Research

Lexical Errors in the Written Compositions of Thai EFL students: Neglectful Instruction of Vocabulary Teaching

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Abstract

This article emphasized the analysis of the lexical errors in the written work of fourth-year students at Prince of Songkla University (PSU), Pattani campus, majoring in English from both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The aim of this study was to investigate the types of lexical errors produced by Thai students who study English as Foreign Language (EFL). This study also attempted to explain the possible causes of lexical errors in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors. From the analysis of the data, it was revealed that the highest percentage of errors was attributed to direct translations, the type of interlingual errors. For intralingual errors, the majority of error was attributed to omissions while confusion of binary terms was the least frequent of lexical errors found. The findings of this study showed that students had a great difficulty in producing vocabulary in the written composition. The influence of the mother tongue was the main cause of errors in the use of vocabulary among Thai EFL students. The main difficulty encountered was negative transfer from their native language rather than difficulties within the Target Language (TL).

Key Words: Lexical Error; Interlingual & Intralingual Errors, Target Language (TL), and Thai EFL Students

บทความวิจัย

ข้อผิดพลาดทางคำศัพท์ในงานเขียนของนักศึกษา EFL: การเรียนการสอนคำศัพท์

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความชิ้นนี้เน้นการวิเคราะห์ข้อผิดพลาดทางคำศัพท์ในงานเขียนของนักศึกษาวิชาเอกภาษา อังกฤษชั้นปีที่ 4 ทั้งคณะศึกษาศาสตร์ และคณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ วิทยาเขตปัตตานี จุดประสงค์ของการศึกษาครั้งนี้ เพื่อวิเคราะห์ถึงข้อผิดพลาดทางคำศัพท์ชนิดต่างๆ ของนักศึกษาไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ รวมทั้งอธิบายถึงสาเหตุเกี่ยวกับข้อผิดพลาดดังกล่าวข้างต้นในแง่ของ Interlingual errors และ Intralingual errors

จากการศึกษาพบว่า ข้อผิดพลาดทางคำศัพท์ที่มีร้อยละสูงสุด คือ Direct Translations ซึ่งเป็นชนิดของข้อผิดพลาดใน Interlingual errors สำหรับข้อผิดพลาดใน Intralingaul errors ชนิดของข้อผิดพลาดที่พบมากที่สุด คือ Omissions ในขณะที่ Confusion of binary terms เป็นชนิดของข้อผิดพลาดที่พบน้อยที่สุด ผลของการศึกษาครั้งนี้ชี้ให้เห็นว่า นักศึกษามีอุปสรรคในการใช้คำศัพท์ในการเขียนเรียงความเป็นอย่างมาก อิทธิพลของภาษาแม่ถือเป็นสาเหตุหลักของข้อผิดพลาดในการใช้คำศัพท์ของนักศึกษาไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ การถ่ายโอนจากภาษาแม่เป็นอุปสรรคสำคัญมากกว่าความยากของภาษาเป้าหมาย นั่นก็คือภาษาอังกฤษ

Definition of Terms

1. Lexical Errors: The errors which are classified according to vocabulary at a word level.

2. Interlingual Errors: Errors which results from language transfer which is caused by the learner's native language.

3. Target Language (TL): The language which a person is learning, in contrast to a first language or mother tongue.

4. Intralingual Errors: Errors which occur due to difficulties found within the TL or the learners in ignorance of the TL on rule learning.

5. English as a Foreign Language (EFL): The role of English in countries where it is taught as a subject in schools but not used as a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication.

6. Thai EFL Students: Thai EFL Students in this study refer to the students at Prince of Songkla University**,** Pattani, Thailand who use Thai as a medium of instruction and learn English as a foreign language.

Introduction

Research in Error Analysis (EA) have focused mainly on two components of interlanguage, that is, syntax and phonology to the neglect of the lexicon as evidenced by many researchers such as Ramsey (1981); Zoghoul (1991); and Dušková, (1969). Ramsey (1981, cited in Zughoul, 1991: 45) claims that "teachers and syllabus designers have been under the influence of the tenets of audiolingualism where lexis is relegated to a secondary status in comparison to phonology and syntax". In addition, the complexity inherent in the area of lexis does not lend itself as easily as phonology and syntax to quantification and scientific analysis (Zughoul, 1991). Dušková (1969) has acknowledged that certain lexical errors are difficult to differentiate and they are less homogeneous as compared to errors in grammar.

In many studies on Thai EFL learners (Khaourai, 2002; Kemthong, 1981; Kertpol, 1983 & Lukanavanich, 1988), lexical errors were considered to be a secondary factor after grammar. Lack of researches on lexical errors makes this study different from other studies. With the emphasis on the investigation of lexical errors produced by Thai students, this study gives a real insight into explanations and causes of lexical errors. In addition, recommendations for the improvement of teaching and learning of vocabulary in the Thai EFL context as provided in this study will further benefit Thai teachers in the understanding of the causes of lexical errors faced by their students.

Importance of Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary is an important component in English language teaching. In the area of reading and language arts, vocabulary instruction plays a crucial role in students' comprehension and written composition. Wilkins (1972) expresses the view that learning vocabulary is as important as learning grammar. He explains that we can distinguish near native speaking levels by whether learners can use collocation, which refers to the way in which words are used together to produce natural-sounding speech and writing. Without such ability, learners cannot be classified as native speakers, even if they make no grammatical

mistakes. McCarthy (1990: viii), states in his introduction that "No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way". Allen (1983) holds the view that vocabulary problems frequently interfere with communication. When people do not use the right words, they fail to communicate. This view underlines the importance of vocabulary instruction as without vocabulary, communication is unsuccessful.

Problem of Vocabulary Instruction

Despite the great significance of vocabulary knowledge, it is not as important as the aspect of grammar. Richards (1985: 176) reveals that "the teaching and learning of vocabulary has never aroused the same degree of interest within language teaching as have such issues as grammatical competence, contrastive analysis, reading or writing, which have received considerable attention from scholars and teachers". In addition, grammatical well-formedness of a composition is the main focus of many second and foreign language teachers in the teaching of writing. Lexis in language teaching, in general, and in the teaching of writing, in particular, is misunderstood because of the assumption that "grammar is the basis of language and that mastery of the grammatical system is a prerequisite for effective communication". (Lewis, 2002: 133).

In Thailand, too, vocabulary teaching is not the main focus. In the Thai education system, particularly at the tertiary level, it appears to be that lexis is not given much emphasis in the teaching class. When correcting students' writing, teachers pay more attention to the grammatical errors than to the lexical errors even though they are main errors found in a composition. In addition, teachers still use a limited range of methods. Pookcharoen (2007) explains problems of ineffective vocabulary instruction in Thailand that most Thai EFL teachers are familiar with traditional way of teaching vocabulary. Memorizing and translation-based teaching strategies are their common emphasis. Furthermore, looking for dictionary definitions and memorizing the translation equivalent in Thai are activities generally used in the classroom. Teachers usually use decontextual methods to teach words in isolation rather than showing students how to make use of contextual clues.

As the neglect of vocabulary teaching, it appears to be a major problem among Thai students who study English as a foreign language. Their command of English vocabulary is very poor. Sawangwaroros (1984) reported that Thai EFL learners are weak in vocabulary knowledge, which results in their being unable to effectively perform in the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Navasumrit (1989) indicated that Thai students encounter a major problem in learning EFL because they have insufficient vocabulary knowledge.

Methodology

Participants: The errors exemplified in this study were based on the English composition written by 50 of fourth year students at Prince of Songkla University ((PSU),

Pattani campus, majoring in English language from both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and comprising 8 male and 42 female students ranging from 19-23 years old.

Instruments: The written work, vocabulary test and questionnaire were the instruments used for this study.

Data Collection Procedures: There were three main procedures of data collection. To start collecting the data, the researcher obtained permission from the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Head of the English Department at Prince of Songkla University (PSU) to conduct this research. Secondly, the lecturer of the writing course, namely, "Paragraph and Composition Writing" was informed the purpose of this study. Finally, discussions were held to clarify the methods and details of the study tools.

On the final week of the course, two sets of the written work were given to the students as the assignment. The students were divided into two groups. Each group comprised 25 persons. The first group was assigned to choose and write one topic from the first set of the written work, narrative composition, whilst the second group was assigned to choose and write one topic from the second set, factual descriptive composition. They had to finish their writing in the class hour together with the vocabulary test. Due to the normal teaching schedule, the first 30 minutes of the class period was spent for the class introduction and the explanation of doing the composition and the vocabulary test. The lecturer gave 1 hour after the class introduction to the students to finish the writing part. The length of the essay was about 200-400 words to be written under the supervision of the lecturer of the course. In order to maintain the authenticity of the data, dictionaries were not allowed. The vocabulary test was administered to the subjects in the last 30 minutes after the lecturer collected the written work. The questionnaire was administered to the subjects after the vocabulary test was collected at the end of the class. the students were asked to complete it outside the class, at home or dormitory and return it to the lecturer next class.

After the lecturer obtained all the data from the students, he kept the photocopy of the written work in order to give mark to the students as a part of his assignment. The original of the written work, vocabulary test, and questionnaire, then, were returned to the researcher.

Data analysis: The students' errors were explained by means of Error Analysis (EA). Four procedures adapted from Corder (1974), namely (1) identification of errors, (2) counting of errors, (3) classification of errors, and (4) description and explanation of errors were used for analyzing students' lexical errors.

Results & Discussions

In the 50 English compositions, a total of 17,438 words were produced by the subjects. The average length of an essay was approximately 349 words. There were all together 847 lexical errors found in the written work. Out of the total number of lexical errors discovered in the data, as many as 657 lexical errors were identified as intralingual errors, while 190 were interlingual errors. In other

words, intralingual errors made up 77.6% of the total number of errors identified and interlingual errors constituted the remaining 22.4%. They were illustrated below:

Distribution of Lexical Errors According to Types

Types of Lexical Errors	Number of Errors	%
I) Interlingual Errors		
1. Direct translations	173	20.4
2. Misordering	17	2.0
3. Use of native words	0	0
Subtotal:	**190**	**22.4**
II) Intralingual Errors		
1. Confusion of sense relations	93	11.0
2. Collocational errors	42	5.0
3. Distortions	42	5.0
4. Omissions	165	19.5
5. Additions	117	13.8
6. Confusion of derivatives	56	6.6
7. Redundancy	42	5.0
8. Paraphrasing	63	7.4
9. Confusibles	29	3.4
10. Confusion of binary terms	8	0.9
Subtotal:	**657**	**77.6**
TOTAL:	**847**	**100**

On the whole, intralingual errors outnumbered interlingual errors. But the highest frequency of lexical errors felt into the error type known as direct translations, subtype of interlingual errors. It accounted for 20.4% of the total number of errors. This is due to the fact that intralingual errors have more subcategories and, as a result, there are a greater number of errors. Another two subtypes of interlingual errors are misordering and use of native words. The former accouted for 17 (2.0%) of errors whilst no record was found for the latter. Although some native words were used in the students' compositions, they could not be considered as lexical errors because they were names of places, provinces and games in Thai. Moreover, the subjects did not use words from the Thai language, Thai loan words in English, probably because the need did not arise.

Of the 10 subtypes of intralingual errors, omissions occupied second place after direct translations. Out of the 874 errors, 165 (19.5%) accounted for this error type. The lowest frequency (0.9%) of errors found in the data was confusion of binary terms. The

findings of this study showed that students had a great difficulty in producing vocabulary in the written composition. The influence of the mother tongue was the main cause of errors in the use of vocabulary among Thai EFL students. The main difficulty encountered was negative transfer from their native language rather than difficulties within the TL.

1. Direct Translations

This error type presents errors due to the literal translation of Thai words when their meanings are assumed to be equivalent to English words or phrases. It is subtype of interlingual error caused by the interference or negative transfer of the learner's mother tongue (Richard, 1971). The following are examples of such errors. The erroneous items are underlined. In the explanation, L1 translations are provided in Thai characters followed by the romanised version. In the list of examples, possible interpretations in the TL are given in parenthesis:

1.*At the in front of Big C while I was driving, I tried to drive carefully. (In front of)

2.*But each activity has difference. (is different)

3.*I think education is important thing for everybody. (important)

4.*In each a day everybody have 24 hours... (Everybody has 24 hours a day...)

All sentences given are interesting exemplifications of word-for-word translation from Thai to English. The phrase '*at the in front of Big C'*, '*has difference*', *'important thing'*, and *'in each a day'* were the students' literal translation from the Thai *ที่หน้า บิ๊กซี /te na Big C/*, *มีความแตกต่าง /mee khwam taek tang/*, *สิ่งสำคัญ /sing sam khan/*, and ในแต่ละวัน */nai tae la wan/* to English respectively. For those who are familiar with the Thai language or use Thai as a mother tongue, such expressions are understood. But they are unacceptable to Standard English.

Such errors were produced because the students structured the sentences in their Mother Tongue (MT); Thai, before translating them into the TL (English). They chose a lexical item which they were familiar with. The students produced erroneous items in the L2 compositions because of the L1 structure interference. This process is what Richards (1971) calls negative transfer.

2. Misordering

When the learners express their intended meaning in the TL by using word-for-word translation of the native language, misordering or incorrect placement of a word or groups of words is usually generated (Dulay; Burt and Krashen, 1982). The following are examples from the corpus:

1.*I and my old friend strolled down to the sea. (My old friend and I..)

2.*This is because it uses many program software of three – D animation. (software program)

3.*Translators should be good at structure language that they want to translate. (language structure)

In sentence 5, the pronoun *'I'* is usually put before other pronouns in Thai sentences. On the other hand, in English, the pronoun *'I'* is usually put after pronouns. Consequently, most Thai students still put the pronoun *'I'* before other pronouns in English sentences because

they are used to the Thai structure. Sentences 6 and 7 showed the misplacement of compound nouns. The errors demonstrated how two words were put together to form compound nouns in Thai. Thai people say โปรแกรม ซอฟท์แวร์ *'program software'*, and โครงสร้างภาษา *'structure language'* in their language. In English, on the other hand, the adjectives are placed before the noun: '*software program'*, and *'language structure'*.

3. Use of Native Words

From the data collected, none of the lexical errors found was due to the use of native words. According to "perceived language distance" (Kellerman, 1977 & Ringbom, 1982, cited in Zughoul, 1991: 56), there was a great distance between the MT (Thai) and the TL (English). Thai is perceived as very distant from English in terms of writing system, graphology and phonology. In addition, the role of English in Thailand is that of a foreign language. As a result, code switching or code mixing is very rare compared to countries where English is used as a second language.

4. Confusion of Sense relations

The results showed that the students used or selected words that were inappropriate for the context. The words in English can be classified into sets such as synonyms, superonyms, and hyponyms (Lehrer, 1974). The students cannot realize these word sets by assuming that they can be used interchangeably. The problem of this kind of error can be seen clearly, especially among foreign language learners who are encouraged to learn synonyms and rely heavily on bilingual dictionary. The following are examples of confusion of sense relations found in the data:

1.*Uncle and aunt talked <u>together</u>. (to each other)

2.*It is <u>useful</u> for us to think about this question (Why do we learn English?). (necessary)

3.*The weather is also causes of an accident if the weather is bad or not suitable such as raining or <u>smokescreen</u>, drivers can't see well. (cloudy skies)

In sentences 8 and 9, the errors of lexical choice occurred due to semantic confusion between pairs of words which were near-synonyms. Because of meanings which were quite similar, the subjects used inappropriate lexical items in the given context. To give the intended meaning, *'to each other'* and *'necessary'* are more appropriate. Sentence 10 was an error due to the use of a specific term where a more general term is needed. To explain the weather in this context, *'cloudy skies'* is more appropriate for this sentence.

5. Collocational Errors

James (1998:152) defines collocations as "the other words any particular word normally keeps company with". It relies heavily on word-association knowledge. The wrong choice of collocation produced by the students can be considered as "unEnglish", which is directly related to transfer from the native language". The following are examples from the corpus:

1.*They are fighting again and again to <u>go to the aim</u>. (achieve their aim)

2.*This sweeping beach offers fine-grained white sand and crystalline water. (crystal-clear water)

3.*I would come back here again to see nightlife and click photos to show you. (take)

In sentence 11, the subject transferred the phrase directly from the Thai *ไปให้ถึงจุดหมาย /pai hai teug jud mai/.* He might assume that this collocation in Thai can also be applied to English. Although it is acceptable and frequently used in Thai expressions, it sounds odd in English because *'go'* does not collocate with *'aim'*. So, *'achieve their aim'* is more acceptable. In sentence 12, the word *'crystalline'* gives the meaning of *'something made of crystals'* or *'very clear and transparent, like crystal'*. Although the learner used this word together with the word *'water'*, the word *'crystal clear'* is more appropriate to mean *'water that is completely clear and also clean'*.

The word *'click'* in sentence 13 did not collocate with *'photos'*. It is usually used to show *'how quickly something can be done on a computer'* such as the click of a mouse. Thus, *'take'* is the right collocation.

6. Distortions

James (1998: 150) explains distortions as "the intralingual errors of form created without recourse to L1 resources". The outcomes are forms non-existent in the TL. The misapplication of processes as given by James (1998), namely omission, overinclusion, misselection, misordering, and blending are the framework of analysis for this error type. However, blending cannot be found from the data. The following are examples of distortions:

1.*Another occupation in which we have to use English is an ambassdor. (ambassador)

2.*Bussiness men exploit English for negotiating their agreements. (business)

3.*Of cause, some people were friendly. (of course)

4.*When I wacthed ghost 1990 I always happy and active. (watched)

Sentence 14 illustrated the error of omission. The letter *'a'* was missed resulting in the deviant form *'ambassdor'*. From this example, it can be assumed that the subjects committed such error because they have spelt the word according to the way they pronounce it. However, this deviant form can also be the result of ignorance of the spelling of the word in question. Sentence 15 showed distortions resulting from overinclusion. The subject produced additional letter *'s'* in the word *'business'*, by assuming that it was needed for the first syllable as in the third syllable. As a result, the deviant form *'*bussiness'* was produced.

Sentence 16 was the example of misselection. The way that Thai students pronounce the words *'course'* and *'cause'* are the same, that is, /kɔ:s/. However, for native speakers, the pronunciation is different. The final sound of the *'course'* is /s/, while the final sound in *'cause'* is /z/. Due to the similarity in the way Thai students pronounce these words, the subject has chosen the incorrect form for the expression *'of course'*. The distortion resulting from misordering was exemplified in sentence 17. All the letters of the words were presented but they were not in the appropriate

place. In this sentence, the word 'watched' was spelt as *'*wacthed'*. The order of the letters *'t'* and *'c'* were confused.

7. Omissions

Omissions are erroneous sentences characterized by "the absence of an item that must appear in a *well-formed utterance*" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 154). The following are examples of omissions:

1.*The beach is ___ place that everyone wants to go. (a)

2.*...but when I heard at ___ second time ...(the)

3.*The sky ___so clear. (is)

4.*We parked our car at the parking ___ of Samila beach. (lot)

In sentences 18 and 19, the subjects omitted the articles *'a'* and *'the'*. These are the common errors that can be found among Thai students because the use of articles does not exist in the Thai structure. Similarly, the omission of the verb *'to be'* in sentence 20 was an interesting example of the errors produced by Thai students. The subjects have produced this kind of error because of the differences between Thai and English sentence structures. In Thai, a subject can be immediately be followed by an adjective, and it is unnecessary to use the copula as in the English structure. In addition, Thai verbs can function as adjectives and verbs in the sentence.

Sentence 21 demonstrated omissions caused by ignorance of the right choice of words. Because of the lack of vocabulary in the TL, the subjects could not perform the correct word choice with its intended meaning, thus, leaving blanks in the sentences. Thus, this sentence needs the word *'lot'* to produce the meaning of a parking space. It should be noted that although the researcher has placed omissions under intralingual errors, some of the errors mentioned are due to interference of the mother tongue.

8. Additions

Additions are analyzed based on Dualy, Burt and Krashen's (1982) subtypes, which are double marking, regularization, and simple addition. The subjects produced these kinds of errors because of the difficulty in the TL. These errors can be used as a measure of the learners' acquisition of the TL. The learners have learned but have yet to master all the rules. Incomplete learning has resulted in "the all-too-faithful use of certain rules" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 156). The following are examples from the corpus.

1.*We can see that the governments <u>are</u> pay attention in education.

2.*I can contain the photos, music<u>s</u>, or videos in the diary.

3.*What I did <u>in the</u> yesterday,....

4.*In our daily life, we always <u>to</u> do everything.

Sentence 22 was additions resulting from double marking. The present tense was produced twice. This may come from overgeneralization and ignorance of rule restrictions. The subject may have acquired the general basic sentence structure in English, that is, *subject + copula* as in *'he is a man'* or *'they are beautiful'* and assumed that the verb *'to be'* can be used with all kinds of sentences. At the same time, the subject may not realize that *'pay'* functions as a verb in the sentence,

when, *'are'* was added, it has resulted in double marking. In sentence 23, *'*musics'* was regularizations in which the plural marker *'-s'* was added to uncountable nouns which do not take a marker. This may come from the incomplete learning and ignorance of the rules in the TL. The rest of the examples given were simple addition errors. Interestingly, the study has revealed that simple addition errors found in the subjects' written work were mostly due to the additional use of prepositions and articles.

9. Confusion of Derivatives

This category involves the students' inability to differentiate between the word classes, for example, verbs and nouns, nouns and adjectives, verbs and adverbs, verbs and adjectives, and adjectives and adverbs. They are attributed to incomplete application of the rules and structure in the TL. In addition, the differences between the TL and the learners' mother tongue are a major cause of difficulties for the students. However, the problem is also attributed to the learners' ignorance of the use of the different forms of the words in the TL. The following are examples of this error type:

1.*I was very amused with Allah's created. (creation)

2.*Every language is importance and English is importance like other languages. (important)

3.*When I go to the beach, I feel relax and relieve. (relaxed, relieved)

In sentence 26, the subject could not differentiate between the noun and the verb, producing an error of derivatives. The correct word should be a noun *'creation'*. Sentence 27 was a derivational error caused by the inability to differentiate between the noun and the adjective. In an English sentence, an adjective is required to describe a noun. Thus, the right choice of word for this sentence is *'important'* not *'importance'*. The errors in sentence 28 were due to the wrong uses between verbs and adjectives. The subject used the verbs *'relax'* and *'relieve'* in the sentence. They were considered as the errors because two verbs could not use together in an English sentence. The verb is followed by the adjective. So, the correct choices are *'relaxed'* and *'relieved'*.

10. Redundancy

This type of error includes the deviant forms of a needless use of different words or phrases to mention or repeat the same thing twice in the sentence (Woon,2003).The following are examples of redundancy:

1.*The World Wide Web is larger than anyone person can imagine.

2.*We applauded the performance by clapping.

3.*But we can learn from entering to wander in cyber world, internet.

In sentence 29, the word *'anyone'* itself refers to *'any person'*. The repetition of the word *'person'* is unnecessary because the word *'anyone'* is enough to express the meaning in this context. Similarly, the word *'applauded'* in sentence 30 carries the meaning of *"to hit your open hand together to show that you have enjoyed a play, show, etc"*. This means that the phrase *'by clapping'* is unnecessary in such a context and could be considered as redundant. The word *'internet'* in sentence 31 was redundant as the subject

has already used the word *'cyber world'* which has the same meaning. Thus, *'internet'* is unnecessary repetition.

11. Paraphrasing

This type of error is often committed by the second or foreign language learners, especially those who have a limit amount of vocabulary. When the learners face such a problem, they tend to use more words than necessary to convey the intended meaning. Woon (2003: 81) describes paraphrase as a state of "simplification strategy which the learners employ to replace lexical item that they don't know". The paraphrasing errors produced can be described under three different simplification strategies: (1) providing elaborating synonyms, (2) providing oppositeness of meaning, and (3) providing semantic features of the intended lexical items. The following are examples of paraphrasing:

1.*My father and my mother bought seafood. (my parents)

2.*It is not unusual if they always have ambition and face with various competition. (usual)

3.*People use car to drive go back to their home. (People drive back)

Sentence 32 was the example of the first simplification strategy. The subject paraphrased *'my father and my mother'* because he or she provided elaborating synonyms of the word *'parents'*. Sentence 33 demonstrated paraphrasing occurred due to the second simplification strategy where the subject provided oppositeness of meaning instead of the actual word or phrase. The subject used *'not unusual'* to refer to *'usual'*.

The third simplification strategy is demonstrated in sentence 34. When the subjects had a limited amount of English vocabulary knowledge, they tried to put the lexical item or phrase together in a complicated way. Sometimes, the paraphrasing sentence they produced was unstructured, ungrammatical and difficult to understand. In this sentence, actually, it could be shortened to *'people drive back'.*

12. Confusibles

Confusibles are errors that Laufer (1992) calls 'synforms'. Room (1979) refers to them as 'confusibles'; and Phythian (1989) uses the term 'confusables' (cited in James, 1998: 145). Laufer's (1992) taxonomy; (1) the suffix type e.g. *consider<able> / consider<ate>,* (2) the prefixing type e.g. *<com>press / <sup>press,* (3) the vowel-based type e.g. *seat/set, manual/menial,* and (4) the consonant-based type e.g. *prize/price, ledge/pledge* were used to analyze the errors found in this study. However, only the consonant-based and vowel-based types were found, while the suffix and prefixing types had no occurrences. The following are examples of confusibles:

1.*He must warm Molley about the danger that she is in. (warn)

2.*We had many activities, such as driving into the sea. (diving)

3.*The principle character is so famous too. (principal)

In sentence 35, the confusible pair, *'warn'* and *'warm'* have some phonetic similarity. Both words share the same initial consonant */w/* and vowel sound /ɔ:/. The difference is in the spelling of the final

consonant */n/* and */m/* respectively. However, to convey the intended meaning, *'warn'* is the correct word. In sentence 36, the subject produced the confusible pair *'drive'* and *'dive'*. The two words have some phonemes in common. Semantically, these words are different. In the context of this sentence it is more appropriate to use *'dive'* as the subject was talking about the activities at the seaside.

The confusible pair *'principle'* and *'principal'* in sentence 37 was due to phonetic similarity. These words sound similar /prɪnsəpl/, but their spelling and meaning are different. The word that means "*a moral rule or belief about what is right and wrong*" is spelt <ple> for the last syllable, whereas the word that means *"main or most important"* is spelt <pal>. Thus, to convey the intended meaning, *'principal'* is correct choice in the sentence.

13. Confusion of Binary Terms

Palmer (1976 cited in Zughoul, 1991: 55) defines binary terms as "relational opposites" of lexical items. In other words, binary terms refers to two lexical items that are rationally opposite to each other such as *come-go*, *here-there*, *give-take*, etc,. These words generally exhibit the relationship between items rather than "oppositeness in meaning". According to the analysis of this error type, *'come-go', 'give-take', and 'borrow-lend'* are binary terms found in the data. The following are examples from the corpus:

1.*People all around the world go to take diving courses here. (come)

2.*My friends took a lot of fruits to my parents. (gave)

3.*I lent the car from my uncle and drove to the sea. (borrowed)

The confusion between *'come-go'* in sentence 38 was produced because the subject did not have a clear understanding of the directional relations of these words although they know that *'come'* and *'go'* are opposite to each other in meaning. In addition, the relational opposites of *'come-go'* and *'here-there'* are interrelated. *'Come'* is always used with *'here'*, while *'go'* always appears with *'there'*. Otherwise it does not make sense. Sentence 39 the subject confused the binary terms of *'give'* and *'take'*. To express the meaning *'to provide something for someone'* or *'let someone have something'*, *'give'* is the correct word to be used instead of *'take'*. Sentence 40 presented the rational opposites of '*lend-borrow*'. Instead of *'lent'*, the subject has to use *'borrowed'* because its meaning is *'to take something from somebody that you intend to give back'*.

Recommendations

In order to facilitate Thai EFL students' learning English, particularly English vocabulary, some recommendations are suggested as follows:

1.In terms of English teaching methodology, Teachers need to apply the functional-communicative approach and other eclectic methods in the classroom and place more emphasis on learner-centred and performance-based assessment together with a balanced teaching of the four language skills.

2.Thai EFL students need to receive more vocabulary instruction. Further more, the attitude of giving more importance to grammar

should be radically changed by giving more emphasis to other aspects such as vocabulary, reading, listening, and speaking which are applicable to functional and communicative strategies.

2.Many of the lexical errors produced in this study are caused by the use of equivalent vocabulary in the students' mother tongue. Teachers have to encourage their students to use a monolingual dictionary in order to avoid resorting to Thai equivalents and literal translation from Thai to English.

3.Teachers should help the students by increasing their chances to learn vocabulary through exposure to words in contexts, and not only concentrate on introducing new words with their meaning in isolation.

4.Teachers should encourage their students to be aware of their own vocabulary learning strategies by designing appropriate exercises to promote the use of vocabulary learning strategies.

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