AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF FREE COMPOSITIONS
# IN WRITTEN ENGLISH BY THAI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

JITTRA BANLOMCHON

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY OF THAILAND

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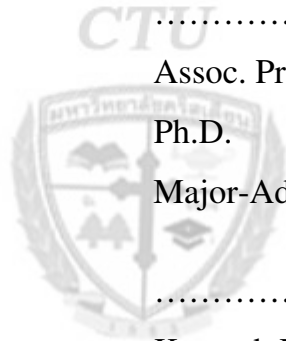
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was submitted to the Faculty of Graduate School, Christian University of

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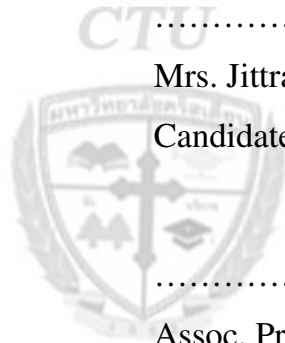
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to substantiate the hypothesis that major problems for Thai students in writing free compositions in English are from grammatical and lexical errors. In support of this hypothesis the study was made of the frequency of writing errors occurring in free compositions of the High School students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province, and to analyze common errors in free compositions. The research sample was fifty grade 12 students of Nakprasith School in Nakhonpathom Province obtained by a sample random technique from one hundred students in two classes.The data were collected on December 1 to 31, 2004. The research instruments consisted of 1) ten writing topics, 2) five picture stories, and 3) a scheme classification of twenty-five types of error.The total of one hundred of written compositions obtained were analyzed by means of percentage.

The results of the research were prioritizing as follows: The ten most frequent from a total twenty-five types of errors were: 1) determiners, 2) wrong choice of words, 3) verb forms, 4) agreements, 5) prepositions, 6) punctuations,

7) tenses, 8) capitalization, 9) nouns, and 10) misspelling. The common errors from a total twenty-five types of errors were analyzed and found that 57.39 percent were grammatical errors, 25.06% were lexical errors, and 17.55% were mechanical errors respectively.

The common causes of errors in writing free compositions were from mother tongue interference, over-generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized.

These findings suggested that various kinds of errors made by Thai students should be corrected. Teachers should encourage the students to understand more grammatical rule and vocaburary in order to reduce their errors and get success in English usage in every level.
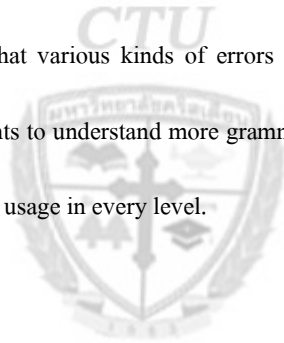
บทคัดย่อ

        การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อยืนยันสมมุติฐานที่ว่าข้อผิดพลาดทางด้านโครงสร้างและการใช้คำศัพท์เป็นปัญหาส่วนใหญ่ที่เกิดขึ้นสำหรับเด็กนักเรียนไทยในการเขียนเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษแบบอิสระ   ดังนั้นการสนับสนุนสมมุติฐานในการวิจัยครั้งนี้นักวิจัยได้ศึกษาความถี่ของข้อผิดพลาดที่เกิดขึ้นในการเขียนเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษแบบอิสระ ของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 ของโรงเรียนนาค-ประสิทธิ์ จังหวัดนครปฐม และวิเคราะห์ข้อผิดพลาดที่เกิดขึ้นทั่วไป โดยกลุ่มตัวอย่างในการวิจัยคือ   นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 โรงเรียนนาคประสิทธิ์ จังหวัดนครปฐม จำนวน 50 คน ซึ่งได้มาจากการสุ่มตัวอย่างจากประชากรจำนวน 100 คนจำนวน 2 ห้องเรียน ระยะเวลาในการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลเกิดขึ้นระหว่างวันที่ 1 ถึงวันที่ 31 ธันวาคม 2547 เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย ประกอบด้วย 1) หัวข้อสำหรับการเขียนเรียงความ จำนวน 10 หัวข้อ 2) รูปแบบเรื่องสำหรับการเขียนเรียงความ จำนวน 5 เรื่องและ 3) เกณฑ์การวิเคราะห์ข้อผิดพลาด จำนวน 25 ชนิด การวิเคราะห์ข้อผิดพลาดจากเรียงความทั้งหมด 100 ฉบับ วิธีวิเคราะห์โดยใช้ค่าร้อยละ

        ผลการวิจัยพบว่ากลุ่มตัวอย่างมีข้อผิดพลาดในการเขียนเรียงความทั้ง 25 ชนิด ซึ่งสามารถเรียงลำดับความถี่ของข้อผิดพลาดจากมากไปหาน้อย จำนวน 10 อันดับ คือ 1) การใช้คำนำหน้านาม 2) การใช้คำผิด 3) การใช้คำกริยา 4) การใช้คำประธานกับคำกริยาสำคัญของประโยค 5) การใช้คำบุพบท 6) การใช้เครื่องหมายวรรคตอน 7) การใช้ประโยคที่เกี่ยวข้องกับกาลเวลา 8) การใช้อักษรตัวใหญ่ 9) การเลือกใช้คำนาม และ 10) การเขียนสะกดคำผิด   จากข้อผิดพลาดทั้งหมด 25 ชนิด สามารถสรุปเป็นข้อผิดพลาดทางโครงสร้าง คิดเป็นร้อยละ 57.39 ข้อผิดพลาดของการใช้คำศัพท์ คิดเป็นร้อยละ 25.06 และ ข้อผิดพลาดทางด้านกลวิธีการใช้เช่นการสะกดคำผิดหรือการใช้เครื่องหมายวรรคตอน คิดเป็นร้อยละ 17.55 ตามลำดับ

        สาเหตุทั่วไปของข้อผิดพลาดในการเขียนเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษมาจากการแทรกซ้อนของภาษาแม่ การสรุปหรือใช้กฎเกณฑ์มากเกินไป การไม่รู้จักข้อจำกัดของกฎ การใช้กฎเกณฑ์ทางภาษาไม่ครบถ้วน และการสรุปกฎเกณฑ์ผิด

        ดังนั้นข้อผิดพลาดต่างๆที่เกิดขึ้นในการเขียนเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษของเด็กไทยควรได้รับการแก้ไขให้ถูกต้อง โดยครูผู้สอนควรส่งเสริมให้นักเรียนได้เรียนรู้และเข้าใจโครงสร้างทางด้านไวยากรณ์มากขึ้นรวมถึงการใช้คำศัพท์ต่างๆให้ถูกต้องตามสถานการณ์   เพื่อลดการเกิดข้อผิดพลาดและนำไปสู่ความสำเร็จในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในทุกระดับชั้น

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and rationale of the study

Nowadays, English language is considered as the most important foreign language widely used in education and communication all over the world, especially, in terms of business, politics, and tourism. In Thailand, English is also very popular for Thai students. So, many educational institutes offer English as compulsory and elective courses to serve students' needs.

The following data was the National Test Report for the year 2004 (Nakprasith School: 2004) of students grade 12 of Nakprasith School among three subjects.

Subject	No.of students	Total score	The lowest score	The hightest score	The average score (%)
Thai	101	50	22	42	69.307
Mathematics	101	40	13	40	63.292
English	101	50	11	48	60.733

Subject	Improve		Medium		Well done	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%
Thai	-	-	19	18.812	82	81.188
Mathematics	-	-	34	33.663	67	66.337
English	4	3.960	43	42.574	54	53.465

The report showed that the average score in English subject was the lowest when compared with Thai and Mathematics. Most students still are weak in English usage. Some of the causes may be from the following factors:

1) Many teachers are not sufficiently qualified in teaching English language. That is, they did not graduate in an English major field.

2) English language errors are sometimes due to inefficient teaching or learning materials in the classroom (Torut, 1993).

3) There is inadequate time to learn English in the classroom. Therefore, it is very difficult to motivate students' interest in studying English and make the English study effective in a short period of time.

4) The student may lack funds to learn the English language because the cost of learning English language is rather more expensive than other subjects, especially, when they wish to learn in an international school or a bilingual school.

5) Most students lack the opportunities to practice the four English skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. This is because the language they use in daily life is Thai, not English. Therefore, the students use Thai in daily life rather than the English language.

6) Some of the most frequent errors of Thai students arise from their mother tongue interference. Many Thai students think in Thai and then translate into English word for word. This will cause grammatical structure errors and incorrect English vocabulary usage (Torut, 1993).

In this study, the researcher is interested in studying writing skills of high school students (grade 12) because most students (grade 12) have a background of knowledge and experience in learning English for many years and their writing skills should be good enough. However, the teacher has to contend with students' errors because writing skill is the most complicated and difficult one. Students have to pay more attention and spend more time to practice and improve their writing. If they do not really know the structure and vocabulary, then they cannot write English well.

According to Chalaysap (1982: Introduction), most teachers are more familiar with the frustrations of teaching English. They have to correct the same mistakes over and over again and have to repeat the explanation of the points already discussed in earlier lessons. Therefore, she concludes that a good way to teach English effectively is for the teacher to give students the opportunity to become familiar with many types of errors in order to prevent the occurrence of these same errors.

We know that learning English language as a second language is difficult because when students start to write a sentence or a paragraph, they have to consider the main idea and supporting ideas in each paragraph including the coherence between the paragraphs. Students have to imagine how the description varies according to the situation. The problem we normally encounter is that students will think in their mother tongue and then translate into the target language. They also lack knowledge in terms of vocabulary and structure. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand the nature of the learners' mother tongue in order to understand the language learners' errors in their target language.

Byrne (1988: 5) mentioned that writing is learned through a process of instruction. This means that learners have to master the written form of the language and to learn certain structures which are less used in speech, or perhaps not used at all, but which are important for effective communication in writing. Learners also have to learn how to organize their ideas in order that a reader who is not known to them can understand what they write.

Heaton (1975: 138) commented that writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgement elements. The necessary skills for writing good language in its usual form can be divided into four main areas:

1) Grammatical skills, the ability to write the correct sentences.

2) Stylistic skills, the ability to manipulate sentences and use language effectively.

3) Mechanical skills, the ability to use those conventions peculiar to the written language correctly such as spelling and punctuation.

4) Judgement skills, the ability to write in an appropriate form for a specific purpose with a specific audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize and order relevant information.

When students are learning to write ESL or EFL, they always make some errors. There are many reasons why students commit errors when learning a foreign language.

Brook (1964; quoted in Chalaysap A.) indicates that there are four possible reasons for the occurrence of errors:

1) The student may make a random response; that is, he may simply not know which of many responses is the right one.

2) The student may have encountered the model but not have practiced it a sufficient number of times.

3) Distortion may have been induced by dissimilar patterns in the language.

4) The student may have made a response that follows a sound general rule but because of an anomaly in the new language is incorrect in this instance.

Therefore, correcting the students' errors is very important because the students can learn from their errors and improve their writing.

Nakprasith School is one of the private schools where teachers pay attention in teaching English to their students and the curriculum they use is also based on the Ministry of Education as in other schools. Therefore, the potential of students in learning English at Nakprasith School should not differ much in comparison to other schools. However, learning English is still a major problem of Thai students. The researcher interviewed one of the teachers who teaches English in Nakprasith School and she agreed that many students are weak in English. The researcher believes that the major problems of teaching and learning English of almost every school are the same. Therefore, the researcher would like to analyze the errors from written compositions in

English of students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School. Teachers will benefit from the results of this study and they can further adapt the way of teaching their students to be more efficient and effective.

This study aims at analyzing writing errors in English free compositions of high school students (grade 12) of Nakprasith school, Nakhonpathom Province.

The theoretical framework of the analysis of errors was based on the idea of Richards (1974) and Norrish (1982) regarding the possible causes of errors: 1) Over-generalization 2) Ignorance of rule restrictions 3) Incomplete application of rules 4) False concepts hypothesized and 5) Mother tongue interference.

The Scheme of Error Classification was applied from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), and Srinon (1999) with a total of twenty-five categories:

1) Error in capitalizations

2) Error in the use of adjectives

3) Error in the use of adverbs

4) Error in the use of agreements

5) Error in the use of conjunctions

6) Error in the use of determiners

7) Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds

8) Error in the use of nouns

9) Error in the use of possessives

10) Error in the use of prepositions

11) Error in the use of pronouns

12) Error in the use of tenses

13) Error in te use of verb forms

14) Error in the use of subjects and objects

15) Incomplete sentences

16) Misspelling

17) Overgeneralization

18) Error of parallel structures

19) Error in the use of punctuation

20) Error of the repetition of words

21) Error of run-on sentences

22) Space error

23) Error of word order

24) Wrong choice of words

25) Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors

At present, English usage is influential for Thai students. Therefore, students' ability to use English effectively is very important, especially writing. The writing skill is very difficult for students. When they write sentences, some errors or mistakes always occur. Thus, teaching students to be familiar with their errors and know how to correct them is very essential so that they can use English effectively.

1.2. General information of the study

Nakprasith School was established on August 20, 1940 by Phrakhru Palad Pan Sangsopha, Wat Bang Chang Nua, on a thirty-five rai plot of land. It was the first private school in Sam Phran District, Nakhonpathom Province. The school was inaugurated on July 15, 1941, with one hundred and twenty five students, five teachers, and only one building.

The school aims at developing general and academic administration in order to create many effective aspects of learning so that the students can live happily in society.

Educational management policies of the school are as follows:

1) To develop students' potentialities through effective learning, virtue, ethics health, conversation and appreciation of the value of the environment and of being a Thai citizen loyal to the nation, religion, monarch, and having faith in democracy.

2) To develop effective administration and management, to promote teamwork, and establish relationship with the community.

3) To develop the capability and knowledge of personnel, teachers, and administration in order to be good examples in developing their work at a professional standard.

At present, the school has over 5,000 students and 226 teachers. It is very important for all teachers to develop the quality of teaching in order to give the appropriate knowledge to students so they can apply their knowledge to their daily life. In this regard, students should learn English as their second language and understand the process of writing, listening, speaking and reading so that they can use English for communication with foreigners in the future.

1.3. Objectives of the study

This study is designed to

1.2.1) Identify the frequency of writing errors occurring in free compositions of High School students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province.

1.2.2) Analyze causes of the common errors in term of grammatical, lexical and mechanical

1.4. Expected benefits of the study

A. Benefits of the study

1) To know the frequency of errors in writing composition in English of Thai students.

2) To know the common errors in the free compositions of Thai students.

B. Benefits for teachers and learners

1) The results of the study will be the guidelines to correct the students' writing.

2) Teachers can create a test based on students' error recognition.

3) Error analysis benefits learners because they can recognise and reduce errors as they continue their study.

4) Teachers can adapt more suitable teaching methods for the students once they know the students' weak points in writing English.

5) Teachers will get points of view to improve their students' writing skills.

1.5. Hypothesis of the study

Major problems for Thai students in writing free compositions in English are from grammatical errors and lexical errors.

1.6. Scope of the study

This is a study of errors in writing free compositions of high school students grade 12 of Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province. The scope of the study is described below.

1.6.1) Population and sample

1.6.1.1) The population were 100 high school students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province studying in the Science-Mathematics Program, in the second semester of the academic year 2004.

1.6.1.2) The subjects were 50 high school students (grade 12) of Nakprasith school, Nakhonpathom Province in the Science-Mathematics Program, in the second semester of the 2004 academic year. The subjects were randomly selected from the population.

1.6.2) Each student was requested to write two compositions. The free compositions were based on topics and selected pictures that the researcher provided. The students chose only one topic of each type.

1.6.3) The data were collected on December 1 to 31, 2004 by the teacher of Nakprasith school who teaches the (grade 12) English students.

1.6.4) The scheme of error classification was adapted from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982); Norrish (1983); and Srinon (1999). It included a total of twenty-five categories.

1.7. Limitation of the study

This study is descriptive research. The main objectives of this study are to analyze the frequency and the main types of errors occurring in students compositions. There are many causes of the errors that occurred in this study. Each error could have resulted from several factors and could not be exactly traced to a single cause. Due to the time restraints, results of this study might be incomplete because the researcher did not have a chance to interview students about their writing. Therefore, the researcher could not clearly define the exact causes of certain errors.

1.8. Definitions of terms

An error means a mistake in writing a free composition compared to standard English language. The errors of this study were classified based on the scheme of error classification differentiated from a total of twenty-five categories applied from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982); Norrish (1983); and Srinon (1999)

Free composition means a composition written by students without guidance or help using one of ten given topics and one of five situations from sets of pictures by Frauman-Pricker; each composition was to be a minimum of 100 words in length.

Thai High School Students refer to the Thai high school students (grade 12) of Nakprasith school, Nakhonpathom Province studying in the Science-Mathematics Program, the second semester of the academic year 2004.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review related to an error analysis presented the following topics:

2.1   An overview of errors

2.2   An error analysis approach

2.3   Sources of errors

2.4   Problems and limitations of errors analysis

2.5   Methods of correcting errors

2.6   Research studies related to error analysis

2.1 An overview of errors

The study of students' writing errors is very important. Corder (1981: 35) reported that learners' errors are a major element in the feedback system of the process which is called language teaching and learning. Therefore, the study of errors is also a fundamental part of applied linguistics. It provides a validation of the findings of contrastive linguistic studies. Corder (1973: 293) stated that "errors are evidence about the nature of the process and or the rules and categories used by the learner at a certain stage in the course". Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 138) indicated that teachers who have waged long and patient battles against their students' language errors have come to realize that making errors is an inevitable part of learning. People cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors. Studying learners' errors serves two major purposes: 1) it provides data from which inferences about the nature of the language learning process can be made; 2) it indicates to teachers and curriculum developers which

part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types detract most from a learner's ability to communicate effectively.

Norrish (1983: 7) divided the different types of language irregularities into three types: the error, the mistake and the lapse which is called a systematic deviation. When a learner has not learnt something and he consistently 'gets it wrong', it is **an error**. For example, a child aquiring his own language sometimes makes the same error consistently. In the same way, when a learner of English as a second language makes an error systematically, it is due to a lack of learning the correct form. Once a learner has been taught the way to use the verb 'must' in English, it may not follow the same pattern as some of the other modal verbs. Learner may produce 'he must go' and 'he must to go'; sometimes the learner will inconsistently use one form and sometimes the other. We shall call this inconsistent deviation **a mistake**. This means that sometimes the learner gets it right but sometimes he makes a mistake and uses the wrong form. Another type of wrong usage is **a lapse,** which may occur from lack of concentration, shortness of memory, fatigue, etc.

Corder (1967; quoted in Ellis 1994: 51) makes a distinction between errors and mistakes. He specifies that an error takes place when a deviation arises from a lack of knowledge. It represents a lack of competence. A mistake occurs when learners fail to perform within their competence. Therefore, a mistake is the result of processing problems that prevent learners from accessing their knowledge of a target language rule and this causes them to fall back on some alternative, non-standard rule that they find easier to access. Mistakes are performance phenomena and are regular features of native-speaker speech, reflecting processing failures that arise as a result of competing plans, memory limitations, and lack of automaticity. He argues that error analysis should be restricted to the study of errors. In other words, mistakes should be eliminated from analysis.

He also noted that identification of errors could be significant in three ways:

1)   They provide the teacher with information about how much the learner had learnt.

2)   They provide the researcher with evidence of how language was learnt.

3)   They serve as devices by which the learner discovered the rules of the target language.

Ellis (1985: 21-22) proposed that errors can result from the following reasons:

1)   Interference which is the result of proactive inhibition, concerns the way in which previous learning prevents or inhibits the learning of a new habit.

2)   Transfer will take place from the first to the second language. Errors can occur when transfer is negative due to the occurrence of proactive inhibition. Transfer will be positive when the first and second language habits are the same. Odlin (1989) (as quoted in Ellis 1994: 301) gives the meaning of transfer as follows:

> Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired (1989 : 27).

3)   Errors are the result of non-learning rather than wrong learning. Therefore, classroom practice could be directed to the problem areas in order to help learners overcome the negative effects of first language transfer.

Norrish (1983: 11) mentions that errors are not only an inevitable part of the learners' output but they are also quite possibly a necessary part because they provide useful information for teachers and help them to plot the learning activity as it takes place.

Ellis (1994: 301-302) stated that "errors occurred as a result of the negative transfer of mother tongue patterns into the learner's L2" However, three things we should consider as facilitation, avoidance or underproduction, and over-use.

Ellis (1994: 302) shows the percentage of interference errors reported by various studies of L2 English grammar (from Ellis 1985a: 29) as follows:

Study	% of interference errors	Type of learner
Grauberg 1971	36	First language German-adult, advanced
George 1972	33 (approx)	Mixed first languages-adult, graduate
Dulay and Burt 1973	3	First language Spanish-children, mixed level
Tran-Chi-Chau 1975	51	First language Chinese-adult, mixed level
Mukkatesh 1977	23	First language Arabic-adult
Flick 1980	31	First language Spanish-adult, mixed level
Lott 1983	50 (approx)	First language Italian-adult, university

Table 1: The percentage of interference errors

Source : Ellis, R, Understanding Second Language Acquisition (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1994)

Corder (1973: 270-272) indicated that errors can be ascribed to one of the following stages: (1) pre-systematic stage, (2) systematic stage, and (3) post-systematic stage.

The pre-systematic error stage or the stage of random guessing means a stage in which the learner is only vaguely aware of something to be learnt and

also aware of a particular system of the target language. The learner is not able to correct his errors or explain them.

The systematic error stage means the stage in which the learner has begun to discover the correct system but is inconsistent in his application of what he knows. The learner can explain their errors by providing alternative linguistic messages, such as giving different words or structures, even though they cannot correct their mistakes.

The post-systematic error or 'practice stage' of learning means the learner can obviously describe the process of learning. He or she can both explain and correct errors.

These stages are summarized in following Table:

Error type	Correction possible	Explanation possible
1. Pre-systematic	No	No
2. Systematic	No	Yes
3. Post-systematic	Yes	Yes

Table 2: Stages of errors

Corder (1973: quoted in Torut) stated that errors can be described as errors of addition, omission, substitution, and ordering.

1) Addition refers to the learner unnecessarily adding word(s) in the sentence, such as adding a "do" auxiliary in the sentence, "Does can he sing?"

2) Omission refers to the learner omitting a word or words in the sentence, such as the definite article from the sentence " I went to movie."

3) Substitution refers to the case in which students use a word which is not suitable in the context, such as the word "road" substituted for "way" in the sentence " I lost my road," (instead of saying " I lost my way.")

4) Ordering refers to confusion with the word order in the target language, such as saying "I to the store went," instead of saying " I went to the store."

Corder (1973) divided language into four levels: phonology or orthography, lexicon, grammar, and discourse. This opinion is in line with Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 146). They described four error types based on linguistic categories according to language components as follows: phonology (pronunciation), syntax and morphology (grammar), semantics and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary), and discourse (style).

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 55) classified error types into 6 categories as described below:

1) The omission of grammatical morphemes means omitting items that do not contribute much to the meaning of the sentence, such as *I buy some coloring book*. The sentence omits past and plural markers. Language learners omit grammatical morphemes much more frequently than content words. Omission errors were found in greater abundance and across a greater variety of morphemes during the early stages of L2 acquisition. In intermediate stages, when learners have been exposed to more of the target language, misformation, misordering, or overuse of grammatical morphemes are more likely to occur.

2) The double marking of a given semantic feature means marking two or more items in an utterance when only one marker is required, such as *She didn't wented*. Past tense is marked more than once.

Error of Double Marking in L2 Production

Semantic Feature	Error	Example of Error*
Past tense	Past tense is marked in the auxiliary and the verb	She *did*n't *went/goed*.
Present Tense	Present tense is marked in the auxiliary and the verb	He do*es*n't eats.
Negation	Negation is marked in the auxiliary and the quantifier	She did*n't* give him *none*.+
	Negation is marked in the auxiliary and the adverb	He do*n't* got *no* wings. They do*n't hardly* eat.

Semantic Feature	Error	Example of Error*
Equation Predicate	Equation is marked in two copula positions	*Is* this *is* a cow?
Object	The object is both topicalized and expressed in the object pronoun	That*'s the man* who I saw him.
Past Tense	The auxiliary is produced twice	Why *didn't* mommy *don't* make dinner?

Table 3: Error of Double Marking in L2 Production

The above table presents the types of double marking errors commonly observed in L2 performance.

3)   The regularization of irregular rules, such as *That mouse catched him*. Normally, we use –ed as the regular past tense marker instead of the irregular "caught". The verb *eat* does not become *eated*, but *ate*; the noun *sheep* is also *sheep* in the plural, not *sheeps*.

Regularization is more narrowly defined than the more commonly used term "overgeneralization" which has been used to describe almost all developmental errors observed.

4)   The use of archiforms means using one form for the several required, such as *Them going to town; I know them*.

5)   The alternating use of two or more forms, such as using of much and many: *too much dolls; many potteries*.

6)   The misordering of items in constructions that require the reversal of word-order rules that have been previously acquired, such as *I don't know who is it."*

The relationship and relative proportions of the Four Error Types in a Comparative Taxonomy are as follows:
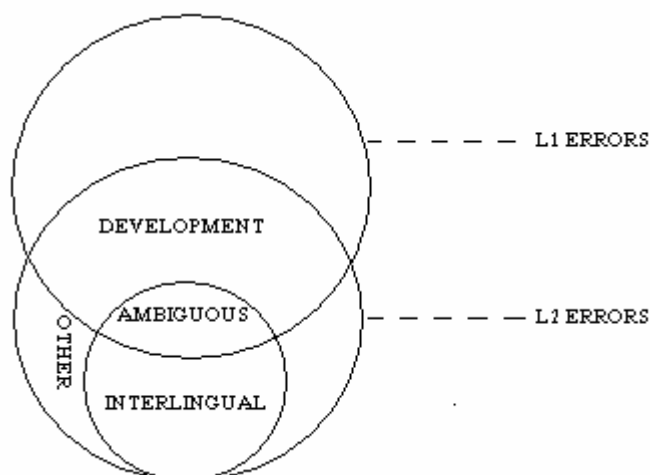
Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 165-172) explained the meaning of the above diagram as follows:

Developmental errors are errors similar to those made by children learning the target language as their first language.

Interlingual errors are similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language. To identify an interlingual error, researchers usually translate the grammatical form of the learner's phrase or sentence into the learner's first language so as to see if similarities exist.

Ambiguous errors are those that could be classified equally well as developmental or interlingual, such as, I no have a car.

Other errors: few taxonomies are completed without a grab bag for items that do not fit into any other category, such as, she do hungry.

Burt and Kiparsky (1972 quoted in Sereebenjapol 2003: 27) concluded that learner' errors can be classified into two categories as follows:

1) Global errors occur in sentences with more than one clause, errors in overall organization which confuse the relations among the constituent clauses

or errors which cause a reader to misunderstand a message, such as "I like taxi but my friend said so not that we should be late for school".

2) Local errors mean minor errors within clauses or errors which do not significantly hinder communication of a sentences message such as, "If I heard from him I will let you know".

2.2 An error analysis approach

Teachers have come to realize that errors or mistakes of learners are very useful for language teaching because the analysis of learner' errors is the clearest evidence for further developing systems for learners. Teachers also can get insights into how learners process the data of the language. (Littlewood : 1984)

Norrish (1983: 80-88) specified three different methods of an error analysis as follows:

2.2.1) "The pre-selected category approach"

Etherton (1977) suggested the list of headings stated below for starting the work of classifying errors.

List of headings

1) Abbreviations	12) Can
2) Adjectives	13) Capital letters
3) Adverbials	14) Comma
4) Age	15) Comparison
5) Agreement	16) Conditionals
6) Apostrophe	17) Connections
7) Articles *a, an*	18) Could
8) Articles (omitted)	19) Days and date
9) Articles (unnecessary, but inserted)	20) Direct questions
10) As	21) Do
11) Be	22) Ed/ Ing

23) Full stop

24) Future perfect

25) Gerund

26) Have

27) Hyphen

28) Indirect question

29) Indirect speech

30) Infinitive inverted commas

31) Make

32) Must

33) Nouns (countable/ uncountable)

34) Numbers

35) Passive

36) Past continuous

37) Past participle

38) Past perfect

39) Personal pronouns

40) Plural problems

41) Possessive adjectives

42) Prepositions (omitted)

43) Prepositions (unnecessary but inserted)

44) Prepositions (wrong one)

45) Present continuous

46) Present participle

47) Present perfect

48) Punctuation

49) Question tags

50) Reflexive pronouns

51) Relative pronouns

52) Sequence of tenses

53) Simple future

54) Simple past

55) Simple past, passive

56) Slang

57) Spelling

58) Spelling (pronuncition)

59) Spelling (L1 interference)

60) Spelling (metathesis)

61) There is/ are

62) Time

63) Unclassified

64) Verbs- past not known

65) Vocabulary

Etherton (1977) draws attention to some important points as follows:

1)   He indicates that it is important that the material from which the errors are taken is as representative of the student's standard of work as possible. It must also be free writing; guided writing will only allow certain errors and those may not be a representative selection, though it may be that teachers will wish to check on errors produced in guided writing too.

2)	Teachers will find the collection they make more flexible if the entries are cross referenced from one section to another, for example:

I saw the man was died

3 cards are needed:

a) died	(Stored alphabetically in vocabulary section.)

b) dead

c) 'Pairs of words confused'

('Front' card, with actual examples kept behind it.)

3)	Etherton points out that even a fairly simple collection of errors can indicate where either the teacher's work is not proving effective, or the syllabus itself is defective either as to the ordering of, or failure to include, certain language items.

2.2.2) "Let the errors determine the categories approach"

This is the final list of error types arrived at by Hudson (1941) by the process of recording errors into separate cards, one error per card, and then grouping the cards together in boxes. Gradually the sorting produced smaller and smaller groups, until eventually all the cards were accounted for apart from a handful.

1) Tense

 For example, simple past instead of simple present active.

 A brother has more strength to help me whenever I fought with anyone.

2) Agreement

   For example, subject – verb agreement.

   … things which makes me happy

3) Determiners

   For example, omission of the definite article.

   Before United States…

4) Word order

   For example, adverbs.

   They might have also some reason…

5) Subordinate clauses

For example, relative clauses.

…the only boy what my mother has.

6) Ungrammatical redundancy

For example, redundant adverbs.

We returned back to Addis Ababa….

7) Fragments

For example, When he sat down….

8) Possessive and attributive structures

For example, *of* construction instead of *'s*.

The only son of my mother….

9) Incomplete structures

For example, obligatory object omitted.

'One can enjoy with a brother.'

10) Comparative constructions

11) Superlative constructions

12) Reported speech

For example, failure to make adjustments in pronouns and time-words.

13) Negative constructions

14) Structural idioms

For example, infinitive instead of *ing* after various verbs.

They don't mind to accept it.

15) Participial phrases

I was left there being lonely and miserable.

16) Parallel structures

For example, present participle with non-finite verb.

…seeing my family and went for a picnic.

17) Pronouns, infinitives and infinitive constructions

Non-referential *There* sentence.

They were many men who were drinking heavily.

18) Derivation

    For example, noun derivation.

    …the day of happy.

19) Lexical selections

    For example prepositions.

    …who lives at this world.

    So…that construction (miscellaneous errors).

20) Spelling

21) Capitalisation

22) Punctuation

23) Handwriting

24) Style

25) Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors

26) Miscellaneous complex and irreducable errors

This approach is suitable only for written English. All the errors/mistakes which the teacher records should be on cards rather than in an exercise book because it is easy to re-order and recategorise when the teacher uses cards, whereas it is not easy to move when the teacher uses the pages of an exercise book. The processes are as follows:

1) The error/mistake should be sorted out from its immediate context. For example, when several overlapping 'deviations' occur, they need to be isolated. For example, '**My sister and me are wanting brother**.' For this sentence, we need three cards. Only one error will appear on each card, thus:

Card 1   My sister and I want _____ brother.

Card 2   My sister and me want a brother.

Card 3   My sister and I are wanting a brother.

The teacher underlines the deviation on the card for ease of reference later. Card 1 would be categorized under 'Determiner' (the indefinite article 'a' is omitted). Card 2 would be assigned to ' Pronoun'. (The form here should be

'I'). Card 3 would be assigned to a category under 'Tense'. (The present continuous tense has been used in place of the normal present simple).

The disadvantage of this method is that it is time-consuming. On the other hand, all the cards can be kept and checked later.

2.2.3) "The quick check approach"

This method is likely to be commonly used by classroom teachers who wish to check quickly whether or to what extent their teaching material has been learnt by their classes. This technique could be used for either speech or writing.

In an activity a teacher may particularly wish to note the tense being used (the present simple) or the pronoun forms. A checklist where the errors occur can be noted. This method should have sufficient time. However, the main aim is to note quickly the correct or incorrect use of recently taught forms. The following Table shows an example of a checklist.

Present Simple Tense	Pronoun Forms	Verb/ Subject Agreement	Vocabulary Misused
/	/	x	bakes
/	/	x	
/	/	x	
x (be)	/	x	
x (be)	/	/	
/		/	
Comments: In the main, not bad. Verb/Subject Agreement needs more work. Pronouns seem well known. Pres. Sim. of 'be' gives some difficulties-re-teach			

Table 4: Teacher's checklist of Correct and Incorrect Forms

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) provide the following Sample of Linguistic Category Taxonomy:

Linguistic Category and Error Type	Example of Learner Error
A. Morphology	
1) Indefinite article incorrect	
• *a* used for *an*	*a ant*
• *an* used for *a*	*an little ant*
2) Possessive case incorrect	
• Omission of 's	*the man feet*
3) Third person singular verb incorrect	
• Failure to attach –s	*The bird help man.*
• Wrong attachments of –s	*The apple fall downs*
4) Simple past tense incorrect	
a. Regular past tense	
• Omission of –ed	*The bird save him.*
• Adding –ed to past already formed	*He calleded*
b. Irregular past tense	
• Regularization by adding –ed	*He putted the cookie there.*
• Substitution of simple non-past	*He fall in the water.*
• Substitution of past participle	*I been near to him.*
5) Past participle incorrect	
• Omission of –ed	*He was call.*
6) Comparative adjective/adverb incorrect	
• Use of *more + er*	*He got up more higher.*

Linguistic Category and Error Type	Example of Learner Error
B. Syntax	
1) Noun Phrase	
a. Determiners	
• Omission of the article	*He no go in hole.*
• Substitution of definite article for possessive pronoun	*He fall down on the head.*
• Use of possessive with the article	*He put it in the his room.*
• Use of wrong possessive	*The little boy hurt its leg.*
b. Nominalization	
• Simple verb used instead of –ing	*by to cook it*
• Preposition *by* omitted	*The dove helped him putting leaf on the water.*
c. Number	
• Substitution of singulars for plurals	*He got some leaf.*
• Substitution of plurals for singulars	*He stab him in the feet.*
d. Use of pronouns	
• Omission of the subject pronoun	*(He) pinch the man.*
• Omission of the "dummy" pronoun *it*	*Is nice to help people.*
• Omission of object pronouns	*I don't know (it) in English.*
• Subject pronoun used as a redundant element	*My brother he go to Mexico.*

Linguistic Category and Error Type	Example of Learner Error
• Alternating use of pronouns by number as well as gender	*So he can eat it (referring to apples).*
• Use of *me* as subject	*Me forget it.*
e. Use of prepositions	
• Omission of preposition	*He came (to) the water.*
• Misuse of prepositions	*He fell down from (for on, into?) the water*
2) Verb Phrase	
a. Omission of verb	
• Omission of main verb	*He (fell?) in the water.*
• Omission of *to be*	*He in the water.*
b. Use of Progressive tense	
• Omission of *be*	*He going*
• Replacement of –*ing* by the simple verb form	*The bird was shake his head.*
• Substitution of the progressive for the simple past	*Then the man shooting (shot?) with a gun.*
c. Agreement of subject and verb	
• Disagreement of subject and verb person	*You be friends.*
• Disagreement of subject and number	*The apples was coming down.*
• Disagreement of subject and tense	*I didn't know what it is.*
3) Verb-and-Verb Construction	
• Embedding of a noun-and-verb construction in another noun-and-verb construction	*I go to play. (I go and I play)*

Linguistic Category and Error Type	Example of Learner Error
• Omission of *to* in indentical subject construction	*I go play*
• Omission of *to* in the verb-and-verb construction	*I see a bird got the leaf.*
• Attachment of the past marker to the dependent verb	*He was going to fell.*
4) Word Order	
• Repetition of the object	*The bird (object) he was gonna shoot it.*
• Adjectival modifiers placed after noun	*He put it inside his house a little round.*
5) Some Transformations	
a. Negative transformation	
• Formation of *no or not* without the auxiliary *do*.	*He not play anymore.*
• Multiple negation	*They won't have no fun.*
b. Question transformation	
• Omission of auxiliary	*How the story helps?*
c. There transformation	
• Use of *is* instead of *are*	*There is these hole.*
• Omission of *there*	*Is one bird.*
• Use of *it was* instead of *there was*	*It was round things*
d. Subordinate clause transformation	
• Use of *for* for *so that*	*For the ant could get out.*
• Use of indicative for conditional	*So he don't kill the bird.*

Table 5: Sample of linguistic category taxonomy

From Dulay and others, Language Two (Oxford : Oxford University Press,1982),pp.148-150

2.3 Sources of errors

Sources of errors can be caused by the cross-association of both L1 (the source language) and L2 (the target language) (Richards: 1974). As Taylor (1986, quoted in Ellis 1994: 57) pointed out, the source of error may be psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic, or may reside in the discourse structure. Psycholinguistic sources involve the nature of the L2 knowledge system and the difficulties learners have in using it in production. Sociolinguistic sources concern such matters as the ability of the learners to adjust their language in accordance with the social context. Epistemic sources involve learners lacking world knowledge, while discourse sources concern problems in the organization of information into a coherent text.

The following figure is Abbott's plot of psycholinguistic sources of errors (Ellis 1994: 58)

```
                                    ┌─── transfer
                                    │
           ┌─── competence ─────────┼─── intralingual (e.g. overgeneralization,
           │       (errors)         │              transitional competence)
           │                        └─── unique (e.g. induced)
errors ────┤
           │                        ┌─── processing problems
           └─── performance ────────┤
                   (mistake)        └─── communication strategies
```
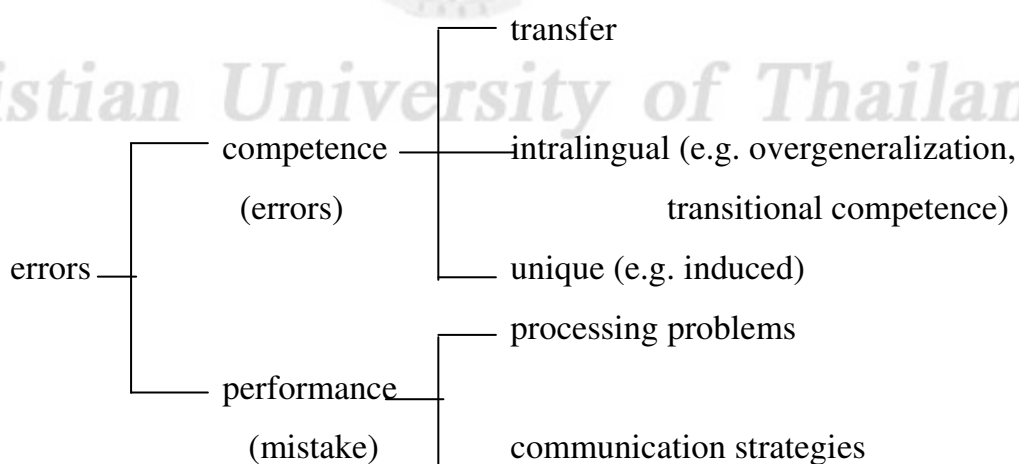
Psycholinguistic sources of errors

Richards (1971b, quoted in Ellis) distinguishes three different sources of competence errors as follow:

1)   Interference errors occur when one uses elements from one language while speaking another. For an example, when a German learner of L2 English says * 'I go not' because the equivalent sentence in German is 'Ich gehe nicht'.

2)   Intralingual errors reflect the general characteristics of rule learning such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply.

3)   Developmental errors occur when the learner tries to build up hypotheses about the target language on the basis of limited experience.

Brook (1964) explained the four possible reasons for errors' occurrence as follows:

a)   The student may make a random response; that is, he or she may simply not know which of many responses is the right one.

b)   The student may have encountered the modal but not have practiced it a sufficient number of times.

c)   Distortion may have been induced by dissimilar patterns in the language.

d)   The student may have made a response that follows a sound general rule but because of an irregularity in the new language is incorrect in this instance.

Richards (1974: 174-179) explained four causes of intralingual and developmental errors:

1) Over-generalization means that the learner creates a deviant structure based on his own experience of other structures in the target language, such as, *he can sings, we are hope, it is occurs, he come from.*

2) Ignorance of rule restrictions, closely related to the generalization of deviant structures, is failure to observe the restrictions, such as, *The man who I saw him* violates the limitation on subjects in structures with *who. I made him to do it* ignores restrictions on the distribution of *make*. A major factor in the misuse of preposition is from analogy because the learner, encountering a particular preposition with one type of verb, tries by analogy to use the same preposition with similar verbs. For example, *He showed me the book* leads to *he explained me the book; he said to me* gives *he asked to me; we talked about it,* therefore *we discussed about it; ask him to do it* produces *make him to do it; go*

with him gives *follow with him.* Some pattern exercises appear to encourage incorrect rules being applied through analogy.

3) Incomplete application of rules means the occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances such as a statement form may be used as a question, one of the transformations in a series may be omitted, or a question word may simply be added to the statement form.

4) False concepts hypothesized. This concept may be sometimes due to poor grading of teaching items. For example, the form *was* may be interpreted as a marker of the past tense, giving *one day it was happened* and *is* may be understood to be the corresponding marker of the present tense: *he is speaks French.*

Using the above analysis of the major types of intralingual and developmental errors may lead teachers to examine their teaching materials for evidence of the language-learning assumptions that underlie them.

Norrish (1983: 21- 27) postulated causes of errors as follows:

Carelessness: It is closely related to lack of motivation, being in a hurry or boredom. Many teachers will accept that carelessness of students may not depend on the lack of students' attention; perhaps it may be from unsuitable materials and or the style of presentation.

First language interference: Learning a language is a matter of habit formation concerned with the behaviorist theory. Then when we try to learn new habits, the old ones will interfere with the new ones. We call this 'mother tongue interference'.

Translation: The reason why learners try to translate a familiar expression in his first language into the language he is learning is because he does not know the appropriate expression or structure to communicate something in his second language. Therefore, he will fall back on the system of his familiar language, his mother tongue.

2.4 Problems and limitations of errors analysis

Norrish (1983: 91-93) indicated that it seems to be difficult for the teacher in analyzing errors because when the time changes, the language also changes and develops. Therefore, what is considered 'incorrect' today may be acceptable tomorrow. For example, Dr Johnson's opposed slang words and would not include the word 'job' in his famous dictionary, which is now a perfectly correct English word.

Three examples which may sound unusual, but were eventually accepted in a major error analysis (Hudson 1971):

a. All this was done *for the progress* of my country.

b. … and *it is always my prayer* that my country will develop…

c. They had come to *help me to celebrate* my birthday.

Some would claim that the forms in italics are incorrect, since they are simple translations from the learners' own languages. This cannot be a valid reason for rejecting them, because there almost certainly will be occasions when the use of this very natural communicative 'strategy' of translating from the source language results in acceptable English sentences.

Further problems of error classification do not necessarily relate to the teacher's view of language, but also depend on his or her interpretation of the nature of the error, such as, when a learner writes 'chose' for 'choose'. How is this to be classified? It might be regarded as spelling, or as an incorrect tense.

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 141) proposed that there are at least three major methodological problems of research design and analysis of weaknesses: (1) The confusion of explanatory and descriptive (process and product) aspects of error analysis. (2) Lack of sufficient precision and specificity in the definition of error categories. (3) The inappropriate use of simplistic classifications to explain learners' errors.

2.5 Methods of correcting errors

When learners write compositions, certainly they need the teacher to correct errors in their compositions. As Corder (1973: 293) proposed, the teacher must understand the source of the errors so that he or she can provide the appropriate data and other information, sometimes comparative, which will resolve the problems of the learner and allow him or her to discover the relevant rules. Corder (1973) also suggested that the teacher should have skill in correction in order that he or she could present the appropriate data to the learner including to what statements, descriptive or comparative, to make about it.

Cohen (1971 : quoted in Chalaysap) suggested that when the teacher decides to correct a learner's errors, he or she has to consider at least four dimensions at the same time; the adequacy of information about the error, the importance of correction, the ease of correction, and the characteristics of the learner.

Norrish (1983 : 73-74) found that the method of using 'code' to indicate errors written in margins or over the error was a profitable approach. For example, **T** (tense), **WF** (word form), **WO** (word order), **S** (syntax), **A** (agreement), **V** (vocabulary), **Sp** (spelling), **P** (punctuation), **Art** (article), **R** (reference unclear), **St** (style).

Baskoff (1984 : 164) proposed another set of symbols for marking errors as follows:

sp.	spelling errors
punc.	punctuation errors
cap.	capitalization errors
#	errors in number (singular/plural)
det.	determiner errors (articles – a, an, the)
prep.	preposition errors
wd.	wrong vocabulary item or word form
t.	error in verb tense

agr.   error in subject-verb agreement

ref.   error in reference

?   something I can't understand

Byrne (1988 : 124) suggested the various correction procedures as follows:

(a)   Correct all the mistakes.

(b)   Correct mistakes selectively.

(c)   Indicate mistakes so that the students can correct them.

(d)   Let the students identify and correct their own mistakes.

Besides this, teachers can do the following things to help students when they make mistakes:

(a)   Explain a mistake.

(b)   Indicate to the students that they should consult teachers about a mistake.

(c)   Use the mistake as a basis for remedial teaching.

2.6 Research studies related to error analysis

The research related to students' errors in writing were found in various levels of students such as the secondary level and the university level. Students in each level have different writing skill varying according to their knowledge basis. Unavoidable errors in writing were found in every level of student. Following are research studies related to error analysis in Thailand.

Noisaengsri (1977) analyzed English writing errors of seniors at Ramkhamhaeng University who were taking the course "Advanced English Writing II" in 1977. The tool used in the research was the answer books of 302 seniors taking the exam at the end of the second semester, 1976. The findings showed that vocabulary errors are mainly found on general verbal misapplication in connection with nouns and adjectives. Misspelling was the most common error of students.

Ubol (1981) studied errors in writing free compositions of Thai university students who studied English as a foreign language. The subjects were first-year and third-year students of a university in the south of Thailand. The subjects were asked to write a free composition of 200 words and translate a text from Thai to English. The findings showed that many lexical errors can be traced to the source language (Thai) influence. Thai students at the same level of age and academic level showed different patterns of errors in writing free compositions in English. Third year Thai university students made errors less than first year students. This showed that there was progress in language during the two years of instruction at the university level.

Chalaysap (1982) did an error analysis of the compositions of the students in the writing training course and their opinions on the content and the teaching method at The National Institute of Development Administration. She found that major error categories were at the sentence level, clause level, phrase level and word level.

Lukanavanich (1988) studied written errors of first year English students at Bangkok University. The subjects of this study were 256 first-year students from Bangkok University. They were asked to write compositions of 150-200 words within 60 minutes. The errors were grammatical errors or structural errors, lexical errors and stylistic errors. The most frequent errors arose from ignorance of rules, mother tongue interference, incomplete application of rules, over-generalization and false concepts hypothesized, respectively.

Torut (1993) studied errors in English composition written by Silpakorn University students. He found that the major sources of errors arose from the interference from L1 (Thai), the overgeneralization of new rules in the target language (English), and the insufficient practice in English writing of the subjects. He also suggested that students should have training courses in writing basic sentence patterns through writing exercises and also need to build up a massive vocabulary in order to express ideas clearly and effectively.

Srinon (1999) conducted an error analysis of free compositions written by the first year students of Mahamakut Buddhist University, Mahavajiralongkornrajawitthayalai Campus, Ayutthaya Province. The research sample was fifty first-year students of Mahamakut Buddhist University. They were asked to write free composition on eleven topics and three picture stories. The findings showed the major cause of written errors arose from using the first language structures to write English compositions.

Noojan (1999) analyzed the errors that occurred in thesis' abstracts and found that most errors occurred through the process of the translation from the first language which is Thai (L1) to the second language which is English (L2) because of the different grammatical features between those two languages and the knowledge background of the translator.

Abdulsata (2000) studied errors of second-year English major students' compositions of Srinakharinwirot University. The findings of the study found that typological differences between L1 and L2 were quite influential in the L2 acquisition and such difference caused errors.

Lush (2002) conducted a study of errors made by third-year undergraduate Thai students in their essays. The study found that most grammatical errors in essay writing were as follows: misuse of definite and indefinite articles, singular and plural nouns, incorrect tense used, subject-verb agreement and use of prepositions.

Sereebenjapol (2003) analyzed the main types and frequency of errors occurring in the discussion sections of scientific theses published in 2000 at Mahidol University and to determine the probable causes of those errors. The results revealed that most frequent errors occurred in the categories of syntax, lexis, morphology and orthography respectively. Among those categories, the results found that most frequent local errors were articles, verbs, and plural markers whereas the most frequent global errors were the use of subordinators and conjunctions. The probable causes could be carelessness, incomplete application of rules, and differences between English and Thai.

According to the above research, the most frequent errors were from grammatical errors and vocabulary and the major cause of error in writing English of Thai students arose from first language interference. Most Thai students think in Thai first and then translate word for word to English without considering the regulations of L2. Therfore, first language has an influence on the language learners in learning the second language.

Besides the above research in Thailand, there also is the research related to an errors analysis in foreign countries. The findings of such research are summarized below:

Lee (1957 : quoted in Ellis) reported on an analysis of some 2,000 errors in the written work of Czechoslovakian learners, which were 'hurriedly grouped into categories'. Errors were wrong punctuation misuse, omission or articles, misspellings, non-English constructions, and wrong use of tenses.

Robinson (1960) studied English errors in the University of Rangoon and found the following errors:

1) Spelling

2) Wrong article or no article when required

3) Verb forms (e.g. I did not remembered)

4) Tense (e.g. I see him yesterday)

5) Confusion of active and passive

6) Prepositions

7) Agreements

8) Pronouns

9) Word order

10) Idiom

11) Unclassified

Besides this, Robinson studied the problem he found when marking a large number of essays submitted for a prize competition in Singapore schools. He found the eight errors occurring most frequently: (1) Lack of agreement between subject and verb. (2) Wrong use of the articles or their omission. (3)

Failure to use the present tense for habitual action. (4) Use of the present tense as an all-purpose tense. (5) Omission of the verb "to be". (6) Failure to use the perfect tense. (7) Wrong use of prepositions or their omission with verbs. (8) Confusion between certain groups of prepositions.

Duskova (1969 : quoted in Ellis) identified a total of 1,007 errors in the written work of 50 Czech learners of English, who were postgraduate students studying science. It was found that 756 "recurrent systemic errors" and 251 "once errors" such as errors that occurred once only. Articles errors were most common (260), then followed by errors in lexis (233) and morphology (180). In comparison, there were only 54 errors in syntax and 31 in word order.

Owens (1970: quoted in Lakanavanich) found that most students in Asia had English writing ability below the standard level. Writing skill is very important because learners need to communicate in various forms such as memos, reports, research reports, and articles.

Richards (1971b: quoted in Ellis) examined errors made by learners from different language backgrounds which were Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese, and the major Indian and West African languages. The study showed the different kinds of errors relating to the production and distribution of verb groups, prepositions, articles, and the use of questions.

Olsson (1973) studied errors yielded by a written test in English given to 424 Swedish fourteen years olds from 24 different classes in a comprehensive school. The study discussed the differences in attainment between pupils of high and low proficiency, frequency and types of errors for regular and irregular verbs, and the occurrence of systematic and nonsystematic errors. She found that the errors can be traced back to the influence of the pupils' mother tongue, and also to the unsatisfactory teaching strategies and teaching material.

Chamot's (1978; 1979: quoted in Ellis) studied of the acquisition of English by a bilingual French/ Spanish boy found that the main linguistic problem areas were omission of constituents, verb forms, sentence formation,

articles, and prepositions. Chamot suggested that it may be difficult to provide a satisfactory description of learners' L2 development by quantifying the types of errors they make.

Smithies and Holzknecht (1981: quoted in Chalaysap) studied errors made by students at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology.The deviations from the English of a native speaker were also noted. The 451 students whose work was examined spoke 212 different mother tongues. The analysis showed a wide range of error categories. The major types of errors have been chosen for discussions. The highest percentage of errors was articles, prepositions, verb usage and nouns respectively.

Bhela (1999) explored case studies of native language interference with target language usage. There were four participants in the study: a Spanish-speaker, a Vietnamese-speaker, a Cambodian-speaker and an Italian-speaker. They were given two sets of sequential pictures and asked to write each story in English (L2) and the native language (L1). They also were interviewed individually about what they knew about the structure of L1 and L2. The findings showed that when writing the target language, these learners rely on their native language structures to produce a response. They have used some L1 structures to produce appropriate responses in L2, producing semantically acceptable texts. Subsequently, they have also used L1 structures interchangeably with L2 structures, producing inappropriate L2 responses, indicating an interference of L1 on L2. As the structures of L1 and L2 have differences, there was a relatively high frequency of errors occurring in the target language.

Mei Lin Ho (2003) studied a step-by-step approach to empower teachers of English to analyze grammatical errors in children's writing. The objective is to provide a practical guide in developing teachers' skills in identifying and classifying students' errors, and in explaining grammatical rules. The approach to accommodate more complex nature of errors needs to be further revised and adapted over time. Nevertheless, the systematic, methodical textual analysis is

beneficial as it focuses attention on not only the type and nature of errors made but also tries to understand the violation or misappropriating of specific grammar rules on the part of the student. In examining children's writing, a student-directed approach could focus on specific needs and problem areas or weaknesses. As Carter (1997: quoted in Mei Lin Ho) proposed that "Language in the classroom is not to be encountered wholly by unconscious, implicit and indirect means" but there is also the need to "see through language in a systematic way and to use language discriminatingly".

The above research studies have shown various ways of dealing with errors. In conclusion, learner's errors in writing English as a second language vary according to the learner's competence at a particular stage. There are many causes of errors made by learners. Thus, if we know learner's errors, we can indicate his/her understanding and ability in learning the second language. Moreover, the role of the instructor is also important because instructors have to organise their ideas and their teaching methods to be more effective and appropriate to all learners in order to reduce errors. Error analysis research has benefits for both teachers and learners by pointing to areas where more effective English learning and teaching methods should be developed in the future.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive research. It was designed to analyze errors in written free compositions in English made by high school students (grade 12) in Science-Mathematics Program of Nakprasith school, Nakhonpathom Province. The three processes of error analysis used in the research are as follows:

3.1   Preparation of data

3.2   Collection of data.

3.3   Analysis of data

3.1 Preparation of data

The researcher selected the population from high school students (grade 12) during the second semester, academic year 2004 in the Science-Mathematics Program at Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province. There were two classrooms. Each classroom had fifty students. Each student had to write two compositions in each type of compositions. Therefore, the population of this study is 100 students. The researcher selected only fifty students in each type of compositions as the sample of this study by randomly selected from the population.

The criteria for selecting free compositions for error analysis: The researcher asked the teacher an students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School to answer a questionnaire regarding their preference of a topic for the compositions from a total of fifteen topics, to narrow the list down to the ten topics on which they would most like to write a composition. Each student selected only one topic. Each topic had to contain a minimum of 100 words. The other compositions were

based on one of five sets of pictures provided by the researcher. Each student selected one situation and wrote a minimum of 100 words on it. The limit of time for writing was fifty minutes per topic. If a free composition was less than 100 words, it was discarded automatically.

3.2 Collection of data

The researcher conducted a pre-test study with a sample of approximately twenty students in writing two compositions. One was a free composition on one of ten topics assigned by researcher. The other composition was to be a description of sixteen pictures concerning one of five situations. The pictures were taken from the Action English Pictures of Frauman-Prickel (1985). Students were asked to write more than 100 words per composition within fifty minutes. A Nakprasith School teacher helped the researcher to collect compositions from students (grade 12) between December 1 to 31, 2004. As prescribed, if the student wrote a composition of fewer than 100 words, his or her composition was discarded automatically. After that the researcher used a simple random method to select fifty compositions on the ten topics and fifty compositions on the pictures of the five situations. Therefore, the total number of compositions for the error analysis in this study was 100 compositions. Instruments of collection were free compositions on one of ten topics and five topics of compositions based on one of five sets of pictures.

The ten topics for a free composition were:
1) Occupation in the future
2) Taking care of a pet
3) Forest conditions in Thailand
4) My family
5) Activities on a long weekend
6) The favorite sport in my country
7) Cartoon I like most
8) If I were a millionaire

9) Impression in my life

10) Attraction in my memory

The above ten topics were selected by using a questionaire listing fifteen topics and asking them to choose one.

The five situations using the sixteen pictures were as follow:

1) A rainy day

2) A sunday drive

3) Christmas

4) Going to the library

5) Fire

For errors classification, the researcher identified twenty-five categories of the Scheme of Error Classification which was adapted from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982); Norrish (1983); and Srinon (1999). The researcher followed "Let the errors determine the categories approach" of Norrish (1983).

The Scheme of Error Classification

1) Error in Capitalization

2) Error in the use of adjectives

3) Error in the use of adverbs

4) Error in the use of agreements

5) Error in the use of conjunctions

6) Error in the use of determiners

7) Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds

8) Error in the use of nouns

9) Error in the use of possessives

10) Error in the use of prepositions

11) Error in the use of pronouns

12) Error in the use of tenses

13) Error in the use of verb forms

14) Error in the use of subjects and objects

15) Incomplete sentences

16) Error of misspelling

17) Overgeneralization

18) Error of parallel structures

19) Error in the use of punctuation

20) Space error

21) Error of the repetition of word

22) Error of run-on sentences

23) Error of word order

24) Wrong choice of words

25) Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors

3.3 Analysis of data

The process of data analysis was described below:

1) The number of words produced by all the subjects was counted. Each composition had to contain a minimum of 100 words.

2) The errors were classified into each type of error according to the Error Classification Scheme and the frequency of errors was counted using the record form of errors as applied from Srinon (1999) in Appendix III.

3) The percentage of errors was derived as follows:

Proportion of errors = number of errors/ total of errors

Percentage = 100 * proportion of errors

4) The errors were analyzed in both the numbers of errors and alphabetical order and discussed side by side.

Methodology of an error analysis in written English of grade 12 students of Nakprasith School is the descriptive research. The subjects were randomly selected from the population of 100 students. Each student was requested to write two compositions from one of ten topics and one of five situations by pictures. The errors were classified by using the Scheme of Error Classification applied from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) and Srinon (1999) with a total of

twenty-five categories. The research followed "Let the errors determine the categories approach" of Norish (1983). The frequency of errors was calculated to the percentage and the result was discussed for the possible causes of errors.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results of the error analysis of the compositions of Grade 12 students in the Science-Mathemetics program of Nakprasith school Nakhonpathom Province.

The analyzing processes were executed as follows:

4.1)　The number and percentage of errors are displayed in alphabetical order.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1. Capitalization	153	5.12
2. Error in the use of adjectives	54	1.81
3. Error in the use of adverbs	66	2.21
4. Error in the use of agreements	285	9.53
5. Error in the use of conjunctions	61	2.04
6. Error in the use of determiners	305	10.20
7. Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds	41	1.37
8. Error in the use of nouns	131	4.38
9. Error in the use of possessives	87	2.91
10. Error in the use of prepositions	232	7.76
11. Error in the use of pronouns	102	3.41
12. Error in the use of Tenses	164	5.48
13. Error in the use of verb forms	293	9.80
14. Error in the use of subjects and objects	90	3.01
15. Incomplete sentences	86	2.88

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
16. Misspelling	131	4.38
17. Overgeneralization	11	0.37
18. Parallel structures	13	0.43
19. Punctuation	222	7.42
20. Repetition of words	58	1.94
21. Run-on sentences	14	0.47
22. Space error	18	0.60
23. Word order	55	1.84
24. Wrong choice of words	296	9.90
25. Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors	22	0.74
Total	2,990	100

Table 6: Percentage of errors classified by error type

4.2) The frequency of errors is concluded by sorting from the highest to the lowest average rate.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1. Error in the use of determiners	305	10.20
2. Wrong choice of words	296	9.90
3. Error in the use of verb forms	293	9.80
4. Error in the use of agreements	285	9.53
5. Error in the use of prepositions	232	7.76
6. Punctuation	222	7.42
7. Error in the use of tenses	164	5.48
8. Capitalization	153	5.12
9. Error in the use of nouns	131	4.38
10. Misspelling	131	4.38
11. Error in the use of pronouns	102	3.41

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
12. Error in the use of subjects and objects	90	3.01
13. Error in the use of possessives	87	2.91
14. Incomplete sentences	86	2.88
15. Error in the use of adverbs	66	2.21
16. Error in the use of conjunctions	61	2.04
17. Repetition of words	58	1.94
18. Word order	55	1.84
19. Error in the use of adjectives	54	1.81
20. Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds	41	1.37
21. Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors	22	0.74
22. Space errors	18	0.60
23. Run-on sentences	14	0.47
24. Parellel structures	13	0.43
25. Overgeneralization	11	0.37
Total	2,990	100

Table 7: Percentage of errors sorted from the highest to the lowest average rate.

4.3)   The examples are shown in alphabetical order totaling twenty-five categories as follows:

4.3.1) The error of capitalizations

The error of capitalizations shows the percentage of error in capitalization. Error in capitalization between sentences accounts for 77.78% and proper nouns uncapitalized accounts for 22.22 %.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Proper nouns uncapitalized 2) Capitalization between sentences	34 119	22.22 77.78
Total	153	100

Table 8: The error of capitalizations

The sentences below are examples of capitalization between sentences and proper nouns uncapitalized:

- I will buy benze. (Benze)
- On Christmas day, there're many activeties such as finding the Suitable tree, baking cooking, Making many cards for everyone that they want them happy.

  (On Christmas day, there are many activities such as finding a suitable tree, baking cookies, and making cards for everyone.)

4.3.2) Error in the use of adjectives

There were several different types of error in the use of adjectives. The three highest types of adjective errors are inappropriate or wrong choice of adjectives (55.55%), omission of adjectives (18.52%) and confusion of adjectives with nouns or pronouns (16.67%).

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Confusion of adjectives with nouns	9	16.67
2) Inappropriate / wrong choice of adjectives	30	55.55
3) Omission of adjectives	10	18.52
4) Confusion of *a lot of, much and many*	5	9.26
Total	54	100

Table 9: Error in the use of adjectives

Examples of error in the use of adjectives are indicated below:-

Confusion of adjective with noun:

- I feel <u>the loneliness</u> in the life without my lovely dad.

    (I feel lonely without my lovely dad.)

Inappropriate or wrong choice of adjectives:

- My family have <u>entire</u> ten people.

    (My family has ten people.)

Omission of adjectives:

- I know that this occupation have_____ income but I want to be a

    nurse and I will work as long as I can. (less)

Confusion of *a lot of , much and many* :

- I have not <u>many</u> time to spend at home with my family.

    (I do not have much time to spend at home with my family.)

- I think that the nurse is a good job and make money <u>very much</u>.

    (I think that being a nurse is a good job to make a lot of money.)

As seen on Table 7, error in the use of adjectives is only 1.81% of the total amount of twenty five errors. It is considered a small amount when compared with other errors. However, these errors should be corrected. The major errors of students in regard to adjectives occurred from using inappropriate adjectives.

4.3.3) <u>Error in the use of adverbs</u>

Inappropriate or wrong choice of adverbs occurred 74.24 % of the time and the other two types of error were omission of adverbs (18.18%) and confusion of adverbs with other forms (7.58%) respectively.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Inappropriate / wrong choice of adverbs	49	74.24
2) Omission of adverbs	12	18.18
3) Confusion of adverbs with other forms	5	7.58
Total	66	100

Table 10: Error in the use of adverbs

The examples of error in the use of adverbs are:

Inappropriate or wrong choice of adverbs:

- She was disappointed so much.

   (She was very disappointed.)

- The house doesn't so big but we can live this house comfortably.

   (The house is not very big but we can live in this house comfortably.)

Omission of adverbs and confusion of adverbs with other forms:

- Exceptable from Piyodamari that I like most, I like mashimoro, it is a white rabbit.

   (Besides Piyodamari, which I like most, I also like Mashimoro, a white rabbit.)

- It so quick after my calling.

   (They came very quickly after my calling.)

- During way she find a basin and try to jump across the basin then she doen't use umbrella and running very fasty.

   (Along the path, she found a puddle then she closed her umbrella and jumped across it by running very fast.)

The above examples show various kinds of errors in one sentences, not only adverb errors but also other errors as well. However, when the students are still confused when they use adverbs, the reason may be from insufficient knowledge about using adverbs correctly.

4.3.4) <u>Error in the use of agreements</u>

The following table shows error in the use of agreements. The most frequent types of agreement errors are subject-verb agreement (85.97%), and determiner-noun agreement (14.04%) respectively.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Subject-verb agreement	245	85.96
2) Determiner-noun agreement	40	14.04
Total	285	100

Table 11: Error in the use of agreements

Examples of the above mentioned errors are as follows:

<u>Subject-verb agreements:</u>

- She <u>come</u> back home with sadness. (comes)

- When she <u>arrive</u> at her home, she <u>take</u> a bath and <u>go</u> to bed at once. (arrives, takes, goes)

- Tan-tan <u>have</u> <u>a</u> big eyes. (has, delete)

<u>Determiner-noun agreements:</u>

- My father and <u>My</u> mother are <u>a gardener</u>. (delete, gardeners)

4.3.5) <u>Error in the use of conjunctions</u>

The most frequent errors in this type are using inappropriate or wrong choice of conjuctions (81.97%) and 18.03% being errors of omission of conjunctions.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Inappropriate / wrong choice of conjunctions	50	81.97
2) Omission of conjunctions	11	18.03
Total	61	100

Table 12: Error in the use of conjunctions

Examples of conjunction errors are as follows:

The inappropriate or wrong choice of conjunctions:

- <u>When</u> I was a millionaire, I could ask for anything not in the air. (If)

- <u>As</u> I would construct a big university and employ professors to make the best university. (delete)

- <u>And</u> I would donate some of my money to making world peace. (delete)

Omission of conjunctions:

- I hardly help the work at home but I try to do it as much as I can for example clean the clothes, iron clothes, ___ clean bowls. (and)

Conjunction errors remain a problem for Thai students. Most of all, conjunctions were used at the beginning of the sentence instead of linking two sentences. The possible reasons are from L1 interference or ignorance of rules.

4.3.6) Error in the use of determiners

Determiner errors occurred the most frequent among twenty five types of errors. Determiner errors are classified into two types: (1) Indefinite article (57.70%) and (2) Definite article (42.30%)

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Indefinite Article (a, an)	176	57.70
2) Definite Article (The)	129	42.30
Total	305	100

Table 13: Error in the use of determiners

Examples of determiner errors are:

- China's story is his favorite story, so he ask ___librarian for it.(the)

- My father is ____driver. (a)

- His daughter writes a card to <u>a</u> Santa. (delete)

- _____Cartoon I like most is GUNDAM. (The)

- It is ___Bangkeaw. (a)

4.3.7) <u>Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds</u>

The following table presents infinitive and gerund errors. Gerund errors (65.85%) occurred more frequently than infinitive errors (34.15%).

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Infinitives	14	34.15
2) Gerunds	27	65.85
Total	41	100

Table 14: Error in the use of infinitives and gerunds

Examples of infinitive errors are as follows:

- At night, everyone must go to bed <u>for waiting</u> their Santa <u>giving</u> their gifts or presents to their socks at the chimney. (to wait, to give)

- Last thing I want to do is ___ donate some money for all science that can develop and keep the world. (to)

Examples of gerund errors are as follows:

- I gradually develop my football skill by <u>add</u> new skill and <u>increase</u> my power but I'm short. (adding, increasing)

- Muyong like <u>swim and eat</u>.

(Muyong likes swimming and eating.)

Infinitive and gerund errors are not a big problem in this study because the percentage of errors is only 1.37 % when compared to other errors.

4.3.8) <u>Error in the use of nouns</u>

Table 15 shows the percentage of noun errors. The majority of errors involve the omission of plural endings (54.96%) while confusion of nouns with other forms (6.11%) is a minor amount of the errors.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Noun Forms		
1.1) Confusion of nouns with other forms	8	6.11
1.2) Omission of nouns	14	10.69
1.3) Inappropriate use of nouns	21	16.03
2) Number		
2.1) Omission of plural endings	72	54.96
2.2) Inappropriate use of plural endings	16	12.21
Total	131	100

Table 15: Error in the use of nouns

Following are examples of each type of errors:

Confusion of the nouns with other forms:

- He gives a help for me when I get a terrible thing. (trouble)
- I think my dad loves me so much because he gives me any good introduction for me and gives a consulting when I have a problem.(advice)

Omission of noun:

- Although he doesn't have opportunity to go the ___, he can find detail of it from book. (to, China)

Inappropriate use of noun:

- My mother works for money in factory. (a salary)
- My grandfather is people in a good mood.

    (My grandfather is a good-humored person.)

There are many examples of the misuse of nouns that are examples of L1 interference. In Thai thare is a grammatical form the linguists call a "classifier" which is necessary in addition to the noun itself to indicate the type of the noun.

Thai students, as in this case, manufacture an unnecessary second noun in place of the missing classifier.

Omission of plural endings:

- My father and <u>MY</u> mother are <u>farmer</u> which they grow <u>guava</u> and <u>orange</u>. (delete, farmers, guavas, oranges)

- All of <u>cartoon</u> that I read kept in my bed room. (cartoons)

Inappropriate use of plural endings:

- Somtime I will give <u>some foods</u> with dogs and cats because They are lovely and honest. (food)

- Before the New Year, my family has to prepare many things to pay <u>respects</u> to the gods and our forefathers. (respect)

Many types of error in the use of nouns show that the students are confused when they use nouns in English. Most of them do not seem to understand when the noun should have a suffix -s or when it should be omitted. They put –s after uncountable nouns and omit –s after plural nouns.

4.3.9) <u>Error in the use of possessives</u>

Table 16 shows error in the use of possessives. The percentage of error in the use of apostophe (49.43%) ranks the highest among the four types of error in this category.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Apostrophe	43	49.43
2) Inappropriate / wrong choice of possessive adjective	16	18.39
3) Omission of possessive adjective	17	19.54
4) Wrong choice of possessive forms	11	12.64
Total	87	100

Table 16: Error in the use of possessives

Various kinds of examples are as follows:

Apostrophe:

- The sign of <u>Christmas's Day</u> is Santa cross and you vehicle rain deer. (Christmas Day)

- Mother is 50 <u>year's</u> old. (years)

- It<u>'s</u> <u>make</u> me happy. (delete, makes)

Inappropriate / wrong choice of possessive adjective:

- I like two <u>dog</u>. <u>His</u> name <u>is</u> Tan-tan and Muyong.(dogs, Their, are)

Omission of possessive adjective:

- One day Ben and ____nephew were in the kitchen. (his)

Wrong choice of possessive forms:

- She felt painful at the bottom <u>hers</u> cloth very drity that full of mud. (her)

- She think <u>hers</u> body very drity and she fear that she have a cold. (her)

4.3.10) <u>Error in the use of prepositions</u>

Table 17 shows preposition errors. The majority of preposition errors is from the choice of the wrong prepositions (46.99%). The inappropriate use of prepositional phrases (17.24%) is the least among the four types of errors.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Wrong choice of prepositions	109	46.99
2) Omission of prepositions	41	17.67
3) Inappropriate use of prepositional phrases	40	17.24
4) Unnecessary insertion of prepositions / prepositional phrases	42	18.10
Total	232	100

Table 17: Error in the use of prepositions

Examples of prepositions are as follows:-

Wrong choice of prepositions:

- Father drive car <u>till</u> the park.(to)

- John decided to return the book <u>at</u> a library. (to)

Omission of prepositions:

- John went to the library on April 30th   ___return books which he borrowed from there. (to)

Inappropriate use of prepositional phrases:

- The view <u>beside the way</u> was very fresh and wonderful.(along the way)

- He read those books at the library <u>after a little while</u>.(unnecessary insertion)

Unnecessary insertion of prepositions/ prepositional phrases:

- Everybody feels happy and enjoys <u>together in</u> Christmas Day. (delete)

4.3.11) <u>Error in the use of pronouns</u>

The following table presents the number of pronoun errors which are divided into four types. Inappropriate or wrong choice of pronouns account for 57.84 %, which is the highest, followed by relative pronouns (36.28%).

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Relative pronouns	37	36.28
2) Inappropriate / wrong choice of pronouns (subject / object pronoun)	59	57.84
3) Omission of reflexive pronouns	3	2.94
4) Confusion of the pronoun with other part of speech	3	2.94
Total	102	100

Table 18: Error in the use of pronouns

Examples of pronoun errors are as follows:

Relative pronouns:

- It's my dad that disappeared from our home. (who)
- Last thing I want to do is donate some money for all science that can develop and keep the world. (who)

Inappropriate / wrong choice of pronouns (subject/object pronoun):

- In the evening, their house have a party. (they)
- He takes a chinese book and reads them on table. (it)

Omission of reflexive pronouns:

- I will prepare_____ for study in new day. (myself)

Confusion of the pronoun with other part of speech:

- The librarian told his to go and had a look at the section of China. (him)

4.3.12) Error in the use of tenses

Table 19 shows the different types of error in the use of tenses. The number of errors of simple past (60.37%) is the highest and present continuous (1.22%) is the lowest among the three types of tenses.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Simple Present	63	38.41
2) Simple Past	99	60.37
3) Present Continuous	2	1.22
Total	164	100

Table 19: Error in the use of tenses

Examples of tense errors are indicated below:

Simple Present:

- Uncle <u>run</u> to help his nephew out of kitchen and <u>shut</u> the door. (runs, shuts)

Simple Past:

- It was rainy…. I <u>walk</u> along the street. (walked)

- My mom <u>give</u> them to me on my Birthday. When I <u>am</u> 18 years old. (gave, was)

Present Continuous:

- "Good evening, can I help you?"… " The fire ____burn my house."…. (is burning)

Most of the students use simple present and simple past tenses in writing free compositions. Therefore, the more complicated tenses are rarely used. When the students wrote compositions, they rarely specified the period of time. These factors made it rather difficult to evaluate their use of tenses.

4.3.13) Error in the use of verb forms

Table 20 shows the errors in the use of verb forms. Wrong lexical selections of verbs (58.36%) is the highest percentage of errors and the omission of verbs (26.96%) is second.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Wrong lexical selections of verbs	171	58.36
2) Omission of verbs (verb to be / …ed / verb to be + …ed / main verb)	79	26.96
3) Unnecessary insertion of verbs	43	14.68
Total	293	100

Table 20: Error in the use of verb forms

Examples are indicated below:

Wrong lexical selections of verbs:

- My family <u>have</u> happy. (is)
- My mother and father <u>leave</u> in sakonnakorn. (live)

Omission of verbs (verb to be / …ed /verb to be + …ed / main verb):

- Christmas day _____coming soon. (is)
- There _____ a lot of activities on that day. (are)

Unnecessary insertion of verbs:

- It'<u>s</u> make me happy. (delete)

  (It makes me happy.)

- They <u>are</u> <u>practising</u> sing a song in church.(delete)

  4.3.14) <u>Error in the use of subjects and objects</u>

Table 21 shows the errors in the use of subjects and objects. The inappropriate or wrong choice of subjects (50%) represents the hightest percentage of errors and the inappropriate or wrong choice of objects (22.22%) is second.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Inappropriate/ wrong choice of subjects	45	50.00
2) Inappropriate/ wrong choice of objects	20	22.22
3) Omission of subjects	9	10.00
4) Omission of objects	16	17.78
Total	90	100

Table 21: Error in the use of subjects and objects

Some examples of the above error types are as follows:

Inappropriate/ wrong choice of subjects:

- <u>Eventually Activities on a long weekend</u> have many activities.

  (There are many activities on a long weekend.)

- <u>My country</u> pay attention to this game. (People in my country)

<u>Inappropriate/ wrong choice of objects:</u>

- She see <u>a water source.</u>

  (She sees a puddle.)

<u>Omission of subjects:</u>

- Then _____ prepare milk and cookie for Santa. (they)

<u>Omission of objects:</u>

- My mother teach _____ to save in finance. (me)

- He go into the kitchen and clean ___up. (it)

- So he must pay _____ for those books. (a fine)

4.3.15) <u>Incomplete sentences</u>

Table 22 presents the number of errors of incomplete sentences.

Error Types	Number Of Errors	Percent
1) Incomplete sentences	86	100
Total	86	100

Table 22: Incomplete sentences

Examples are as follows:

<u>Incomplete sentence:</u>

- Although they have different temperment.

- My sister whom I love, rely and take care.

- And going to see movie with my friend.

- But in Thailand, the players which are the part of National Team.

- In the evening before Christmas Day.

4.3.16) <u>Misspelling</u>

The following table shows the frequency of misspelled words.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Misspelling	131	100
Total	131	100

Table 23: Misspelling

The following are examples of misspelling:

<u>Incorrect word</u>	<u>Correct word</u>
activeties	activities
annimal	animal
bact	back
barby	Barbie
biuld	build
cenema	cinema
commudy	comedy
drity	dirty
holpe	hope
immedeataly	immediately
jumb	jump
langnage	language
pey	pay
santacross	Santa Claus
taking a bathe	taking a bath
telephon	telephone
televison	television
togeter	together
trassi	taxi

4.3.17) <u>The error of overgeneralization</u>

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Overgeneralization	11	100
Total	11	100

Table 24: The error of overgeneralization

Examples of overgenralization are as follows:

- She carrys an umbrella walking along the street for a while.

  (She carries an umbrella while she is walking along the street.)

  The above sentence, the singular verb must be "carries" instead of "carrys) because if the letter before the last letter of verb is not vowel (A, E, I, O and U), then it must be changed to "i" and put "es" as in this case.

- He payed attention to drive because he loved his grandchildren. (paid)

  The verb in this sentence must be changed to "paid" instead of "payed".

  Most students have less accuracy in using verbs, therefore they have to memorize the rules of verb accurately in order to use them correctly.

4.3.18) Error of parallel structures

Table 25 presents the number of errors of parallel structures.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Parallel Structures	13	100
Total	13	100

Table 25: Error of parallel structures

Examples are detailed below:

- Grandfather is <u>hangs</u> a flower and baking cookies but neice is writing a letter to Santa and hanging a stockings and <u>prepare</u> food give Santa. (hanging, preparing)
- I like to travel and <u>playing</u> sports.(play)
- She likes to do everything in my house such as sweeping, <u>plant</u>, etc. (planting)

4.3.19) <u>Error in the use of punctuations</u>

Table 26 displays the number of errors in the use of punctuations divided into 7 categories. Error in the use of periods (52.70%) is the most frequent and error in the use of dashes (1.35%) is the least.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Commas	81	36.49
2) Periods	117	52.70
3) Semicolon	5	2.26
4) Quotation marks	4	1.80
5) Exclamation marks	8	3.60
6) Dashes(-)	3	1.35
7) Brackets	4	1.80
Total	222	100

Table 26: Error in the use of punctuations

Examples of punctuations are as follows:

1) <u>Commas:</u>

- There are a lot of activities in my long weekend such as reading my favorite book__ going to see movie at the cenema or relaxing on the beach.(,)
- In the evening. I go to the temple for cover with gold leaf. (,)

2) <u>Periods:</u>

- I will build small house<u>.</u> and big garden. (delete)

- We hardly have a lot of money, but we're happy (.)

3) <u>Semicolons:</u>

- This is a story of us<u>,</u> me, my mom and my dad. (;)

4) <u>Quotation marks:</u>

- Today, I'm very happy and I want to say <u>Merry Christmas</u> for everybody. ("Merry Christmas")

- <u>"Ahhh!"</u> I fall in slush puddle. (Ah!)

5) <u>Exclamation marks:</u>

- It was Sunday! (.)

- They waited for this day very much… a day for going picnic<u>!</u> (.)

- Now<u>!</u> I don't know what occupation I want to be. (delete)

6) <u>Dashes (-):</u>

- I prepare to set the lights on a <u>christmas-tree</u> and pack gifts for my mother, my father, my grandmother, my grandfather, my uncle and my sister. (Christmas tree)

7) <u>Brackets:</u>

- When the night come, childen hang their sock <u>(very big)</u> near the stove for their present from Santa Cross.

- Finally, Santa comes and bring presents for children (they're sleeping on beds at that moment.).
  (While the children are sleeping on their beds, Santa brings presents to them.)

4.3.20) <u>Error of repetition of words</u>

Table 27 shows the frequency of errors of repetition of words. Repetition of nouns (subjects/ objects) (93.10%) is the highest among the four type of errors.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Repetition of adverbs	2	3.46
2) Repetition of pronouns	1	1.72
3) Repetition of nouns (subjects / objects)	54	93.10
4) Repetition of verbs	1	1.72
Total	58	100

Table 27: Error of repetition of words

Examples are as follows:-

1) Repetition of adverbs:

- Ko is very very kind. (delete)

2) Repetition of pronouns:

- I think my dad loves me so much because he gives me only good introduction for me and gives a consulting when I have a problem.

3) Repetition of nouns (subjects / objects):

- Uncle run to help his nephew out kitchen and shut the door. Uncle calls 911 to inform so as to call a fireman.

- In the morning, grandchild wake up, grandchild found the presents under chrishmas tree.

- My family has cows. Cows are big. They look terrible. In the morning my father takes cows to field and gives water to them.

4) Repetition of verbs:

1) By the way, my uncle's car go…go…go very slowly like the owner.(goes)

4.3.21) <u>Error of run-on sentences</u>

Table 28 presents error of run-on sentences.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Run-on sentences	14	100
Total	14	100

Table 28: Error of run-on sentences

Examples are as the following:

- Immediately the fire burn a pot he is alarmed and try to put out the fire but it burn the kitchen more and more.
- He is Ko because Ko is very very kind He always helps everyone as for as he can.
- I told them my address in order to get to my house correctly and quickly then I told every one to get out of house and shut all doors and windows for prevent fire from growing up and spreading to another part of my house then I get out of house as well.

4.3.22) <u>The number of space errors</u>

Table 29 shows the number of space errors.

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Space error	18	100
Total	18	100

Table 29: The number of space errors

Examples of space errors are as follows:-

- When I arrive the beach I swim in the see and play sand on <u>sea shore.</u> (seashore)
- <u>Every thing</u> seems to be complete but when I see my uncle's car, me hope is pulled down. (Everything)

- I do strongly support that the story of <u>santacross</u> is the truth.(Santa Claus)

4.3.23) <u>Error of word order</u>

Table 30 shows the error regarding the word order. These are classified into four categories. The most errors are from the misplacement of adverbs (30.91%) and the misplacement of adverbial phrases (12.73%) is the least.

Error Types	Number Of Errors	Percent
1) Misplacement of adverbs	17	30.91
2) Misplacement of adverbial phrases	7	12.73
3) Misplacement of adjectives	16	29.09
4) Misplacement of prepositional phrases	15	27.27
Total	55	100

Table 30: Error of word order

Examples in each type of errors are indicated below:

1) <u>Misplacement of adverbs:</u>

- Sports not only make me happy but make me strong <u>also</u>.

  (Sports not only make me happy but also make me strong.)

2) <u>Misplacement of adverbial phrases:</u>

- They are puppies and <u>very cute</u>.

  (They are very cute puppies.)

3) <u>Misplacement of adjectives:</u>

- Father lay a reed mat on playground and, sleep happily with children and eat food <u>delicious</u>. (delicious food)

- The football want to have <u>player</u> <u>eleven</u> to match. (eleven players)

- Although its full name is very long but there are several <u>secret</u> <u>hidden</u>.(hidden secrets)

4) Misplacement of prepositional phrases:

- Eventually Activities <u>on a long weekend</u> have many activities.

  (There are many activities on a long weekend.)

4.3.24) <u>Error of the wrong choice of words</u>

Table 31 shows error of the wrong choice of words

Error Types	Number of Errors	Percent
1) Wrong choice of words	296	100
Total	296	100

Table 31: Error of the wrong choice of words

Examples are as follows:-

Wrong choice of words:

- <u>Immediately</u> the fire burn a pot he is alarmed. (When)

- At dawn, he wake up <u>lately</u>. It make him go to school <u>behind time</u>. (delete, late)

- He gives a help for me when I get a <u>terrible thing</u>. (trouble)

- I went back to a <u>basin</u> and cleaned my raincoat. (puddle)

4.3.25) <u>Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors</u>

Table 32 shows miscellaneous unclassifiable errors.

Error Types	Number Of Errors	Percent
1) Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors	22	100
Total	22	100

Table 32: Miscellaneous unclassifiable errors

Examples of miscellaneous unclassifiable errors are as follows:-

- It can be said the Christmas's day communication system is so advanced and these are techniques for make children happy and enjoy.

- I think she is so careful to me as my dad for both of person take care of me since I was a baby.

(My parents have always taken care of me since I was young.)

4.4)   The highest ten levels of errors were chosen for discussion regarding the possible causes of errors.

As shown on the above table, the highest ten level of errors, chosen for the discussion regarding the possible cause of errors, are:

4.4.1) <u>Error in the use of determiners</u>

Error in the use of determiners was the most frequent (10.20%) of errors incurred from a total of twenty-five types of errors. Most Thai students had a problem when they used determiners. They did not know when the determiner should be used. Sometimes, they omited the determiner when necessary or inserted it when unnecessary as shown in Table No.11. The finding agrees with other studies showing that article misuse was a big problem for learners of English as a second language or a foreign language (Ubol, 1981; Srinon, 1999; Lush, 2002). These errors may be from the different stuctures of Thai and English. Normally, Thai does not need to use definite or indefinite articles like English. Therefore, Thai students frequently omit articles. (Torut, 1993).

4.4.2) <u>Wrong choice of words</u>

Wrong choice of words were second out of twenty-five categories of error which accounted for 9.90%. The findings showed that most students lacked knowledge in selecting the appropriate vocabulary when they wrote compositions. The finding agrees with other studies showing that lexical error was a major problem for the students (Duskova,1969: quoted in Ellis; Torut, 1993; Sereebenjapol, 2003). The main cause of error was from misunderstanding the real meaning of the words; for example students used <u>a basin</u> for <u>a puddle</u>, or <u>a sock (very big)</u> for <u>a stocking</u>. The other cause of using the wrong word was also from the lack of understanding the culture of English-speaking people.

4.4.3) Error in the use of verb forms

Error in the use of verb forms presented the third most frequent type (9.80%) of error. The study showed that most error in the use of verbs were from inappropriate lexical selections of verbs and omission of verbs. Most students chose the wrong verbs when they wrote the sentence because they did not know the feature and the meaning of such vocabulary as "they sheep presents", "I hearth of running water sound…". One main reason for error is from mother tongue interference, such as "My family have happy" and "So he headed for one bookshelf to search for that book and he found them." This problem occurred because when the students write the English sentence, they always think in Thai first and then translate word for word into English.

4.4.4) Error in the use of agreements

Error in the use of agreement was another major error, which ranked as the fourth most frequent error (9.53%) among the twenty five errors. Most students used the wrong forms of the copula when they wrote compositions. One main reason of error in the use of agreements is that Thai has no overt agreement marking, whereas English has overt agreement markers. (Torat : 1993 : 50). For examples: 1) "I am happy" and 2) "They are happy" in English. 3) "Chan me kham suk" and 4) "Khao me kham suk" in Thai.

From the above 4 sentences, it can be noted that verb "am" and "are" in English have been changed following the subject while verb "me" (meaning, "have/has" regardless of the person of the subject) in Thai remains the same.

4.4.5) Error in the use of prepositions

Errors in prepositions ranked fifth (7.76%) among the twenty-five categories of errors. Using prepositions correctly is rather difficult for Thai students because prepositions used in English have more complexity than in Thai. The major error in the use of prepositions of students in this research is from the wrong selection of prepositions. The cause may be from the translation from L1 to L2. Prepositions in Thai can be used in a limited context which is different from English for example the preposition "TI", "CHAN YU TI BAN" (" I stay

at home"). In English, "at" can be used in several aspects such as "I stay at home.,"(indicating place), "She looks at her book.," (indicating direction), "He is at work now," (indicating occupation).

Richards (1974: 176, 185) comments that a major factor in the misuse of prepositions seems to be from analogy. The learner, encountering a particular preposition with one type of verb, attempts by analogy to use the same preposition with similar verbs. Following are a few example of errors in the use of prepositions.

1. with instead of ϕ	met with her, married with her
from	suffering with a cold
against	fight with tyranny
of	consist with
at	laughed with my words

Mavrides (quoted in Srinon 1999: 63) in "An Analysis of Errors Committed by Greek Learners of English in Prepositions". The findings were that the cause of errors mostly were intralingual and developmental instead of transfer errors.

4.4.6) Punctuation

Thai students rarely used diversified punctuations in their writing. Therefore, it is to be anticipated that errors in the use of punctuation would occur infrequently. Punctuation, especially the period or comma, are not used in Thai. Therefore, the students may not be acquainted with using punctuation in writing English in order to show the relationship between sentences.

Even though learners know how to use the period, they still miss the period at the end of some sentences. This may be caused by carelessness or ignorance of the rules. Errors in commas, colons, and semicolons occurred frequently in compound sentences and complex sentences. (Torut: 1993). Students lack practise in using various kinds of punctuation, therefore, errors in using punctuation occur often.

4.4.7) <u>Error in the use of tenses</u>

Most students wrote compositions having errors in the use of tenses. The majority of students used the simple present to express a current situation. However, many types of tense errors by students were found as follows: (1) They mixed tenses when they wrote a sentence such as " 1.1) I *will* feel very freshy when I *get* some oxigen into my body. 1.2) If I was a millionaire, I would like to use my money by I devide it. First, I use my money to buy…Second, I will bring my money to give…" (2) They used the simple present to explain a situation in the past such as "2.1) One day, while my uncle was cooking in a kitchen and my sister was playing balls. Immediately, it catch fire…. He rush to carry my sister in his arm and went to outside. 2.2) When I was in grade 9, I can get the scholarship from the government for science study. (3) They made mistakes if there were clauses in the sentences. (4) They used the future tense instead of the simple present such as "At night, the family'll have dinner together and they'll be funny so much. In this research the use of the simple past was the majority (60.37%) of errors in the use of tenses. This result was consistent with Torat (1993: 46). Using various kinds of tenses might be difficult for Thai students because English has overt verb inflections while Thai does not have overt verb inflections.

4.4.8) <u>Capitalization</u>

Students still confuse the way capitalization occurs at the beginning of sentences and they leave proper nouns uncapitalized. They may think that it is insignificant or they may lack knowledge in using the proper nouns. The sentences made by the students sometimes end with the period and start with the conjunction in capitalized words such as but, because, and. Actually, this is uncommon in English.

For example, (1) I want to go to the beach on weekend. <u>Because</u> I like the beach very much.; (2) Moreover I think that I will to buy a love story book. <u>And</u> going to see movie with my friend.

4.4.9) <u>Error in the use of nouns</u>

Error in the use of nouns occurred about as often as misspelling. The majority of errors in the use of nouns involved the omission of plural endings markers which accounted for 54.96% of the errors, followed by the inappropriate use of nouns (16.03%). Students might be confused about countable nouns and uncountable nouns because they put –s after uncountable nouns such as air, water, love. They also forget to put –s when countable nouns were plural. Inappropriate use of nouns was a problem of the students, too. They did not choose the right noun in their writing because they might not have known which noun was the most appropriate one to use in the sentence. This showed that students lacked adequate vocabulary as well.

4.4.10) <u>Misspelling</u>

Spelling errors were not a big problem. Even so, teachers should help students identify, revise and correct them. The spelling problems of students were from a lack of accuracy in using vocabulary and the similarlity between certain letter sounds. Some errors might be attributed to a confusion about the use of proper nouns or words spelled similarly. Students wrote words with missing, alternating or misplaced letters. This showed that students lack experience in spelling.

The above ten errors have been drawn from Table No.32 to discuss the possible cause of errors made by students. Every category of errors occurring in this study was very important for teachers and learners because they could use them to find ways for correcting such errors.

4.5)   The errors of students were analyzed from the Scheme of Error Classification in terms of lexical errors, grammatical errors and mechanical errors by percentage.

The following graph shows the incidence of lexical errors, grammatical errors, and mechanical errors.
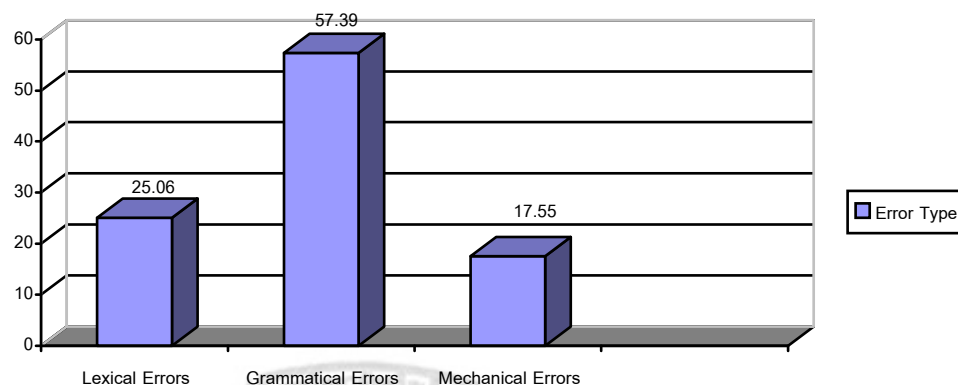
The above chart indicates that the highest percentage of errors were grammatical errors (57.39%). Most students were confused about the grammatical rules of English. It was rather difficult because they rarely had a chance to practise English usage. English grammar is complicated for Thai Students because there are many kinds of regulations that they have to memorize.

The second most frequent type of error in this study was lexical errors (25.06%). Students did not have the vocabulary to explain a picture. They relied on generic words such as "a water source" or "a basin" instead of "a puddle", "a sock (very big)" instead of "a stocking". However, they tried to explain what they saw by using general words to express their ideas in place of the unknown words. Students have a limited vocabulary.

The last error type was mechanical errors (19.21%). Mechanical errors occurred because students had not mastered such basics as spelling and punctuation. Students have problems in spelling words which have similar letter sounds. However, the way to solve this problem is to give students practise writing more frequently and show examples of selecting the right word in the right place. Besides spelling problems, students also face punctuations problem

as well. This is due to lacking of experience in using punctuations because punctuations are not used in Thai while they are very important in English.

In conclusion, the research was found that three major errors made by students grade 12 were error in the use of determiners , wrong choice of words and error in the use of verb forms while overgeneralization was the least. The major cause of error was from mother tongue interference. Most students faced with grammatical problem then followed by lexical and mechanical problem respectively. Therefore, students' writing skill should be improved in order to reduce those errors.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this study was to analyze the most common errors and to analyze the frequency of errors occurring in a writing sample of 100 free compositions of Thai high school students (grade 12) of Nakprasith School, Nakhonpathom Province. The sample compositions were selected from 200 free compostions. The scheme of error classification was adapted from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982); Norrish (1983); and Srinon (1999) with a total of twenty-five types of errors and the record form of errors applied from Srinon (1999).

The methodology and processes of this study were conclued as followed:

1) The errors made by the subjects were examined and categorized into twenty-five types of errors based on The Scheme of Error Classification.

2) The frequency of errors in each category was counted and analysed into percentages.

3) The examples of errors in each category were selected and made correction.

4) The possible causes of error for the ten most frequent errors were discussed.

5) The common errors were analyzed in term of grammatical, lexical and mechanical

5.1) **Conclusion of the study:**

The above errors were summarized into three main categories by percentages: grammatical errors, lexical errors, and mechanical errors.

Major findings were that the most ten frequent errors were:

1)	Error in the use of determiners (10.20%)

2)	Wrong choice of words (9.90%)

3)	Error in the use of verb forms (9.80%)

4)	Error in the use of agreements (9.53%)

5)	Error in the use of prepositions (7.76%)

6)	Punctuation (7.42%)

7)	Error in the use of Tenses (5.48%)

8)	Capitalization (5.12%)

9)	Error in the use of noun (4.38%)

10)	Misspelling (4.38%)

Of the twenty-five categories on the Scheme of Error Classification, most errors made by students were grammatical (57.39%), lexical (25.06%), and mechanical errors (17.55%) respectively.

The most troublesome problem in the area of grammatical errors was determiners. Errors in determiners might have resulted from the differences between Thai and English. Thai has no definite and indefinite articles while English has a large number of articles. Students often omit articles or make the wrong choice. E.g., "A father and a girl are preparing a home for a Christmas day." Noojan (1999) also found that article error was ranked in the top three.

The second highest number of errors were errors in the use of verbs. Wrong choice of verbs and omission of verbs were the main errors in this regard. E.g., "So he have to pay some money for his late." "My name____ Petter Soroger." This study was in line with Noojan (1999), and Abdulsata (2000) who also reported that the students had problems in selecting the right verb and using the right verb forms.

The third most frequent errors were the use of agreements. Subject-verb agreements are the major errors in this study, E.g., "Tan-tan have a big eyes." The results of students' errors were mainly from intralingual errors which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning and interference errors which occur when one uses elements from one language while speaking another. The

above two mentioned errors comply with the sources of competence errors of Richards (1971b, quoted in Ellis) as stated in Chapter II. The following examples are the errors of over-generalization of language rules.

1) She was <u>happied</u> to do that.

2) She <u>feeled</u> very happy.

Richards (1974: 174-179) mentioned that these errors occurred from the students' creation of a deviant structure based on their own experience of other structures in the target language

3) My dream is *I have a long weekend* and I have activites <u>in</u> weekend.

4) *My house like pet* such as cats, dogs and a fish Although my family have middle standing but I have happiness.

5) Niece is writing a letter to Santa and hanging a stockings and *prepare food give Santa*.

The example items no. 3-6 show interference errors from L1 to L2. The student thought in Thai and then translated into English word for word.

Most students frequently omitted the grammatical morphemes from their writing such as "*These **sport** makes my health a strong." "It's easy to find **any** book from library by asking from librarian.*" Likewise, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 55) observed that language learners omit grammatical morphemes much more frequently than content words. Omission errors were found in greater abundance and across a greater variety of morphemes during the early stages of L2 acquisition. When learners have been exposed to more of the target language, misformation, misordering, or overuse of grammatical morphemes are more likely to occur. Double marking errors were also found in this study, as for example, "*Grandfather **is call** to niece and **tell that you go to bed**." (double marking, interference from L1) "Grandfather **is hangs** a flower.*"

In the area of lexical errors, most students used the wrong choice of words when they wrote compositions because they had inadequate vocabulary to explain such topics when they wrote a sentence such as "*The father **sets up** a*

door with flowers." **(decorates)** *"At the midnight Santa* **leads** *gift to child."* **(brings)** *"They* **provided** *themselves* **to enjoy it**." **(prepare, for Christmas)** *"When she walked to home, she* **was meeting a water reservoir**." *(saw, a puddle)* *"She walked along the street and saw* **a small swamp**." *(a puddle).* These sentences showed the wrong choices of words. Most students tried to use different kinds of words to explain the pictures when they did not know the appropriate vocabulary. However, there were other kinds of errors in one sentence when the context was considered. The cause of error might be from analogy because the student encountered a word with a similar meaning. The major factor of lexical errors was from inability to choose the right word for the right place. Students' limited vocabulary also showed up as a misunderstanding of the exact meaning of such words. In their compositions, they would sometimes resort to using literal translation from L1 (Thai) to L2 (English).

The third most frequent errors were mechanical errors. Most students were confused when they used punctuation, especially periods and commas such as *"In a holiday. Father plan to go picnic with his family."* (,) *"It was Sunday!"* (.) *"We hardly have a lot of money, but we're happy"* (.) The examples show that some students used the wrong punctuation or forgot to insert punctuation marks when it was needed. This is probably because Thai has no period and comma, while they are used extensively in English. Dawkins (1995) mentioned that punctuation is not based on rules but on principles governing the relationship between one independent clause and the next. So to correct these errors the thing to do is to familiarize students with the nature of clauses.

Another kind of mechanical errors was regarding spelling. Students also had spelling problems resulting from the similarity of letter sounds, such as *free* instead of *fee*, *allow* instead of *around*. The other reason for misspelling might be from a lack of accuracy in using vocabulary such as the following:

- *wark* instead of *work*

- *jumb* instead of *jump*

- *bact* instead of *back*

- *excit* instead of *excite*

- *chidren* instead of *children*

- *ultimetly* instead of *ultimately*

The main objective of this study was to analyze the frequency and the main types of errors occurring in students compositions. There are many causes of the errors in this regard. Each error could have resulted from several factors and could not be exactly traced to a single cause. The difficulty in error classification is related to the interpretation of the nature of the error. (Sereebenjapol, 2003). Norrish (1983: 92) stated that one error might fit into more than one category.

5.2) Conclusions regarding the hypothesis:

The evidence from the analysis of the free compositions of the students is that a major source of problems for Thai students in writing English is clearly from grammatical and lexical errors. These errors make the students' writing obscure and confusing; they are an obstacle in the students' ability to use English effectively in communication. Moreover, the problems are basic, at the level of writing phrases and sentences. Inasmuch as grammatical errors are more than twice as frequent as lexical errors, this study also supports the pedagogical strategy of continuing an emphasis on English grammar in order to enable students to increase their fluency in English. However, it does not necessarily follow that the traditional approaches to teaching English grammar should be insisted upon. On the contrary, the study establishes the fact that grammar problems persist at a highly significant level despite the traditional approaches. This therefore suggests that alternative educational strategies in teaching English writing should be explored.

5.3)   **Suggestions for teaching writing compositions:**

Error analysis in this study revealed various types of errors in writing free compositions made by Thai high school students. The result of the study might be useful for both teachers and students because teachers could apply it to clarify their weaknesses in writing and thence to improve their teaching method to lead to greater proficiency, whereas students could identify their weaknesses in writing. Students writing in a second language are also faced with social and cognitive challenges related to second language acquisition. Nevertheless, they must practice their writing and learn through their experience (Myles, 2002). Students need to learn about the social and cultural aspects from English native speakers as well, when they practise their writing. Otherwise, they cannot do effective writing. Rivers and Temperley (1978: 312) mentioned that students need to read widely in order to write well, thus familiarizing themselves with the way recognized writers write in English. Their ability to assimilate information directly in English and think in English must be developed through much experience with written texts in order that their writing acquires the rhythms and associations of the English-language writer.

Rivers and Temperley (1978: 317) mentioned regarding the expressive writing or composition of students that we must give students opportunities to acquire confidence in their ability to write and they also need to see some purpose in their writing activity in order to write English spontaneously.

Widdowson (1990: 95) presented grammar as a device for mediating between words and contexts and its functional depends upon its being subservient to lexis therefore, a more natural and effective approach in teaching of grammar should begin with lixical items and show how they need to be grammatically modified to be communicatively effective.

Zak (1993) commented that students' writing can improve with time, lots of writing experience and feedback, and maturity. On the other hand, the teacher is also an important person in teaching students to write effectively.

Weaver (1996) indicated that teaching "grammar" in the context of writing works better than teaching grammar as a formal system. Students will not automatically make use of grammatical concepts, syntactic constructions, and language conventions until they are taught such concepts.

Like Hartnett (1997), he indicated that English composition teachers have a problem in determining what and how to teach when they have to teach students how to correct errors in mechanics and usage. A developing approach overseas comes from a type of linguistics called "functional," because it describes how languages work rather than only its forms.

Arapoff (quoted in Rivers and Temperley 1978: 320) calls the process basic to writing "purposeful selection and organization of experience." If one of the objectives of the English course is ability to write well and expressively in English, then the teacher must guide the students in the following matters:

1) Developing their skills in analyzing their thoughts.

2) Shaping them into central and subordinate ideas.

3) Developing lines of thought which carry their readers to the heart of the matter.

In addition to the matters given, the teacher cannot suppose that the students already know these things from some other course. Rivers and Temperlay also comments that writing a story, poem, or autobiographical incident in the style of an author students have just been reading is a good starting-point for the one who is inexperienced, or lacking in confidence.

Boone, Gildea, and Moran (1978: 40, 63-77) stated that "the writing tasks are consistent with the students' knowledge of vocabulary and structure." They proposed three different types of technique that help language learners build their writing skills. The techniques are :

1) Sequenced exercises, help prevent errors rather than correct them. Each exercise progresses from elementary to advanced writing levels which only differ in focus. One increases structural complexity. The other increases the writer's freedom to make decisions, in a controlled framework, about the

content of the sentences and paragraphs. The order of these exercises can be changed to meet the language learners' requirements. The exercises can also be repeated with different passages, and can be implemented to meet the needs of the individual language learner.

Sequenced exercise is structural; it allows a language learner to work on one element of structure at a time, rather than cope with many different problems at once.

Example 1: "The cake was made by Elizabeth. First the ingredients were combined well, and then…"

     1) Change the paragraph from passive to active.

        Begin: Elizabeth made a cake.

     2) Change the new paragraph to the future.

        Begin: Tomorrow, Elizabeth will make a cake.

Beginning

Instructions	Examples
1. Copy the sentences	Have several sentences in a list on the blackboard.
2. Change to gender.	Joan to Ed; he to she
3. Change the person.	she to I; we to they
4. Change to plural.	I to we; verbs and pronouns
5. Substitute pronouns for nouns.	Joan to she
6. Combine simple sentences to form compoun sentences.	add and; add but
7. Add adjectives	• She is a teacher. –beautiful- (She is a beautiful teacher.)
8. Change tenses.	today to yesterday; everyday to now
9. Add opinion.	• Henry (and I) saw a movie last night. He liked it. (I didn't.) He wants to go again. (I don't.)

Instructions	Examples
10. Restore sentences.	• My brother/ come/ now. S: My brother is coming now. • The dog/ eat/ this morning. S: The dog ate this morning.
11. Add comparatives	• Henry's book is big. S: His book is bigger than mine. S: My book isn't as big as his. S: My book is smaller than his.
12. Add adverbs.	• The boy ran. –quickly- S: The boy ran quickly. –often- S: The boy often ran quickly.
13. Change to complex sentence with one subject.	• The boy left school. He went home. S: The boy left school and went home.
14. Add prepositional phrases.	• There is a box. – on the table – (There is a box on the table.)

Intermediate

Instructions	Examples
1. Add adverbial clauses of time.	• I did my homework. S: After I finished dinner, I did my homework.
2. Combine two sentences to make a relative clause.	• The girl was his cousin. She wore a red dress. S: The girl who wore a red dress was his cousin.

Instructions	Examples
3. Change direct to indirect speech.	• I can see a plane in the sky. S: She said she could see a plane in the sky.
4. Substitute synonyms.	• I'm hungry. S: I'm starved.
5. Change adjectives to adjective clauses.	• It was a green carpet. S: It was a carpet that was completely green.
6. Change adjectives to prepositional phrases.	• It's on the kitchen table. S: It's on the table in the kitchen.
7. Change adjectives to relative clauses.	• There was a very old man. S: There was a man who was very old.
8. Add relative clauses.	• That boy is my best friend. S: That boy who sits by the window is my best friend.

Advanced

Instructions	Examples
1. Add adverbial clauses of condition.	• I will go tomorrow. S: I will go tomorrow if I can finish my homework tonight.
2. Add gerund phrases and clauses.	• I like fishing. S: Fishing in early morning is fun.
3. Combine sentences using gerunds.	• He ate dinner at 6:15. He went to the market at 6:30. S: Before going to the market, he ate dinner.

Instructions	Examples
4. Add infinitive phrases and clauses.	• I like to fish. S: It is fun to fish in the morning.
5. Add adverbial clauses of both time and purpose.	• When she arrived in the capital, she put her money in the bank so she wouldn't spend it too quickly.

Example 2: Write a sentence using the following three words.

    (content) bed, book, blackboard

    a) : _____.

    (function) he, it, him

    b) : _____.

       him, it, he

    c) : _____.

Example 3: Controlled stories from pictures. Flash cards in sequence that tell a simple story. Have students write one sentence about each picture. Then put the sentences into paragraph form. This should only be done after oral work on the same picture.

Example 4: Discuss proverbs in class by giving a list of English proverbs. Get translations of local proverbs and sayings. Have students choose a proverb and write a short composition with the proverb as the last line.

Example 5: Vocabulary to story. Take a picture with a lot of detail. Have a students list words they associate with the picture and write a story using these words, individually or in groups.

2) Dictation, is a means of building a relation between the written and the spoken word. It helps language learners mark their progress in listening comprehension, and reinforces new vocabulary and new structures both orally and aurally. It is also a way of improving skills in note taking, listening for the main idea, and writing summaries.

Examples 6 : Working with numbers.

Full word	"Two hundred and twelve."
Numerals	"212"
Problems	"What is six times two?"
Times	
(Numerals)	"12.15."
(Full words)	"Tweve-fifteen."
Dates	"1492"
	"Fourteen ninety-two."
Figures:	"$2.50."
	"Two dollars and fifty cents."

Examples 7: Working with opinion (negatives-affirmatives; tenses)

Dictate an opinion; have the students write an opposite opinion. State an opinion orally and have studnets only write the opposite opinion.

3) Types of writing, presents ideas for introducing the language learner to creative writing. It can provide a new level of interest and involvement for students and teacher. The following are types of writing that can be practiced in a class:

1) Descriptive (It was red and just sat there).
2) Narrative (Once upon a time).
3) How to (First you take a can opener).
4) Dialogue ("I am fine, thank you, and you?").

Example 8: Detailed vocabulary can be learned in specific areas:

a. Feelings: **nouns**: excitement, happiness, love, hate, anger, desperation, wonder, evil

adjectives: exciting, excited, happy, loving, lovely, hateful, hated, angry, angered, despised

b. Write a descriptive paragraph beginning with the phrase:

" I really liked the last movie I saw because…"

d. Write a brief paragraph about why you like:

- a sunny day

- your favorite food

- music

Example 9: The fold-over story.

Each student takes a piece of paper and writes the numbers 1-10, well spaced, down the side of the page. After each instruction, the student folds over the page so what has been written cannot be seen, and passes to page to another student.

1. Write the name of a man.

2. Write an adjective about the man. (fat, handsome)

3. Write the name of a woman.

4. Write an adjective about the woman. (fat, beautiful)

5. Write a place. (the beach, Seoul)

6. Write what he did.

7. Write what she did.

8. Write what he said.

9. Write what she said.

10. Write what everybody said about them.

Open the paper and read the story.

Ex: Once there was a man. His name was_____. He was_____. He met a woman_____. Her name was_____. She was_____. They met_____. He_____. She____. He said____. She said_____. Everyone said_____.

Ex: A man named_____, who was_____, met a woman named_____, who was_____, _____. He_____ (but/ and/while) she_____. He said____to which she responded____. Everyone said_____.

Example 10: Asking students to describe objects or scenes that relate to or contain vocabulary from several different areas, so that the vocabulary is used in new and different contexts.

The Fridge

Describe a refrigerator…

- A refrigerator is big.
- A refrigerator is white sometimes.
- A refrigerator is metal/ plastic.
- A refrigerator is in the kitchen.

A regrigerator has a door.

- It has hinges.
- It has no legs.
- It has a motor.

You keep food in a refrigerator.

- It is a machine to keep things cold.
- It has two compartments.
- One compartment freezes things; it's an ice box.
- The other compartment just keeps things cool.
- You can keep ice cream and ice cubes and meat in an ice box.
- You can keep vegetables and milk and cooked food in the main compartment.
- It's coldest at the top, in the freezer.
- It's the least cold at the bottom.
- You usually keep vegetables at the bottom.

Food related vocabulary	Weather related vocabulary		
vegetables	cold	cool	
milk	freeze	ice	
cooked food	Other related vocabulary		
ice cream	metal	machine	box
meat	motor	hinges	kitchen
	door	compartment	

Various techniques for helping students writing English proficiently as mentioned the above are very useful for both teacher and student. The teacher should encourage students to do the writing process and help them reduce their errors by practising. Students themselves should also learn how to correct their errors in order that they can get successful in language learning in the future.

Mostly the problems in written English free compositions for Thai students were from grammatical errors and lexical errors. These were consistent with the hypothesis of the study.

5.4) **Suggestions for further study**

This study is an error analysis research dealing with writing free compositions of Thai high school students (Grade 12). Futher research concerning error analysis is recommended as follows:

(1)   Future studies should investigate students' errors between undergraduate students and graduate students in order to see the development of their English writing skills.

(2)   Future studies should examine the most frequent types of errors occurring for Thai students, including the major causes of such errors. This could be a step toward suggesting effective methods for students to practice to correct their errors.

(3)   New techniques and instruments should be developed for analyzing writing errors of Thai students, including a follow-up interview with selected students in order to more accurately access what they were thinking, when they made writing errors, and thus to more accurately analyze the causes.

(4)   Future research studies should include various kinds of writing activities in order to see the most effective activities that can be used to reduce students' errors.

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APPENDIX A

Survey for the list of topics

แบบสำรวจความต้องการหัวข้อในการเขียนเรียงความแบบอิสระ

สำหรับโครงการวิทยานิพนธ์ เรื่อง การวิเคราะห์ข้อผิดพลาดในการเขียนเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษแบบ
อิสระของนักเรียนไทย โรงเรียนนาคประสิทธิ์ จังหวัดนครปฐม โดย นางจิตรา บรรโลมชน
นักศึกษาปริญญาโท   หลักสูตรปริญญาศึกษาศาสตรมหาบัณฑิตสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่
สอง มหาวิทยาลัยคริสเตียน

กรุณาเรียงลำดับหัวข้อเรื่องการเขียนเรียงความแบบอิสระที่ท่านคิดว่าเหมาะสมที่สุดสำหรับนักเรียน
ชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 โดยเรียงลำดับจากมากไปหาน้อย

- [ ] Occupation in the future
- [ ] Taking care of a pet.
- [ ] Forest condition in Thailand
- [ ] My family.
- [ ] Activities on a long weekend.
- [ ] The favorite sport in my country.
- [ ] Cartoon I like most.
- [ ] Custom in Thailand I like most.
- [ ] If I were a millionaire.
- [ ] Impression in my life.
- [ ] Attraction in my memory.
- [ ] Bangkok in my dream.
- [ ] Jobs for teenagers.
- [ ] Teenagers life in different generation.
- [ ] My further studies.

โปรดเสนอแนะและระบุหัวข้อเรื่องอื่นๆที่ท่านสนใจและคิดว่าเหมาะสมกับเด็กนักเรียน

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ขอขอบคุณทุกท่านที่ให้ความร่วมมือ

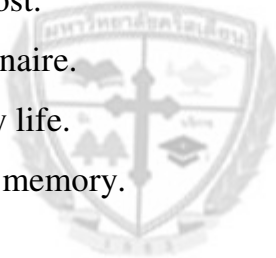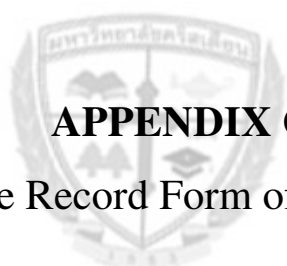**APPENDIX B**

The list of topics

Direction: Choose only one topic and write a free composition more than 100 words within 50 minutes. The sentences should be included simple, compound, and complex sentences in one topic.

1. Occupation in the future.
2. Taking care of a pet.
3. Forest condition in Thailand.
4. My family
5. Activities on a long weekend.
6. The favorite sport in my country.
7. Cartoon I like most.
8. If I were a millionaire.
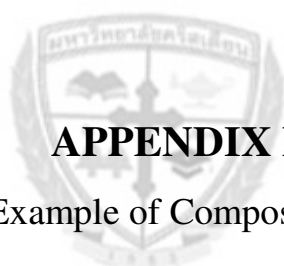9. Impression in my life.
10. Attraction in my memory.

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Name_____Surname_____

Direction: Choose only one set of picture and write a free composition more than 100 words within 50 minutes. The sentences should be included simple, compound, and complex sentences in one topic.

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APPENDIX C

The Record Form of Errors

APPENDIX D

Example of Compositions

My family

There are six people in my family. I not live with father and mother but I live with grandfather, grandmother, aunt, brother (cousin) and sister in law. My father and my mother live in Bangkok. I haven't brother and sister. My father is lawyer. He is 52 years old. He is blame and quiet. He is tall and fat. My mother works in a plant. She is 47 years old. She is kind. She is short and fat. She has short hair and curly hair. My grandfather is still living. He is 78 yearsold. He is agriculturist. My grandmother is passive and calm. She is thin and Short white hair. My aunt is kind and blame. She is 42 yersold. She have one son. She is Short brown hair. My brother (cousin) is 22 years old. He is talkative and active. Him wite is 20 years old. She is pregnant 7 month. Everybody excit and wait for her children. She is quiet. Our house is a big one of two storeys Downstairs are the kitchen, the dining room, the bedroom, the bathroom, the water-closet and the drawing-room Upstairs are the bedrooms. I asleep upstairs. We receive the visitors in the drawing-room. Round the lawn are a few flower beds. Behind the house there are some big trees. After dinner they always spend the evenings in the armchair and watch TV in the sitting-room. I love My family and My house.

(Apinya)

Cartoon I like most

Cartoon I like most is GUNDAM. Many people may not know that its ordinary name is just abbreviated name. Actually, its complete name is General Unilateral Neuro-link Dispersive Autonomic Maneuver. Although its full name is vary long but there are several secret hidden.

This cartoon brings some ideas of the future which imply that human can build robots or mobile suit. Country where else can considerably produce this cyborg pattern ; That one will be mastery country and will gain consideration from any country. If any colony resist it then it will bring demolition to them. With human's thirsty always start war. It is the reason that cause development of mobile suit called GUNDAM.

There are not only violating war but also love, which interest story a lot. BUNDAM cartoon is quite consequently attractive story.

(Teerut)

Taking care of a pet

I like every kind of animal. And I like dog very much. I like two dog. His name is Tan-tan and Muyong. Tan-tan have a big eyes, colour of hair are white and black. It is Bangkeaw. Tan-tan like swim and play football. Muyong have a big eyes, colour of hair are whit, brown and black. It's Bangkeaw. Muyong like swim and eat. My mom give them to me on my Brithday. When I am 18 years old. I like them very much. They are puppies and very cute. I love them very much. Because I feed them and take care them every time. When I feel lonely I have dogs is friend. It's make me happy. When them ill I am very sad and bring them to vet.

(Thapanee)

If I were a millionaire

My name is Porntip Chamchugon. I think that When I was a millionaire. I will give someone monny with beggar. I will take care my family. I will support homeless annimal. Because I love animal. Sometime I will give some food with dogs and cats because They are lovely and honest. I will build small house. And big garden. I will build pool as for as support fish. I will go to foreign country. I will ate food that I like. I will buy benze. I will build shool for child. I holpe that I will be happy in my life.

(Porntip)

Attraction in my memory

Attraction in my memory is Arawan waterfall in Kanjanaburee. I went to Arawan waterfall with my friend. We leaved from my home to Kanjanaburee at midnight. When van is coming to Pla's house. My friend and me get into this van. Two hours ago we arrive at Arawan waterfall. When we arrive at Arawan waterfall. We must walk way that go to Arawan waterfall. Arawan waterfall has seven floors. Floor's name is different. We swim in the waterfall and enjoy photograph. Finally we go to top floor that is the best beautiful. In afternoon we come back to home. In the way we buy thing. We arrive at home in evening.

(Nalinrat)

Going to the Library

In the morning, John decided to return the book at a library and then she go to the library. She returned it to the librarian at the counter. She'd returned the book too late o she had to pay for returning the book lately. She wanted to read another book. She wanted to read the story about detective, biography's famous professor and Chinese. She wanted to learn the Chinese langnage but she couldn't find Chinese book so she asked the librarian. The librarian told her to go and had a look at the section of China. When she got them all, She borrowed all the books and then got out.

(Nuengruthai)

A Sunday Drive

On Sunday, As a matter to fact it's today, My uncle will bring me to the park for picnic. We've already prepared for it. I think everything is the most perfect and absolutely. Every thing seems to be complete but when I see my uncle's car, my hope is pulled down. It's very old. Moreover, my uncle older than it. " What an old they are!" By the way, my uncle's car go…go….go very slowly like the owner. Slow as it is, it's very safe. "Slow but sure" is the truth. From city….. to the park, it's very long, Long time pass, I am at the public park and eating our meal. Yeah! This Sunday is a perfect day.

(Thongchai)

Christmas Day

Today is 10 December. Certainly, Christmas Day coming soon. My uncle my brother and I to make arrangements for christmas day. My brother preparing present for everybody. Many day ago. Our house is completely for Christmas. Today is 24th December. My uncle, my brother and I go to a Christian church. We have to consist of ceremony and to sing a song for celebrate in Christmas festival. When the ceremony finish We are to hurry back home for making cookies, as for my brother and I to writing words to ask a blessing from Santa. then bring socks to suspend at a fireplace. Before I go to bedroom. I prepare some milk and cookie for santa. My uncle to lead my brother and me to lie down. I to dream that Santa bring the present lay down under Christmas tree for us. finally, today is Christmas Day My uncle to recall us and say Merry Christmas. My brother and I hurry run to christmas tree . Oh! My dream to be true. Santa give the presents for us. We pick out the present and we are very satisfied at early evening. We have party Christmas in our home. My grandmother and My mom to join at party also Today, I'm very happy and I want to say Merry Christmas for everybody.

(Montida)

The Rainy Day

It is a last day of school. Anna feel really good that at last school finally over. As she rushing out of her school. She just find out that it's raining as her mother has predict in the morning. So she take her mother umbrella out from her backpack and open it. As she walk through the rain she see a pond of water on a street as she walk pass it. After a while a rain is getting stronger and stronger and an umbrella is getting no use. So she close her umbrella and walk in the rain without notice she slip over a mud on the street. So a lot of mud is all over her wet cloth. At the moment Anna have an idea how to clean herself up. So she start to run as fast as she can to pond on street that she pass by and start to use her feet stomping over a pond of water. But she find out that a mud is not really get off her cloth at all. She decide to walk home and get change to clean and comfortable new cloth.

(Kritsada)

Fire

One day Ben and nephew were in the kitchen. He cooked food intentionally. Suddenly, there were the fire came from the stove. The fire appeared on pan Ben covered the pan immediately. but he couldn't stop the fire. The fire burst out dramatically. Outside was coverd with smoke. Ben brought his nephew to get away from their home. He called the policeman to come for stopping the fire. So he pressed the number 911. The policeman asked Ben's address. After that Ben told everyone to go out of the home. Before leaving the home. He closed the door and the window in order not to let the fire burst out of the kitchen. The fire truck arrived at the home on time. The fire was stopped. He told his children that everything would be right. He thought that he should not be careless.

(Thanpisithi)

BIOGRAPHY

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INSTITUTION ATTENDED:

1990-1994	Bachalor of Business Administration (BBA), Major in Accounting, Assumption University
2003-2006	Master of Arts in English as a Second Language, Christian University of Thailand

WORK EXPERIENCE:

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