Writing Problems of EFL Learners in Higher Education: A Case Study of The Far Eastern University

ปัญหาด้านการเขียนของผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ ในระดับอุดมศึกษา: กรณีศึกษาจากมหาวิทยาลัยฟาร์อีสเทอร์น

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Abstract

This research primarily aimed to identify the problems in writing of EFL students, and to analyse written works with corpus linguistic analysis methods. The subjects of this research mainly were 27 students who registered ENG214 English Writing. The subjects were assigned to write an essay on the topic 'My Special Places' Then, all essays were scored by using the designated rubric criteria in Grammar Uses, Lexical Issues, Coherency and Cohesion. The score range was between 1.0 (for the lowest performance) and 5.0 (for the highest performance) with 0.5 for increments. After that, the scores were analysed with SPSS, and Corpus Linguistic programmes. Moreover, the measurement of text readability, known as readability indices, namely, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning-Fog Score, Coleman-Liau Index, SMOG Index, and Automated Readability Index, was used to investigate which reading level the essays reflected. The results showed that the writing problems regarded to EFL of the subjects could be classified and divided into four facets: Grammar Uses, Lexical Issues, Writing Styles, and Practicing hours and Feedbacks from Instructors.

Keywords

Writing Problems, Corpus Linguistics, EFL Learners, Higher Education

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ระบุปัญหาในการเขียนของนักเรียนที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็น
ภาษาต่างประเทศ และ 2) วิเคราะห์งานเขียนทั้งหมดด้วยวิธีการทางภาษาศาสตร์คลังข้อมูล ตัวอย่างที่ใช้
ในการศึกษา คือ นักศึกษาที่ลงทะเบียนเรียนในรายวิชาการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ ENG 214 English Writing
จำนวน 27 คน โดยให้เขียนความเรียงในหัวข้อ "My Special Places" จากนั้นให้คะแนนงานเขียนรายบุคคล
ด้วยหลักเกณฑ์ที่กำหนดไว้ตามหัวข้อ การใช้ไวยากรณ์ ประเด็นด้านคำศัพท์ ความสอดคล้องต่อเนื่อง
และความราบรื่นของเนื้อเรื่อง รายงานคะแนนระหว่าง 1.0 คะแนน (สำหรับงานเขียนคุณภาพต่ำ) ไปจนถึง
5.0 คะแนน (สำหรับงานเขียนคุณภาพสูง) เกณฑ์การเพิ่มคะแนนทีละ 0.5 คะแนน วิเคราะห์ผลการเขียน
ด้วยโปรแกรม SPSS และโปรแกรมภาษาศาสตร์คลังข้อมูลออนไลน์ นอกจากนี้ทำการวิเคราะห์วัดดัชนี
ความสามารถในการอ่านได้ (Readability Index) อื่นๆ อีก 5 ดัชนี ได้แก่ 1) Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level
2) Gunning-Fog Score 3) Coleman-Liau Index 4) SMOG Index และ 5) Automated Readability Index
ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ปัญหาด้านการเขียนของนักเรียนที่ศึกษาวิจัย สามารถแบ่งออกเป็น 4 มิติ ได้แก่
1) ปัญหาด้านการใช้ไวยากรณ์ 2) ปัญหาด้านคำศัพท์ 3) รูปแบบการเขียน และ 4) ชั่วโมงการฝึกฝนและ
การให้ผลสะท้อนกลับจากผู้สอน

คำสำคัญ

ปัญหาด้านการเขียน   ภาษาศาสตร์คลังข้อมูล ผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ
ระดับอุดมศึกษา

Introduction

Learning English as a foreign language, as known as EFL, has been gaining more interest
these days because of its necessary roles as lingua franca and to be in support of the fashionable
increase of a new economy revolution 4.0 (Forman, 2016). Consequently, English skills, as well as
other alternative languages that have potentiality in economic climate, such as Chinese, Korean,
Spanish, or German, for example, will play an immensely necessary role, for they could lend such
an effective tool to accessing to important data. It is interesting that when considering all four
English skills, writing appears the most problematic of EFL students, according to the evaluation
of students' ability to command English language as a communicative tool (Ahmadian, Rahimi &
Asefi, 2016 ; Cedar & Setiadia, 2016 ; Black & Nanni, 2016 ; Dueraman, 2015). It seems that EFL
learners face some problems, of which native speakers could easily overcome, and they have been
overlooked because not so much research has raised such issues to the public, especially in EFL
Thai learners. Some problems are due to the confusion between the agreement of subject and verb

(Ferris & Roberts, 2001 ; Ferris, 2006 ; Darus & Subramaniam, 2009 ; Nayan & Jusoff, 2009). Others might be grammatical errors (Truscott, 1996 ; Ferris, 1999); noun uses, verb declension, prepositions, collocations, or syntactical errors (Schneider & McCoy, 1998 ; Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013).

Due to the participation of Thailand in Asean Economic Community (AEC) since 2016, it is inevitable, at present, that English is used as a medium language for communication among members of the community. Thus, all English skills are increasingly required, at least in a good commanding level, for new graduates going to the workplace, either in national or in international scope (Kirkpatrick, 2012). Furthermore, several companies also request that applicants should include their international proficiency test results, like TOEIC, with their résumé. Some firms will offer additional monetary incentive supposing the applicants prove their English skills are in a higher level (Panyawong-Ngam, Tangthong & Anunvrapong, 2015). Others may grant them an opportunity to work abroad with holiday-taking periods. These, altogether, seem probably to put the students who are not ready in the English skills in a difficult situation (Puengpipattrakul, Chiramanee & Sripetpun, 2007). It was recently reported that English skills of Thai students were classified as 'very low proficiency' at the rank of 56th out of 72 countries (Education First, 2016), this reaffirmed that English skills of the majority of Thai students are not in a prompt action; therefore, their future might be in difficulty.

In learning to write in another language, learners' errors are an unavoidable element, for it is impossible for language learners to learn or acquire a language without error-making (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). Corder (1978) claims that learners' errors can disclose the methodology of the language employed or studied. Thus a number of studies focus on analysis of errors produced by second language learners for numerous purposes, for example, to reveal what learners use when learning a second language, to show the sources of errors which learners commit, and to know what the usual obstacles in EFL learning are.

According to a meeting of Business English Department, Faculty of Arts, The Far Eastern University, the most common problem about English skills among its students was found is writing. Moreover, a number of satisfaction letters from employers also suggested that the students of the Far Eastern University should have practised their writing skill more often so that their performance would meet the requirement of their future employers.

Thus, this is the reason why this research aimed to investigate if there are some rooms for developing the writing ability of The Far Eastern University students.

Objectives

1. To identify the problems in writing of EFL students that most of them are still inferiority so that they should be corrected in order to improve their writing ability.

2. To analyse written works with corpus linguistic analysis methods, which can possibly yield some beneficial suggestions.

Significance of the Research

In order to explore how to enable the students of The Far Eastern University to write effectively, writing ability of the students was evaluated to see whether there are any pitfalls, and to explore which areas they urgently need to be advised.

Methodology

1. Subjects

The subjects of this research mainly were 27 students who registered ENG214 English Writing. They are the second year students who major in Business English, Faculty of Arts of The Far Eastern University.

2. Instruments

In the current study, two research instruments were used to collect data.

1) Students' writing essays on the topic "My Special Places".

2) Vocab Trainer: Two sets of vocabulary with around one thousand words each.

3. Data analysis

In this study, three different instruments were used to analyse data.

1) Rubric Score Criteria (Cobb, n.d. a,b) was used for analysing the students' writing in grammatical, lexical, coherency and cohesive aspects, as well as the length of the essay.

The criteria were based on the following rubric scores:

5.0 = no grammatical errors found; no misspelling; the complete understanding of the essay is overall.

4.5 = few grammatical errors and misspelling may be found, but having no significant effects upon understanding the essay.

4.0 = some grammatical and misspelling errors may be found, and the essay shows a few ambiguity, however, it can be read comprehensively.

3.5 = grammatical and misspelling errors may affect the meaning conveyed in the essay in some way.

3.0 = several grammatical and misspelling errors are found and affected the meaning in the essay.

2.5 = many errors of both grammar and misspelling are found and they affected the understanding of the essay to some extent; some points may be difficult to understand.

2.0 = many errors of both grammar and misspelling are found and they affected the understanding of the essay to some extent; some points are hardly possible to understand due to the misspelling of word(s) or the repeated misuse of grammatical structures.

1.5 = many errors in both grammar and misspelling, including the word order, all of these hinder overall the understanding of the essay; comprehension seems rather difficult due to several aspects: grammatical structure, misspelling, word choices, or a misuse of words.

1.0 = many errors in both grammar and misspelling, which hinder overall the understanding of the essay; comprehension seems rather impossible, look like just grouping of words in a random together.

2) Five readability indices: Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning-Fog Score, Coleman-Liau Index, SMOG Index, and Automated Readability Index were used for calculating an overall essay to see which reading level of the essay reflects, the text quality, and detailed from syllables to sentences.

3) Two online programmes: Frequency Analysis and Vocab Profilers (Cobb, n.d. a,b) were used for analysing the writing text corpus.

Procedure

The students were assigned to write an essay on the topic 'My Special Places,' with which they feel familiar in the first period of ENG214 English Writing course. Then, all essays were scored by using the designated rubric criteria (Cobb, n.d. a,b) in Grammar Uses, Lexical Issues, Coherency and Cohesion. The score range was between 1.0 (for the lowest performance) and 5.0 (for the highest performance) with 0.5 for increments. This obligation was in exception to only the sub criterion 'Length of Essay'. For this, the qualitative assessment of 'satisfied' or 'unsatisfied' was implemented, instead.

After that, the scores were analysed with SPSS, and Corpus Linguistic programmes. Moreover, the measurement of text readability, known as readability indices, namely, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning-Fog Score, Coleman-Liau Index, SMOG Index, and Automated Readability Index, was used to investigate which reading level the essays reflected. In addition, the text quality, detailed from syllables to sentences, will also be reported as well.

During studying this course, the students were assigned to complete Vocab Trainer, which were two sets of vocabulary with around one thousand words each. They had to choose the parts of speech and define the meaning of each word without using dictionaries to investigate what their vocabulary profiles may be looked like. Two online programmes, Frequency Analysis and Vocab Profilers (Cobb, n.d. a,b), were used to analyse the writing text corpus. These latter analyses would insinuate the overview of the performance of the students' writing ability.

Results

1. Writing Analysis with Rubric Score Criteria

The results of students' free writing on 'My Special Places' found that most of the students investigated had the ability in use of grammar lexical and coherency and cohesion in medium level (average scores are 2.69, 2.80, and 2.56, respectively). When taking Grammar Use and Lexical Issues into consideration, the maximum score was 4.0, which means some grammatical and misspelling errors may be found, and the essay showed a little ambiguity, yet it could be read comprehensively, whilst the minimum score was 2.0, which means many errors of both grammar and misspelling were found and they affected the overall understandability of the essay to some extent. Misinterpretation, misimplication, and misunderstanding of the essay might occur due to its unclear and/or its ungrammatical structures; some points are hardly possible to be understood due to the misspelling of word(s) or the repeated misuse of grammatical structures. Coherency and cohesion appeared to be rather obvious problems for most of the students due to the fact that the average score was just 2.56 and nearly half of the students got around 2.0 only. Several students confronted the problem of developing their essays to complete their thoughts.

Misspelling was one of the main errors found in all essays. Supporting details were hardly seen in the writing works. In the same vein, discourse markers were sometimes used, but in unsatisfied manner. All of these defects were the main problems of the students participating in this research. Regarding the length of the essay, over three-fourths were classified into 'satisfied' category (77.78%), with the length between 70 to 197 words; whereas around one-fourth was unsatisfied (22.22%), with the length of less than 60 words. Moreover, nearly all essays showed undeveloped themes or topics by failing to express the main points the students would like to show or emphasise.

2. Corpus Linguistic Analysis

All of the essays were recompiled to a homogeneous text corpus, and then analysed with online programmes. (Cobb, n.d. a,b).

Table 1

Related Ratios & Indices

1. Pertaining to whole text	
Words in text (tokens)	2415.00
Different words (types)	660.00
Type-token ratio	0.27
Tokens per type	3.66
Sentences in text	171.00
Average sentence length (words)	15.09
StdDev	12.22
2. Pertaining to on-list only	
Words in text (tokens)	2354.00
Different words (types)	610.00
Families	518.00
Tokens per Family	4.54
Types per Family	1.18
3. Pertaining to cognates in *classified* on-list items only (English 1 - 11K)	
Tokens in analysis	2259.00
Cognate with French (or with English if Latin = French)	234.00
Non-Cognate with French (or with English if Latin = French)	2025.00
Cognateness = (234/2259)	0.10
COUNT INDEX (Averaged Individual Word Frequencies Approach)	
4. Pertaining to English words appearing on BNC-COCA frequency list only	
Sum of individual freqs	5,336,627,235.00
Divided by rateable tokens	2242.00
Mean frequency	2,380,297.61
	(SD=5,499,580.70)
Count Index Log_{10}[a]	6.38
	(SD=15.52)

[a]small index = higher proportion low freq items

According to Table 1, if considering only pertaining to a whole text, the overall 2,415 words (tokens) were analysed. Of these, 660 different words (types) were recognised. The type-token ratio was 0.27, whilst tokens per type were 3.66. These mean that around every 100 different words sampled from the written works, we would find 3.66 words that belonged to the same type. This may be implied the limitation of lexical density of the students. In this text corpus, 171 sentences were recognised with the average sentence length (words) of 15.09 ± 12.22. Regarding to pertaining to on-list only, the results demonstrated that the words in text (words) were 2,354. Of these, 610 different words (types) were recognised with 518 word families. Tokens per family were 4.54, whereas types per family were 1.18. The cognateness analysis was 0.10; this means that just only 10% of the written words in the analysis showed that the students scarcely recognised the cognate, words in two or more languages having a similar meaning and spelling. The count index, Averaged Individual Word Frequencies Approach, log10 was 6.38.

Table 2

Measure Text Readability

Readability Grade Level	
1. Readability Formula	*Grade*
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	3.9
Gunning-Fog Score	6.4
Coleman-Liau Index	8.2
SMOG Index	8.0
Automated Readability Index	2.4
Average Grade Level	5.8
2. Readability Formula	*Score*
Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease	83.2
Spache Score	3.8
New Dale-Chall Score	15.2
3. Text Quality	
Sentences > 30 Syllables	19.0
Sentences > 20 Syllables	56.0
Words > 4 Syllables	10.0
Words > 12 Letters	0
Passive Voice Count	7.0
Adverb Count	143.0
Cliché Count	0

Measure text readability analysis was performed and shown in Table 3. This work used five different kinds of readability formula, namely Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning-Fog Score, Coleman-Liau Index, SMOG Index, and Automated Readability Index. The average score was 5.8, which approximately equals to grade 6-student level. Moreover, when considering the readability formula score used, namely Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease, Spache Score, and New Dale-Chall Score, the scores were 83.2, 3.8, and 15.2, respectively. Regarding the text quality, it was found that 19 sentences appeared to have more than 30 syllables, and 56 sentences showed to have 20 syllables. Narrowing down to a word level, it was found that 10 words with more than four syllables were used; there were no words with more than 12 syllables reported. Passive structure was used in just only seven sentences. Moreover, 143 adverbs were reported in the corpus, and no cliché used in the text corpus compiled from the written works.

About the vocabulary profile of the overall essays, it is obvious that 91.68 per cent of words (tokens), or 2,214 words, used by the students belonged to the category K-01. This can be visualised in Table 3. The most common words the students used were 'special' 'home' 'family' 'like' 'places,' for example. Approximately 3.40 per cent, or 82 words, belonged to the category K-02. The rest, which belonged to the category K-03 to K-20, belonged to the insignificant number. 95 per cent cut point of the text corpus belonged to the category K-02, which means that the overall text appeared fairly easy to follow and comprehend.

Table 3

Frequency Analysis of Words Used (only the first 82 words shown in the table)

RANK	FREQ	COVERAGE		WORD	RANK	FREQ	COVERAGE		WORD
		individual	cumulative				individual	cumulative	
1	124	4.82%	4.82%	I	42	10	0.39%	52.83%	MAKE
2	106	4.12%	8.94%	AND	43	10	0.39%	53.22%	OR
3	96	3.73%	12.67%	MY	44	10	0.39%	53.61%	SO
4	87	3.38%	16.05%	THE	45	9	0.35%	53.96%	AS
5	71	2.76%	18.81%	IS	46	9	0.35%	54.31%	HERE
6	66	2.57%	21.38%	TO	47	9	0.35%	54.66%	I'M
7	54	2.10%	23.48%	IN	48	9	0.35%	55.01%	IF
8	48	1.87%	25.35%	A	49	8	0.31%	55.32%	DOI
9	37	1.44%	26.79%	HAVE	50	8	0.31%	55.63%	EVERY
10	33	1.28%	28.07%	BECAUSE	51	8	0.31%	55.94%	FRIENDS

Table 3

Frequency Analysis of Words Used (only the first 82 words shown in the table) (Continued)

RANK	FREQ	COVERAGE		WORD	RANK	FREQ	COVERAGE		WORD
		individual	cumulative				individual	cumulative	
11	33	1.28%	29.35%	OF	52	8	0.31%	56.25%	LIVE
12	31	1.20%	30.55%	SPECIAL	53	8	0.31%	56.56%	MACAO UNIVERSITY
13	31	1.20%	31.75%	THERE	54	8	0.31%	56.87%	TR
14	29	1.13%	32.88%	PLACE	55	7	0.27%	57.14%	ALL
15	29	1.13%	34.01%	VERY	56	7	0.27%	57.41%	CHIANG
16	28	1.09%	35.10%	PLACES	57	7	0.27%	57.68%	HAS
17	27	1.05%	36.15%	NUMBER	58	7	0.27%	57.95%	KRABI LANGUA
18	25	0.97%	37.12%	ARE	59	7	0.27%	58.22%	GE
19	25	0.97%	38.09%	AT	60	7	0.27%	58.49%	MAI
20	24	0.93%	39.02%	FOR	61	7	0.27%	58.76%	MOST
21	24	0.93%	39.95%	HOME	62	7	0.27%	59.03%	THEY WATERFALL
22	24	0.93%	40.88%	LIKE	63	7	0.27%	59.30%	LL
23	21	0.82%	41.70%	THIS	64	7	0.27%	59.57%	WE
24	20	0.78%	42.48%	FAMILY	65	7	0.27%	59.84%	YOU
25	20	0.78%	43.26%	WAS	66	6	0.23%	60.07%	ALSO
26	20	0.78%	44.04%	WITH	67	6	0.23%	60.30%	BAN
27	19	0.74%	44.78%	WHEN	68	6	0.23%	60.53%	FEEL
28	18	0.70%	45.48%	GO	69	6	0.23%	60.76%	LOT
29	17	0.66%	46.14%	ME	70	6	0.23%	60.99%	NOT
30	16	0.62%	46.76%	BEAUTIFUL	71	6	0.23%	61.22%	ON
31	16	0.62%	47.38%	HAPPY	72	6	0.23%	61.45%	PARENTS
32	16	0.62%	48.00%	IT	73	6	0.23%	61.68%	POK
33	16	0.62%	48.62%	MANY	74	6	0.23%	61.91%	TRAVEL
34	15	0.58%	49.20%	GOOD	75	6	0.23%	62.14%	WANT
35	14	0.54%	49.74%	TIME	76	5	0.19%	62.33%	ABOUT
36	12	0.47%	50.21%	BUT	77	5	0.19%	62.52%	AIR
37	12	0.47%	50.68%	LOVE	78	5	0.19%	62.71%	ALWAYS
38	12	0.47%	51.15%	PEOPLE	79	5	0.19%	62.90%	BEST
39	11	0.43%	51.58%	FOOD	80	5	0.19%	63.09%	BIG
40	11	0.43%	52.01%	IT'S	81	5	0.19%	63.28%	CAN
41	11	0.43%	52.44%	THAT	82	5	0.19%	63.47%	COLD

Discussion

The student performance on the designated free writing topic 'My Special Places' appeared just rather mediocre. The majoring of them was facing with the confusion of grammatical rules. Consequently, almost all of the written works were rather short, undeveloped, and lexically limited, as well as less cohesive and fluent. Moreover, the influence of the Thai language also distracted the students to imitate the syntactical and stylistic uses, resulting in errors found in most works. This issue has been discussed in the work of Pongsiriwet, Fakhri, Obenauf, Deaton & Bower (2001) in terms of 'fossilization.'

The problems that most subjects encountered in this work can be classified the problems into four facets: Grammar Uses, Lexical Issues, Writing Styles, and Practising Hours.

1. Grammar Uses

1.1 The limitation of knowledge in grammar rules

The overall knowledge of the students in terms of grammatical matters appeared inadequate, or did not cover all important aspects, as they should have had. Most of the students' writing was influenced by Thai language grammar rules and syntaxes, which gave such non-standard English writing patterns. This could be detected in 1) Subject-Verb Agreement 2) Verb Tense 3) Parallelism 4) Collocations of words 5) Voices and 6) Discourse markers (Pongsiriwet, 2001). The possible solution to such problems may be that it is obligatory and essential that most of the students consult or review the grammatical lessons in all aspects; consequently, they could then use these rules in their own writing with ease (Truscott, 1996 ; Ferris, 1999). The repeated practice with feedback from the instructor could help them the most. (Brabeck, Jeffrey & Fry, 2009).

1.2 The limitation of exposure hours to English media: novels, newspaper, magazine, Internet articles/essays, or other online social media

In order to be congruent with the new era of information that each person could access to news and information all the time with comfortable and supporting devices, students should be able to employ their own entire device as an educational enhancing tool. In this case, it will increase their inputs of English language uses of grammatical patterns and styles. Then, they could imitate and learn how to use them in their own free style, similar to what native speakers could do. Students should get the most use of accessible media nowadays, such as Facebook, Twitter, or any other online articles, news, or magazines. As a result their English manipulation may go further because this potentially increases their exposure time to good examples of English language. When their familiarity with these features of the language reaches a crystallisation point, they will adeptly possess a command of the language as they desire (Chen & Chung, 2008 ; Thornton & Houser, 2005 ; Stockwell, 2007).

2. **Lexical Issues**

    2.1 **The limitation of understanding the parts of speech**

    This problem is due to a lack of realisation of how important the parts of speech are. This, in view of writing, causes the problem to the extent that they do not know how to combine words appropriately, or even know how to do, but they still show some flaws in combination because of their assumption to Thai language, which differs from one another definitely. The solution to this problem is that students should learn all of these together: how a word was spelt, to what parts of speech it belongs, and what meanings the word could convey in different connotations. In addition, a study of word family relationship will enhance students' ability to use the word more mastery as well (Kittigosin & Phoocharoensil, 2015 ; Khamkhien & Kanoksilapatham, 2015).

    2.2 **The limitation of word formation: Prefixes and Suffixes**

    The study of prefixes and suffixed will provide such essential knowledge background for students. This will help them learn how to form words, and change parts of speech of words: all of which are required to be applied in a good writing. More than 80 per cent of words in English have been borrowed or have originated from Latin and Greek. Consequently, putting more effort to learn the prefixes and suffixes of Latin and Greek would provide such beneficial background to write good essays.

    2.3 **The limitation of word order due to parts of speech's prerequisite understanding**

    Tseng (2016) has studied the error types of EFL writers and found that the problem was due to a lack of good understanding of parts of speech, resulting in placing words in a wrong order, or not collocating with words of their counterparts. The students can use the application of online dictionaries or online corpora databases which give more examples of how words can be used; they can also learn the word combination in collocations.

    2.4 **The limitation of vocabulary levels that are frequently used, hierarchically categorised by Tom Cobb**

    Luo & Liao (2015) suggests the use of corpora for error correction in EFL learners' writing. This method is worth trying to use with Thai EFL students because the programme will analyse and point out the weakness in view of vocabulary statistically (Yoon & Hirvela, 2004). If such these applicable to the students in the research, their writing ability will much be improved.

    2.5 **The limitation of recognition and recall of vocabulary to use as desire**

    Phoocharoensil (2016) investigated grammatical and lexical errors in low- proficiency Thai graduate students' writing and found that most of them were because of their limitation of recognition and recall of vocabulary to use as desire.

3. Writing Styles

3.1 The limitation of styles in writing

Ghanbari, Dehghani & Shamsaddini (2016) investigated the use of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing. They found that most problems were due to the fact that students' lack understanding to manipulate discourse markers effectively. Some tried to use them too much that it seemed to be a drawback because the essay looked awkward and clumsy. Others placed them in an improper position, resulting in ambiguity of meanings.

3.2 The limitation of fluency in employing the writing styles in their own works

Phuket & Othman (2015) conducted the research to understand EFL students' errors in writing. They found that students often used their own unorganised thoughts to write every genre of works. This exactly seemed to be wrong and out of topic because of their limitation of competency in employing the writing styles in their own works. Reading much more from authoritative sources may help improve their writing.

4. Practising Hours and Feedbacks from Instructors

4.1 The uneasiness of using English after class and feedbacks

Vibulphol (2016) investigated students' motivation and learning and teachers' motivational strategies in English classrooms in Thailand and suggested that students should more often practise English skills in their everyday lives. Moreover, another factor, feedbacks from instructors, might also play a significant role in student's writing development (Bitchener, Young & Cameron, 2005). Effective continual feedbacks to students who show a lack of errors enhance the most rapid progress of their works. (Guénette, 2007).

4.2 A learning effect of making fun of learners who are during in progress of practice

This can cause most of the learners are on the verge of indifference, which appears to be a self-protection mechanism to avoid social rejection, to practise English trial-and-error method. Some students have to cope with such problems and they do not want to be rejected from the group. They might feel insecure to be different from their peers, in all manners. Thus, if many of their peers incline to consider that practising English all the time, or even in a manner of imitating native speakers, is a show-off performance, it is somewhat difficult to change their fixed mindset to the growth mindset, which seem pretty more appropriate, to develop necessary skills of English or other potentially alternative Indo-European languages, like German, French, Spanish, or Italian. (Wang & Rajprasit, 2015 ; Weerachairattana & Wannaruk, 2016 ; McDonough, Crawford & De Vleeschauwer, 2016)

4.3 Cultivation of the willingness habit in English learning

Another mindset is they have to hold their ground in persisting to use English every day. Motivation may most likely play an important role in such view. This would spur their stamina to the infinity in learning English language (Fujiwara, 2015). It may be viewed because of psychological effects: if one knows how important the skill is, one will keep focus stayed for a longer interval. Another suggestion is that they have to practise English, whichever approach they could, day in and day out.

Conclusion and Further Studies

All of these points of view may shed some light on how to improve students' ability in writing and correct their works. Four key problems, namely, Grammar Uses, Lexical Issues, Writing Styles, and Practising Hours and Feedbacks from Instructors, were represented as the most problematic issues to focus. Of these, Grammar Uses and Lexical Issues appeared to be the chronic obstacle for most of the students participating in this research, Writing Styles, Practising Hours and Feedbacks from Instructors were other enhancing factors that could effectively help students to achieve their goal the most.

From this research, Grammar Uses and Lexical Issues were the only inclination of the students' performance. Thus, there need to be further research in depth to reaffirm the assumptions concerning the students' problems about such topics. In addition, the levelled vocabulary should individually be tested to see their vocabulary profile. Grammar Uses in detailed topics should also be examined to see in which topic of syntactic errors they often made. If these errors have been corrected in time and continuously, this will pave the way for the students to their English ability improvement, which seems much more necessary to the next advanced level.

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