A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF TENSE FORMATION AND USAGE IN JABA AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis has been examined and approved for the award of the Degree of a Master of Arts in English language.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis titled a contrastive analysis of tense formation and usage in Jaba and English language was written by me under the supervision of Dr.(Mrs.) A. Enesi of the Department of English and Literary Studies.

All quotations and sources are fully acknowledged by means of reference.

_____ _____

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God for giving me inspiration, good health and strength to carry it out. I am also dedicating the work to my darling husband and children who had to suffer less attention in the course of the academic pursuit. I am equally dedicating this same work to my beloved late brother, Mr. Thomas Kato who laid the foundation for my education.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the use of tense forms to express time relations of different actions or events in written English of Kanyi dialect learners of English language. It also investigated reasons for the learners' inability to appropriately use the tense forms. For an effective presentation, the study was divided into five chapters. The first chapter contained the introduction which highlighted the background of the study and the statement of the research problem. The statement of the problem was to investigate Kanyi (Jaba) learners' problems with tense formation and its implication to learning while the aim of the study was to make a comparative study and analysis of the tense formation in English and Kanyi (Jaba) language as well as to investigate and highlight the syntactic patterns of both languages regarding tense formation and usage and how the differences that existed between them could affect Kanyi learners of English as a second language. The second chapter contained some related literature review on some related studies on contrastive analysis, second language learning and the meaning of tense in English. The third chapter discussed the methodology and the theoretical framework. Before selecting the theoretical framework, some grammatical theories were discussed. These included the transformational grammar theory, the traditional grammar theory, the systemic functional grammar theory and structural grammar theory. Having recognized the indepth analysis of the theories, the transformational grammar theory was selected as the framework. The method employed in this study was the translation method. This method was used especially if the researcher is bilingual in both languages. The fourth chapter dealt with the analysis of the data collected by the use of different tables for each of the tense form that was tested. The findings were brought to light after analysing the data that was collected. It was discovered that the tense morpheme in both languages occurred after the subject (similarity). It was also discovered that the major difference in them lied in the use of inflections. For instance, while English language adds the inflections 's', 'es' to the verb when using the present tense, and 'd' or 'ed' added to the verb when using the past tense, the Kanyi speaker uses tone (rising or falling tone) to differentiate between the two tenses. In English language the present tense is used in relation with the persons of the noun or pronoun while in Kanyi (Jaba) language, the present tense is not used in relation with the persons. The first, second and third persons take the uninflected forms of tense morpheme or verb. The learning implications was discussed in chapter four. It is assumed that the differences in the tense classification between the two languages could cause problems for the learners. The last chapter contained the summary, conclusion, further areas of research and the limitations of the study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

English occupies a unique place in Nigeria because of its significant role and status in the speakers national life. English is sociolinguistically important in Nigeria inspite of its colonial origin, having become over the years both the language of official business and a vital link language between the various ethnic groups in the country. It is also pedagogically significant as the language of instruction in the school system, in principle from upper primary to the highest, tertiary levels. It enjoys a lot of prestige as a language over and above other Nigerian languages, major or minor. Accordingly, a good pass in English has become mandatory for transition from primary to junior secondary school, and from junior secondary school to senior secondary school and for admission to all levels of higher education in the country.

English, as a second language of Nigeria, plays an essential role for success in the educational process and in other areas of national life. There is close correlation between failure in English and failure in the other subjects particularly biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and geography. This seems to lend strong support to the suggestion that many failures in other subjects are really failures in English (CF Banjo 1989:4). In other words, they are occasioned by poor mastery and performance in English, thereby revealing the close connection between communicative competence and educational performance generally.

Competence in English language and its usage signifies an added advantage for material and social gains. English is considered a symbol of modernization and an extra arm for success and mobility in culturally and linguistically complex societies. For instance, whatever the language of discussion, a serious business transaction is

sealed up in written English. The same goes for political campaigns which are largely carried out in the language of the immediate environment, but manifestoes and other documents are produced in English. Mhtml:file:C:/Documents and settings/user/Desktop/setting priorities in teaching English 2009.

The poor performance in English language could suggest that a lot of grammatical errors are committed by many Nigerian students in the course of using the language. This problem could be due to poor start at the primary level. The research is an attempt to investigate the syntactic differences in tense formation in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language and usage in English.

Jaba Language and People

In brief, the Jaba community is one of the largest tribes in northern Nigeria. It is located in the southern part of Kaduna state. Its people are found in Jaba, Kachia and Kagarko local government areas of the state.

According to Udo (1971) Jaba land is characterized by hills, rocks and valleys which provided refuge and defensive mechanisms against raids, invaders and adventurers in pre-colonial years. According to Woodford (1974) Jaba language is a plattoid language of the Benue Congo language family of the Negro Bantoid stock, and a language full of palatilization of consonants.

Jaba language has five dialects. These include Chori, Sambang, Kwoi, Jaba Ketere and Kanyi dialects. This study focuses on Kanyi dialect. Kanyi is a name for one of the dialects as well as the name of the village this dialect is widely spoken. This community had its first contact with English with the advent of missionaries to the village and its environs in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The establishment of a primary school and a church in Kanyi marked the beginning of

formal education with English taught as a subject and used as a medium of instruction. This was the first contact of the people with English language.

Most Jaba children particularly Kanyi learners of English begin their primary school education after they had attained a near perfect mastery of the Jaba language. This means that they are already at a disadvantage in English when compared with native speakers of English of their age. Therefore, Kanyi learners of English speakers cannot demonstrate the same degree of mastering of English as they would in their First Language.

This study is an attempt to investigate the syntactic differences in tense formation in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language and usage in English. This study is important because it hopes to identify the competence level of Kanyi learners of English language in their use of the different tense forms in expression as well as identifying the reasons for their inability to appropriately use the tense forms.

There are several ways of conceptualizing language. McArthur (1992) perceives language as a human system of communication, which uses structured sounds and can be embodied by other media such as writing, print and physical signs. Gimbson (1994) defines language as a system of connectional signals used for communication by a whole society. From these definitions, we know that language is a system of symbols which are essentially verbal and which are based on certain conventions accepted by a group of people or community. As a system of symbols, the sounds and meanings in a language are related. A proficient speaker of language should therefore have a good knowledge of the sound, the words and the rules for their combination into meaningful units. Using a language appropriately is considered as the ability to understand the meanings of sounds the speaker produces and recognizing that certain grammatical sequences have been organized within the language.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

As a linguist, the researcher, over the years has found out that an average Kanyi speaker of English exhibits incompetence in English grammatical structures. This is more pronounced in the area of tense formation. Therefore, the researcher wants to identify and explicate the problems and also demonstrate its implication for pedagogical purposes. To this end this research considered certain questions which are salient in the light of the research.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the structural similarities and differences between the tense forms of the Kanyi and English codes?
2. What are the problems encountered as a result of these differences?
3. What are the implications of these in the process of learning English?

At the end of the research, it is hoped that satisfactory answers would be provided to these questions using the most preferred models of theoretical and analytical framework.

1.3 Need for the Study

As a teacher of English language as well as a native speaker of Kanyi dialect of Jaba language, the researcher feels that it is necessary to study some grammatical categories such as tense formation and usage in the two languages, because English is used as medium of instruction in schools. She therefore hopes that her limited work may stimulate others to undertake similar studies on other grammatical categories such as gender, number or aspect in the two languages in a wider scope.

Studies have shown generally that in learning English as a second language, students find it very difficult to cope with the English tenses. This study hopes to

probe the nature and causes of the errors committed by Kanyi learners of English language as they relate to the present and past sentences in English for purpose of effective learning.

Finally, the research is motivated by the researcher's awareness of the M.T. interference on second language learner especially Jaba students learning English as a second language. The researcher intends to view the structural differences between tense forms of Kanyi and English which she feels will help to explain why errors were made.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The study aimed at making a comparative study and analysis of tense formation and usage in Jaba and English language. It also aimed at investigating and highlighting the syntactic patterns of both languages regarding tense formation and usage and how the differences that exist between them can affect Kanyi learners of English as a L2.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The choice of the English tense is important because English language is used as a medium of instruction in schools. The choice of the English tense therefore, may shed light on tense formation and usage in the two languages and how the differences may affect Kanyi learners of English as a L2.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study is limited to Kanyi dialect speakers of Jaba language. The subjects of this study are selected students from the Government Day Secondary School Kanyi. The only tense forms that were discussed include: The present tense, the present

progressive, the present perfect, the past tense, the past progressive and the past perfect tenses.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Some terms used in this study have been used operationally so as to give the reader a clear and a better understanding of how such terms are used in this study.

i. **Contrastive Analysis:** According to Parren G.C. (1971) on papers in contrastive linguistics and Nickel G. (1971) both emphasized that contrastive analysis is a study which is concerned with the contrast and similarities between languages.

ii. **Dialects:** According Petyt, K.M. (1980), dialects are the various different forms of the same language.

iii. **Deep and Surface Structure**:

A deep structure according to Rosehaun (1970) is an underlying syntactic structure which gives the meaning of a sentence or utterance while a surface structure is the phonological and the graphological component of grammar, that is, it is the final phonetic and graphological surface realization of a sentence or utterance.

iv. **Theory:** Theory is classified as a system of ideas or statements explaining something especially one based on general principles independent of be the things to be explained. It is a hypothesis that has been confirmed or established by observation or experiment and is accepted as accounting for known facts. It is the formulation of abstract knowledge or speculative thought and systematic conception of something. (Retrieved June 16, 2009 from http:en/Wikipedia.org/wiki/applylinguistics).

v. **Language transfer:** (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 16/6/2009) typically refers to the learners trying to apply rules and forms of the first language into the second language.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Although there has been no study carried out on Kanyi students to determine the difficulties encountered in learning English as a second language, there is evidence from studies which indicates that in learning English as a second language, the English tense constitutes a universal learning difficulty (Palmer 1965 and Wilkins 1972). Based on this assertion, the researcher believes that Kanyi student learners of English language cannot be an exception. This study sets out to make a contrastive analysis of the present and the past tenses in their different tense forms between the two languages.

The first part of this chapter reviews some related studies on contrastive analysis and second language learning while the second part reviews related literature on the meaning of tense in English language. The third part discusses the present and the past tenses in their different tense forms in the two languages.

2.1 Contrastive Analysis

Many writers have written on the values of contrastive analysis and among such literature is Lado's (Linguistics Across Cultures) (Lado 1957:2-3). According to him, the differences that may exist between languages could be the causes of difficulties that speakers of First Language (L1) may experience while speaking the Second Language (L2). Banathy's article on the potentials and limitations of contrastive linguistic analysis (Oregan: Defence Language Institute, 1969:1-6) shares the same views with Lado. These views show that knowing the linguistic and cultural elements between the First Language (L1) and the second language (L2) will help

teachers focus more attention on the areas which need to be stressed.

Also related to the study are the works of Nickel's (1971) papers in contrastive linguistic and Parren, G.C.(l971) applications of linguistics and both emphasize the need for contrastive linguistic studies: which are concerned with the contrast and similarities which can help in the study of applied linguistics and the construction of language teaching courses. (Retrieved from "http:en.wikipedia.org./wiki/ contrastiveanalysis").

Selinker (1972) posits that contrastive analysis and error analysis are diagnostic hence it cannot be traced to individual native competence. Harris (1969) states that a detailed point by point comparison of the target language and the First Language is essential because it will provide a good basis for efficient well informed instructions. He reveals that through contrastive analysis we can identify the learner's entire thinking which is conditioned by his/her First Language experiences.

In the light of these views, contrasting the tense morphemes of Kanyi and English language is important because it will afford the teacher of English language to understand the causes of the errors committed by them (learners) and will use them (errors) to explain to students that using direct translation method to translate sentences from Kanyi dialect to English may not always produce equivalent sentences because the two languages have different sentence structures.

A practical attempt on contrastive analysis was a study by Carrel’s Transformation Grammar of Igbo which he applied some advances in theoretical linguistics to a little known language Dr. Adeyanju T’s doctorial thesis - Hausa and English structure, and Mallam Akau’s Master’s thesis, give a general picture of Nigerians problems of studying English.

According to Ogunbowale (1970) while it is acceptable that any idea in any language can be expressed in Yoruba, it is a mistake for instance to equate a particular tense in Yoruba to a particular tense in English. Though there may be similarities in the formation of tense morphemes in the two languages there are also differences.

A Ford foundation survey of English language teaching in Nigeria strongly called for continued work in contrastive analysis between English and all Nigerian languages which are used as media of instruction in Nigerian schools. Contrastive analysis describes similarities and differences among two or more languages at such levels as phonology, grammar and semantics (Richards A. Platt & Platt, 1992). Contrastive analysis is the study of foreign language learning, the identification of points of structural similarity and differences between two languages (Crystal, 1992).

Charles Ferguson in commenting on Herbert Kufuer H.L's grammatical structures of English and German says "the studies will make available to language teachers and textbook writers careful analysis, prepared by experts, and offering an excellent basis for the compiling of the instructional materials, planning of courses, and the development of classroom techniques.

A contrastive study could reveal the nature of the ideal hearer /speaker's basic knowledge and competence and how it differs from its outward manifestations performance; the difference between the two constitutes the problem the researcher is investigating regarding English and Kanyi (Jaba) present and past sentences.

Contrastive analysis in summary, pre-occupies itself with two basic formulation-namely, finding language differences and language similarities at the phonological, syntactic, and lexical levels between two or more languages. This helps to predict the learner's errors in the differences between the (L1) and (L2). By predicting the

learner's errors, it will help any researcher to make assumptions about possible learning difficulties by anybody learning a second language. It is also expected that once the areas of potential difficulty had been mapped out through contrastive analysis it would be possible to design language courses more efficiently.

2.2 Error Analysis

Since this study hopes to probe the nature and causes of the errors committed by Kanyi learners of English language as they relate to the present and past sentences in English for purpose of effective learning which was clearly stated under the need for this study, the researcher feels there is need to discuss briefly on error analysis as it relates to contrastive analysis.

Error analysis soughts to predict all learner errors based on language transfer. Transfer is an important factor in language learning at all levels. Typically, learners begin by transferring sounds (phonetic transfer) and meanings (semantic transfer) as well as various rules including word order and pragmatics. As learners progress and gain more experience with the target language, the role of transfer typically diminishes.

The field of error analysis in second language acquisition was established in the 1970s by S.P. Corder and colleagues. Error analysis was an alternative to contrastive analysis, an approach influenced by behaviorism through which applied linguists sought to use the formal distinctions between the learners' first and second language to predict errors. A key finding of error analysis has been that many learner errors are produced by learners making faulty inferences about the rules of the new language. An error can be classified according to basic type: omissive, additive, substitutive or related to word order. Errors may also be classified according to the level of language:

phonological errors, vocabulary or lexical errors, syntactic errors and so on. Error analysis can deal effectively only with learner production (speaking and writing) and not with learner reception (listening and reading). It cannot account for learner use of communicative strategies such as avoidance, in which learners simply do not use a form with which they are uncomfortable.

This explains why the researcher used sentence translations from Kanyi to English to collect her data. In addition, the sentence translations was through controlled production so that the learner will not be able to avoid any linguistic area which he/she is not certained about. By trying to keep to the pattern, he/she is likely to make errors. The essays were through free writing so that it will reveal how much the learners depend on their L1 when using and writing in the L2.

Some frequent errors made by English Second language writers include errors in the use of articles, such as a mistake in using 'a', 'an' or 'o' (the zero).

- Errors in the use of verb tense, such as making a mistake in using the correct verb tense.
- Errors in the use of subject verb agreement. This has to do with when the subject and verb do not agree, for example, I bought two book or one weeks ago etc.
- Punctuation marks – such as capital letters, full stops or commas missen.
- Word class – such as a word being used in the wrong class. For example, She is unemployment.
- Vocabulary – This is when the wrong word is used. For example, She is married with an Australian.
- Sentence structure – This is when the sentence is not complete or perhaps is too long and needs to be reorganized.

In the mid 1970s, Corder and others moved on to a more wide ranging approach to

learner language, known as inter-language which seeks to understand learner language on its own terms as consistent set of rules.

Second Language Learning

Different models of second language learning have focused on different aspects. Krashen S. Monitor Model, Language Two (1982) prioritized research on input and affective factors. His research on input is strongly influenced by Noam Chomsky's theory of first language acquisition. According to him learners' most direct source of information about the target language is the target language itself. When the learners come into direct contact with the target language, this is referred to as "input". When learners process that language in a way that can contribute to learning, this is referred to as "intake". His research on input is strongly influenced by Blooms taxonomy, which describes the affective levels of receiving, responding, valuing, organization and self-characterization through one's value system. Furthermore, the researchers believe that language learners posses an affective filter which affects language learning. If a student possesses a high filter, he is less likely to engage in language learning because of shyness, concern for grammar or other factors. They went further to assert that students possessing a lower affective filter will be more likely to engage in learning because they are less likely to be impeded by other factors. The main idea of this model considers learning as the conscious attention to form and rule learning. The only functions of learning according to Krashen are monitoring or editing.

Similarly, Horwitz (1986) highlights the importance of naturalistic experience in L2, promoting listening and reading practice and stressing involvement in life-like conversations. She explicitly suggests teaching practices based on these principles: that much class time should be devoted to the development of listening and reading

abilities and that teachers should assess student interest and supply appropriate materials. Generally speaking, the amount of input learners take in is one of the most important factors affecting their learning. The fact remains that teachers are models for students. Despite the fact that Kanyi learners of English exhibit a MT interference in their speeches when they speak, a competent teacher of English can help them to rectify it.

Long's Interactional Hypothesis on Language Acquisition

Long's interactional hypothesis proposes that language acquisition is strongly facilitated by the use of the target language in interaction. In particular, the negotiation of meaning has been shown to contribute greatly to the acquisition of vocabulary (Long, 1990). From Long's interactional hypothesis on language acquisition, it is understood that learners should be encouraged to interact among themselves using the target language.

Debating clubs should be formed and learners through the help of teachers can organize inter-schools or inter-class debates. This will go a long way to help learners to improve in their communication skills. Moreso, schools which are not in academic settings, such as Kanyi need to participate in programmes that demand them to speak using the target language. Nation (2000) relates the value of negotiation to the generative use of words; the use of words in new context which stimulate a deeper understanding of their meaning.

A number of studies have looked into the sequence of acquisition of pronouns by learners of various Indo-European languages. These are reviewed by Ellis (1994:96-99), they showed that learners begin by omitting pronouns or using them indiscriminately. For example, using "I" to refer to all agents. Learners then acquire a

single pronoun feature often person, followed by number and eventually by gender. Little evidence of interference from the learners First Language (L1) has been found. It appears that learners use pronouns based entirely on their inferences about the target language structure.

Recent studies on second language learning have proposed two main directions. One focuses on the pairings of LI and L2 that renders L2 learning difficult and the other investigates certain aspects of language that may be maturationally constrained. Fledge, Mackey and Piske (2002) looked at Bilingual and Monolingual L2 speakers. They investigated whether the age at which participants learned English affected dominance in Italian-English bilinguals and found that the early bilingual were English L2 dominant and the late bilinguals Italian (L1) dominant. Further analysis shows that dominant Italian bilinguals had detectable foreign accents when speaking English but early bilingual (English dominant) had no accent in either language. The suggestion that second language (L2) learning should be done by pairings of L1 and L2 may render L2 learning difficult particularly if the pairing is done between Kanyi and English language. This is because the two languages have different sentence structures. The age at which Kanyi learners start learning English too, has also affected their intonation because of interference from MT which learners have already mastered before they started learning English.

Age Related Learning Problems:

Asher (1972) insists that teenagers and adults rarely successfully learn an L2 and attributes this to teaching strategies. He presents an L2 teaching strategy based on infants' L1 acquisition, which promotes listening as central in language learning.

Harley (1986) compared attainment of French learners in early and late

immersion programs. She reports that after one thousand (1000) exposure hours, late learners had better control of French verb systems and syntax. However, comparing early immersion students with age matched native speakers had identified common problem areas, which include third person plurals and polite forms. This suggests that grammar in L1 or L2 is generally acquired later, possibly because it requires abstract cognition reasoning. A common notion is that children learn L2 easily and older learners rarely achieve fluency.

Scherag, Demuth, Rosier and Neville (2004) suggested that learning some syntactic processing functions and lexical access may be limited by maturation, whereas semantic functions are relatively unaffected by age. They studied the effect on late second language acquisition on speech comprehension by German immigrants to the U.S.A and American immigrants to Germany. They found that native-English speakers who learned German as adults were disadvantaged on certain grammatical tasks but performed at near-native levels on lexical tasks. These findings are consistent with work by Hahne (2001) cited in Scherag et al (2004).

One study that specifically mentions semantic functions acquisition is that of Weber-Fox and Nevill (1996). The outcome of their study showed that Chinese-English bilinguals who had been exposed to English after puberty, learned vocabulary to a higher competence level than syntactic aspects of language. It has been speculated (Nevill and Bavelier, 2001, and Scherag et al 2004) that the semantic aspects of language are founded on associative learning mechanism which allows life-long learning, whereas syntactic aspects are based on computational mechanisms, which can only be constructed during certain age period. It is reasoned therefore, that semantic functions are easier to access during comprehension of an L2.

Mayberry and Lock (2003) questioned whether age retrains both L1 and L2

learning. They examined grammatical abilities of deaf and hearing adults who had their initial linguistic exposure either in early childhood or later. They found that, on L2 grammatical tasks, those who had acquired the verbal or sign L1 early in life showed near-native performance and those who had no early L1 experience (that is born deaf and parents did not know sign -language) performed weakly. Mayberry and Lock then concluded that early L1 exposure is vital for forming life-long learning abilities, regardless of the nature of exposure (Verbal or signed language). They also recognized that certain aspects of L2 learning may be affected by age though others may remain unaffected. Most studies into age effects on specific aspects of L2 learning have focused on grammar with the common conclusion that it is highly constrained by age, more so than semantic functioning.

Sebastian-Galles, Echeverria and Bosch (2005) studied bilinguals and highlight the importance of early language exposure. They looked at vocabulary processing and representation in Spanish-Catalan bilinguals exposed to both languages simultaneously from birth in comparison to those who had learned L2 later and were either Spanish or Catalan - dominant. Findings showed that "from birth bilinguals" had significantly more difficulty distinguishing Catalan words from non-words differing in specific vowels than Catalan - dominants did. These difficulties according to these linguists are attributed to a phase around age eight months where bilingual infants are insensitive to vowel contrast, despite the language they hear most. This affects how words are later represented in their lexicons, highlighting this as a decisive period in language acquisition and showing that initial language exposure shapes linguistic processing for life. Sebastian-Galles *et al* also indicate the significance of phonology for L2 learning: they believe learning an L2 once the L1 phonology is already internalized can reduce individuals' abilities in the L2.

The general conclusion from these investigations is that different age level learners acquire the various aspects of language with varying difficulty. Generally speaking, a second language is easily learnt at early stage than at a later stage. This explains why learning and using the correct tenses by Kanyi learners of English language has proved difficult as discovered in the result of the test items which were administered and analysed in chapters three and four of this study respectively.

Authorial Review on Tense in English language

For related literature on the verb tense in English language, evidence of the verb tense difficulty has been identified among Yoruba students learners of English as a second language. Tamori (1971), Banjo (1969) and Durrojaiye (1970) for instance, discover that twenty five percent (25%) of their data are verb tense associated errors. Tomorri's verb tense errors were as high as thirty six percent (36%).

Levenston (1966) and Wilkins (1972) hold very strongly that the universality of verb tense error is due to the fact that students make their choice of tenses in English the way it is made in their first language or languages.

Pierre (1968) points out specifically that all the first, second and third person verbs are the same in spoken French whereas in English the third person verbs are realized by inflectional verb forms in the present tense such as 's' as in sits or 'es' as in catches and 's' as in eats, but are expressed in French by one single verb form. He then drew a conclusion that any difficulty encountered by the French learners of English as a second language could be traced to their linguistic background. It can be argued here too that although the learners' thinking and experiences can be traced to their linguistic background, the learners through a skilful teacher using a good teaching method can make the learners master the target language by making them

to acquire the rules of that target language.

As for the meaning of tense, Christopherson and Sandued (1972) regard it as a set of grammatical forms bearing some relations to the notional category of time. They went further to explain that there are some expressions that do show time concepts without using different verb forms. For instance, as when referring to the former Head of state or last year or late Head of state. The examples above show various past times which refer to actions that took place in the past without using different verb forms.

Lyon (1977:682) perceives tense as a deictic category but contends that a tensed preposition is not merely time bound or even temporarily restricted but makes a reference to some point or period of time which cannot be identified except in terms of zero point of reference. He sees the distribution of past, present and future as non-essential to the definition of tense as long as the temporal zero point of statement or utterance could be identified. This therefore implies that only the finite verb forms can be used to express tenses while the non-finite forms which merely relate a situation but not at the time of speaking cannot express tense. For example Grace loves traveling. Javan wants to eat. It is raining in Kano now. It was raining in Jos at five O'clock p.m, yesterday. The words 'is' and was are finite verbs used to express tense, present and past respectively while the words 'wants' and traveling are non-finite verbs. They do not express tense but only relate situations respectively.

Graver (1977:42) perceives tense as a term used to refer to a verb form and not to chronological time. He posits that tense and time are not always synonymous terms in English and that a past does not necessarily refer to the chronological past because the past tense of modal and other verb forms are frequently in unreal situations to make reference to the present or future. For instance, if I know how it

worked: I could tell him what to do (an expression made to express the present). He went further to explain that the terms 'tense' and 'time' should not be regarded as synonymous because the term tense is used to refer to a verb form and not to chronological time. He opines that a speaker of English has the right to choose the verb form to use based on the nature of the action or event being expressed and the circumstances in which it occurs.

Graver further argues that the choice of a verb form used in expression depends on the speaker's viewpoint. The choice to use any tense form depends on the situation at the time of utterance. For example, a speaker may choose to use the simple verb form to express series of actions or uses the progressive verb form to show that an activity is in progress and in a state of incompletion.

In other words, Graver means that a particular tense form can be used in two or more ways as the speaker wishes. Consider these sentences for instance,

a. She lights a stove, places a pot of water on it, and after a few minutes the water gradually boils.
b. She is lighting a stove and placing a pot of water and gradually the water boils. In these sentences the actions are the same but the speaker speaks from different points of view. Graver therefore, only identified tense as a verb form used only to express activities without making reference to the time of action. Many linguists have associated tense with time that is, the time of action determines the tense to be used. This is in contrast to Graver's view. Learning to use the correct tense without reference to time of action could be difficult for learners such as Kanyi learners of English as a second language. When tense is taught or learnt in relation to time or action, students may understand it better.

Palmer (1965:68) opines that tenses are verb forms that function mostly to

indicate past and present tense in three ways, using adverbials.

He also identifies three kinds of adverbials used with tense. They are as follows:

a. adverbials used with past tense only e.g. last week, yesterday, a long time ago.

b. adverbials used with present tense only e.g. now, at this moment.

c. adverbials used any period of time except the present e.g. today, this week, this year etc.

Palmer in his discussion of time has grouped tense using adverbials. This system if used will fuster the learners understanding on using tenses. If a teacher of English to Kanyi learners uses adverbials such as last week, yesterday, last year to teach the past tense, and adverbials such as now, every day, to teach the present tense, it will be of great help to the learners because the adverbials will guide them on their choice of the correct tenses to use when they speak or write. In Kanyi dialect, the auxiliary verbs 'is' 'are' 'were' which help to show tense do not exist. This explains why the students performed poorly on the translation exercises on the present and past progressive exercises on chapter three of this study. The present and the past progressive tenses can only be differentiated through context of use in the dialect.

Crystal (1991) examines morphological variations of tense verb forms as "a signal to meaning" other than temporal ones. According to him, tense and time in English are not related terms. He accepts the traditional distinction of past, present and future tense. He later argued that tenses are seen as forms of verbs. He sees constructions such as I will/shall go as best analyzed as modal auxiliary verbs displaying a different grammatical function such as expression of intention that may often involve futurity.

Crystal's view on the relationship between tense and time can be misleading to

students because as earlier on pointed out, time is made reference to using tense verb form. His inconsistency on the use of auxiliaries for future time expression can pose difficulty to students learning English.

Fleitchman in Lyon (1982:10) defined and explained tense as a dietic category of grammar marked formerly by an affix, participle, auxiliary etc on whose function is to mark sequence of events in direct or indirect relation to a temporal zero point which is the moment of the speech event. This implies that a tense preposition should be used to relate events directly or indirectly to a particular time whether in the present or past and that these affixes, participles or auxiliaries attached to verb forms should describe the relationship of the situation and the speech time.

2.3 Topical Review on Tenses

The English Tense:

Tense is a grammatical term that refers to how a verb shows the time of happening in any given sentence (http:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/appliedlinguistics). Every English sentence has a verb that describes an action, state, or occurrence. These can happen in one of the three time zones which we all exist -past, present or future. Different languages have different number of tenses and different verb systems expressing similar ideas, but in different forms.

Tenses interact with the grammatical concept of aspect. Aspect defines how the flow of time is viewed in the sentence. In English there are four aspects according to which the tenses can be conveniently sorted.

1. **The simple aspect**: It does not relate to the flow of time and merely states whether or not such an action occurs.
2. **The progressive (or continuous) aspect**: it views the action in the process

of happening, being in the middle of things and not having completed it.

3. **The perfect aspect:** It views the action as having been completed before another point in time. The action is finished but may influence what follows it.
4. **The perfect progressive aspect**: This combines the qualities of the progressive and the perfect aspect. It views an action as an ongoing one that has been going on until a certain point in time and having been completed up to that point. It may influence what follows.

Thomas (1993) posits that English language has two forms of tenses only, the present and the past. The present is associated with or without 's' and the past with 'ed' for regular verbs while the past tense for irregular verbs are realized in different ways. For instance, the past tense of eat is ate, and the past tense of build is built etc. He also identifies the use of the simple present, simple past and the perfect forms to indicate time relations of various actions and the use of the auxiliary verb 'will' only to indicate a future time action.

Quirk et al (1990) see time as a universal non-linguistic concept which can be expressed using verb tenses. He sees time in three divisions, the present, the past and the future which are respectively expressed using various verb forms.

Quirk and Greenbaun (1974), Afolayan in Tomori (1977) and Quirk et al (1990) share similar views on the use of the English tense. In their views, the English tense is used to express time. They opined that the three terms of tense - the present, past and future are realized by changes in the verb form to match the time concept rather than application of rules of tense formation. Quirk et al (1990) categorize the expression made with the simple present tense to mean the state at present, the habitual present and the instantaneous present which are used with static and dynamic verbs to refer to state of affairs and activities respectively.

The Present Tense

The present simple tense states that a constant, unchanging, or repeated action, state, or habit exists in the present. Adding's' to verbs in the third person singular is one of the most basic English grammar rules that must always be followed. For all other persons, simply use the base form of the verb.

The present tense is dominant in scientific writings, dramatic literature and other texts discussing things. It is used to make statements to what was true in the past, is true now and is likely to be true in the future. Habitual present refers to those activities which we do always and repeatedly such as going to school, going to church, going to the farm, sweeping our houses, cooking our food, brushing our teeth and so on. The present tense is expressed in sentences such as:

Babies cry or a baby cries.

We go to church every Sunday or she goes to church every Sunday.

Dogs bark or a dog barks.

Linguists contend that the simple present tense makes use of inflectional verb forms which are 's' or 'es' as in barks - a dog barks; Paul goes to school everyday and so on.

The Present Progressive

The present progressive or continuous describes an incomplete ongoing present action that is in the middle of happening but will finish at some point. This tense is formed by using the auxiliary verb (am, is, are) with the present verb form ending with - ing. For instance, the students are having their siesta. The children are watching a football match.

The present progressive tense can also be used to express dislike on someone's habits. For example, he is always complaining for lack of money. Lami is always

visiting Mr. Thomas. Amina is always asking for a free ride.

Quirk et al (1973) explained that the present progressive has a future happening anticipated in the present, thereby having the meaning of fixed arrangement, plan or programme. For instance, he is taking the children to the children's park.

Rev. Father Charles is moving to St. Joseph's Cathedral.

The Present Perfect -Tense

The present perfect tense according to Ubahakwe and Dele (2001) is a reflection of a present action with an indication that such an action has ended a short while ago. The present perfect tense is formed by using the auxiliary verb (have/has) with the past participle form of the verb. For example,

Dennis has found his textbook.

I have finished sweeping the room.

The Simple Past Tense

This tense states that an action or situation was finished in the absolute past and bears no connection with the present. Quirk and Greenbaum (1972) and Declerick (1991) share the opinion that the simple past tense expresses an idea of completeness of an action at a specific time in the past. The simple past tense therefore is used to indicate that an activity happened and ended in the past without any connection with the present. Most past simple verbs end with 'ed' (for regular verbs while irregular verbs have different past simple forms. For instance,

(a) Peter graduated in 2005

Grace was born in 1958

The principal punished those students who sneaked out of the

compound/school/college yesterday.

She saw the governor yesterday.

The examples cited above are actions that happened and ended in the past.

The Past Continuous Tense

This tense describes an action which went on during a stretch of time in the past and finished. The tense is formed by using the verb be (was/were) with the present participle form of the verb ending with - ing. For instance:

While I was walking down the street yesterday, I suddenly met my boss.

The Past Perfect Tense

This tense states that an action was completed in the past before another point in time or action in the past.

Quirk et al (1990) in their opinion explained this tense to refer to a past time earlier than another past time". The past perfect tense is used to refer to two or more events or activities that took place and finished at different times in the past. The tense is formed by using the auxiliary verb (had) with the past participle form of the verb. For example, - By the time Paul had saved enough money, he bought a new car. The baby had stopped crying before its mother arrived. The burglars had escaped before the policemen arrived. The chairman had completed building his house before it collapsed.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Before embarking on any theoretical framework for this study, some grammatical theories and their treatment on tenses were highlighted and one of them which is an effective model was selected. Among the theories that were highlighted

are:

a. The transformational grammar theory.

b. The traditional Grammar theory.

c. Systemic functional grammar theory.

d. The structural grammar theory.

a. The Transformational Grammar Theory: Transformational grammar theory approach to the study of grammar represents an attempt to prescribe rules for language use.

The notion of transformation was first used by Harris in the early 1950 and later considerably extended by his pupil Chomsky in (1957) who attempts to describe linguistic occurrences using phrase structure rules. It analyses sentences into phrases as their immediate constituents by making correct account of corpus sentences a native speaker of any language can make. Basically, it has been used to refer to situations where there is a complex relationship between the expression aspects of a linguistic element and its meaning or function. The proponents of this theory believe that a native speaker of a language should be able to produce new grammatical constructions in the language as well as understand new constructions made in the language using a finite number of base sentence patterns familiar to all native speakers of that language.

In linguistics every linguistic element would have a separate single meaning and its position in the sentence would make its contribution to the meaning. The theory of transformational grammar is designed to distinguish between the grammatical and the ungrammatical sentences. A grammatical sentence is a sentence which would be accepted as well formed by native speakers of the language under consideration.

Transformational grammar deals with the well formedness of a sentence

syntactically, semantically and phonologically. A sentence may be syntactically well formed but semantically unacceptable. For example; they love herself. Again, a sentence can be syntactically ill-formed but accepted semantically. For example: Musa gave the ball to Peter back. A sentence could also be semantically and syntactically well formed but phonologically ill-formed. This can be found in cases where words are not stressed properly. For example, the pronunciation of contract should be CONTract with stress on the first syllable when it is used as a noun while the stress should be on the second syllable when it is used as a verb.

According to the grammarians of this theory, transformational grammar comprises three elements. These are:

i. syntactic rules of sentence formation which specify how to form sentences.

ii. semantic rules of sentence interpretation which specify how to interprete the meaning of sentences.

iii. phonological rules of sentence pronunciation, which specify how to pronounce words and sentences.

Transformationalists also assert that sentences have two structures – the surface and the deep structures. According to Jacob and Rosenbuam (1968) syntactic tense is represented in the deep structure by (+ present) for the present and (- present) for the syntactic past. While a surface structure of a sentence is the written or spoken form which is represented at the phrase structure is the abstract syntactic structural representation of the sentence. In other words, a deep structure is a syntactic structure level of a grammar, the deep structure gives the meaning of a sentence or utterance. The surface structure on the other hand is the final phonetic and graphological surface realization of a sentence or utterance (Rosenbuan 1970).

The syntactic component of transformational grammar specifies which

sequences of words form grammatical sentences in a language as well as the sequences that specify the internal syntactic structure of such sentences. There are rules that show how sentences are built out of phrases and how phrases are built up out of words. These structures are generated by a set of rules called phrase structure rules because they specify how sentences are structured out of phrases and phrases out of words.

For example, in the sentence - The man hit the ball. Using rewrite rules to show the built up of this sentence. For instance, it will start by breaking the sentence into:

S $\rightarrow$ NP + VP

$\rightarrow$ Det + N + VP

$\rightarrow$ Det + N + V + VP

$\rightarrow$ The + man + V + NP

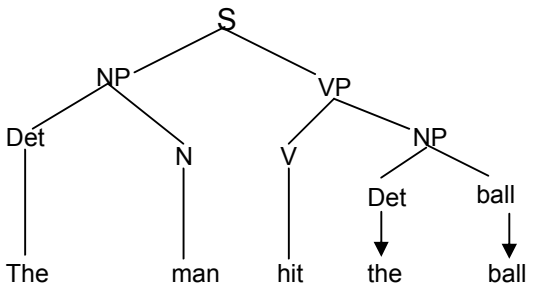
$\rightarrow$ The + man + hit + the + N

$\rightarrow$ The + man + hit + the + ball

$\rightarrow$ The man hit the ball.

Transformational grammar also uses tree diagram system extensively to assign grammatical categories to tenses.

For example, using a tree diagram system, the sentence, the man hit the ball, can be analysed as:



Transformational grammar assigns grammatical categories to tenses as shown in the example above. According to Jacob and Rosenbuan (1968) syntactic tense is represented in the deep structure. In this view, verb tenses are paradigmatically of three forms: the present, the past and the future. This classification of tense into different time frames is still very much in use today though they cannot be said to be represented in all languages. For example, the use of the inflection in the third person singular as in "she eats" cannot be said to be a universal concept in all languages.

These views have provided us with an insight on how to describe the way tenses are used in Kanyi and in English language respectively.

Traditional Grammar

The second grammatical theory that was discussed is the traditional grammar approach to the study of grammar which represents an attempt to prescribe rules for language use. Traditional grammar or prescriptive grammar is ascribed to great philosophers as far back as the fifth century. In traditional grammar, language is described using features to refer to syntactic categories which have been identified in classical languages such as Greek and Latin Crystal (1991).

According to the grammarians of this school of thought, for any research within a language to be carried out successfully, requires a classification of the elements of that language. Based on this, terms such as: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition, pronoun and interjection were established and given formal and notional definitions. Though the traditional approach to grammar aids our understanding of grammar through its notions that are used in grammatical description today, they are however, sometimes not embrassive. For instance, a noun is defined as the name of a person, place or thing. This definition does not cover all

nouns. For instance, words such as beauty, honesty and yellow are classified under nouns but cannot be defined as naming persons, places or things.

Though these terms are still in use today in language study, they cannot be said to be represented in all languages. For instance, pronouns are not represented in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language.

In traditional grammar, tense is seen as a grammatical category that is realized at the verbal group of a clause. In this view, verb tenses are paradigmatically of three forms, the present, the past and the future.

Systemic Functional Grammar

The third grammatical theory that was discussed is the systemic functional grammar which relies on context of situation to describe language. It conceives language as a social activity and that meaning can only be arrived at by taking into consideration the social conditions within which it occurs.

According to Haliday (1985) the system of tense is realized by the logical structure of the verbal group. Tense, according to the grammarians of systemic functional grammar is classified into two forms; the primary and the secondary forms which are based on their system of realizations. The linguists also identified three different forms of expressing tense. These are the present, the past and the future.

The primary tense is realized in three forms: the past, the present and the future. For example, the past tense is realized by adding – 'ed' to the regular verbs and other forms for the irregular verbs – as in worked, drank, was, were, put etc. The present tense is realized by adding 's' to the simple present tense as in eats, talks, takes etc. The future is realized by using 'will' preceding the verb – as in will eat, will come, will dance etc.

The secondary forms of tense on the other hand are realized in the past by using have + 'ed' to the verb in regular verbs - as in have worked, have talked, have danced, and other forms for irregular forms as in have taken, have eaten etc.

They are realized in the present by using be + 'ing' to the verb as in: be taking, be working, be walking etc.

The future is realized by using 'be going to' (infinitive), + verb as in – be going to take, be going to work, be going to walk etc.

Systemic grammar sees a tense system as being recursive but has 'stop rules' which limit the total set of the tense that can occur in a sentence. This is because one has to take into consideration the social conditions within which the tense can be used.

Structural Grammar

The grammarians of this theory consider the general characteristics or features of a language to be word order. This means that every language has its word order to suit its syntactic convention. Therefore, to understand the structure of any language, the study of the syntactic properties of language becomes necessary. This is realized in the classification of words, the order of words in phrases and sentences, the structure of phrases in sentences and the different sentence structures that languages use. For example, in the sentence "He is tall" in English language, in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language the sentence will be "A tsari". The direct translation is "He tall" while in a question such as "Is he tall? In Kanyi, "A tsari"? that is. He tall? There is no verb by this translation. Again in the sentence, He bought a book (English) 'A gor takada', whose translation is "He buy book". The last example shows that there are no articles in Kanyi.

Ironically many structural linguists who champion the cause of contrastive

analysis failed to acknowledge the logical necessity of common categories. This failure may have been due to the characteristic of structuralist assumption that each language is a self-sufficient system and that every element has a value which is uniquely determined by the stru ctural relations of that system.

Having discussed four approaches to contrastive analysis namely, the transformational grammar, the traditional grammar, the systematic functional grammar and the structural grammar theories, it will not be proper to conclude that anyone of the four approaches is superior to the other for contrastive analysis in general. However, it is fair to conclude that the transformational grammar theory is more explicit. This is because it has taken into consideration the three important components which specify how to form sentences. These are the phonological rules the semantic rules and the phonological rules. The transformational grammar theory distinguishes between deep and surface structures. The deep structure gives the meaning of a sentence while a surface structure is the final realization of the sentence at the phonological and graphological level (spoken and written) under this theory tense is not independent of the semantic categories such as time. Because of this, it will be possible to account for the ungrammaticalness of wrongly constructed sentences.

According to Jacob and Rosebaun, syntactic tense is represented in the deep structures. The verb tenses are paradigmatically in three forms – the present, the past and the future. A sentence could be semantically correct but phonologically wrong if a word is wrongly stressed.

For instance, conTRACT as a verb and CONtract as noun. If the stresses are not maintained in their proper stresses, they can be said to be ungrammatical. The syntactic component of transformational grammar specifies which sequences of words

form grammatical sentences in a language as well as the sequences that specify the internal syntactic structures of such sentences. These are rules that show how sentences are built out of words.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This research focuses on a contrastive analysis of the present and the past tense in their different tense forms. It aims at establishing the similarities and the differences between the two languages and how the differences have affected Kanyi students learning English as a second language.

There are different methods employed in contrastive studies. One of them is the translation method. Translation is exclusively used especially if the researcher is bilingual in both languages.

Translation is based on the theory of universals especially the presence of equivalent and deep structures across languages which ensures the possibilities of saying the same thing in different languages.

Harris (1954) introduced a transfer relation between each sentence of language A and its translation in language B whereby each sentence in language A was analyzed in terms of its differences from its translation in language B. using translation paradigms, Levenston (1965) presented the syntactic differences between languages. He did this by using a translation paradigm in which a grammatical category in language A was listed opposite all categories in language B by which it may be translated.

Translation was employed to establish the necessary translational equivalent in the translation exercise in this research. A translation equivalent is a corresponding word or expression in another language.

3.1 Data Collection

The choice of data was guided by the contrastive principle which says that contrasts are made along specific levels of the two languages that are being compared Bouton (1976). The wrong use of tenses that were made by Kanyi students provided data for analysis.

The present and the past tense in their different tense forms in the two languages, English and Kanyi were described, compared and contrasted.

3.2 Population and Elicitation of Data

The data came from the performance of forty students from Kanyi learners of English as a second language. Students from Government Day Secondary School Kanyi, were randomly selected from Senior Secondary two (S.S.2) students. Their responses to the translation of sentences from Kanyi to English language were used as the data for the study. The students are native speakers who were born and also live there so that there will be no interference of another Nigerian language so that their linguistic error could be said to be due to interference from Kanyi language only.

3.3 Tools for Data Collection

The tools for the data collection was sentence translations from Kanyi to English language. The students were also asked to write two short essays. One tested their ability on the proper use of the present tense and the other on the past tense.

The translation exercise was aimed at ascertaining the competence of the students in the use of the present and the past in their different tense forms.

3.4 **The Test Material**

This research aimed at ascertaining the competence of the students in the use of the English tense verb forms in expression by students from Government Day Secondary School, Kanyi. This school is located within Kagarko Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The school is co-educational and it is not located in an academic environment that is, it is the only secondary school in that village. As such, the students do not have any advantage to interact and relate socially using English language. Ninety-nine percent of the students speak Kanyi dialect of Jaba language therefore, most of the students interaction is through this dialect.

The test material was the structured type. The test consisted of five test items each on the six exercises. Each exercise tested a different tense form. The tense forms are as follows:

(a) The present tense

(b) The present continuous tense

(c) The present perfect tense

(d) The past tense

(e) The past continuous tense

(f) The past perfect tense

The subjects listened carefully to sentences that were read to them in Kanyi and they translated them into English language. The results from the translation exercises and essays were used to reveal the students level of competence on the correct use of the different tenses being tested. Both the wrongly translated sentences and the wrongly constructed sentences in the essays were identified, described and explained in the next chapter.

The sentence translation was through controlled production because through

this method the learner cannot avoid any linguistic area which he is not certained about. In an attempt to keep to the pattern demanded of him/her, he/she is likely to make errors. The essays will be spontaneous production (free writing) so that it will reveal how much the learners depend on their LI when using and writing in the L2.

3.5 **Analytical Procedure**

A class test totaling thirty items, (30) was administered. There were five questions under each of the six exercises. They were asked to write two short stories, one of which was about "My first day in the secondary school" (past tense) and in the second story "What my mother does everyday" (simple present tense).

The focus was to identify the correct uses and abuses students make when using the different forms of these English tenses being tested. The grading system will be by counting the number of correctly answered questions over the total number of questions under each of the six exercises. Two marks were awarded on each correctly answered item. Fifty percent was a pass mark. Respondents who scored less than 50% were regarded as having failed the test. The two essays were marked over fifty each. Any respondent that scored below twenty five marks on any of the two essays was considered as having failed the test.

The marks collected from the data were tabulated so that the students' performance in each of the exercises will be read and analysed easily. The errors most readily noticed from learners are those in expressive activity. The study of expressive performance (spoken or written) offers the only direct source of information about the learner's transitional competence. The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. It provides one with the picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may also give one indications as to the

learning strategies. Analyzing errors is one of the central activities in the psycholinguistic study of language learning. If a teacher knows what the natural course of the development of a speaker of language 'A' in the learning of language 'B' it is then the teacher will have some information on how to devise linguistic syllabus for teaching language 'B' to speakers of language 'A'.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

The analysis of the data colleted for this study is discussed in this chapter. It has been indicated in chapter three of this work that the wrong use of the present and the past tense in their different tense forms by Jaba (Kanyi dialect) learners of English language will provide data for analysis. These different tense forms in the two languages will be described, compared and contrasted. The discussion below is based on the results obtained from all the data collected in the course of the research. It has discussed the interference problems of Jaba (Kanyi dialect) speakers learning English, with particular reference to the present and the past tense morphemes system in the two languages. This was made possible because of the researcher's knowledge of the two languages.

4.1 Comparative Analysis of Jaba (Kanyi) and English Tenses

The morpheme marker of the English regular simple present tense is only identifiable when the tense is considered in relation to its use with the "person" for example, when the tense is used with the 3rd person singular, the tense is marked by an 's' with its allomorphs. For instance;

(a) Play + 's' - plays. As in He/she plays.

(b) Dance + 's' - dances. As in He/she dances.

(c) Walk + 's' - walks. As in He/she walks.

The other persons, that is the 1st and 2nd take the uninflected form of the tense morpheme. The English simple present tense morpheme has three allomorphic variants /s/, /z/ and /|z/.

The Jaba (Kanyi dialect) regular simple present tense on the other hand is not identifiable in relation to its use with the 'person'. That is to say that the 3rd person singular is not inflected with any of the allomorphic variants. This means that both the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons take the uninflected form of the tense morpheme. For example;

(a) "Ake tenteno ne tinomo" is the same as he play or she play in afternoon instead of he/she plays in the afternoon.

(b) "Muke" tenteno ne tinomo" is the same as they play in afternoon, instead of they play in the afternoon.

(c) Ake tzentzeno tson tson – is the same as he/she walk fast fast, instead of he/she walks very fast.

The Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense in English is marked by an inflected 'ed' as in the past (with regular verbs and other forms with irregular verbs) and the addition of preceding morphemes which are conditioned by "person" that is used. For instance, the 3rd person singular is marked by the addition of the morpheme 'has[7] while other persons are marked by the morpheme 'have' for example:

(a) He/she/it has played.
I/they/we have played

(b) He/she/it has slept.
I/they/we have slept.

(c) He/she/it has danced
I/they/we have danced.

The Jaba present perfect equivalent on the other hand is marked with 'asi' which is used for 3rd person singular and 'musi' for 3rd person plural and 'misi' for 1st person singular, 'si' in this case is equivalent to the English present perfect markers 'has' and 'have. For examples;

(a) "Asi sworswor" is the same as:

He has dance /he has dance/she have dance

Instead of he/she has danced in English.

(b) "Musi sworswor" is the same as

They has dance / they have dance

Instead of they have danced in English.

(c) "Misi sworswor" is the same as

I has dance / I have dance

Instead of I have danced in English.

The examples show that 'si' which is equivalent to the English present perfect markers which are "has" and "have" as used for both the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons and either singular or plural in Kanyi.

The Present Progressive Tense

This tense form in English is marked by the - 'ing' morpheme and the addition of proceeding morphemes 'is' 'are', depending on the person of the pronoun. For example,

(a) He/she/it is dancing

We/they are dancing

(b) He/she is playing

We/they are playing

(c) He/she is walking

We/they are walking

This tense form in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) is marked by the morpheme 'deng'. This morpheme prefixed the verb and is often used as a bound morpheme to the pronoun. For example:

(a) Adeng sworswor means

He/she/dancing

He/she/are dancing

Instead of he/she is dancing in English.

(b) Adeng tentenor – is the same as he/she playing or he/she playing.

Instead of he/she is dancing in English.

(c) Mudeng tentenor - is the same as they playing.

Instead of they are playing in English.

(d) Redeng tentenor – is the same as -

We is playing or we are playing.

Instead of we are playing in English.

(e) Mideng tentenor – is the same as -

I are playing or I am playing.

While the morphemes 'is' and 'are' in English language are used depending on the person of the pronoun, (1st, 2nd, 3rd person pronouns) the morpheme 'deng' in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) is not used according to the person of the pronoun but is bound to the pronoun.

The Simple Past Tense

The regular simple past tense in English language is marked by an inflected -'d' or ‘ed’ as the case may be to show that the tense is in the past.

For example;

1. dance + 'd' - danced - he/she danced.
2. play + 'ed' - played - he/she played.
3. walk + 'ed’ - walked - he/she walked.

The equivalent of the simple past in Jaba (Kanyi dialect) is realized by the addition of zero morphemes to the verb but with a rising tone on the verb. Where as there is structural change in the past tense of English, this does not occur in Jaba. For example,

1. Asworswor - is the same as he/she dance
   Instead of he/she danced in English
2. Atentenor - is the same as he/she play
   Instead of he/she played in English
3. Atsentsenor – is the same as
   He/she walk, instead of he/she walked in English.

The Past Perfect

The past perfect tense in English may be marked by the use of the regular past perfect tense markers 'd' or 'ed' and the addition of preceding morpheme 'had'.

For example; I/he/she had danced.
I/he/she had walked.
I/he/she had played.

The past perfect equivalent in Jaba is regularly marked by 'si' morpheme added to the verb just as is the case in the present perfect, 'si; as equivalent to 'had' plus the 'past tense morpheme' joined to the main verb in English. However, it is the context in

which the sentence is used that shows whether one has used the tense in the present or past perfect. For example;

1. "Asi sworswor" - is the same as he/she has dance or he/she had dance, instead of he/she had danced in English.

2. "Musi sworswor" – is the same as they has dance or they have dance, instead of they had danced in English. In Jaba language therefore, the present perfect and the past perfect can only be differentiated through context of use otherwise, one can conclude that they have the same sentence structure.

The Past Progressive

The past progressive in English language is marked by the - 'ing' morpheme plus preceding morpheme 'was' or 'were' depending on the 'person' of the subject noun, pronoun or number. For example,

He/she/it/I was dancing. They/we were dancing.

He/she/it/I was playing. They/we were playing.

He/she/it was walking. They/we were walking.

On the other hand, the past progressive in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) is marked in a similar manner as the present progressive that is, both use the morpheme 'deng' preceding the verb. It is only through context of use that one can differentiate whether the action is in the present progressive or past progressive. For example,

a.. Adeng sworswor - is the same as he/she is dancing

or he/she was dancing. Instead of he/she was dancing in English.

b. "Adeng tentenor" – is the same as

He/she is playing or he/she was playing.

c. "Mudeng tsentenor" – is the same as they is dancing or they are dancing.

Instead of they are dancing in English.

For the present progressive, the morpheme 'deng' uses a falling tone, but for the past progressive, the morpheme 'deng' uses a rising tone.

Therefore, the 'deng' morpheme is equivalent to English is/are or was/were plus - ing" morpheme. It is through the context of use that would show whether the action is in the present progressive or past progressive.

English and Jaba (Kanyi dialect) irregular present tense markers

In English language, the formation of the irregular simple present tense morphemes has the same pattern with the regular simple present tense morphemes. For example,

hit: hit + 's' - hits - he/she/it hits.

go: go + es - goes - he/she goes.

The irregular present progressive also has the same pattern with the regular present progressive e.g. is, and are:

1. He/she is hitting - we/they <u>are</u> hitting
2. He/she is clinging - we/they <u>are</u> clinging.
3. He/she is going - we/they are going.

In English language too, the irregular present perfect is marked by the verb morphemes = past participle + 'en' or '0' vowel replacive preceded by 'have' or has. For example,

1. He has eaten the food - verb + 'en'
2. They have hit the ball V. + Φ
3. I have drunk the milk - vowel replacive.

In Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) however, the irregular tense morphemes are non-existent. This makes one of the major distinctions between the tense systems of the two languages. English and Jaba (Kanyi dialect) irregular past tense morpheme markers:

In English language, the irregular past tense markers are varied. There are those forms that are not marked at all and these are referred to as having zero morpheme markers. For example, hit, burst, cost, quit, have zero morphemes. Others are marked by vowel replacives:

For example;

Sting – stung /ɪ/ to /^/

Cling - clung /I/ to /^/

Grind - ground /ai/ /au/

Freeze - frozen /I:/ to 2u

Choose - chose or u: /au/

Win - won

In Jaba language however, the irregular past tense morphemes are non existent that is to say that they have zero morpheme markers –

e.g. "gbor" (hit) - gbor.

"gwark" (grind) gwark.

"tsuh" (choose) - tsuh. etc.

From the discussion of the present and the past morpheme markers of the two languages, English and Jaba (Kanyi dialect) it is understood that the two languages have different ways in which time (tense) is expressed. While English language has both regular and irregular tense morpheme, in Jaba (Kanyi dialect) the irregular tense morphemes are non-existent. Furthermore, while the regular simple past tense in

English is marked by an inflected 'd' or 'ed' to show that the tense is in the past, the simple past in Kanyi dialect is realized by the addition of zero morphemes to the verb, but with a rising tone on the verb.

The English regular simple present tense is considered in relation to its use with the person. For the 3rd person singular, the tense is marked by an 's' while the 1st and 2nd persons take the uninflected form of the tense. In Kanyi dialect, the regular simple present tense is not identifiable to its use to the persons. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons take the uninflected form of the tense morpheme.

With these differences highlighted above, the researcher was guided by them to make a good contrastive analysis of tenses between the two languages and was as well able to explain why Kanyi learners of English language have problems in using the correct tenses.

The data collected from the performance of the students through translation of sentences from Kanyi dialect of Jaba language to English language using the different tenses are presented and discussed below.

Exercise A:

In exercise A, which tested the simple present tense, the students correct use of inflectional verb forms for the 3rd person singular was tested. All the students responded to the translation and in the essay writing (what my mother does everyday). There are five test items in this exercise. In test items 1, 2 and 4, the sentences read to the students should have the following as their equivalent in English:

1. My room mate dances before she sleeps.
2. Mrs John brushes her hair every morning.
3. Binta washes her uniform after every two days. 85% - 90% of the students

responded wrongly because they used the uninflected form of the tense morpheme which is only applicable to the 1st and 2nd persons but not on the 3rd person singular. Some examples of the students' wrong responses in using the simple present tense in expression in the essay are the following;

(a) "Yami ke gbiter shimi"

Mother me wash clothes me, instead of;

My mother washes my clothes.

(b) "Yami ke shag jei kobin nom"

Mother me cook food every day, instead of;

My mother cooks food every day.

(c) "Yami shimnimi"

Mother me love me, instead of;

My mother loves me.

(d) "Yami ke shag jeyi kobin nom"

Mother me cook food every day, instead of;

My mother cooks food every day.

The errors from the sentences above are pointers which have indicated the respondents' ignorance of the fact that when the tense is used with the 3rd person singular, the verb is marked by an 's' or 'es' as the case may be. It has also been observed that the Jaba (Kanyi dialect) learners of English have extended the absence of the pronoun verb antecedent agreement in their L1 to English by ignoring the fact that verbs in English change with the person and number, hence, they have produced the erroneous sentences above. Table 1 shows the summary of students' performance on each test item in exercise A: Simple Present Tense.

Table 1

Students performance on each test item in exercise A. (Simple Present Tense)

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	% of errors made	Summary of errors
1	40	36	90%	324%
2.	40	38	94%	
3.	40	12	30%	
4.	40	34	85%	
5.	40	10	25%	

Table 1 revealed that majority of the students were ignorant of the 3rd person singular verb markers and this accounted for the mistakes made by almost all the students (for the details of the Test items in exercise A – F see Appendix A). Appendix B contained the respondents' answer scripts to the exercises.

Exercise B: The present progressive tense:

The sentences under this exercise were administered to examine the students competence on the correct use of tense forms to express actions that are in progress. It also examined the students ability in using the – "ing" morpheme and the addition of auxiliary verbs forms 'is' or 'are' according to the person of the pronoun. Some of the students correct responses include the following:

The children are watching a football match.

Javan is writing his project.

The students are writing a test.

Aaron is cleaning the car.

The erroneous responses include the following:

The students is writing.

The children is watching a football match.

According to the scores, about 65% of the students responded correctly. This could be

due to the fact that all verbs in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) can be used in the progressive. For instance, hear, I am hearing you see, I am seeing you, understand, I am understanding you etc. Table 2 showed the summary of the students' responses.

Table 2:
The present progressive tense. This table is a display of students' performance on each test item in exercise B.

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly.	Percentage of errors made	Summary of errors
6.	40	12	28	30%	
7.	40	15	25	37.5%	
8.	40	08	32	20%	130%
9.	40	10	30	25%	
10.	40	07	33	17.5%	

Table 2 indicated that over 60% of the responses were correct while 30% and above were wrong in the activity.

Exercise C: The Present Perfect tense:

The test items in exercise C were meant to test the students ability on the correct use of tense forms which are used to show that an activity has ended a short while ago. Emphasis was laid on the students ability to use 'has' for the 3rd person singular and 'have' for the other persons.

The five test items read to the students in Kanyi dialect to be translated into English language, should have the following as their equivalent in English language (see Appendix A).

1. Dennis has found his textbook
2. Mrs Tom has prepared breakfast
3. The painter has repainted the house
4. Mr & Mrs Paul have just left for London
5. The house has been sold.

Some of the students' performance are as follows:

1. Mr & Mrs Paul 'has' just left for London (has used instead of have).
2. Mrs Tom "have" prepared breakfast ('have' used instead of "has")
3. Denis 'have' found his textbook ('have' used instead of 'has').

From the analysis, it is observed that the respondents have not used 'has' and 'have' correctly. This could be due to the fact that in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) speakers use 'has' for both the present perfect tense and for the past as well as for the 3rd person singular and for the other persons.

Table 3:

The Students' performance on each test item in exercise C is analyzed in Table 3.

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly.	Percentage of errors made	Summary of errors
11.	40	30	10	75%	418
12.	40	35	05	87.5%	
13.	40	35	05	75%	
14.	40	38	02	95%	
15.	40	30	10	75%	

This table showed that students had problems using 'has' and 'have' correctly hence majority of the respondents got the items wrong.

Exercise D: The simple past tense:

In this exercise, the students' ability to express an idea of completeness of an action at a specific time in the past was tested. The test items which were read to the students in Kanyi dialect to be translated into English language should have the following as their equivalent when translated into English language (see the details in Appendix A).

1. Mrs James visited Nigeria in 1956
2. Sani lost his school bag

3. Ali bought a book in Mr. Bello's shop

4. Binta wrote a letter in the classroom yesterday

5. Okon saw a lion on his way to school.

The following sentences are examples of the wrong use of tenses to express past actions by Kanyi learners of English language:

1. Mrs. James visit Nigeria in 1956 (visit used instead of visited)

2. Sani wash his school bag (wash used instead of washed)

3. Binta write a letter yesterday (write used instead of wrote)

4. Ali buy a textbook in Mr. Bello's shop (buy used instead of bought)

From the analysis, it is observed that the respondents expressed the simple past tense in the simple present, thereby violating the rules of the usage. This could be associated with the fact that while the regular simple past tense in English is marked by an inflected 'd' or 'ed' as the case maybe, the equivalent of the simple past tense in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language is realized by the addition of zero morpheme to the verb. It can be concluded that the students choice of the verb tense has been conditioned by their L1 and other factors. To this conclusion, competent teachers of English are needed to handle the issue of tenses seriously.

Table 4: The Simple Past Tense

The students performance on each test item in exercise D which tested the students competence on how to express ideas of completeness of actions in the past, is analysed in Table 4 (see test items in Appendix A).

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly.	Percentage of errors made	Summary errors
16	40	32	8	80%	38.5%
17	40	30	10	75%	
18	40	30	10	75%	
19	40	30	10	75%	
20	40	32	8	80%	

This Table revealed that respondents had problems in the use of simple past tense.

Exercise E. The past progressive tense:

The sentences under this exercise were meant to find out the students' appropriate use of the morpheme 'was' or 'were' plus – 'ing' morphemes with the correct person of the noun or pronoun when referring to an action or activity which took place but was not completed as of the time of reporting. The test items which were translated from Kanyi dialect to English language by the learners should have the following as their equivalent.

1. I was sleeping when my sister arrived
2. Joe was playing basket ball when his father returned from the village.
3 My baby was still sleeping when I left for work.
4. The armed rubbers were still shooting into the air when the policemen arrived.
5. Mallam Audu was still beating his wife when his mother in-law arrived.

Some examples of the students wrong use of the past progressive tense are as follows:

1. I am sleeping when my sister arrived. ('am' used instead of 'was')
2. Joe is playing basket ball when his father returned from the village. ('is' used instead of 'was')
3. My baby is still sleeping when I went to work. ('is' used instead of 'was').

4. The armed rubbers are still shooting when the policemen arrived ('are' used instead of 'were').

From the analysis of the data collected, one could assume that the students based their choice on 'was' and 'were' according to how they are used in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect). The 'deng' morpheme used in Kanyi dialect is applicable to both the present, progressive and the past progressive. This is to say that 'deng' is equivalent to 'is' and 'was' as well as 'were' in English language.

Table 5: The past progressive tense:

Table 5 shows the students' performance on each test item in exercise E which tested their competence in the correct use of the morpheme 'was' or 'were' plus – 'ing' morphemes.

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly.	Percentage of errors made	Summary of errors made
21	40	30	10	75%	382.5
22	40	30	10	75%	
23	40	30	10	75%	
24	40	32	08	80%	
25	40	31	09	77.5	

The table showed that the respondents used 'was', 'were' and 'ing' morphemes synonymously without differentiation.

Exercise F. The past perfect tense:

The test items under this exercise were used to test the students' ability in using the past perfect tense markers 'd' or 'ed' and the addition of auxiliary verbs 'had'. (The tense is used to indicate that there were two different events or actions in the past but one of the events or actions had been completed before the other one took place. The sentences below are the correct translation of the sentences read to students in

Kanyi dialect as the test items.

1. The lecturer had left the class before the students arrived.
2. The school building had been demolished before the state government intervened
3. The baby had stopped crying before its mother arrived.
4. The burglars had escaped before the police arrived.
5. She had finished cooking before the quests arrived.

Some of the students wrong responses are as follows:

1. The baby has stop crying before its mother arrive.
   ('has' used instead of 'had', 'stop', used instead of stopped and 'arrive' used instead of arrived).
2. She finish cooking before the guest arrive ('finish, used instead of finished, come used instead of 'came').
3. The lecturer has leave the class before the students came. ('has' is used instead of 'had', leave is used instead of left and arrive instead of arrived).

From the analysis of the students' responses, it was discovered that there was poor performance in this exercise. It could be due to the fact that in Jaba language (Kanyi dialect) 'si' morpheme is added to the verb just as it is in the past perfect. 'si' is equivalent to has/have/had. The students have therefore generalized the 'si' morpheme to represent either 'has', 'have' or 'had' during the translation exercise.

Table 6: The past perfect tense:

The students' performance on each test item in exercise F which tested the students' ability in using the past perfect tense markers 'd' and 'ed' is shown in Table 6.

Test Items	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly.	Percentage of errors made	Summary of errors made
26	40	30	10	75	420
27	40	35	05	87.5	
28	40	35	05	87.5	
29	40	38	38	95	
30	40	30	30	75	

This Table (6) revealed that respondents could not differentiate between the past perfect tense markers ('d' or 'ed') and the addition of auxiliary verb 'had' in English because they are not like that in Kanyi dialect. Instead, the respondents substituted with what is available in Kanyi dialect.

In the two essays, which tested their ability on the correct use of the present and the past tense in expression, the students performed poorly. In the essay titled – "What my mother does everyday". The students performed poorly because they could not use the inflections 's' and 'es' which are used for the 3rd person singular. In the second essay titled – "My first day in the secondary school", which tested their ability in using the simple past tense correctly in expression, they equally performed poorly because they could not use the inflection 'd' or 'ed' which are used in English language to express the simple past tense. None of the students scored above 24 marks. This means all the students failed in this essay writing. Wrong expressions such as

My mother cook food every day (cook for cooked)

My mother go to farm every day (go instead of goes). These are examples of some of the wrong use of the simple present tense by some of the students that were recorded in this study. Similarly, wrong expressions such as: In my first day in secondary school, a senior student 'punish' me (punish used instead of punished).

In my first day in secondary school I write a letter to my friend. (Write used instead of wrote).

Table 7: A distribution table of the different tense errors

Test item	Type of tenses tested	No. of students that responded	No. of students that made errors	No. of students that responded correctly	Percentage of errors made	Summary of errors.
Exercise A.	Simple present tense					
1		40	36	04	90	
2		40	38	02	94	
3		40	12	28	30	324
4		40	34	06	85	
5		40	10	30	25	
Exercise B.	Present progressive					
6		40	12	28	30	
7		40	15	25	37.5	
8		40	08	32	20	130
9		40	10	30	25	
10		40	07	33	17.5	
Exercise C.	Present perfect					
11		40	30	10	75	
12		40	35	05	87.5	
13		40	35	05	87.5	420
14		40	38	02	95	
15		40	30	10	75	
Exercise D.	Simple past tense					
16		40	32	08	80	
17		40	30	10	75	
18		40	30	10	75	385
19		40	30	10	75	
20		40	32	08	80	
Exercise E	Past perfect					
21		40	30	10	75	
22		40	35	05	87.5	
23		40	35	05	87.5	
24		40	38	02	95	420
25		40	30	10	75	

Exercise F	Past progressive					
26		40	30	10	75	
27		40	30	10	75	
28		40	30	10	75	382.5
29		40	32	08	80	
30		40	31	09	77.5	

From the distribution table above, the summary of the total percentage of errors made on each tense form is as follows:

The present perfect and the past perfect tense:

These two tense types have the highest percentage of errors, with 420% each respectively. The poor performance of the students in these tenses may not be far from the fact that the tense classification in the two languages differs greatly. For instance, the present perfect tense and the past perfect tense in Kanyi dialect are not equivalent to the present and past perfect tenses in English. For example, in Jaba (Kanyi dialect) language, has 'have' and 'had' can be used for both the present perfect and the past perfect, hence, these different tense forms have the same percentage of errors made by the students because they have used the same auxiliary verbs in dealing with the two tenses.

The simple past tense:

This tense has a total of 385% of errors, thereby making it the second highest where errors were made by the students. This is due to the fact that in Kanyi dialect of Jaba language, the simple past tense does not add any morpheme to the verb to change it to the past tense, instead, it uses tone to differentiate between the present and the past tense. When referring to an activity that is taking place at the moment, one uses a falling tone, but when referring to an event or activity that took place in

the past, one uses a rising tone. The students' responses in this tense form were guided or conditioned by their L1 intuition. That is probably why they did not add inflections to the verb for a change from the present to the past tense. Proper drilling activities in communicative skills by competent teachers of English could take care of these problems.

The past progressive

The past progressive tense has a total of 382.5 percent of errors made by the students. The high rate of failure could be associated with the fact that in Kanyi dialect, 'is' 'are' 'was' and 'were' can be used for both the present and fror the past progressive. This explains why the students could not use 'was' and 'were' appropriately. For instance, 'My baby is still crying when I went to work'.

However, they were able to use the – "ing" morpheme correctly since every word in the dialect can be used in the progressive.

The simple present tense:

The students made a total of 324 percent of errors in the exercises that tested their competence in the use of the simple present tense. In this exercise, the students were not able to use inflections on words like dance, (dances) brush, (brushes) wash, (washes) along with the 3rd person singular. This could be associated with the fact that in Kanyi dialect, the simple present tense is not used in relation with the persons. Both the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons take the uninflected form of the tense morpheme or verb.

The present progressive tense:

The summary of the errors committed by students under the sentences administered on the present progressive tense has a total of 130%. This is the lowest

of the percentage of errors made by the students in all the present and the past tense forms. About 65% of the students representing about thirty students responded correctly. Some of the students had the problem of choosing between 'is' and 'are' in their responses. For instance, sentences such as "The students is writing", is one of the wrong responses.

The good performance under this tense form could be due to the fact that all verbs in Kanyi dialect can be used in the progressive as earlier stated. All elicited errors made by the students have reflected the nature of the subjects' responses to the exercises. All of them responded to the exercises. The high failure of responses to the present perfect and the past perfect tenses is associated with the fact that these tenses do not exist or are not found in Kanyi dialect. The tense classification in the two languages differs greatly. In addition, the fact that a tense construction in Kanyi dialect may belong to a variety of tense classes could mislead the Kanyi learner to use one tense construction to refer to different tense forms in English.

The Findings

After analyzing the data that was collected from the sentence translations administered to forty (40) students who were randomly selected from Government Day Secondary School, Kanyi, the researcher discovered that the tense morpheme in both languages occurs after the subject (similarity). The major difference between Kanyi (Jaba) and English language lies in the use of inflections. For instance, while English language uses the following inflections – 's' or 'es' when using the present tense and 'd' or 'ed' while using the past tense, the Kanyi speaker uses tone to differentiate between the two tense forms. The rising tone is used to indicate a past tense and the falling tone is used to indicate a present activity or happening in Kanyi

(Jaba). The present tense is not used in relation with the persons of the noun or pronoun, but in English language, the present tense is used in relation with the persons of the noun or pronoun. For instance, when the present tense is used with the 3rd person singular it takes the inflected form of the tense morpheme or verb, which is either 's' or 'es'.

The tense classification in the two languages differs greatly. A tense construction in Kanyi dialect may belong to a variety of tense classes. The auxiliary verbs is, are, was, were can be used for both the present and the past progressive while has, have and had can be used for both the present and the past perfect tenses. Because of the presence of irregular verbs in English and the absence of it in Kanyi (Jaba), the students performed poorly in the translation exercise that tested their competence in their use of the past tense.

One other area where the students exhibited incompetence lies in their inability to use the auxiliary verbs: is, are, were, was, has, have, and had correctly. The differences in tense formation discovered in the two languages had made it difficult for the students to express tense forms correctly of various actions at different periods.

The researcher wishes to observe that the irregularity in the formation of tense morphemes in English could be a source of difficulty for Kanyi dialect speakers learning English. Irregular tense forms are completely absent in Kanyi dialect and as such; a Kanyi speaker can assume that all tenses in English are regular. Apart from the interference problem resulting from the confusion of differences in the structure of English, many of the errors made can be based on Kanyi speakers' ignorance in the tense system of English rather than considering the difficulty inherent in English as a language.

4.2 Learning implications of the present and the past tenses for Kanyi dialect learners of English as a second language.

The differences in the tense classification between the two languages could cause problems for the learners. Earlier in this chapter, it was observed that Kanyi dialect lacks certain tenses, for example (present perfect and past perfect tenses). It was also observed that a Kanyi dialect speaker uses tone to indicate the differences between the present and the past tense. For the present tense, the speaker uses a falling tone on the verb while a rising tone is used to indicate an action or an activity that has or had taken place. In the light of the above therefore, Kanyi dialect speakers do not use inflections, rather it uses tone to differentiate between certain tenses as earlier mentioned. These differences therefore can cause learning problems. The Kanyi learners of English should therefore come to gribs with the English present and past tense morpheme systems in order to be able to use these tenses intelligibly. The students should endeavour to understand what they learn rather than committing to memory the mechanical structural drills used in the class. For the students to be able to learn with understanding, they need teachers who have high degree of communicative competence as their model.

It has also been observed that the students performed poorly because they transferred their ideas from the L1 into English. The L1 interference has therefore contributed to their poor performance. In order to help the students out of this situation, all the tense forms of English should be thoroughly taught using situational illustrations that will drive the message home. For instance, in teaching the simple present tense, it will be ideal if the teacher tells the students the different situations in which this tense form is used, followed by adequate and regular practice. The students should be aware of the fact that each tense form is used for different

constructions. As such, there will be need for the teacher to for instance, help students to try to differentiate between the use of 'has' 'have' and 'had'.

Finally, the students should be made to know and to understand the verb form that is used for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the on set of this study, it aimed at identifying the competence level of Kanyi learners of English in using the different tense forms as well as identifying reasons for the students inability to use them in correct expression.

The study being a contrastive analysis at the syntactic level between English language and the Kanyi dialect of Jaba language, attempted to find out the syntactic differences in tense formation and usage between these languages and the likely problems which Kanyi learners of English may face when using the tenses of the English language.

In order to be guided properly during this research work, research questions were set. They include the following:

- What are the structural similarities and differences between the tense forms of Kanyi and English codes?
- What are the problems encountered as a result of the differences?
- What are the implications of these in the process of learning English?

The justification for the choice of the English tense is said to be important because English is considered as the official language for education in the region and because tense constitutes much difficulty for Kanyi learners of English as a second language. The scope and the delimitation of the study is limited to a contrastive analysis of tenses in English and Kanyi dialect of Jaba language only. The study also focuses on the analysis of the present and the past tense in their different tense forms.

The differences that exist between the two languages with regard to using the tenses correctly was one of the aims of this study. This was ascertained in chapter

four.

In the second chapter, some related literature to the topic under discussion, were reviewed. For related literature on the verb tense in English language, research works from linguists such as Tamori (1971) Wilkins (1972) Pierre (1968) Christopherson and Sandved (1972) Loyn (1977) Graver (1977) Crystal (1991) Comrie (1977) and Boadi (1968) were reviewed. For example, Levenston (1966) and Wilkins (1972) hold very strongly that the universality of verb tense error is due to the fact that students make their choice of tenses in English the way it is made in their first language or languages.

In the third chapter, the tool used for data collection, was highlighted. The wrong use of tenses from the test items administered to Kanyi learners of English language provided the data for analysis. Before choosing a theoretical framework, three grammatical theories were discussed. These include:

The transformational grammar theory, the traditional grammar theory, systemic functional grammar theory and the structural grammar theory. After the discussion, the transformational grammar theory was adopted for the theoretical framework for this study because it is more explicit since it takes into consideration the three important components, which specify how to form sentences. These components are the syntactic rules, the semantic and the phonological rules. This theory was also adapted for this contrastive analysis because it distinguishes between deep and surface phenomena. The deep structure gives the meaning of a sentence while the surface structure represents the written or spoken form of a sentence or utterance (phonological and the graphological component of grammar).

The test material was the structured type and it was administered to students of Government Day Secondary School, Kanyi in Kagarko local government area of

Kaduna state. The location of this school is not in an educational environment. The present and the past tense in their different tense forms were tested and the test material was drawn from these tenses. The tenses include the following: the present tense, the present continuous tense, the present perfect tense, the past tense, the past continuous tense and the past perfect tense. Each tense form consists of five test items in each of the six exercises that were administered, making a total of thirty (30) test items administered to forty (40) students.

The analytical procedure was also discussed in this chapter. This was done by totaling the number of correctly answered questions over the total number of questions under each of the six exercises. Two marks were awarded for each correctly answered item. From 50% and above was considered a pass mark. The two essays were fifty marks each. From 25% and above was considered a pass mark. All the students got below 25% in the two essays.

In the fourth chapter, the researcher presented in different tables the results and the analysis of the students score. The explanation of the errors made by the students were also discussed. A high failure of responses to the present perfect and the past perfect tenses were recorded. This is because these tenses do not exist in Kanyi dialect.

A good number of students performed well in the exercise that tested their ability on the present progressive tense. 62% of the students representing about thirty (30) students responded correctly. This could be due to the fact that all verbs in Kanyi dialect could be used in the progressive as earlier pointed. In the two essays titled "what my mother does everyday" and "my first day in the secondary school" which tested the subjects ability on the correct use of the present and the past tense respectively, no student got a pass mark, because they could not use the inflections

's' and 'es' which are used for the 3rd person singular when using the simple present tense and the inflections 'd' and 'ed' which are used in English language to express the simple past correctly.

Finally, the learning implications for Jaba learners (Kanyi dialect) of English as a second language with particular reference to the present and the past tense in their different tense forms were also discussed. It was brought to light that the major difference between Jaba (Kanyi dialect) and English language, lies in the use of inflections. While English language uses inflections when using the present and the past tense ('s' 'es' 'd' 'ed'), the Kanyi speaker uses tone to differentiate between these two tenses. A falling tone is used when referring to a present happening or action, while a rising tone is used to indicate a past happening or event. One other observation, is that Kanyi dialect lacks certain tenses. For instance, the present perfect and the past perfect tenses, hence, a high number of errors was recorded in the test items under these tenses because they are none existent in the dialect. These differences therefore can cause learning problems. Kanyi learners would have to really understand the tense morpheme systems in order to be able to use these tenses correctly. The teachers of English to Kanyi learners of English language, need to use situational illustrations to teach the present and the past tense. They can also use adverbials to teach the present and the past tenses as suggested by Palmer (1965). For instance, he identifies three kinds of adverbials used with tense as follows:

a. adverbials used with past tense only. For example, last week, yesterday, a long time ago.

b. adverbials used with present tense only. For example, now, at this moment.

c. adverbials used any period of time except the present. For example, today, this week, this year etc.

Following these suggestions by Palmer, it is hoped that Kanyi learners of English language can improve in their performance.

5.2 **Conclusion**

To conclude this study, the researcher wishes to briefly refer to the research topic and its findings: This study sets to make a contrastive analysis of Kanyi (Jaba) learners' problems with Tense Formation and usage and its implications to learning. First of all, the tense morpheme markers in the two languages were discussed. Fifty (50) students were administered thirty (30) test items to identify the competence level of Kanyi learners in their use of the different tense forms in expression as well as to identify the reasons for their inability to appropriately use the tense forms. After analyzing the data collected, the following findings were discovered. It was discovered that the verb tense morpheme in both languages occurs after the subject (similarity).

The major difference in tense formation in the two languages lies in the area of inflections. For instance, while English language uses the following inflections 's' and 'es' when using the present and 'd' or 'ed' while using the past tense, the Kanyi speaker on the other hand uses tone to differentiate between the two tenses, the falling tone for the present tense and the rising tone to indicate a past activity or happening. It was also discovered that in Kanyi dialect the present tense is not used in relation with the persons of the noun or pronoun. Both the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons take the uninflected form of the tense morpheme or verb. The tense classification in the two languages differs greatly.

A tense construction in Kanyi dialect may belong to a variety of tense classes. The auxiliary verbs – is, are, was, were can be used for both the present and the past progressive while 'has' have, had can be used for both the present and the past

perfect.

There are no irregular verbs in Kanyi. In the two essays, no student got a pass mark because none could use the inflections 's' or 'es' to express simple present tense correctly. The second highest of errors the students made came from the exercise that tested their ability in the simple past tense. This is not unconnected with their inability to use the inflections 'd' or 'ed' correctly. The analysis of the data also showed that Kanyi learners were unable to use the auxiliary verbs is, are, were, was, has, have and had which are morpheme tense markers in English correctly.

Finally, it is hoped that this work will serve as a useful study and will arouse others to undertake research on similar or related studies in English and other dialects of Jaba language.

5.3 **Limitations**

The area of coverage in the study only concentrated on investigating Kanyi learners competence in forming and using the tense forms of English. Therefore, generalizations of the findings to cover other Jaba dialects would be highly limited.

Contribution to knowledge

It is worth noting that no research from a Kanyi dialect speaker had undertaken this dimension of such study in any aspects of Kanyi dialect. This study also discovered causes of poor performance in both internal and external English examinations by the Kanyi learners.

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APPENDIX A

The Exercises

Excise A

The Simple Present Tense:

This tense is used to refer to a constant, or repeated action, state or habit that exist in the present. In this exercise, the students' ability on the correct use of inflectional verb forms for the third person singular was tested.

Instructions:

Listen attentively to the sentences that I am going to read in Kanyi language. You are to translate them into English language.

1. My room mate dances before she sleeps.
2. Mr. John brushes his hair every morning.
3. Rita and Anna watch children's movies every evening.
4. Binta washes her uniform after every two days.
5. I wash my cutlery after every meal.

Exercise B:

The Present Continuous Tense.

(This tense is used to refer to an uncompleted activity that is still continuing as of the time of reporting).

1. The children are watching a football match.
2. Aaron is washing the car.
3. Javan is writing his project.
4. The students are writing a test.
5. The students are having their siesta.

Exercise C:

The Present Perfect Tense.

(This is a reflection of a present action with an indication that such an action has ended a short while ago).

1. Dennis has found his textbook.
2. Mrs Tom has prepared breakfast.
3. The painter has repainted the house.
4. Mrs Paul has just left for London.
5. The house has been sold.

Exercise B:

The Simple Past Tense.

(It is used to indicate that an activity happened and ended in the past without any connection with the present).

1. Mrs James was born in 1956.
2. Sani lost his school bag.
3. Ali bought a textbook in Mr. Bello's shop.
4. Binta wrote a letter in the classroom yesterday.
5. Okon saw a lion on his way to school.

Exercise E:

The Past Continuous Tense.

(It gives an indication that an action which took place was not yet completed as at the time of reporting).

1. I was sleeping when my sister arrived.
2. Joe was playing basketball when his father returned from the village.
3. My baby was still sleeping when I left for work.

4. The armed rubbers were still shooting into the air when the policemen arrived.

5. Mallam Audu was still beating his wife when his mother in-law arrived.

Exercise F

The Past Perfect Tense

(This tense is used to indicate that there were two different events or actions in the past but one of the events or actions had been completed before the other one took place).

1. The lecturer had left the class before the students arrived.

2. The school building had been demolished before the state government intervened.

3. The baby had stopped crying before its mother arrived.

4. The burglars had escaped before the police arrived.

5. She had finished cooking before the guest arrived.

Essay One

Write about "My first day in secondary school (past tense).

Essay Two

Write about "what my mother does every day. (Simple present tense).

In conclusion, from the data collected in the course of the research, the researcher was able to discuss the interference problems of Kanyi speakers learning English with particular reference to the present and past tense morpheme systems of the two languages.