CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.0   INTRODUCTION

In the light of the analysis and interpretation of results, the researcher has to use all care and caution in formulating his/her findings. The research process demands critical and logical thinking in summarising the findings of the study. On the basis of findings, a detailed discussion on the aspects of the Grammar Diagnostic Test Booklet and the Questionnaire is presented by the investigator in this very chapter.

5.1   MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the objectives, the following findings have been deduced from the study by the investigator:

5.1.1   Syntactic errors committed by the Vernacular Medium Class IX Students in Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh District

i. The study found 87.50% Assamese Medium, 83% Bengali Medium and 86.50% Hindi Medium students of Class IX of Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district committed errors in Word order under sentence structure.
ii. 88.50% students from Assamese Medium, 94.50% students from Bengali Medium and 91.50% students from Hindi Medium committed errors in Wh-sentence structure.

iii. 66% students from Assamese Medium, 80% students from Bengali Medium and 83.50% from Hindi Medium students, the errors were found in terms of omission of Articles.

iv. A number of students from vernacular Medium (82% from Assamese Medium, 75% from Bengali Medium and 85% from Hindi Medium) committed errors in the correct use of Articles.

v. Maximum number of students, 90.50% Assamese Medium, 91% Bengali Medium and 93.50% Hindi Medium students performed erroneous sentences in writing in terms of use of Verbs in Tense.

vi. In the appropriate selection of Auxiliaries, 88.50% students of Assamese Medium, 88.50% students of Bengali Medium and 86% students of Hindi Medium committed errors.

vii. 74% Assamese Medium, 80.50% Bengali Medium and 71% of the Hindi Medium students of Class IX committed errors in the use of Prepositions.

viii. With regard to errors in the use of Lexical items, 95% Assamese Medium students, 86.50% Bengali Medium students and 76.50% Hindi Medium students committed errors.

ix. Regarding Vernacular Medium students’ errors in the use of Punctuation marks, 94.50% Assamese Medium, 91.50% Bengali
Medium and 93.50% Hindi Medium students either inserted wrong Punctuation marks or omitted Punctuation marks.

x. Most of the students (93.50% from Assamese Medium, 91.50% from Bengali Medium and 95% from Hindi Medium) committed errors in spelling as found from the answer scripts.

xi. 23.50% Assamese Medium, 22% Bengali Medium and 26.50% Hindi Medium students’ errors could not be detected due to their incomplete writing of the sentences in English. So these were kept under the term ‘non-specific’ errors.

5.1.2 Comparision of the Syntactic Errors in English Committed by Vernacular Medium Class IX Students in Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh District.

A comparative study has been made among the vernacular medium students on the syntactic errors in English.

5.1.2.1 Assamese Medium and Bengali Medium Students

i. The finding of the study reveals that there was no significant difference between Assamese Medium and Bengali Medium students of Class IX in Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Word–order, insertion of wrong Articles, use of Verbs in Tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Prepositions, use of Punctuation marks and Spellings are concerned.
ii. The study reveals that there was a significant difference between the Assamese and Bengali Medium students studying in Class IX of Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in formation of Wh-sentence, omission of Articles, use of Lexical items omission are concerned.

5.1.2.2 Assamese Medium and Hindi Medium Students

i. The study reveals that there was no significant difference between Assamese and Hindi Medium students of Class IX in Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Word –order, formation of Wh-sentences, insertion of Articles, use of Verbs in Tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Prepositions, Punctuation marks and Spellings are concerned.

ii. The study reveals that there was a significant difference between the Assamese and Hindi Medium students studying in Class IX of Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Article omission and use of Lexical Items are concerned.

5.1.2.3 Bengali Medium and Hindi Medium Students

i. The study reveals that there was no significant difference between Bengali and Hindi Medium students of Class IX in Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Word –order, formation of Wh-sentences, by omitting
Articles, use of Verbs in Tense, use of Auxiliaries, Punctuation marks and Spellings are concerned.

ii. It was found from the study that there was a significant difference between the Bengali and Hindi Medium students studying in Class IX of Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in insertion of Articles where not necessary, use of Prepositions and use of Lexical Items are concerned.

5.1.3 Gender wise comparision of the Syntactic Errors in English

i. The study reveals that there was no significant difference between the Boys and Girls students of Class IX Vernacular Medium Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Word –order, formation of Wh-sentences, by omitting Articles, insertion of Articles where not necessary, use of Verbs in Tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Punctuation marks and Spellings are concerned.

ii. The study reveals that there was a significant difference between Boys and Girls students of Class IX in Vernacular Medium Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in the use of Prepositions and use of Lexical items are concerned.

5.1.4 Habitation wise comparision of the Syntactic Errors in English

i. The study reveals that there was no significant difference between Urban and Rural students of Class IX Vernacular
Medium Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district as far as their errors in Word –order, formation of Wh-sentences, by omission of Articles, insertion of Articles where not necessary, use of Prepositions, use of Lexical Items, use of Punctuation marks and Spellings are concerned.

5.1.5 Causes of the Syntactic Errors in English Committed by the Vernacular Medium Students of Secondary School of Dibrugarh District

i. It was found that 87.50% Assamese Medium, 83% Bengali Medium and 86.50% Hindi Medium students of Class IX of Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district committed errors in Word –order under sentence structure. The students depended on sentence pattern of their mother tongue. So, interference from the mother tongue is obvious in these erroneous sentences. From the study of wrong Word –order, errors in concord have also been found. Lack of agreement between the Subject and the Verbs ‘to be’, ‘to have’, ‘do’ and other lexical verbs are traced back to redundancy in the Second Language (SL) which lead to overgeneralization. It was found from the analysis that students had internalized a wrong rule that both ‘do’ and the main Verb carry tense. The cause found for this error is due to ‘false analogy’.
ii. Regarding the formation of Wh-sentence, 88.50% students from Assamese medium, 94.50% students from Bengali Medium and 91.50% students from Hindi Medium committed errors by not adding dummy ‘do’ to frame questions in sentences having no auxiliary and did not place auxiliary in front of the Subject to frame questions. These kinds of errors are considered as ‘developmental errors’ and fossilization of the structures already learned by the students.

iii. The data reveals that 66% from Assamese Medium, 80% from Bengali Medium and 83.50% from Hindi Medium students’ errors were found in terms of omission of Articles. The main cause is the learners’ failure to observe restrictions on Article usage which derive from ‘analogy and the learning strategy of simplification’.

iv. From the data it reveals that 82% from Assamese Medium, 75% from Bengali Medium and 85% from Hindi Medium students committed errors by using inappropriate Articles. The students ignored the grammatical restrictions and overgeneralised the use of Articles. So the cause of these errors is due to ‘overgeneralization’ and ‘asystematic’ errors.

v. It was found that 90.50% Assamese Medium, 91% Bengali Medium and 93.50% Hindi Medium students performed erroneous sentences in writing in terms of the use of Verbs in Tense. For analysis those errors were listed under three sub- categories. The
errors under these three categories are due to ‘intra-lingual problems’, ‘intrinsic difficulties in English’ and ‘redundancies in the SL which lead themselves to ‘overgeneralisation’.

vi. The data reveals that 88.50% students of Assamese Medium, 88.50% students of Bengali Medium and 86% students of Hindi Medium committed errors in the use of Auxiliary system. They took is/was and was/were as the only markers of the Present and Past tense. They extended this transitional rule in formation of future tense also. The learners’ imperfect perception, faulty comprehension and lack of control over the Second Language (L2) system due to ‘ignorance’ lead to errors. The omission of ‘be’ from the progressive is ‘typical developmental errors’. Errors like omission of Auxiliaries, dropping of Modals and errors in formation of Questions/Interrogative sentences are due to learners’ ‘wrong strategy’. Example like the tsunami going country my government is faint is due to ‘ambiguous goof’.

vii. It was found from the data that 74% Assamese Medium, 80.50% Bengali Medium and 71% of the Hindi Medium students of Class IX committed errors by using inappropriate Prepositions which are because of the ‘false analogy’.

viii. With regard to errors in the use of Lexical items, 95% Assamese Medium, 86.50% Bengali Medium and 76.50% Hindi Medium students committed errors. These errors are due to ‘confusion of
words related to semantics’. Students used non existent words which were seemingly English but completely unEnglish. These errors are because of the students’ negligence or due to weak English competence in them. Again the use of mother tongue expressions like chiriyakhana, uvoti jabo etc. are evidence of students’ brave attempt to communicate in a situation where vocabulary falls short of ideas. The unnecessary insertion of words is due to non systematic errors.

ix. Regarding Vernacular Medium students’ errors in the use of Punctuation marks, 94.50% Assamese Medium, 91.50% Bengali Medium and 93.50% Hindi Medium students either inserted wrong Punctuation marks or omitted Punctuation marks. The major factors for these errors are because of students’ ignorance and lack of perception and wrong teaching strategies.

x. Most of the students (93.50% from Assamese Medium, 91.50% from Bengali Medium and 95% from Hindi Medium) committed orthographical errors or errors in spelling as found from the answer scripts. Spelling mistakes are considered as developmental errors. Students could not distinguish between one sound from another both at the Vowel and Consonant levels and so substituted one sound by another or omitted completely or inserted or misplaced elsewhere in the words. These errors are found to be
due to students’ defective or incomplete perception, overgeneralization, lack of drill work and haste and carelessness.

xi. From the date collected it was found 23.50% Assamese Medium, 22% Bengali Medium and 26.50% Hindi Medium students’ errors could not be detected due to their incomplete writing of the sentences in English.

xii. From the personal information of the students it was found that most of the parents were illiterate (31.83%) or their educational qualifications were very low (30.16% upto class V). It was also found that 53% of the parents never used English at home or at any other social setting. It affected the students’ learning as they did not get any proper guidance at home environment in learning English as second language.

xiii. It was found from the data that 27.50% students never used English at home, 25.50% students rarely used and 29.50% students sometimes used English at home. Likewise, most of the students (32.50%) sometimes spoke English with friends and 26.33% never used English while talking with friends. The data reveals that 37.50% students always hesitated to speak English in class. So, the lack of use of English in sociolinguistic context or their little exposure affects their way of learning and they committed errors.
xiv. Regarding proficiency of the students in the communicative skills, 22% students said they were poor in reading skill and 13.83% students were very poor in the reading skill. Likewise, 30.66% students were poor and 13.83% students were very poor in the writing skill. With regard to the speaking skill, 33.83% students opined they were poor and 18.33% students were very poor in the speaking skill. 33.66% students said that they were poor in vocabulary or lexical items and 26.33% were very poor in this regard. The data reveals that 20.83% students told they were very poor in pronunciation while reading. The lack of proficiency, therefore, in the communicative skills indicates their poor level of confidence and their competence in these skills for which they committed errors.

xv. Regarding the methods of teaching 27.83% of the students opined their teachers sometimes used English while teaching, according to 20.66% students the teachers rarely and according to 14.66% students their teachers never used English while teaching. Likewise, 33.83% students said the teachers sometimes interacted with students in English while teaching and according to 22.50% students teachers never interacted with them in English. It was found from 23.66% students that teachers sometimes encouraged them to discuss and carry out tasks in English given in class and 10.50% students said they never encouraged them regarding this
matter. 24.16% students opined their teachers sometimes encouraged them to speak in English in English period, 17% students said the teachers rarely did so and 18.33% students said the teachers never encouraged them to speak. Thus, the listening and speaking practice of the second language in classroom situation was very limited. This little exposure to English language may be a cause for which students committed errors.

Again from 27.16% students said their teachers sometimes asked them to read lessons loudly, while 12.83% students said they never asked them to do so. Regarding pronunciation and writing correct English, 24.16% students said their teachers sometimes insisted them to pronounce and write correct English. According to 24% students their teachers never took spelling tests and according to 25.83% students teachers never gave dictation in English. With regard to group discussion, 14.83% students opined their teachers never encouraged them for group discussion. 38% students said their teachers sometimes taught grammar along with prose and according to 19.83% students, teachers never taught textual grammar. Again 28.50% students said their teachers never suggested them for extensive study.

The data revealed that regarding the teaching style and creating a congenial environment for learning English, the
teachers did not pay much attention which affected the students’ learning of English and they committed errors.

xvi. From the data it reveals regarding the learning style of the students that 25.50% students sometimes memorize the question answers of English lessons and 13% students never did so. 20.16% students rarely studied for improvement of their writing skill. 22.33% students never practiced grammar. The study said a majority of the students (45.66%) kept in mind the structure of their mother tongue (L1) while translating from L1 to the target language. 23.16% students follow guides orally to remember the answers without practicing by writing the structures correctly.

From the data it revealed that the strategy involved in the learning process of the students restricted the whole process of learning English as second language and they committed errors. Their own effort in learning English as a second language was also not revealed as satisfactory one.

xvii. Regarding classroom evaluation and monitoring, the data reveals that according to 30.83% students their teachers sometimes evaluated the students on continuous mode, 21.66% students said they rarely did and 17% students opined the teachers never did continuous evaluation of the teaching points. Again 29.66% students said the teachers sometimes paid attention for correction of their errors and according to 21.50% students they rarely corrected their
written tasks. 18.16% students opined that their teachers always punished them for their errors and 11.50% students said they frequently punished them for their errors.

The data collected, reveals that due to teachers’ lack of commitment towards supervising students’ learning and punishment restricted students’ interest in learning and they lost interest in the class. The data itself said that 21.16% students rarely found the class interesting and 17.83% students never found the class interesting. 26.33% students sometimes understood the English pronunciation of their teachers without difficulty and 17.50% students never understood the English pronunciation. This lessened their interest and so 14.83% students always and 25.16% students frequently felt bore in the English class and they did not want to pay attention.

5.2 DISCUSSION

The present study was designed primarily to find out the syntactic errors, to study the causes of the syntactic errors and to compare the syntactic errors in English committed by the students studying in Class IX in Vernacular Medium Secondary Schools of Dibrugarh district with reference to their medium, gender and habitation. Here an attempt is made to present a brief discussion on the basis of the responses received from the questionnaire and the grammar diagnostic test.

Based on the findings it was revealed that almost same number of the respondents of the study had committed errors specifically on ten syntactic
areas: sentence structures (Word-order, formation of Wh-sentences), Articles (Omission of Articles, Insertion of wrong Articles), use of Verbs in tense, selection of appropriate Auxiliaries, use of Prepositions, use of Lexical items, use of punctuation marks and Spelling mistakes.

It was found that 87.50% students from Assamese medium, 83% from Bengali and 86.50% Hindi medium students of Class IX committed errors in Word-order. They committed errors sometimes inserting verbs before the Subjects or Object before the Verbs or Object before the Subject. The respondents’ scripts indicated that they depended on sentence pattern of their mother tongue. Simple sentence structure in Assamese, Bengali and Hindi has Subject + Object + Verb (SOV) pattern. So students made error under category Object before the Verb, specially in the translation section and re-arrangement of jumbled words. They directly translated the Assamese/Bengali/Hindi words into English equivalents which led to malformation of sentences. Thus, there was a lack of familiarity with new rhetorical structures and the organization of ideas due to which they committed errors. An earlier study of Singh (2009) supports this. He found fourth highest no. of errors in use of Subject + Verb (SV) agreement by students. They omitted the Verb form and Subjects in many sentences. They were confused to identify person and the number of the Subject.

Interference from the mother tongue is obvious in these erroneous sentences and it was a main source of committing errors. Some earlier studies also support it: Cook (1997 in Samra 2003) found that many of the English language learning (ELL) writers’ errors were due to interference
from the L1. Moreover, Pathak (2006), Khansir (2008), Liu and Xu (2013), Ngangbam (2016) hold that the major source of errors in English is interference of the mother tongue. Thomas (2014), in his study found that influence of the mother tongue is the negative influence on the performance of the target language learner. The learner has the tendency to find out an equivalent word for the target language from the mother tongue. But Ali (2011) and Benzigar (2013) found from their study that vast majority of the errors were not due to L1 or mother tongue interference.

The data reveals that 88.50% students from Assamese Medium, 94.50% from Bengali and 91.50% from Hindi Medium students committed errors in the formation of Wh-sentence. These errors were caused due to developmental errors. “In the process of reducing the L2 system, this deviant form is fossilized in the interlanguage of a quite few students” (Selinker 1972). Ngangbam’s (2016) study supports this claim of the investigator. Supporting this view Duskova (1969) maintains that “these errors are due to hypercorrection or overgeneralization”. The errors committed by the students were caused by the extension of the target language grammatical rules. George (1972 in Samra 2003) in his study found that “on the basis of analogy, the students internalize that in English one needs a question marker ‘do’ to indicate the question, a past marker ‘-ed’ to indicate past. They also internalize that the past marker ‘-ed’ is to be used both with ‘do’ and the main verb.” This finding was found coincide with Abeywickrama’s (2010) study. He revealed that developmental errors of Sinhala speaking undergraduates were more than the negative L1 transfer/ interference.
According to him, developmental errors were caused because of the learner’s efforts to build up hypothesis about the language from his limited experience in the classroom.

Study revealed 66% Assamese Medium, 80% Bengali and 83.50% Hindi Medium students committed errors in the use of Articles. The main cause was found learners’ failure to observe restrictions on Article usage which derive from analogy and the learning strategy of simplification. Jain (1974) from his study found that the learner from his exposure to the target language had not been able to arrive at any firm generalization with respect to articles in English. He calls the errors ‘asystematic’. Khansir (2008) in his study indicates that learning strategies are the cause of these errors.

Verb or rather the Verbal phrase is central to the structure of the sentence. The present study reveals most of the students (90.50% Assamese, 91% Bengali and 93.50% Hindi Medium) committed errors in this area. The main cause found were intra-lingual, ‘redundancies in the SL which lead themselves to overgeneralization (Selinker 1972, Richards 1971.Taylor 1974). Corder (1973), in his study found that wrong tense used in verb forms with adverbials referring to future time by students were at the ‘pre-systematic errors’. Earlier researcher, Singh (2009) also observed third highest no. of errors in use of verb forms. He observed learners omitted the use of lexical/main verbs in many sentences. They made most of the errors because of the extension of-ing inflection and omission of-s/es inflection in verb form. Learners made deviated/used analogy on the basis of other verb form.
The use of Verb in tense is a difficult problem to analyse. The control of the restrictions of the English tense sequence is a late acquisition in learning the Verb system and therefore we can say it is quite natural for Class IX students to have only a partial control of the English tense system. Singh (2009), in his study found that students made most of the errors because they were confused in the use of tense and its aspects. According to Bakshi (1978), “It is difficult to pinpoint the real sources of errors in this area except in those cases where the errors are the result of L1 interference.”

From the answer scripts, the investigator found regarding appropriate use of Auxiliaries, 88.50% errors from Assamese Medium, 88.50% from Bengali and 86% from Hindi Medium students. Students overused Auxiliaries or inserted wrong Auxiliaries in simple sentences or used wrong Auxiliaries in wh-questions. Richards (1971) in his study found the same typical developmental errors made by learners of English as second language. It was found from the study that students’ imperfect perception, wrong comprehension and lack of control over the L2 system due to ignorance led them to the errors with regard to the use of Auxiliaries. Singh’s (2009) study supports this finding. He found second highest no. of errors in use of auxiliaries and observed that learners did not have a clear notion of the use of auxiliaries (unnecessary insertion of auxiliary). They extended the use of auxiliaries in a restricted environment.

Regarding the comparisons of the errors of Auxiliary verbs, the statistical data reveals that there is no significant difference between the urban
and rural students of Class IX Vernacular Medium Secondary Schools. A similar study was done by Bose (2005) regarding the Tamil learners of English as second language’s use of modal auxiliary verbs and he found that for all the classes, urban students displayed better competence of modal auxiliaries in English than the rural students. Martha (1977) from her study revealed that students from rural background committed larger number of errors (65.4%) in comparison to students from urban background (42.6%).

Deviant use of or omission of Prepositions were observed from 74% Assamese Medium, 80.50% Bengali Medium and 71% Hindi Medium students of Class IX. All the errors were due to the insufficient mastery of different Prepositions and their functions and application of false analogy. It reveals that ignorance of rules of prepositions and their application in translation as a teaching-learning strategy were the observable errors in the students’ use of English in the vernacular medium schools. Sarma (1990) mentions in his findings that about 61% of the errors in the use of preposition involved substitution of some common prepositions.

In Lexico-grammatical errors, use of inappropriate lexical item not only makes the sentence unacceptable but also affects the sentence patterns (Pareshar 1977). The present study reveals that in the use of lexical items 95% students of Assamese Medium, 86.50% of Bengali Medium and 76.50% of Hindi Medium committed errors. In this study, the investigator tried to analyse students’ errors related to ‘content words’. Content words are lexical words which carry a recognizable identifiable ‘meaning’ even when used in isolation. It
was found that students committed errors due to use of wrong words or misuse of words or unnecessary insertion of words. A vast majority of deviations in the use of Lexical items are because of confusion of words related in meaning. Parida (1985) in his study calls these words semantically similar words. He, in his study found that the students somehow knew the meaning but unable to use them appropriately. They used words seemingly English but completely unEnglish. These errors are ascribed to students’ negligence or due to the weak English competence in them and their lack of language contact inside and outside the classroom that makes the learning situation deplorable. Singh’s (2009) study says that we can not ignore the role of context and learners’ utterances are context specific. It was found in his study that some sentences were correct in isolation but erroneous in context. Some of the reasons responsible according to him were poor motivation, lack of opportunities of learning good English and incompetence of their teachers. Ngangbam’s (2016) study supports this finding and she observed that the students were found having incomplete expressions or sentences in describing a situation, under sentence fragments error typology.

Regarding students’ errors in the use of Punctuation marks, 94.50% Assamese medium, 91.50% Bengali medium and 93.50% Hindi medium students either inserted wrong punctuation marks or omitted punctuation marks. The major factor is the students’ ignorance and lack of perception. It was found that two third of punctuation is governed by rule and one third by personal taste of the students. Speech is more variable in structuring of information with stress, intonation and rhythm than writing. Punctuation is one of the various ways in
which written meaning can be presented and arranged for effective communication and proper understanding. Parida (1985) in his study says “some of the errors can be ascribed to the teaching strategies. Teachers, while reading out of text material, don’t always follow the usual full pauses and half pauses denoted respectively by full stops and commas and thus make students fail to perceive the significance of these marks.” Ngangbam (2016) in her study found misuse or overuse of commas by the subjects regarding errors in punctuation marks.

Grammar plays an important role for acquiring and using the language. Realising this, grammar is taught as learning element in the Secondary Schools. Learners in turn are expected to get the grammatical knowledge as imported through teaching materials. A language learner need not acquire all the grammatical items, but the frequently used grammatical traits taught as pedagogical grammar. But in the present study it was found that most of the students from Vernacular medium committed errors in English. The evaluation of the answer scripts of the achievement test revealed that students’ imperfect perception regarding the use of grammar rules, negative L1 interference, faulty comprehension, confusion of words used, lack of vocabulary knowledge, haste and overlook were found as the main causes of these errors. Mohire (1989) found from his study that errors were due to lack of comprehension and expression, wrong punctuation marks, wrong word-order, wrong English syntax and wrong usage of grammatical items. Dulay and Burt (1974) call these errors as ‘ambiguous goof’ where the students used a unique kind of sentence structure
that can not be categorized as either L1 interference or developmental errors. Research conducted by Rajkhowa (2012), Liu (2013), Ngangbam (2016) supports this finding of the investigator. Rajkhowa (2012) found the most frequent errors made by the students were in grammar and usage followed by sentence structure and vocabulary. Liu (2013) from his analysis found that students’ grammatical errors were the result of insufficient grammar knowledge, carelessness, lack of writing practice, or the desire to write more complex sentences in their writing and unfamiliarity with the grammar rules. Similar result was found in the study of Liu and Xu (2013). They found carelessness, influence of L1, lack of sufficient English writing practice and insufficient grammatical knowledge were the principal reasons for errors. Ngangbam (2016) found punctuation, sentence fragments, prepositions and verbs with greatest repeated number of error rates. She concluded that mother tongue interference, sentence fragment overuse, lack of grammatical knowledge formation and developmental errors were the main causes of errors committed by the students.

The data reveals that most of the students (93.50% from Assamese Medium, 91.50% from Bengali Medium and 95% from Hindi Medium) committed orthographical errors or errors in Spelling as found from the answer scripts. Anshu (2004) found that among the types of errors in writing, spelling mistakes was most prominent, followed by grammatical and syntactic errors. Spelling mistakes are considered as developmental errors. Richards (1971) found that the students could not distinguish between one sound from another both at the Vowel and Consonant levels and so substituted one sound by another or
omitted completely or inserted or misplaced elsewhere in the words. According to Srivastava (1981 cited in Parida 1985) “Both at the visual and audio perception levels, the learners’ perception is either defective or incomplete, so that the sounds can not be organized properly and encoded in its spelling.” The main causes of spelling mistakes were due to students’ overgeneralization, lack of drill work and haste and carelessness. It is according to Bansal & Harrison (1974), vowel (e) and (i) are the major source of spelling errors. Benzigar (2013) observed that learners failed to understand that English language has more letter alternatives to a sound than sound alternatives to a letter which influenced them to produce incorrect spellings. Earlier researcher, Ngangbam (2016) also found the most frequent errors committed by the subjects were in spelling. She found the reasons behind might be due to lack of consideration, memory lapses, carelessness, confusion or late exposing of English which led to poor background knowledge.

Correction of spelling mistakes can be overcome by taking spelling test, encourage students’ for regular correct writing and correcting their errors. But it was revealed from the study that according to 24% students their teachers never took spelling tests and 25.83% students said the teachers never gave dictation in English. 24.16% students said their teachers never insisted them to write correct English. The data reveals according to 29.66% students their teachers sometimes paid attention for correction of their written tasks and 21.50% students said teachers rarely corrected their written tasks. This attitude of the teachers and their way of teaching lessen the interest of the learners which affect
the motivation level of the students in learning English. Rohimi and Karkami (2015) found teaching effectiveness a source of motivation for students in learning English as a second language.

It is generally found that when the learners see practical purposes in learning the language, they are motivated even if the language is not significant in the learners’ community. Javad (2013) in his study also found that learners were roughly motivated to learn English as a foreign language and reasons were found the learners’ negative attitude to English language and the usefulness of learning English as the language of communication. Onder (2015) also found that the learning process was affected not only by the learners’ needs and learning style, but also by the motivation of the learners.

The data reveals that with regard to the differences in committing syntactic errors by the Vernacular Medium students of Class IX there was no significant difference among the students of Assamese, Bengali and Hindi Medium students as far as their errors in Word-order, Wh-sentence formation, use of Verb in tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Punctuation and Spelling mistakes are concerned. A significant difference was found among the three mediums regarding their errors in use of Articles, use of Preposition and use of Lexical items. Again there was no significant difference between the Boys and Girls students of Class IX of Vernacular Medium with regard to the errors in Word-order, Wh-sentence formation, use of Articles, use of Verbs in tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Punctuation and Spelling mistakes are concerned. It was found that there was a significant difference between the Boys and Girls students of
Class IX of Vernacular Medium as far as their errors in use of Preposition and use of Lexical items are concerned. The study also reveals that there was no significant difference between the Urban and Rural students of Class IX of Vernacular Medium as far as their errors in Wh-order, Wh-sentence formation, use of Articles, use of Verbs in tense, use of Auxiliaries, use of Preposition, use of Lexical items, use of Punctuation and Spelling mistakes are concerned.

The findings from the study regarding students’ use of language, reveals that 27.50% students never used English at home, 25.50% students rarely used and 29.50% students sometimes used English at home. Most of the students (32.50%) sometimes spoke English with friends and 26.33% never used English while talking with friends. The data reveals that 37.50% students always hesitated to speak English in class. This less exposure to the second language in social setting and hesitation led to students’ error in the use of the language.

The data also reveals that 27.16% students said their teachers sometimes asked them to read lessons loudly, while 12.83% students said they never asked them to do so. 24.16% students said their teachers sometimes insisted them to pronounce and write correct English and according to 25.83% students teachers never gave dictation in English. Again 29.66% students said the teachers sometimes paid attention for correction of their errors and according to 21.50% students they rarely corrected their written tasks.

Listening and speaking influence each other as the more students get input from listening, the richer the knowledge they acquire then the more fluent they become. It is also a fact that to acquire the basic language skills,
practice is very important. Regarding students’ practice of LSRW only 12.16% students said that they always read newspaper or magazine or storybook in English, 9.83% students read very frequently, 30.33% students read sometimes, 23.83% students read rarely and 23.50% students never read newspaper or magazine or storybooks written in English.

Responses from the students revealed that 12.66% students always listened to TV or radio news and other programmes in English, 10.83% students listened frequently, 34.33% students sometimes listened to TV or radio news and other programmes in English, 13.84% students rarely and 28.66% never used to listen to TV or radio news and other programmes in English.

Regarding proficiency of the students in the communicative skills, 22% students said they were poor in reading skill and 13.83% students were very poor in the reading skill. Likewise, 30.66% students were poor and 13.83% students were very poor in the writing skill. With regard to the speaking skill, 33.83% students opined they were poor and 18.33% students were very poor in the speaking skill. 33.66% students said that they were poor in vocabulary or lexical items and 26.33% were very poor in this regard. The data reveals that 20.83% students told they were very poor in pronunciation while reading. The lack of proficiency, therefore, in the communicative skills indicates their poor level of confidence and their competence in these skills for which they committed errors. Ibrahim (1996), in his study, found that a high percentage of students reported that they had lack of proficiency at the time of reading English as a second language. Earlier researcher Gilakjani (2012) found from his study that
due to minimal exposure to the target language, learners did not acquire fluency, control or idiomatic expressions in pronunciation.

Again, regarding students’ interest in speaking English, data revealed that 14.83% students did not have any interest in speaking and they always felt bored in the class and so did not pay attention and stayed silent. 21.33% students frequently felt bored and 25.16% sometimes did not want to pay attention and kept silence. It was found from their responses that they were lack of motivation in an EFL classroom due to this boredom. So, 17.83% students never found the English class interesting and 21.16% students rarely found interest in the class. Dislen (2013), has conformity with this finding that students’ boredom leads to lack of motivation and enthusiasm in students in language learning. Jayashree (1989) and Mohire (1989) in their study also found that students did not show any interest in learning English. Li and Liu (2011) found that many learners were unwilling to take risk with the language and thus preferred to remain silent during the class time. A range of factors were identified by them as leading to reticence which included lack of self-confidence, lack of preparation, fear of making mistakes, lack of knowledge or interest and students’ personality. Riasati (2013) explored Iranian EFL learners’ perception of factors influencing their willingness to speak in language classrooms. He found factors including role of teacher, class atmosphere, learners’ self perceived speaking ability and fear of correctness of speech reduced their willingness to speak. Learners were found to be roughly motivated to learn English as a foreign language due to the negative attitude and the usefulness of learning English as the
language of communication. Liu (2013) investigated Chinese EFL learners’ reticence and revealed that very few students were willing to speak individually in class, and reasons were identified as contributing to the findings of the present study, including low English proficiency, personality, fear of speaking, difficulty of the task, fear of making mistake, teachers’ teaching style and lack of familiarity with the task.

Speaking does not itself constitutes communication unless what is being said is comprehended by another person. It is a skill, which needs attention to be developed, as English is a foreign language. The neglect of oral communication practice in the classroom will hinder such an important language learning foundation to emerge and severely obstruct the development of other aspects of language skills. The real life purpose of reading is to convey information, entertain or to share something that they do not have. Lack of knowledge of vocabulary and meanings were the major problems for the learners.

It was also found that the learning style of the students also restrained them to learn the language and they committed errors. The data itself reveals that 20.16% students rarely studied for improvement of their writing skill. 22.33% students never practiced grammar. The study said a majority of the students (45.66%) kept in mind the structure of their L1(mother tongue) while translating from L1 to the target language. 23.16% students follow guides orally to remember the answers without practicing by writing the structures correctly. The students’ much dependence on the structures of their mother tongue hindered their learning and they committed errors.
Learner plays the crucial part in the learning courses. The learning process is affected by the learner’s needs, learning style, motivation and most important-learner’s own effort. It was revealed from the study that there was a lack of motivation and students’ own effort to learn English as a second language. Earlier study by Dislen (2013) also found that students were disinterested though the teacher built a positive environment in language learning classroom. They did not feel will to learn within themselves. So the study revealed that the shortage of motivation and lack of willingness made them not take pleasure out of learning English.

The data from the teaching style and methods of teaching English give us an understanding of the strategies adopted by the teachers in the classroom. The data reveals that while teaching, according to 60% of the students, their teachers always used vernacular medium. Again according to 24% of the students, their teachers never took spelling tests in English, 25.83% students said their teacher never gave dictation in English, 33.83% students opined that their teacher never selected students to explain the textual lessons and according to 19.83% students, the teacher never taught grammar topic along with the prose. Thus, the study revealed teachers’ indifferent attitude and ineffective teaching style which affected in students’ learning style and they committed errors. They were not so much attentive in developing the communicative skills of the students. Liu (2005) found that students complained that they were not given enough time by their teachers and that the teaching style of the teacher was a major factor in forming their willingness to speak behaviour. Lisa (2006) found
that teachers’ attitude and teaching style can dramatically influence the learners’ willingness to participate in developing communicative skills in the classrooms. Chang (2010) found that according to students’ perceptions of their teachers, the dominant teaching style was indifference. The majority of the students felt that their teachers did not have close relationship with them. The indifferent teachers rarely cared about the needs of their students. Javed (2013) found that teachers’ effectiveness of teaching was assessed by their students to be roughly satisfactory.

Teachers need to create a supportive environment in language classroom to understand their students, which will dramatically influence the learning process. A supportive learning environment makes learners more motivated, confident and gives them a higher perception of their abilities. Dislen (2013) found from his study that positive reinforcements such as praise, high grade or small presents play a big role in promoting students’ will to learn.

Regarding classroom evaluation and monitoring, it was tried by the investigator to find out teacher’s way of evaluation, feedback and encouragement and punishment from students’ perspective. It revealed that majority of the teachers (according to 33.50% students) encouraged students to discuss and carry out tasks given in lesson and only 10.50% teachers never encouraged their students to do so. Again, according to 28.33% students, their teachers always insisted on to pronounce and write correct English, only 12.16% students opined the teachers rarely and 11% students said their teachers never insisted on correct pronunciation as well as correct writing in English. For group
discussion in English, 29.33% students stated that their teachers always encouraged them for group discussion, only 14.83% students said their teachers never encouraged them for group discussion in English. Regarding teacher’s continuous evaluation, 30.83% students said their teachers sometimes did it, 21.66% students said it happened rarely and according to 17% students, the teachers never evaluate them continuously during or after completion of the teaching topic. Only 9.50% students said it was done by their teachers frequently in the class. Again 20.50% students opined their teachers never gave them homework and 25.83% students said it was given sometimes by their teachers and according to 24.83% students, teachers rarely gave them homework to do. It was found that 21.66% students said their teachers sometimes understood their problems in writing and paid attention for correction. Similarly 21.50% students said their teachers rarely understood their problems in writing and hence paid less attention for correction. Regarding punishment, majority of the students said (29.66%) their teachers sometimes gave them punishment, 18.16% students on the other hand said their teachers always gave them punishment.

It was generally accepted that a teacher needs to give punishment to the students to maintain classroom discipline and control over the class. As a teacher s/he has to create a balance between a caring environment and a controlled one to let the genuine communication happen in the classroom. But a teacher who uses aggression and punishment strategies is not perceived to be effective teacher. Few of the earlier research work also support it. Rahimi and Karkami (2015) found in their study that in classes where punishment and
aggression strategies are used by the teachers to manage the class, students have problems in learning. Punishment was found to be one reason for low language learning motivation among students.

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