite contexts was because she was accurate in using demonstratives and possessives in other words, LI had a positive influence on the learner's performance. It should however be noted here that in the current study cases of demonstratives possessives and locative prepositions were only investigated in contexts where they were misused instead of the articles. But cases where they were used correctly were not within the scope of this study.

b) Omissions

Analysis of data reveals that the major causes of errors in this study caused by L1 interference were mainly omission errors. Omission errors caused by L1 interference ranked highest at 349 (31%), followed by confusion errors (caused by the use of

demonstrative and possessive pronouns) at 173 (15%) and insertion and transfer of expressoion at 20 (1%).

Omission errors were caused by a number of factors connected to the learners' L1: as a result of transfer of the notion of bare nouns from learners' L1 .The following examples from the composition task are a good illustration

We were served scones and juice…. we did not eat scones but we took juice'

Then I sneaked into the kitchen and picked mandazi from the frying pan, mother scolded me and said that I should wait until all food for supper is ready. I ran back to the sitting room and started decorating it with flowers we had bought. (L12)

Omission of 'the' before 'juice' 'food' and 'flower'in these cases is as a result of transfer of expression and as a result of breaking the second mention rule to preserve an L1 structure.

Most Luhya NPs are bare. Therefore learners with Luhya L1 tend to have problems in assigning articles to English NPs which have determiners and pre-modifiers. Trenkic & pongpairo (2013) posit that for L2 learners whose L1 lacks articles, the L2 .licensed (Art + N) and L1 licensed (Bare Noun) forms of a target noun phrase (NP) compete with each other for selection and this competition leads to variability in production. The authors further argue that, in cognitively more demanding contexts the more established form of the NP will be more likely to be selected. Therefore for these learners, the Luhya form of NP is the more established form. Furthermore Ridha (as cited in El Werfalli 2013) reacting to influence of L1 transfer observed that learners make wrong choices of

grammatical items for the following reasons: if they fail to find equivalents in their mother tongue; avoid grammatical items if equivalents are not required in their mother tongue; insert them if equivalents are required in their mother tongue and accurately use grammatical items provided that they have equivalents in their mother tongue. His statement tentatively summarizes the influence of L1 on L2 acquisition and explains why Luhya L1 learners leave the nouns bare in cases where articles are required

This finding is supported by findings of several researchers on L2 article acquisition including; (Mayo, 2001; Bergeron-Matoba 2007; Thomas, 1989; Lardiere, 2001) Attributing article omission to L1 influence Thomas (1989, P.349)posits that her participants produced the zero article more frequently (or perhaps…failed to use any article) in 'a' and 'the' contexts. Therefore she concluded that overuse of zero article was a result of L1 influence. Parrish (1987) and Thomas (1989) also reported overgeneralization of the zero article in contexts where 'a' and 'the' were required. They concluded that since ø was over-used considerably by learners with articleless languages than those whose languages have articles then overgeneralization of ø could be attributed to learners' L1. The findings of Lardiere (2005) revealed that her one subject Patty, made more omission errors in her oral productions than substitution errors and she attributed this to L1 influence. However Martynchuk Olena's (2010) study of Russian and Chinese learners revealed that both the groups with Russian and Chinese L1s used the zero article most accurately and the researcher observed that since both Russian and Chinese belong to [– ART] group of learners, their accurate use of zero article was an indication that they were influenced by their L1s. Ionin, Zubizerrata &Maldonado (2007) examined the

role played by L1 transfer and the UG input. When all was considered, the results revealed that L1 overrides fluctuation. This is because the Russian participants in their study were operating in ESL context where they had more exposure to the target language on the other hand the Spanish participants operated in the context of EFL where they only learned the target language during classroom instruction. The Russian participants were therefore expected to perform better than their Spanish counterparts but this did not happen. The Spanish participants showed higher accuracy levels than the Russians. Spanish participants also registered significant instances of omission errors and this was also attributed to their L1 where zero article is used in some contexts. From these findings, it was revealed that L1 impacts on acquisition of articles regardless of the exposure and frequency of L2 input. The findings also revealed that L2 learners whose L1 is articleless have access to UG.

This suggestion supports Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis in which Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) argue that in L2 acquisition the learner transfers all L1 grammar to L2. Thisimplies that the transfer involves both positive and negative transfer hence over-use of the zero articleor omission of articles by Luhya L1 learners should be seen as negative transfer.

To sum up, objective c was guided by two theories; Fluctuation hypothesis and Full transfer/Full Access hypothesis. According to FT/FA hypothesis in the course of acquisition, L2 learners begin learning when they already have the first language. It is the properties of the first language that L2 learners transfer on to the second language that they are learning. The results of this objective reveal that in the process of article

acquisition the learners at all levels made errors which were a result of their L1 influence .This results therefore support the Full transfer/Full Access hypothesis according to which learners initially should transfer all the L1 grammar on to the target language.

4.16.1 The challenges Teachers of English Face when Teaching the English Article system.

This section discusses the findings of the study with regard to the semi-structured interview data. It begins by giving a brief account of steps followed in the data analysis then highlighting the themes that emerged from the interview based on the research question.

4.16 .2   Steps followed in data Analysis

I thematically analysed the data using the step-by-step guide as provided by Clarke and Braun (2006); and a six stage procedure, Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011). Data analysis involved looking at the data, assigning categories and putting together emerging issues into themes in an attempt to answer my research question, Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011). The steps involved were; transcription of the data, re-familiarization with the data, first phase coding, second phase coding, third phase coding and producing a report. The data constituted of transcripts, observation notes. Analysis was done in a non-linear recursive manner. The themes that emerged from data analysis are discussed in this section as Johnson and Christen (2008) point out that the discussion section has the purpose of interpreting and evaluating the results obtained. The themes were: The orientation of the English language syllabus to comunicative language teaching approach, the complexity of the English article system, teacher incompetencies in teaching the English article system, the invariability of teaching and learning activities, the problematic areas in article use for learners and causes of article errors in the learners' use of articles. The themes are discussed.in the following section.

4.16.3 The Focus of the English Language Secondary School Syllabus

Among the challenges raised concerning the teaching of the English article system is the English language syllabus. The respondents during the interview raised two issues concerning the syllabus. First it does not cover the article system adequately; that articles as a topic only appear at Form 2level. Secondly, the syllabus is based on the

communicative approach to language teaching which they claimed prizes meaning over form and they opined that this leads to inductive approach to teaching. The teachers claimed that this approach ignores rules hence the rules governing article use are not addressed. Learners are expected to learn article use through communicative activities. Connected to the syllabus are the text books most of which teachers pointed out are also based on the syllabus. They also pointed out that the text books currently in the market do not adequately cover the article system.

Inductive approach is oriented to communicative language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, (2001) and the Kenyan secondary school syllabus takes a communicative approach to language teaching. The advocates of this approach argue that grammar can be acquired by the learners naturally without learning the rules of grammar. This is in agreement with Krashen's (1985) language acquisition learning hypothesis according to which the acquirers of a language are not aware of the grammatical rules of a language but all the same they develop a kind of correctness. Krashen and other second language learning theorists emphasise that language learning comes about through using language communicatively rather than practising language skills.

The comments from teachers seem to mean that communicative approach implies providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and they apparently do not consider the fact that such activities need to be integrated into a wider programme of language teaching Howatt (in Rodgers 2001,p.66) In fact Littlewood (in Rodgers 2001) states,''One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well

as structural aspects of language'' (p.26) The absence of strict guidelines on teaching grammar does not mean paying no attention to the structral aspect of language. The teachers are supposed to come up with strategies that will ensure that learners are developing competencies that are inclusive of the whole language system. As for the argument that the syllabus does not cover the article system adequately, the teachers seem not to look at articles as an intergral part of other items of grammar and therefore fail to give them equal attention. The finding of the study therefore does not concur with Krashen's Acquisition Learning Theory.

4.16.4 Complexity of the English Article System

Among the challenges raised concerning the teaching of the English article system is the complexity of the article system of the English language. 20 of the respondents stated that the many rules and exceptions to the rules that govern the English article system were an obstacle to the teaching and learning of the article system.. The responses from teachers demonstrated their conviction that the many rules governing the article system use are a challenge to the teaching and acquisition of the article system. This assertion is further supported by the findings of a survey of ESL teachers in the Los Angeles area, where the teaching of articles was reported to be "their number one teaching problem" (Celce-Murcia&Larsen-Freeman, 1983:171).

The teachers enumerated the many rules as follows: the rule governing use of articles before count and non-count nouns , the first and second mention principle the principle has exceptions to it that lead to the "overuse" of 'the' ; the indefinite article variant rule governing the use of 'a' and 'an'leads to confusion between 'a' and 'an' . This point is

supported elsewhere in the study. In the multiple choice task, story-telling task and composition task, overuse of 'the' constituted the second highest percentage of errors: : 9% for the story – telling task, 28% for the composition task and 16% for the multiple choice task. It was also evident from these tasks that "the" overuse in contexts where a zero article was required was largely due to learners confusion of count and non- count nouns.

The study revealed that the complexity of the article system affects the acquisition of the article system by the learners. The complexity of the article system has been implied elsewhere by various studies: Learners were found to incorrectly misanalyse articles as adjectives in the study of Trenkic (2007) and learners used 'a' incorrectly before non-count nouns because they could not tell whether the noun was count or non-count El Wefarlli (2013) Master (1990) raises a number of factors that contribute to the difficulty in article acquisition and among the factors is the fact that articles serve a variety of functions. He explains that in the article system, a single morpheme serves many functions. That means a given article can express several meanings, for example, it can express specificity non- specificity; definiteness and indefiteness and countability. It therefore becomes very difficult for L2 learners to determine when to use a particular article. In other words it makes rule application difficult. In this study teachers raised the issue of use of the definite 'the' before proper nouns as being confusing to the learners since 'the' is not used before all proper nouns.

4.16.5 Teacher Competencies in Teaching the Article System

As regards teacher competencies in the teaching of the English article system,the results revealed that artcles are not given the attention they deserve. Seemingly there's an assumption that articles being function words are not as   important as content words and in any case they don't hamper communication Fujita (2004).The question is do the teachers teach articles at all if so how do they approach the teaching of articles? With regard to whether teachers teach articles at all, over half of the teachers admitted that they teach articles but not as a focus of the lesson. Others stated they only taught articles formally in lower secondary classes;yet others recounted that they only address articles when teaching count and non-count nouns,the rest opined that they do not teach articles at all. These teachers argued that they let learners learn articles through natural contexts which according to their argument is in keeping with communicative approach to language teaching.

When the respondents say '' they let learners learn through natural contexts,'' it seemingly implies they don't teach or focus attention to articles. It also means they assume that learners will attain competency in article use through learning and teaching activities compatible with communicative approach.The chief challenge here is the attitude of the teachers towards the teaching of the articles. Their comments seem to imply that articles beng function words are not important. Similar findings were reported by Fujita (2004)who found out that the majority of teachers in his study did not find it necessary to teach articles and they had divergent views regarding the teaching of articles; many of them did not consider articles important.The findings of this studyalso find support in Kimambo's study (2016). However while in this study teachers

competencies are the problem, in Kimambo's study the problem was teachers' insufficient level of English proficiency. Kimambo explained that EFL teachers in Tanzania cannot communicate competently in English because of late exposure to English language as a language of instruction and having learnt English when the curriculum was based on traditional Grammar Translation approach.

From the narratives, if what teachers said about the communicative approach to language teaching is anything to go by then, the teachers apparently have a challenge in their interpretation of the communicative approach to language teaching. Master (1997p.154) argues:''A communicative approach properly conceived does not involve the rejection of grammar. On the contrary it involves recognition of its central mediating role in the use and learning of language''. To these teachers , communicative approach seems to mean providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and they do not seem to consider the fact that such activities need to be integrated into a wider programme of language teaching Howatt (in Rodgers 2001,p.66) In fact Littlewood (in Rodgers 2001,p.266) states,''One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language''. The absence of strict guidelines on teaching grammar does not mean paying no attention to the structral aspect of language. The teachers are supposed to come up with strategies that will ensure that learners are developing competencies that are inclusive of the whole language system.

In connection to this finding, the study by Borg (1998) had interesting findings.It revealed that a competent teacher can up with novel strategies to teach language as did

the teacher in his study..Borg's study gives an insight into how a teacher using communicative approach could teach grammar items including articles.In the study Borg (1998) points out the strategies theteacher under study used to teach which had interesting revelations:

> ….the teacher used errors from learners' work in each lesson to teach grammar. Secondly the teacher encouraged learners to use their L1 as a resource to guide them in explaining grammatical terminologies and to focus on functions while explaining content. Another strategy he used was to teach the rules of grammar implicitly. In other words he did not teach the rules in a formal and sequential way; instead he preferred engaging learners in discussions of his subject matter and its function.

The reference to Borg's study illustrates how the teachers should creatively use strategies to teach. The teachers are supposed to come up with strategies that will ensure that learners are developing competencies that are inclusive of the whole language system even if the approach is communicative. . Njoroge and Gathigia (2014) in their study on use of songs to teach articles found that the task based method contributes to effective article use.

Contrary to the findings that most teachers don't focus their teaching on articles, Lindstromberg (1986) Berry (1991) and Master (1997) support the idea of formal instruction of articles. According to Master (1970), teaching of articles can have considerable positive effect on the learners' use of language. Master (1997) in his study found that formal instruction of articles had a positive effect on article acquisition.yet according to this study it is evident that articles are not adequately covered. Thus

inadequate instruction in article use is having a negative effect on the learners'
acquisition of the article system..

a) The Teaching Approach

.The findings of this study revealed that most teachers use deductive approach in teaching
articles, (16) of the teachers who said that they teach articles stated that they use direct
method to teach articles and 6 use inductive approach.

When their narratives are examined, they reveal that the teachers who use inductive
approach don't even use it efficiently and those who use deductive approach tend to
follow Whitman's (1974 p. 253), six consecutive steps for teaching the English articles
based on ease of explanation and frequency of occurrence:

1. Quantity (singular/plural distinction). This is a book vs. those are three books.

2. Generic plural: All apples are red > Apples are red.

3. Non-count nouns (count nouns vs. non-count nouns) A lot of books vs. A lot of
water Many books vs. Much water

However from their narratives, they do not go all the way .most of them only do step1
and 3.Their handling of the article system points at some inability to address the various
areas that pertains to the English article system. For such a complex system as the article
system teachers need deeper pedagogical knowledge to enable them deal with the various
complexties that are charactreristic of the system. The cause of errors in these cases for

learners could be emanating from teaching strategies which do not encourage students in some way to develop or use effective strategies of learning and communication.

El Wefwarlli (2013) inher study examined three approaches which included implicit, explicit and enhanced strategy and reached the conclusion that enhanced strategy was the most effective Second language theories have divergent views on how instruction of the English article system should be done. Some views advocate for a deductive approach which concentrates on conscious learning of grammatical structures through formal instruction (El Wefarlli 2013) other views advocate for inductive approach(communicative teaching strategy) where learners acquire language naturally through exposure without formal instruction. This later view is supported by Krashen's acquisition learning theory which sees acquisition as the basic process involved in developing proficiency and stresses that language learning comes about through using language communicatively rather than practising language skills Richards (2005 p.72) The third approach referred to as enhanced input strategy suggests an approach where teachers pay attention to both grammatical structures and meaning using enhanced input techniques in context to help learners notice the target forms (El Wefarlli 2013).

Both the deductive and inductive approaches however have been called into question by some researchers. Those critical of deductive approach claim that pattern practice; drilling, memorization and error correction only lead to language like behavior but do not result in competence (Richards, 2001; Celce Mercia et.al, 1997) and those critical of the communicative language teaching strategy posit that ''communicative language teaching strategies have proven insufficient in enabling learners achieve the required proficiency

level for effective language use because there's often a lack of grammatical accuracy'(El Wefwarlli 2013 P.228).Master, (1997); Ellis, (1998); Nassaji (2000) are of the view that grammatical competence cannot be achieved only by exposure to meaningful input; a degree of focus on grammatical elements is necessary for L2 acquisition.

Arguably, when one considers the complexity of the English article system, some degree of focus on teaching the article system is necessary. In this study, what however emerges from the findings is that teaching that focuses on grammatical rules governing article use to completion is conspicuously lacking

4.16.6 Invariability of Learning and teaching activities and Tasks

As regards teaching and learning activities the findings revealed that most teachers use written exercises including; filling - in blanks (20) cloze tests (10) and re-write exercises (10). A few use dialogues role play simulations (10), flash cards and quizzes (2)

From the data it is revealed that most teachers use filling in blank activities after introducing learners to articles through lecture method which means variation of activities is lacking. Teachers therefore fail to create a variety of situations for learners to acquire the necessary competencies in article use and seem to emphasize the traditional fill- in blanks and re-write exercises.

This leads to emphasis on some usages and can result in overuse. There is also less focus on oral activities. Dialogues role play and simulations are not used by many teachers. This finding finds support in Kimambo's (2016) study in which he explains that teachers failed to create situations for their learners to learn English successfully instead they

mainly employed the traditional Grammar Translation method for lack of sufficient training in implementing the CBLT.

Berry (1991) is critical of fill-in blank exercises and cloze tests. He argues that overuse of gap-filling in exercises designed to practice usage is an indicator of lack of variety in formats. He points out that such exercises could be counterproductive in the sense that they could reinforce learners' beliefs about the redundancy of articles.

The rest use activities compatible with communicative approach. This in my view is not sufficient enough to enable learners achieve necessary competencies in a system as complex as the English article system. The view of this study is that teachers approach the teaching of the English article system by using a combination of strategies involving both deductive and inductive approaches.

Closely related to learning and teaching activities is the outcome of the process. The findings revealed the following types of errors: omission, confusion and unnecessary insertion. This finding agrees with the findings of the multiple choice, story-telling and composition tasks where all these types of errors were evident. This results find supports in various studies including (Trenkic, 2007; Lardiere 2001; Bergeron, 2009; Atay, 2010;:Atia, 2014: Kwame, 2018)

Concerning the causes of the errors, the teachers recounted that the main sources of errors were learners' first language interference and the article system itself which they described as being too difficult for learners.

4.16.7L1 Influence

Regarding the teachers' opinion about learners' L1, the findings revealed that10 of the respondents believed that learners' Luhya language (L1) influences their acquisition of the English article system.

The finding that learners' L1 interferes with the acquisition of the English article system finds support from literature, (Crompton,2011; Lardiere 2001,2005; Sarko 2009 Ekiert, 2007)

The full transfer full access hypothesis proposed by Schwartz and Sprouse (1994, 1996) which informs this study can best explain the role of L1 in second language acquisition, Schwartz and Sprouse state that any learner acquiring a second language uses his L1 as a starting point. Schwartz and Sprouse explain that during L2 acquisition process, the learner transfers the entirety of L1 grammar initially on to L2. Brown (2002) posits that since parameters are principles governing every language they create characteristic grammar for every language thereby making each language different from the others. The findings of this objective show that Luhya L1 learners whose language is articleless tend to transfer all the features of L1including those related to article use on to L2 and this explains why most of their errors are omission and substitution where they substitute demonstrative and possessive pronouns and locative prepositions (features readily available in their L1) for the definite 'the' and make omission errors given that in their Luhya L1 the NPs are mostly bare.

The rest 14 did not think so and felt that it was actually the complexity of the article system itself that affects the acquisition of the English article system.

Objective (d) of this study was grounded in the learning acquisition theory as proposed by Krashen 1985). According to the theory, learners have two independent language systems. One is as a result of deliberately setting out to learn a language, that is, conscious learning. The second is as a result of picking a language from one's environment through using the language for real communication, without consciously setting out to do so that is, subconscious learning.   The theory was relevant to this study as the study mainly focused on the acquisition of the English article system by L2 learners; and the challenges the teachers of English face when teaching the articles. The theory guided the study in finding answers to question (d); what challenges do the teachers face when teaching the English article system? The question is how are the learners acquiring the article system? To answer this question we must turn to the teacher. The teacher influences the learning process hence if there's a problem with the learning of the article then he/she could be facing challenges in teaching the article system. The question also is what methods, what activities and procedures do teachers use to teach the articles?Savignon (in Richards & Rodgers 2005) discusses techniques and classroom management procedures (e.g group activities, language games, role plays) associated with a number of CLT classroom procedures although the activities are not exclusive to CLT classrooms. In this study a number of teachers use these activities .However using the range of activities and not being able to determine a mix and timing of activities that best meets the needs of a learner or group of learners might

not be effective. According to Krashen's theory the best way a language is learned is through natural communication rather than through practicing language skills. This implies that second language teachers should create ideal situations which allow language to be used in order to fulfill authentic purposes. The results reported in this study indicate that Luhya L1 learners are having difficulties with acquisition of the English article system despite the fact that the teachers' attempt to use CLT procedures and activities. This results therefore do not concur with Krashen's acquisition learning hypothesis.

4.17 Semantic challenges Luhya L1 learners face when learning the English L2 Article System

The fifth objective of this study was to find out the semantic challenges that learners face when learning the English article system. The study results reveal that the semantic notions of specificity and definiteness are a challenge to learners whose L1 is Luhya. The learners assigned wrong articles in contexts where other articles were required. In other words they fluctuated between 'a 'and 'the'. Evidence from the three tasks shows that a major cause of fluctuation was connected to the semantic notions of definiteness and specificity which are marked differently in the learners' Luhya L1. This is evident from the results of the three tasks administered to the learners. The rate of fluctuation where the wrong articles were substituted for the correct articles was high across the board. But the highest percentages of fluctuation were evident in contexts III [+definite –specific] where 'the' is required and [–definite +specific] where 'a' is required in the following percentages : For lower intermediate group the learners used 'a' for 'the' 17% and 'the' for 'a' 14% in the multiple choice task; in the story-telling task they used 'the' for 'a'

20% and 'a' for 'the' 7%; in the composition task they used 'a' for 'the' 4% and 'the' for 'a' 9%; for upper intermediate group, the learners used 'a' for 'the' 5% and 'the' for 'a' 17% in the multiple choice task; in the story-telling task they used 'the' for 'a' 14% and 'a' for 'the' 5%; in the composition task they used 'a' for 'the' 9% and 'the' for 'a' 4%.

From these results the study notes that learners fluctuate in their use of articles between the definite article the in [+definite −specific] contexts and indefinite articles 'a' in [-definite +specific] which represent the semantic features, definiteness and specificity. In this particular study fluctuation was as a result of learners having a problem in deciding whether an article should be used in the specific context or non-specific context. Their problem stems from the fact that they associate definiteness with specificity and indefiniteness with non-specificity. Consequently the definite article 'the' is associated with specific contexts and the indefinite article 'a' with non-specific context which is a fallacy.

Thus it can be argued that the semantic challenges revealed in the study are occasioned by the notions of definiteness and specificity. Luhya language does not have an overt article system like English language therefore the notions of specificity and definiteness as marked in English are alien to the Luhya L1 learners because in Luhya language these notions are marked differently (through the use of demonstrative pronouns, locative prepositions tense aspect modality and discourse patterns) not through an article system. In fact the notion of definiteness is not distinct in Luhya language. Therefore Luhya learners just like other learners of English whose first languages do not have an article system tend to fluctuate between 'the' and 'a' in contexts where they are not required

because of faulty association of 'the' with specificity and 'a' with non-specificity. This results concur with Ionin et al's (2004) Fluctuation Hypothesis.'2004. Lyons (1999 p.166) posits that "the relation between the definite and the indefinite articles is achieved via definiteness not specificity, so a NP can be either specific or non – specific regardless of its definiteness status". For Luhya learners however, specificity and definiteness are not differentiated. Definiteness is associated with specificity. For these reasons any context in which the definite 'the' is required or used is construed to be specific and when the context is specific it is construed to be definite, meaning a definite context is construed as specific to these learners and an indefinite context is construed as non-specific. This leads to the overuse of 'the' in [-Definite + specific] contexts and overuse of 'a' in [+definite –specific]. Bergeron-Matoba (2007) in his study of Japanese learners, Ionin Wexler and Ko (2003) in their studies of Russian and Korean learners came up with similar conclusions. Their studies revealed a tendency of learners to use 'the' in (+ definite -specific) contexts and 'a' in (-definite + specific) contexts. The findings therefore concur with Ionin et al's (2004) Fluctuation Hypothesis.(2004)

The association of definiteness with specificity could be as explained earlier due to the fact that the learners are more exposed to the notion of specificity in their L1 and they have a variety of ways of marking specificity including an elaborate demonstrative pronoun system. Secondly, according to Atay, (2010), specificity distinctions are more basic than definite distinctions and resonate with learners better than definiteness. It has also been suggested that learners' tendency to select specificity setting for the definite article may be triggered by the input (Kim & Lakshmanan, 2009). The implication of this

is that definiteness is not easily detected in the input; whereas specificity can be inferred from context; it is harder to deduce the meaning of definiteness from context. Furthermore, in most cases definites are often specific in the input Atay, (2010).

Furthermore, since the story telling and composition tasks were production tasks, learners were not restricted to using given articles in given contexts; they had the freedom to express themselves in the way they deemed appropriate. Consequently, certain unusual aspects of article substitutions were evident. There were considerable instances where demonstratives and personal possessive pronouns and locative prepositions were substituted for the definite article 'the' and indefinite 'a'. For the story telling task, it was evident in context I and II [+ definite + specific] where 'the' is required. In this context there was evidence of use of the demonstrative pronouns 'this', 'those' and 'that' instead of the definite article 'the' at, the rate of 8% for both groups. Use of possessive pronouns; 'his' and 'my' were also evident; the lower intermediate group used 'his' possessive instead of 'the' at the rate of 4% and the upper intermediate at the rate of 2%. The locative preposition 'in' was used instead of 'the' at the rate of 4% and 3% for lower and upper intermediate respectively. For the composition task, the demonstratives 'this' 'that' and 'those' were used instead of 'the' at rate of 10% by the lower intermediate groups and 6% by the upper intermediate groups. The possessive pronouns 'my 'and 'our' were used instead of 'a' at the rate of 6% by the upper and 8% by the lower and upper intermediate groups respectively. The locative preposition 'in' was used instead of 'the' 4% and 3% by the lower and upper intermediate groups respectively.

The study notes that substitution of the demonstrative pronouns 'this' 'that' 'those' and locative prepositions 'in' for 'the' and substitution of possessive pronouns 'my'/'his'/ 'our' for 'a' and ø' could still be seen as a challenge connected to the semantic notions of definiteness and specificity. In the learners' Luhya L1, demonstratives pronouns are used in discourse to mark specificity. It means that learners in this study are trying to express notions of specificity by using demonstrative and locative prepositions. In addition the learners in a way are trying to express notions of specificity in indefinite contexts by using possessive pronouns. Lardiere's study (2005) revealed that her only subject Patty was very accurate with the use of the in specific contexts and she attributed this to transfer of her Mandarin L1 which employs demonstrative pronounce in the realization of specificity. It means in her study contrary to the current one, demonstratives made a positive impact.

Luhya language which is the first language of the learners under study does not have an article system and therefore the notions of specificity and definiteness marked mostly through articles in English are expressed differently in Luhya. Luhya learners of English have intuitions about how article expressions are used in their language therefore in the process of learning the English article system they tend to make their knowledge of their Luhya L1 a stepping stone upon which they conceptualize and diagnose English article use. Specificity for these learners is realized in their language through an overt system of demonstrative pronouns and in some cases locative prepositions, prefixation, tense aspect modality and discourse pragmatic contexts .Consequently learners in this study have borrowed items from their first language to help them express the notions of specificity

and definiteness and in the process made various errors. The findings therefore concur with Full Transfer/Full Access Hypothesis according to which learners initially fall back on their L1 in the process of acquiring L2.

4.17 The Thesis of the Study

It is therefore the thesis of this study that learners' L1 is a hinderence to their achievement of native like competence in the second language. One of the areas of English that Luhya learners have challenges with is the English article system as revealed through a variety of errors they made in this study. Their incompetence in the use of articles partly stemmed from the fact that they do not have an equivalent article system in their L1 hence they fluctuated and made omission errors. Furthermore the findings of the study revealed that the learners' L1 makes acquisition of the article system difficult and thus contributes to teachers' challenges in teaching the article system

Data also revealed that learners' L1 affects their mastering of the the semantic notions of specificity and definiteness .These semantic notions are realized in English largely through the article system but are conceptualized differently in the learners' L1. In the course of learning the English article system data from the study revealed that learners tend to transfer the way they realize these notions from their L1 on to English L2. Errors resulting from misuse of demonstratives and possessive pronouns attest to this. They also associate 'the'with specificity and 'a'/'an' with non-specificity. This results in confusion errors.

Summary

This chapter dealt with presentation and analysis of findings including discussion of the findings.

Chapter five discusses the conclusion of the study and makes recommendations based on each objective.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Luhya first language semantic notions in the instruction of the English second language article system among secondary school learners in Vihiga county of Kenya. This was systematically carried out and the data presented and analysed accordingly. The discussion of the findings has been stated in chapter four. In this chapter therefore the conclusions are drawn on the basis of the discussions in chapter four and recommendations made based on these conclusions. The presentation is organized sequentially according to the research objectives upon which this study was based.

The study sample included 6 secondary schools within Vihiga County. Teacher and student respondents were drawn from the six schools. From these schools 24 secondary school students participated in the multiple choice task, story-telling sessions, and composition writing. Data generation techniques included story-telling task, guided composition a multiple choice task and an in-depth interview with 24 teachers.

The data generated was organized and analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively in narrative, discussion and description form in chapter four. The presentation was done according to the research questions raised by the study. On the basis of the findings, various conclusions and recommendations are warranted.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Chapter four dealt with data presentation and analysis with regard to the instructional implications of Luhya first language semantic notions in the second language acquisition of the English article system among secondary school learners whose first language is Luhya. Based on the objectives of the study, the multiple choice task, the story-telling task, the composition task and the teacher interview, results were organized and analysed thus eliciting the following findings: the findings revealed that Luhya learners fluctuate in their use of the English article system because their first language does not have an overt article system. As expected they have a problem with the notions of specificity and definiteness as they treat all definite contexts as specific and indefinite contexts non-specific. This leads to fluctuation and results in confusion errors. The findings further revealed that in their quest to acquire the English article system, learners make various systematic errors with regard to article use. These errors include: confusion errors (fluctuation), omission errors, and unnecessary insertion errors. Some of these errors are developmental meaning they arise from the article system itself; others are interlingual meaning they arise from learners' first language. Evidence from the study shows that the causes of article errors arise from both learners' first language and the target language itself.

The findings also revealed that teachers of English face various challenges with regard to the teaching of the article system. These challenges stem from a variety of factors, the major one being the complexity of the article system followed by learners 'first language which is article less and consequently interferes with the learning of the article system.

What further emerged from the study is that the semantic notions of specificity and definiteness pose a challenge to the learners in their quest to acquire native like proficiency in the use of the English article system. The prominence accorded specificity in their Luhya first language and the apparent non-distinctiveness of definiteness leads learners to associate the definite article with specificity and indefinite article with non-specificity resulting in fluctuation. Absence of an overt article system in the learners' first language leads learners to transfer the notion of specificity directly from their L1 to L2 and to ignore definiteness resulting in incorrect use of demonstratives, possessives and locative prepositions in place of the definite article. The researcher therefore in the following section by way of conclusion looks at the major focus of this study and issues that have come up and makes a number of recommendations.

From the above analysis and discussion the research has identified a number of important factors concerning the teaching and learning of the English article system. The conclusions arrived at are discussed sequentially according to the objectives of the study.

a) Based on the first objective of this study the evidence indicates that the developmental features exhibited by these learners are fluctuation, overuse, underuse and omission of articles where they are required. The highest fluctuation is noted in [–definite +specific] contexts. And the highest percentage in fluctuation was noted among the lower intermediate group. Results from the data also reveal that the developmental sequence of the English article system for the upper intermediate learners is the >a/an>ø and for the lower intermediate learners

is the >a>an >ø. The acquisition of the article system does not follow a particular order. Even within the acquisition order presented, there are certain contexts in which any of the articles may be acquired late or earlier.

b) Based on the second objective of this study the findings indicate that all learners endeavour to use articles correctly but in the process make systematic errors of various types while attempting to use the articles. Evidence from the study shows that confusion errors are the highest in frequency. From the data, confusion errors involved fluctuation between the definite and indefinite articles. The rate of substitution was high across the board. The data reveals substitution of 'a'for 'the', 'an' for 'the'; 'the' for 'a'and 'the' for 'an'. Use of demonstrative pronouns for the definite 'the' was also evident. Use of locative prepositions for 'the' and use of possessive pronouns for 'a' were also evident in the data. From the confusion errors made, it is observed that learners fluctuated between the definite 'the' and indefinite articles 'a', 'an' in all the tasks. It can therefore be concluded that according to fluctuation hypothesis learners whose L1 is articleless fluctuate between the definite and indefinite articles in the cause of the learning process. It is also evident from substitution of pronouns and locative prepositions for the articles 'a', and 'the'that learners also make confusion errors resulting from their L1 influence. The results of the study also reveal omission errors. They ranked the second highest to confusion errors. From the findings, learners omitted the definite article 'the'and the indefinite 'a'/ 'an' in contexts where they were required at considerably high percentages.

It is also noted from the data that omission of 'the' ranked the most frequent error.It was frequently omitted in contexts where the cultural use of 'the'was required. Omission of'a'was also evident ranking second to omission of 'the'.It occurred frequently in contexts where NPs were pre-modified. The indefinite 'an' was the least omitted error. Evidence from the study also confirm frequency of unnecessary insertion of articles where they were not required. The findings show that learners inserted the definite 'the' and the indefinite 'a'/'an' where a zero article was required. Unnecessary insertion of article errors led to over production of some articles resulting in overuse. The article that was frequently inserted was the definite 'the' leading to what could be described as overuse of 'the'. It can therefore be concluded that the English article system is indeed complex and poses challenges for L2 learners of English and even more so for learners whose L1 lacks an article system resulting in a variety of sytematic errors.

c) The third objective of this study was to find out the causes of errors made in the study. Based on this objective it is revealed that the errors learners make fall into two major categories: Intralingual and interlingual. Intralingual errors arise from within the target language and they account for slightly over half of the errors. Among the causes of intralingual errors was fluctuation which arose from the notions of definiteness and specificity which present a serious problem to L2 English learners with articleless L1.Confronted with these two notions, which are

expressed differently in their L1, L2 learners in this study were often in a dilemma as to which article to choose with regard to specific and non-specific contexts often associating definiteness with specificity and indefiniteness with non-specificity. This caused them to fluctuate in their choices. The finding also revealed that the complexity of the TL structure was also a cause of the errors. The concept of use of articles with adjectivally remodified NPs caused problems to learners. Misapplication of rules governing article use was evident in the data. That the article system has many rules governing its use has been widely documented. From the data some of the errors learners made emanated from misapplication of some of the rules. The notion of countability causes learners problems. This again arises from the target language when learners fail to detect whether a given NP is count or non-count and therefore the appropriate article to use.

As already stated the other major source of errors evident in the study is learners' first language. The study results suggest that learners' Luhya L1 was one of the main sources of errors for the learners' in this study. Evidence from the study confirm that errors arising from misuse of demonstrative and possessive pronouns, locative prepositions were significant. Use of demonstratives and locative prepositions revealed transfer of the notions of specificity from Luhya L1 on to English. Last but not least were omission errors also caused by L1 transfer. An analysis of the errors reveal that the structure of L2 (English) pauses a problem in the article system acquisition for learners of English whose L1 is

articleless. Some of the structural differences between Luhya and English manifest in the treatment of the Noun Phrase (NP). For English language the NPs are often pre-modified or specified with pre-modifiers and specifiers. For Luhya language the NP is mostly bare and if modified the modifiers always come after the NP. Errors resulting from structural differences of the two languages were evident in omission of articles where in some cases direct translation from Luhya L1 to English was discernible. It can therefore be concluded that the causes of errors for learners in this study arise from the target language which is English as well as from learners' Luhya L1.

d) Based on the fourth objective of this study evidence from the teacher interview indicate that one of the challenges teachers face in the teaching of the English article system is the current English syllabus for secondary schools and the current English text books on the market. Both of them put emphasis on the communicative aspects of language and tend to ignore mastery of rules. They also do not adequately address the article system which is a disadvantage. Evidence also indicate that teachers face challenges with regard to the teaching of the English article system. The teachers in the study pointed out that the many rules that govern the English article system and exceptions to these rules complicate the learning process for their learners.

In addition to the challenges arising from the English article system itself, evidence from the study revealed that there are other challenges arising from the approaches to teaching of the article system. This is a challenge that is not readily realized by the teachers. The study notes that the pedagogy for teaching articles is flawed. Few teachers teach the article system in its own right as a topic. Majority of them do not focus their teaching on the article system instead it is inadequately taught under other items that teachers think are more important. Other teachers only teach articles in lower classes. As a result, there are many aspects of the article system that are ignored in grammar lessons. Yet in many cases students need explicit teaching and general practice particularly with exceptions to the general pattern of article use. As such learners continue to under-perform with regard to the article system and in English in general which in a way frustrates teachers. From the learners' performance and the responses of the teachers it emerged that learners' L1 is also one of the major challenges facing teachers in teaching the article system. Evidence shows that learners' first language has an influence on the acquisition of the article system. In conclusion, this study notes that the pedagogy for teaching articles is flawed. The teaching and learning of the English article system has been largely undermined by various factors starting from the inception of the English curriculum to the classroom instruction and to learners' Luhya L1. All these pose challenges for the teachers of English.

e) Based on the fifth objective of this study the evidence indicates that learners face semantic challenges when learning the English article system. The notion of definiteness marked in English language through an overt article system is realized differently in their Luhya L1 which does not have an overt article system. The notion of specificity in English may be realized through articles meaning an article can be definite and specific or definite and non-specific and that an article can be indefinite and specific or nonspecific. As evidence in the study reveals, learners fluctuate in their use of articles between definiteness and specificity as they fail to realize that not every specific context is definite and not every definite context is specific. The generic reference of 'the' is difficult for learners because they associate 'the' with specificity and 'a'/'an' with non-specific contexts and as evidenced in the story-telling task they avoid the generic use of 'the'.

Another problem is the specific use of 'a'. For these learners, 'a' is only associated with indefiteness and therefore non- specificity. Thus the use of 'a'in indefinite specific contexts poses problems to learners. Furthermore in the learners' Luhya L1 the notions of definiteness and specificity are marked by demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions and in fact definiteness is not distinct and there is negligible demarcation between definiteness and specificity. Evidence from this study indicates that Luhya L1 learners have a problem occasioned to these semantic notions. First they tend to think that L1 settings are appropriate for L2, therefore in their work when they want to communicate definiteness or specificity in English they use English terms

that have equivalents in Luhya L1.Thus in the study there is evidence of use of demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and locative prepositions in expressing specificity because these have equivalents in English L2.This study therefore concludes that Luhya learners face semantic challenges occasioned by the semantic notions of specificity and definiteness when learning the English article system.

5.3 Study Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the influence of Luhya learners' L1 on their acquisition of the English article system. The inaccurate use of the English article system has been due to the influence of learners' L1 which is articleless and therefore lacks the syntactic DP category present in English language and partly due to the teaching strategies employed by teachers. All these factors have contributed to learners' poor performance in national examinations. From the findings the study concludes:

a) That the developmental features exhibited by these learners are fluctuation, overuse, underuse and omission of articles where they are required.

b) Luhya L1 learners make systematic errors in the course of learning the English article system.

c) The causes of errors for Luhya L1 learners in the course of learning the English article system emanate from their L1 and from the target language

d) .The teachers of English face several challenges in the course of teaching the English article system

e) The semantic notions with regard to the English article system and learners' L1are an impediment to the acquisition of articles for Luhya L1learners.

5.4 Recommendations

The study is significant in a number of ways: First it presented data on the acquisition of the English article system by Luhya speakers. This is an important contribution in view of the fact that studies done on the English article acquisition have largely been focused on learners from European and Asian countries .Few studies have been done in Africa and in Kenya. New knowledge with regard to article acquisition by learners with Luhya L1 has definitely been unearthed. In addition, the findings have policy and pedagogical implications. .It is hoped that curriculum developers will find the study useful with regard to revising the English language curriculum to address the question of article inclusion in the syllabus. It is also hoped that teachers of English will find the study useful with regard to adopting a variety of approaches in teaching the English article system.

After analysing the data generated and drawing conclusions to the study, the researcher made the following recommendations based on the five objectives:

a) According to the natural order hypothesis, teachers should be aware that certain structures of a language are easier to acquire than others and therefore language structures should be taught in an order that is conducive to learning. These should apply to all structures including articles. Teachers should start by introducing language concepts that are relatively easy for learners to acquire and then use scaffolding to introduce more difficult concepts.

b) Teachers should use an eclectic strategy and method in teaching articles. This will help them employ both communicative language teaching activities which will be meaning-based and at the same time employ a rule-based approach which will help learners to improve their ability to use articles more accurately.

c) Teachers should ensure that learners receive comprehensible input through classroom activities such as role play, debates and language games extralinguistic information and library lessons etc . This will expose learners to more of the target language than their L1.

d) KICD should re-evaluate the syllabus and modify it in the area of the selection of contents to be taught with a view of including the article system as an item of grammar in its own right in order to influence teachers to focus on it just like they do on other grammatical items. It will help teachers to devote sufficient time to the area of article use and supply comprehensible input to the learners.

e) Teachers should use an eclectic strategy and method in teaching articles. This will help them employ both communicative language teaching activities which will be meaning-based and at the same time employ a rule-based approach which will help learners to improve their ability to use articles more accurately.

f). Teachers should ensure that learners receive comprehensible input. . They should supply comprehensible input not only through classroom talk but also through the use of communicative activities and extensive reading.This will lead learners to be be exposed touse of language in different situations.Comprehensible input triggers have a crucial role in discourse analysis and by implication in assigning the correct article.

.g) Teachers should re-examine their approach to the teaching of oral skills with a view to improving the teaching and performance in oral skills.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas need to be further researched:

- The extent to which the strategies teachers employ influence the acquisition of the English article system.

- The teaching and acquisition of the zero and null articles.

Summary

This chapter has summarized the findings of the study discussed the conclusion and made recommendations based on each objective. The study has also suggested areas for further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MULTIPLE-CHOICE TASK

Student Code ………………………. Class……………………………………..

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer all questions

Choose the correct article from ('a', 'an', 'the' or 'ø') to complete the missing parts in the

contexts below:

NOTE: Ø means zero article

Context 1: [+ Definite, + Specific],

Two classmates in a conversation

1. Musimbi: You missed class yesterday. Where were you?

   Mmbone: I had travelled to Kisumu over the weekend and could not make it to

   school in time

   Musimbi: Oh, what did you buy from Kisumu?

   Mmbone: I bought   many things - several fruits, two text books, and a bag. I

   really liked ....……bag

      a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

  2.House girl and employer in a conversation

  Terry: Did you pack for Ivy some bananas to carry to school?

     Lena: Yes I did but she left…………..bananas and took pop- corn instead.

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

3 .Classmates conversing on a trip

Tim: Look, we will need a snag on our way to Nairobi.

Ben: Don't worry, l brought cookies from my mother's kitchen

Tim: That was a great idea. What shall we have with   …… cookies?

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

4. Two teachers discussing exam results

Ronoh: Yusuf has been really hard on us. Look at the grades he gave our students.

I wish somebody can over-rule him.

Ochieng: No one can over-rule him. He is……..minister of education.

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d)the

5. Two colleagues talking about the rush for public transport during Christmas holiday

Wandieri: Did you get the means to travel home over Christmas?

Lwangale: Oh yes on the eve of Christmas Bulimo and l quickly rushed for the

bus. Everybody was jostling for a front seat. Bulimo managed to get in first and

sat in ……….front seat next to the driver while I sat at the back.

a) a   b) an   c) ø d) the

Context II: [+Definite, + Specific]

6. Friends chatting

Ken: My son Ian loves watching Cristiano Renaldo - Real Madrid footballer playing.

John: Well, he is in luck! Tomorrow, I am having lunch with………footballer, he is an old friend of mine. Therefore, I can get his autograph for Ian!

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

7. Colleagues chatting

Mwangi: The trip to Mombasa was very interesting.

Mbotela: Yes, I was told you learned a lot about domestic tourism and I regretted to have missed the trip

Mwangi: Indeed, you should have been there to watch the local dancers performing

They performed …..famous*Sukuti*dance from Western. It was a great dance.

 a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

8. Two friends have met

Kimani: Hi, Mwaniki! What are you doing in the park?

Mwaniki: I am just walking around with my son.

Kimani: Then where is your son?

Hanan: Oh, there he is. He enjoys playing on ………….swing

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

9. Colleagues in the office chatting

Andambi: Have you read today's newspapers?

Wasike: Yes I have read …….. Daily Nation. It is the most informative

paper in Kenya. It is also objective. The headline today is about

voter registration.

    a) a   b) an   c) ø d) the

10. Two cousins have met

Handa: Hey how is everybody at home? I haven't seen uncle for quite some time now. Where is he?

Khasandi: …..old man has given up public life and now spends all his time farming

    a) a   b) an   c) ø d) the

Context 111: (+ Definite, - specific)

11. Mother and daughter's friend talking

  Jebet: I am looking for Cherono. Is she home**?**

  Bett: No, she went to St Luke's hospital. She wanted to have her tooth removed by

……. dentist at the hospital. I do not know who that dentist is but I know that she

wants her tooth removed urgently. She didn't sleep last night.

  a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

12.Friends chatting

Mmboga: Did you see the wedding gown that Lule's bride wore?

Andia: No, I did not. I didn't attend the wedding. What was special about it?

Mmboga: I do not know. But people seem to have been impressed by it. They are

talking about ………imagination of the designer. However, because I did not see

the gown I do not really know what to think.

a) ab) an   c) ø d) the

13. Friends chatting

Andia: I heard your sister got married to a Ugandan. How are they getting on?

Ayuma: They are fine. They left for Entebe after their wedding.

Andia: Wow! Entebe -1 have never been there.

Ayuma: Neither have I, but I would love to go. My sister says she spends some time supervising work on …… farm but after that she spends her weekends on the beaches of Lake Victoria, swimming and eating smoked fish. She is really enjoying herself.

   a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

14. Two teachers discussing the recently held national drama festivals

 Oliwa:Our drama club group was in Nyeri last week for drama festival competitions

Waswa: How did they perform?

Oliwa: They won in most of the items

Waswa: Wau!, your school must be in a celebratory mood

Oliwa: Indeed we are; the principal is going to reward …….. winners

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

15. Friends chatting at a restaurant

Owino: Idon't like the tilapia served in Nairobi hotels nowadays

Mulama:I too ,it just doesn't have the same flavour as the one from the lake

Owino: I'm told the fish comes from artificial fish bonds common around the

country but it is still preferred to 'mbuta'

Mulama: Oh yes, among ………… fish tilapia is the most popular

a)   a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

Context 1V: [-Definite, + Specific]

 16.Conversation between a tourist and a tour guide

Smith: There are many lions in this park.

Lelei: Yes, they are a big attraction to the tourists but they are also a menace to the

        Maasai people who live around the park.

        Smith: Oh, is that so?

Lelei: Oh yes, in fact, last week a young Maasai man killed .... lion from this park.

        The lion was trying to attack a goat.

            a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

17.Friends chatting

Ronoh: How is the situation in baringo now?

Yatich: People have stopped fighting; in fact there's ……… strong desire for

reconciliation

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

18 Friends have just met

        Rodah: Hi, Rose! It's been a while since we last met. What are you doing in the

        market?

Rose: Oh, just a little shopping. I am buying……...special equipment for cooking chicken. I have been using a lot of fuel when cooking chicken.

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d)the

1.9 Telephone conversation between two colleagues

Jane: Hi! Susan, have you already left for the conference

 Susan: No my dear, I'm still sorting out a few items to carry to the conference

Jane: Good, don't forget to come along with a paper clip

Susan: Of course not! ………. Paper clip comes in handy

a) a   b) the   c) an   d) ø

20. John is Youssif's pen friend, but they have never seen each other before. John came to the UAE to visit Youssif. John told Youssif that he would hold a red rose when he arrives to the airport. Youssif tried to see John at the airport but he could not since the airport was so crowded. At the airport Youssif asked the staff member, "Have you seen ………man with a red rose?"

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

Context V: [- Definite, - Specific]

21 Friends have just met

Ruto: Hey! Did you notice the speed at which the young man jumped into the raging floods and swam after the child?

Sang: Oh yes, I did. I have never seen anything like it before. Everyone was relieved when the young man emerged from the river carrying the child in his arms.

Ruto: Wow! Rescuing that child was ………..action of a brave man

  a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

22. Classmates chatting

Joyce: Let's go to the library on Saturday to revise for our exams.

Lilian: Saturday will not be convenient for me

Joyce: Why not?

Lilian: I have to attend ……………..engagement party of a friend on Saturday

    a) The   b) a   c) ø   d) an

23.Wife and husband in a conversation

Ayodi: What are you going to do at the market?

Lucy: Nothing much; I just want to buy some fruits and vegetables then get to a cyber café and send ……….. E-mail.

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

24. Villagers chatting

Mmbone: The sudden death of our member of parliament shocked everybody

    Musimbi: Indeed it did and there were many narratives about the death. Some people saidhe was poisoned others said he was just sick.

Mmbone: Do you know it is said a few days before his death his wife saw ……… owl hovering around their homestead and attributed this to bad luck.

a) a   b) the   c) an   d) ø

25 .Lelei: was leaving the office earlier than usual. When Limo asked her why she was in a hurry that day she answered, "I need to get to the bank before it closes so that I can apply for ………emergency loan

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

Context VI: [- Definite, - Specific]

26. A conversation between a secretary and manager

Secretary: Which edition of the book did you say should be sold?

Manger: Only the new edition of the book is to be sold, and I have already sent all our salesmen ……….instructions to that effect.

a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

27. Husband and wife talking

Wasike: Can you prepare us some tea dear?

Rose: I'm afraid, I can't

Wasike: why not?

Rose: The dry season has led to shortage of …………..milk. We hardly have enough to spare for evening tea

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d)the

28. A conversation between sisters

Lydia: Hey, where's Susan? I'm waiting for her

Mary: Why can't you just go without her?

Lydia: No, we need to help our neighbor. She is moving ………. furniture - but I don't know whose. A friend of hers is moving into a new apartment.

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

29. Ingasia asked Khasandi the stories she likes reading. Khasandi replied, "I like an exciting story with plenty of ……….action in it".

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

30. A conversation between husband and wife outside a supermarket

Lina: Hey! Hold on Joe, let me go back to the supermarket and get the kids some chocolate.

Joe: You will spoil those children. Every time we are out you buy them ………. Chocolate.

    a) a   b) an   c) ø   d) the

APPENDIX B: PICTURE PROMPTS

Note: To be used for story telling
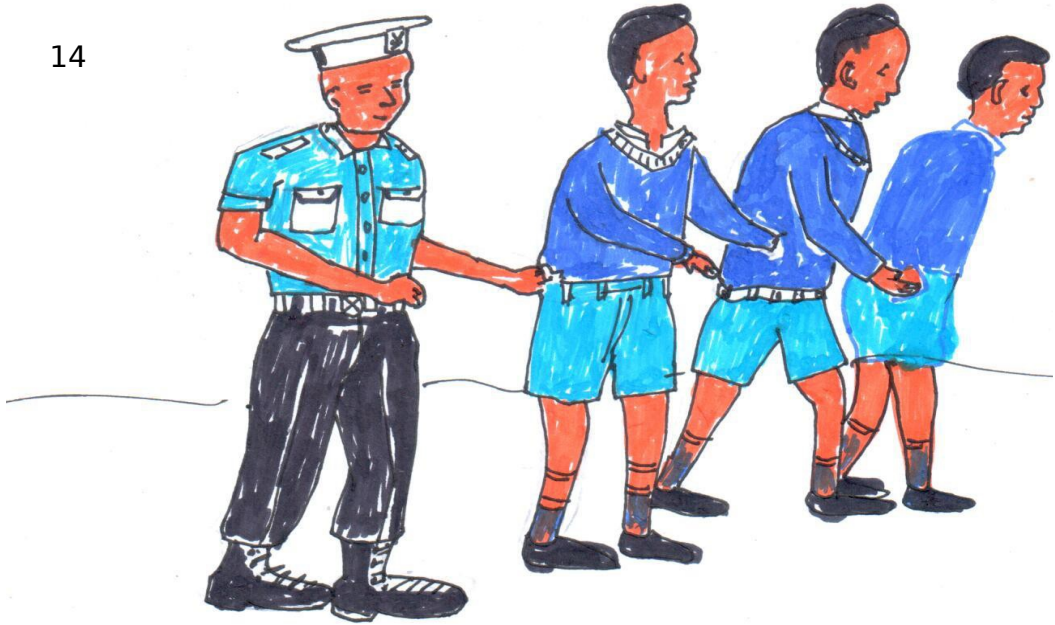
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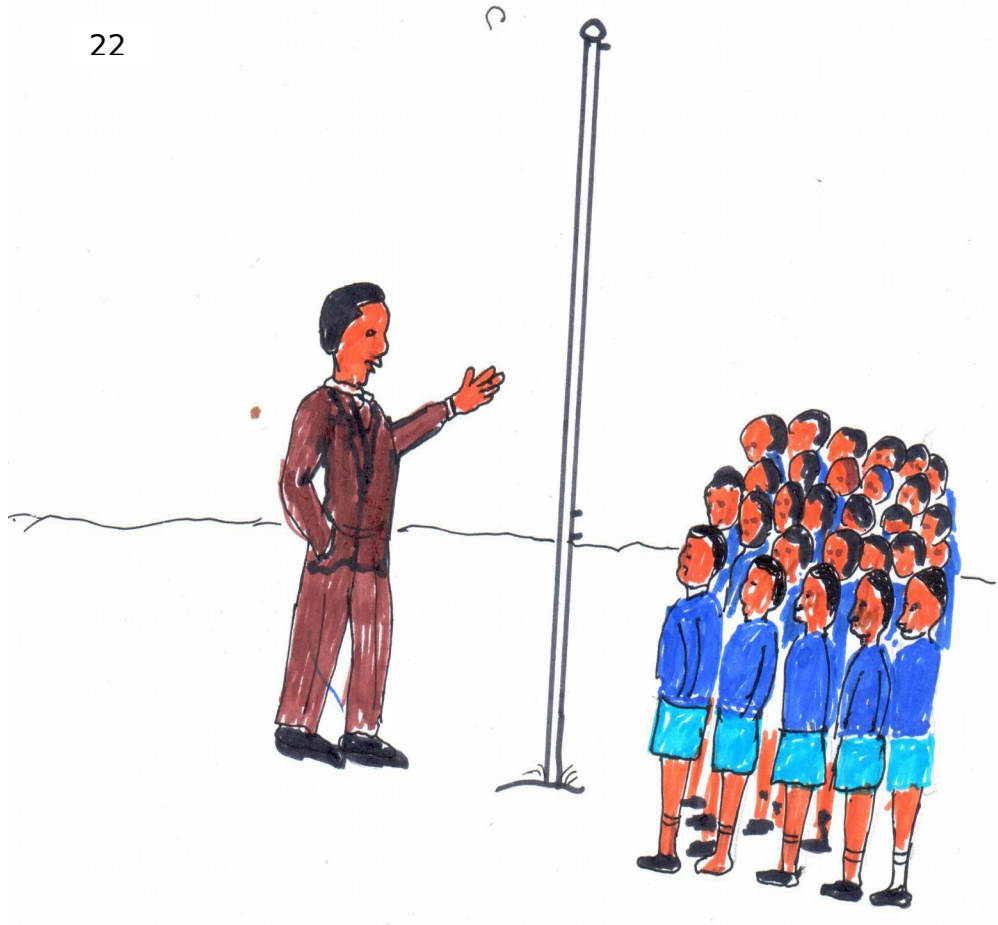
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POLICE STATION

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APPENDIX C: GUIDED COMPOSITION

Q4.Describeyour best friend (Write at least 200 words)

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Q5. Explain how you spend your last Christmas holiday   (Write 200 words)

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APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION OF INTERVIEWER

Hello my name is ………………………………….

I am conducting this interview for a research project that I'm undertaking for a doctoral degree although the findings of the study may in future be useful to a number of stakeholders such as the Ministry of education, curriculum developers and teachers of English language.

First I must thank you for allowing me to interview you and setting aside some of your precious time to talk to me. Secondly, l also wish to let you know that whatever will be discussed during this interview and your identity will not be disclosed to anyone.

During the interview, I would like to discuss the following topics with you: The teaching of the English article system,The English language secondary school syllabus in relation to the English article systemtheapproaches methods and strategies you employ in teaching articles,the challenges you experience with regard to the teaching of articles what difficulties learners experience in article acquisition,, areas learners find difficult to learn with regard to articles, your views on learners' LI and how it affects article acquisition.

Q1. Explain your views on the English language syllabus in relation to grammar and the English article system as an item of grammar (probe for dissatisfaction or approval as far as article coverage is concerned)

Q2. There are various prescribed and other text-books on English language for secondary schools that are used as class texts in secondary schools by language teachers and learners and as a language teacher you certainly use some of them.Can you say that the books you use adequately cover the article system? If no, how do you make up for the inadequacies? (Probe for pedagogical and content knowledge of the teacher)

Q3 a) Do you teach the articles in your grammar lessons?

b) Explain how you approach the teaching of the English article system (probe for methods and approaches and their successes and teacher competence)

c) What difficulties do you experiencewhen teaching the English article system?

Q4 What strategies and activities do you employ during instruction of articles? can you say the strategies are effective? (Probe for the success of the strategies and teacher competence)

Q5.a)When marking students' work do you pay attention to article errors? (Probe for teachers' attention to the teaching of articles whether he considers them or overlooks them)

b) If yes, explain in detail the kinds of article errors that learners make (Probe for errors arising from the target language and those arising from learners' L1)

c). Explain what you think causes these errors.

Q6 a)what are your views on learners' first language?

b). From your experience, can you say it affects the learning of the article system?

(probe for the ways in which L1 affects the learning of articles)

APPENDIX E: TEACHER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

(Teacher 12)

Q1. Explain your views on English language syllabus in relation to grammar and the English article system as an item of grammar.

> *The syllabus tends to ignore articles because it only mentions them in form one only* (Tr.12).

Q2. There are various prescribed other text books on English language for secondary school that are used as class texts in secondary schools by language teachers and learners and as a language teacher you certainly use some of them. Can you say that the books you use certainly cover the article system? If no how do you make up for the inadequacies?.

The text books in the market? – I haven't exhausted all of them madam but the few I have seen and the ones we are currently using don't adequately cover articles

Q3 (a) Do you teach articles in your grammar lessons?

> *Yes I teach articles for sure, it would be suicidal to ignore articles because though they may appear unimportant they have an added meaning to a noun that they precede …………. but then I only   address them in Form I and Form 2*

Q3 (b) Explain how you approach the teaching of articles

> *I mostly use lecture method anytime I teach grammatical items, I use lecture method. In many cases I do this when I'm introducing my students to articles, I use lecture method to let the students understand the rules governing article use. Once I have introduced them to articles, l let them learn about the rest through practice*

(c) What difficulties do you experience when teaching the English articles system?

> *Many problems – but the nagging one is making the students understand the use of 'the' with proper nouns. Even after explaining to my students when to use the articles with proper nouns I still overhear them in their conversations saying things like 'I want to study hard and join University of Nairobi' and ''We crossed Nzoia before we arrived in Webuye town''. Such utterances in which they fail to use the definite 'the' with proper nouns are common among our students and very worrying and sometimes make me wonder what strategy I should use to help my learners master article use with proper nouns .*

Q4. What strategies and activities do you employ during instruction of articles? Can you say the strategies are effective?

> *Among the activities l use to teach grammar are dialogues and role play and I prepare the dialogues and topics for role play depending on the grammar topic I have covered. When my interest is in articles usually I ensure learners practice dialogues which have a variety of article use for example I could let them practice use of articles before countable and uncountable nouns. I also sometimes give a lot of filling in blanks exercises.*

Q5. (a) When marking student's work do you pay attention to article errors?

. I pay attention to article errors when I have been teaching nouns and articles and have given students work on the item taught.

(b) From your experience of correcting learners' work, what are the most frequent article errors in their work?

The overuse of 'the'.   Learners often have a problem in deciding when to use the article 'the' and when to leave it out. In such circumstances they opt for 'the' for instance they write sentences like these: ''this morning we had the eggs for breakfast 'and ''I had to fetch the water in the morning before coming to the school.'' Learners make such errors because they have a problem in mastering when to use 'the' and when to leave it out.

(c) Explain what you think causes the errors

I think these errors have various causes; first the article system is very complex and it takes learners time to master its many rules .Second the learners mother tongue cannot be wished away It influences learners' article use negatively.

Q6 a) What are your views on learners' first language?

Learners' first language has a negative influence on learners' learning of grammar-article system included.

(b) From your experience can you say it affects the learning of the article system?

It sure does. Some of the mistakes learners make are as a result of translation of sentences from their mother tongue to English.

(Teacher 17)

Q1. Explain your views on English language syllabus in relation to grammar and the English article system as an item of grammar.

> *I'm not sure but my take is that the syllabus is specific on the grammar items to be taught and when I look at it closely articles are not adequately covered like other grammar items. If I were to go by the syllabus then I would teach articles only when I'm teaching nouns.*

Q2. There are various prescribed other text books on English language for secondary school that are used as class texts in secondary schools by language teachers and learners and as a language teacher you certainly use some of them. Can you say that the books you use certainly cover the article system? If no how do you make up for the inadequacies?

> *Well I don't see much of articles as a topic in the texts in the market currently for English secondary schools but I think the authors assume that articles will be dealt with under nouns .In any case I usually deal with articles when I'm handling nouns mostly countable and uncountable nouns. I make up for lack of articles in these books by preparing my own notes on articles*

Q3 (a) Do you teach articles in your grammar lessons?

> *Yes I teach articles but not as a focus of my lesson. I teach articles when I'm teaching nouns and my concentration is often on nouns*

Q3 (b) Explain how you approach the teaching of articles

> *I mostly use lecture method*

(c) What difficulties do you experience when teaching the English articles system?

Oh. many problems –.let me begin by telling you that I find the article system very complex- what I mean is it has many rules- may rules indeed for example the rules governing the use of the definite article 'the' alone are very many

Q4. What strategies and activities do you employ during instruction of articles? Can you say the strategies are effective?

I use very many different activities when I'm teaching grammar but when it comes to articles I mostly employ the fill-in blanks. I find that the fill in blanks exercise offer room for practice

Q5. (a) When marking student's work do you pay attention to article errors?

. Yes I do sometimes. It depends on the items of grammar I'm focusing on

(b) From your experience of correcting learners' work, what are the most frequent article errors in their work?

From my experience students make various errors in article use. But the outstanding ones are omission errors and confusion errors- that is to say that they sometimes use 'the' instead of 'a' and 'an' and vice versa.

(c) Explain what you think causes the errors

Hm- hm- the errors -let me say, most of the errors are caused *by a number of factors. First as I have already said the article system is difficult – I think that students make errors because they find the article system difficult –just look at the many rules! To some extent again their first language contributes – there is too much 'Kiluhya' in their English.*

Q6 a) what are your views on learners' first language?

Well I think is good for everybody to have their own first language so I feel learners' first language is useful in many ways- for example it gives them identity and helps them interact with community members who do not know any other language.

(b) From your experience *c*an you say it affects the learning of the article system?

I think it does negatively .For example when you look at the omission errors they make; in many cases they occur in constructions which are direct translations from their first language..

APPENDIX F:MAP - VIHIGA COUNTY, KENYA
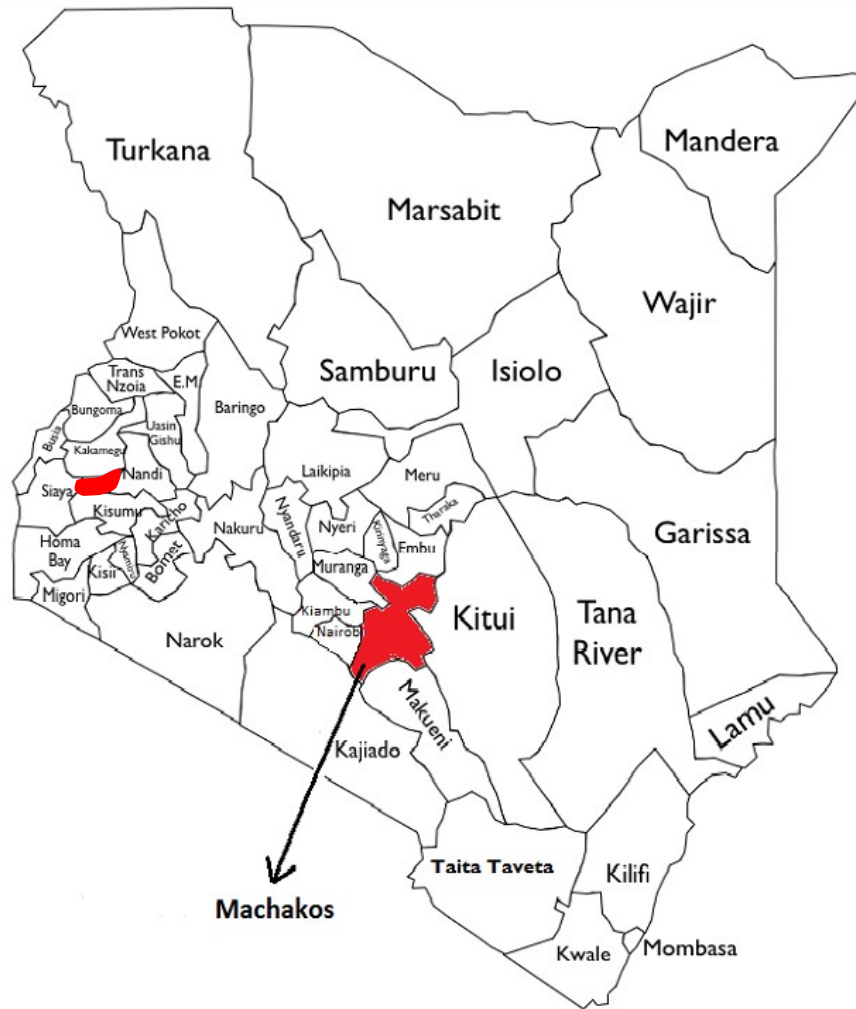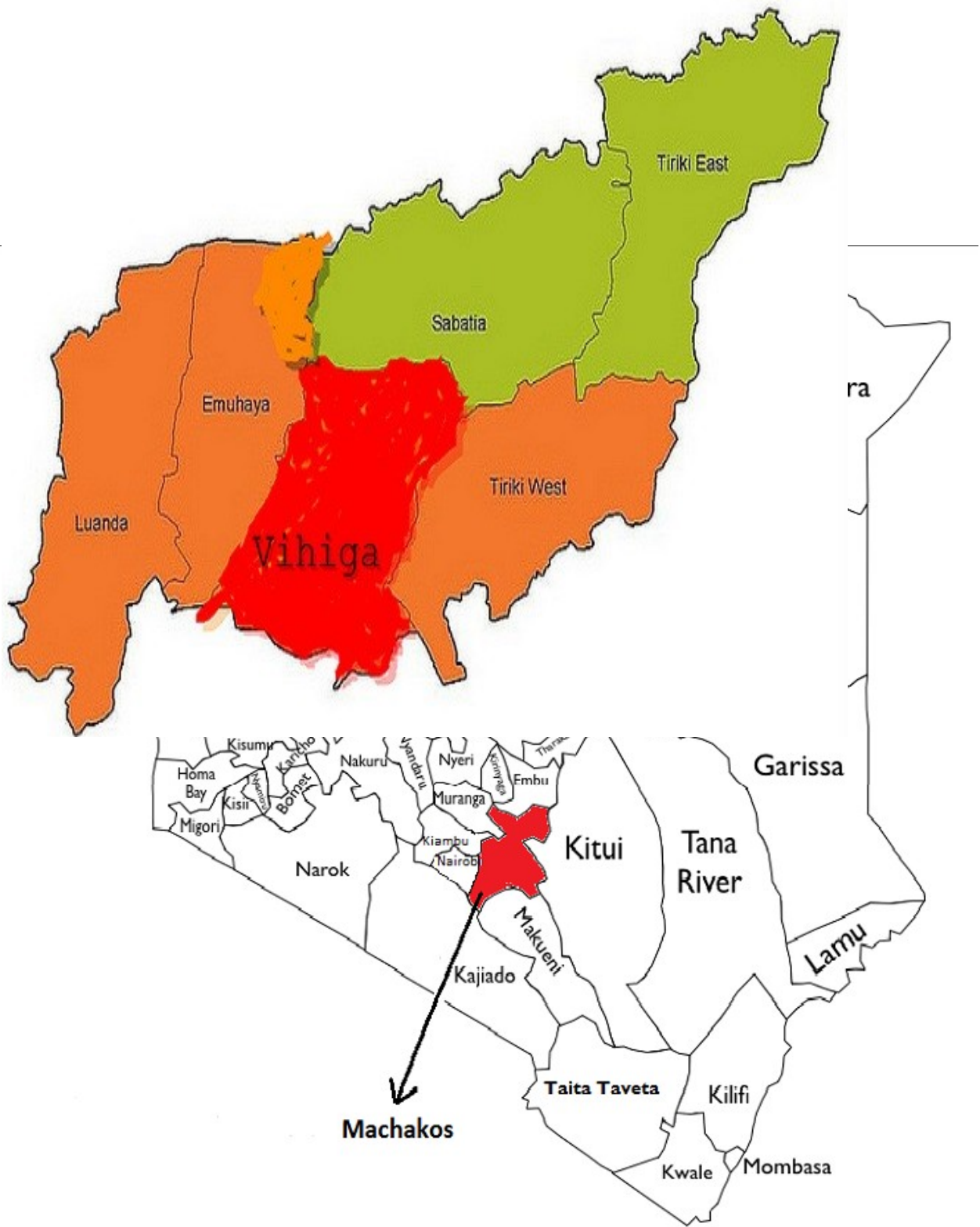
APPENDIX G: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. MARY KHAJEHA KHEJERI
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 2591-30100
ELDORET,has been permitted to conduct
research in *Vihiga County*

on the topic: *INSTRUCTIONAL*
IMPLICATIONS OF LUHYA FIRST
LANGUAGE SEMANTIC NOTIONS IN THE
SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF
THE ENGLISH ARTICLE SYSTEM AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS IN
VIHIGA COUNTY, KENYA

for the period ending:
4th December,2018

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/43019/20316
Date Of Issue : 4th December,2017
Fee Recieved :Ksh 2000

GP Kalerwa

....
**Applicant's
Signature**

....
**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
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7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No.A 16726

CONDITIONS: see back page

APPENDIX H: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
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When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/17/43019/20316**   Date: **4ᵗʰ December, 2017**

Mary Khajeha Khejeri
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Instructional implications of Luhya first language semantic notions in the second language acquisition of the english article system among secondary school learners in Vihiga County, Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Vihiga County** for the period ending **4ᵗʰ December, 2018.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Vihiga County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

GP Kalerwa

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Vihiga County.

The County Director of Education
Vihiga County.