การใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษา สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏธนบุรี

THE ENGLISH GRAMMAR USAGE OF BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS, DHONBURI RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

พัฒนา ศรีสุรักษ์[1*], และเพ็ญพิสุทธิ์ ศิริ[2]

Patana Srisuruk[1*], and Penpisut Siri[2]

มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏธนบุรี 172 ถนนอิสรภาพ แขวงวัดกัลป์ยาณ์ เขตธนบุรี กรุงเทพฯ 10600[1, 2]

Dhonburi Rajabhat University, 172 Isaraphab Rd. Wat kallaya Thonburi Bangkok, 10600[1, 2]

*Corresponding author E-mail: psrisuruk@gmail.com

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษา 1) ความสามารถในการใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ 2) ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษหัวข้อใดที่นักศึกษาจำเป็นต้องปรับปรุง และ 3) นักศึกษาสามารถประยุกต์ใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษในสถานการณ์ต่าง ๆ ได้หรือไม่ กลุ่มเป้าหมายเป็น นักศึกษาสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏธนบุรี ที่ศึกษาในภาคเรียนที่ 1/2561 ชั้นปีที่ 1-4 จำนวน 164 คน การเก็บข้อมูลใช้แบบทดสอบความสามารถ จำนวน 36 ข้อคำถาม 8 หัวข้อคือ Tense, Part of Speech, Relative Pronoun, Quantity Word, Verb or Adjective, Adjective or Adverb, Infinitive or Gerund Verb และ Translation ผลการศึกษาในภาพรวมพบว่า นักศึกษาผ่านที่คะแนนร้อยละ 50 ขึ้นไป จำนวน 38 คน (23.17%) จากทั้งหมด 164 คน และเมื่อพิจารณารายหัวข้อ จำนวนนักศึกษาที่ผ่าน มีดังนี้ Tense 9 คน (5.49%) Part of Speech 87 คน (53.05%) Relative Pronoun 89 คน (54.27%) Quantity 127 คน (77.44%) Verb or Adjective 28 คน (17.07%) Adjective or Adverb 91 คน (55.49%) Infinitive or Gerund 103 คน (62.80%) และ Translation 31 คน (18.90%) ในจำนวน 8 หัวข้อนี้ มี 3 หัวข้อที่นักศึกษาจำนวนมากไม่ผ่านการทดสอบ คือ Tense 94.51% Verb or Adjective (82.93%) และ Translation (81.10%) ผลการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่านักศึกษาเหล่านี้จำเป็นต้องศึกษาเพิ่มเติมและทำความเข้าใจการใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ และผู้สอนจำเป็นต้องหาวิธีการสอนที่ส่งเสริมให้นักศึกษาใช้ภาษาอังกฤษได้เหมาะสม สามารถจำรูปแบบได้ และฝึกการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในสถานที่จริง

คำสำคัญ: นักศึกษาสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ, การใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ, ความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษ

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[1] *ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*

[2] *อาจารย์ สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*

ABSTRACT

The purposes of the study were 1) to study Business English students' English grammar usage; 2) to investigate which areas of English grammar students need to improve and 3) to investigate whether or not students can apply English grammar in different situations. The subjects were 164 Business English students, Dhonburi Rajabhat University, studying from the first year to the fourth year of study in the first semester of 2018. The data were collected by means of a test with 36 questions consisting of 8 topics: tense, part of speech, relative pronoun, quantity word, verb or adjective, adjective or adverb, infinitive or gerund verb and translation. The percentage was used to analyzed and interpret the data. The result showed that 38 students (23.17%) out of 164 students pass the test. The number of students who passed each topic could be broken down as follows: 9 students (5.49%) for tense; 87 students (53.05%) for part of speech; 89 students (54.27%) for relative pronoun; 127 students (77.44%) for quantity; 28 students (17.07%) for verb or adjective; 91 students (55.49%) for adjective or adverb; 103 students (62.80%) for infinitive/or gerund and 31 students (18.90%) for translation. The 3 most serious English grammar usage which more than 80% of students did not pass are tense, verb or adjective and translation. These students need to put more efforts in studying English grammar especially the 3 problem topics. At the same time teachers need to find appropriate strategies for students to remember the grammar rules including being able to use English in the real situations

KEYWORDS: Business English Students, English Grammar Usage, English Proficiency

Introduction

Modern technology has connected people from different parts of the world and thus enabled them to cooperate, interact and do activities together. This emphasizes the importance of English as a medium language in communication. Having a good command of English enables one to gain knowledge, keep up with the world and can increase the competitiveness of the country. Grammar is the core principle in the study of English as a second language or foreign language. The ones who possess more grammar rules are able to learn all aspects of the English language more effectively. Communication with good grammar can bring a positive image and confidence to the speaker and organization.

Thai students have had difficulty in dealing with English grammatical rules which are different from their language. From our experience as English teachers, the obvious grammatical problems are, for example, tense, noun, adjective and adverb. Students need to remember types of noun, the tense system and the order or position of adjective and adverb. Furthermore, learning grammar is quite boring, it usually takes place in the classroom and students do not have opportunities to practice it in their real life. Many students have encountered these confusing rules since their elementary. Apart from the different rules from Thai, the students' low English proficiency may come from the teachers' teaching styles, contents of teaching and students' efforts and attitude toward learning.

Dhonburi Rajabhat University, a community institution, always gives opportunity to all students to further their studies. Students applying for the Business English program will only be required to take an oral examination in the form of an interview with basic interview questions so the interviewers/ committee could not differentiate or judge the true level of the students' English ability. However, it is more important for Business English students to acquire correct grammar and structure than students of other majors. Knowing correct or proper grammar is beneficial and also helps students improve their four skills.

Business English students take an "English Structure" course in their first year. A lot of activities, for example, lecture, explanation, exercises and quizzes are practiced during the class. It looks like these students understand the lessons or what has been taught because these are basic aspects of grammar that they have studied before. Surprisingly, the feedback from their exams has not been good. During the 2015–2017 academic year, 271 students registered for the "English Structure" course. The analysis of the grades of the students from 3 academic years showed that 4 students got A (1.47%), 11 B+ (4.05%), 24 B (8.85%), 16 C+ (5.90%), 55 C (20.29%), 27 D+ (9.96%), 77 D (28.41%), 44 F (16.23%), 9 I (3.32%) and 4 W (1.47%) (DRU academic section, 2015–2017). From this information 59.39 % of students got a grade below D+. Also, the result of a research on pragmatic competence of Business English students (Srisuruk & Siri, 2018) showed that students made a lot of errors in terms of grammar and translation. Also their presentation, writing or speaking to our foreign teachers shows that their English proficiency needs serious improvement. Even though they study English structure for one semester, and also study many other English subjects, many students have not made any improvement in grammar. Since their major is directly related to English and nowadays we are an online society, most companies or organizations have their own English websites. Messages in e–mails or posted on the internet, in blog posts, or on Facebook statuses using good grammar give the company credibility (Wiens, 2012).

Therefore, the researchers would like to

explore whether the Business English students have used and applied it appropriately and on which areas of English grammar these students need to be focused. The findings will be used to improve students' weak areas of grammar and teaching methods.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine English language proficiency in grammar usage of Business English students.

2. To investigate which areas of English grammar students need to improve.

3. To investigate whether or not students can apply English grammar in different situations.

Literature review

Studies about learning English grammar have been conducted and the same or similar results have confirmed what has happened to Thai students even up to nowadays. As we can see from some following studies, problems usually arose from the different grammar rules, heavy teaching styles and teaching materials. Studying of tenses by high school students was too difficult, partly because of the difficulty of understanding the usage of tenses and partly because of the influence of Thai. Students did not understand the tense system – which tense should be used at which time (Sukasame, Kantho, & Narrot, 2014).

The common errors on written essays by Thai undergraduate students were the use of plural form of nouns, omission of punctuation, wrong structures of complex sentences, omission of some parts of a sentence, and fragments (Khumphee & Yodkamlue, 2017). The teaching method is also a problem, Saengboon (2017)'s participants reported their undesirable experiences of having been taught grammar without pointing out the practical use, applications and consequences of using correct English grammar. The appropriate teaching of grammar was beneficial as long as the communicative use of the grammar was emphasized. Teaching materials affect students' attitudes and motivation in learning grammar rules as well. There should not be so many grammar items in the course book as it is time consuming to consider them all. One should consider instead some functional contexts, which students have more opportunities to use (Srinon, 2019).

Methodology

This study looked at the English proficiency of Business English students in 8 grammar topics which Thai students usually make mistakes. Quantitative approach is used to collect and generate the data while qualitative one to analyze, interpret and describe the data.

1. Subjects

The 164 subjects were students who attended their classes on the first week of the 1/2018 semester and the number of students can be broken down from year 1 to 4 as 32, 30, 70 and 32 respectively. There are not many students in each year except the third year, the researchers wanted to explore all Business English students' English proficiency. The students in each year may have different level of English proficiency which will be useful information for teachers. The first year students were new students and took "English Structure" in the first semester. The second and third year students had studied different English subjects. Most of the fourth year students finished their Bachelor's degree at the end of the first semester of 2018 academic year (October 2018).

2. Instruments

Tests are used to collect the data. There are 36 questions which consist of 32 alternative questions dealing with different topics of grammar

(part of speech, relative pronouns, quantity, –ed and –ing or verb, adjective and adverb, and infinitive/gerund) 9 cloze test questions focusing on tense and 4 –text translation test from Thai to English. The total scores are 36 points. The students have 40 minutes to complete the test.

Table 1 Topics and numbers of their questions

No.	Topic	No. of question	Points
1	Tense	9	9
2	Part of speech	5	5
3	Relative pronoun	5	5
4	Quantity	4	4
5	–ed and –ing adj or Verb	3	3
6	Adjective and adverb	3	3
7	Infinitive/gerund	3	3
8	Translation	4	4

Data analysis

The answers in each part of the questionnaire are checked manually. The right answer for translation is 1 point, slightly mistaken 0.75 (wrong word but grammatically correct) and partially right 0.5 point (wrong tense, but understandable) and 0 for totally wrong. For the rest of the topics, the correct answer is 1 point and 0 for the wrong one. Then the scores are represented in terms of percentages within different aspects: overall picture of students' English language proficiency in grammar usage, individual grammar topic and comparison between each group of students.

Analysis results

1. Overall picture of students' English language proficiency in grammar usage.

Table 2 shows the overall pictures of students' English language proficiency in grammar usage. In order to easily see and understand the whole picture, the score range has been divided into 7 groups. First, the score was set by 50% (18 out of 36 points) for passing and then each percentage range was 10% apart. (The percentage was also calculated into raw scores.)

Table 2 The overall scores of Business English students' English_grammar usage

Year	Range of scores (36): Percentage: Number of students							Total students
	4–7 10–19%	8–10 20–29%	11–14 30–39%	15–17.5 40–49%	18–21.5 50–59%	22–25 60–69%	25.25–26.25 70–73%	
1	7 (21.87%)	12 (34.28%)	10 (30.30%)	–	1 (3.12%)	2 (6.26%)		32
2	1 (3.33%)	4 (13.33)	10 (33.33%)	12 (36.36%)	3 (10.00%)			30
3	1 (1.42%)	12 (17.14)	27 (38.57%)	5 (7.14%)	16 (22.85)	6 (8.57%)	3 (4.28%)	70
4	2 (6.26%)	7 (21.87)	9 (28.12%)	7 (21.87%)	6 (18.75%)	1 (3.12%)		32
Total (%)	11 (6.70%)	35 (21.34%)	56 (34.14%)	24 (14.63%)	26 (15.85%)	9 (5.48%)	3 (1.82%)	164
	Fail: 126 (76.83%)				Pass: 38 (23.17%)			

From the data, the lowest score is 4 and the highest is 26.25 out of 36 (the score range is between 4–26.25). Of the 164 students, only 38 students (23.17%) pass the test and 126 students (76.83%) fail. 56 students' scores are between 11–14 (30–39%) which is a larger number than other groups. 35 students' score are between 8–10 (20–29%), 26 students' are 18–21.5 (50–59%), 24 students' are 15–17.5 (40–49%), 11 students' are 4–7 (10–29%), 9 students' are 22–25 (60–69%), and 3 students' are 25.25–26.26 (70–73%).

If we look in detail by the year of study, 21.87 % of the first year students get the lowest scores (4–7 scores) among the four years. The number of students who pass the test from year 1 – 4 is 9.38%, 10%, 35.7% and 21.87 % respectively. The third year students have the highest scores and better English than the other years.

2. Passing and Failing by topic

Table 3 Number and percentage of students who pass and fail by topic and year

Topic (no. of question)	Year 1 (32)		Year2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
Tense (9)	3 (9.37)	29 (90.63)	0	30 (100)	6 (8.57)	64 (91.43)	0	32 (100)	9 (5.49)	155 (94.51)
Part of speech (5)	7 (21.87)	25 (78.13)	13 (43.33)	17 (56.67)	48 (68.57)	22 (31.43)	19 (59.37)	13 (40.63)	87 (53.05)	77 (46.95)
Relative pronoun (5)	14 (43.75)	18 (56.25)	14 (46.67)	16 (53.33)	46 (65.71)	24 (34.29)	15 (46.87)	17 (53.13)	89 (54.27)	75 (45.73)

Teble 3 (Continue)

Topic (no. of question)	Year 1 (32)		Year2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
Quantity (4)	19 (59.37)	13 (40.63)	24 (80)	6 (20)	58 (82.86)	12 (17.14)	26 (81.25)	6 (18.75)	127 (77.44)	37 (22.56)
Verb/adj (3)	6 (18.75)	26 (81.25)	5 (16.67)	25 (83.33)	12 (17.14)	58 (82.86)	5 (15.62)	27 (84.38)	28 (17.07)	136 (82.93)
Adj/adv (3)	12 (37.5)	20 (62.5)	18 (60)	12 (40)	42 (60)	28 (40)	19 (59.37)	13 (40.63)	91 (55.49)	73 (44.51)
Infinitive/ gerund (3)	14 (43.75)	18 (56.25)	23 (76.67)	7 (23.33)	47 (67.14)	23 (32.86)	19 (59.37)	13 (40.63)	103 (62.80)	61 (37.20)
Translation (4)	1 (3.12)	31 (96.88)	5 (16.67)	25 (83.33)	20 (28.57)	50 (71.43)	5 (15.62)	27 (84.37)	31 (18.90)	133 (81.10)

P is passing (50% up). F is failing (below 50%)

The number of students who do not pass the test shown by topic as tenses (94.51%), verb/adj (82.93%), translation (81.10%), part of speech (46.95%), relative pronoun (45.73%), adj/adv (44.51%), and infinitive/ gerund (37.20%) respectively.

Among the 8 topics, **tense** is the most serious problem which 155 students (94.51%) out of 164 fail and only 9 students pass. All students in year 2 and 4 do not pass this topic.

For part of speech, 68.57% of students in year 3 and 59.37% of year 4 pass. The high number of the first (78.12%) and second year students (56.66%) are not able to tell part of speech of the words.

For verb and adjective, a high number of all 4 year students fail. 62.5% of the first year students do not pass this topic. Most students in year 2, 3 and 4 can differentiate adjective and adverb.

Most students from year 2 to 4 pass the **infinitive and gerund** while 56.25% of the first year students do not. The last topic is **translation**, very few students of each year pass as of 3.12%, 16.66%, 28.57% and 15.62% respectively.

3. Three serious topics for Business English students

The majority of students have serious problems in understanding or applying grammar rules for three topics: tenses (94.51%), verb/adj (82.93%) and translation (81.10%). The three topics will be discussed in details: students' answers and the problems of each question

3.1 Tenses

Table 4 The overall result of tenses for each year

Topic	Year 1 (32)		Year 2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
Tense	3 (9.37)	29 (90.62)	0	30 (100)	9 (5.48)	155 (94.51)	0	32 (100)	9 (5.49)	155 (94.51)

P is passing (50% up). F is failing (below 50%).

It is quite surprising that Business English students' knowledge about tense is a real problem. All 4 year students get the worst scores for this topic. 155 students (94.51%) out of 164 get 0 scores for tense section. No students in year 2 and 4 pass this topic and less than 10% of students in year 1 and 3 pass it.

Table 5 Questions on tenses

No	Tense	Question
1	Present simple tense	My brother .....**goes**..... (go) to the gym at least three times a week.
2	Present continuous	Sorry, Mr. Hoffmann can't talk to you right now. He .....**is drivin**g ... (drive).
3	Past continuous	At this time yesterday, I .....**was playing**.....(play) football.
4	Past simple	Sue .....**lost**..... (lose) her job two months ago.
5	Past continuous & past simple	I.....**was watching**..... (watch) a movie when you ...**called**..... (call) last night.
6	Present perfect	Emma ..... **has worked**.. ..... (work) for our company since 2010.
7	Future simple (to be going to)	We ...**will fly/are going to fly**..... (fly) to Singapore next Wednesday.
8	Future simple (will)	Your bag looks heavy. I .....**will carry**..... ... (carry) it for you.
9	Past simple & past perfect	When we.....**arrived**.... (arrive) at Ellen's house, she ....**had left**..... (leave).

The 9 questions test students in different tense usage. Below are the students' answers and problems for each tense.

No. 1 (present simple tense), many students' answers are "go" instead of 'goes". They use correct tense (present simple) but they do not change verb to suit the subject. Different incorrect answers are "going, gone, went, gose". These show students cannot tell the function of present simple and in what situation this tense is used, even though key words "three times a week" are clearly stated in the sentence.

No. 2 (present continuous), the correct answer is "is driving". The key word is "right no" and the meaning of the whole sentence or the context clue can help in choosing the correct tense. The wrong answers are found as "driving, drives, drive, drived". For only 'driving', it is understood that students know this is present continuous, however they always omit verb to be. The rest of the answers can tell that students really do not understand or know the past tense of drive, especially 'drived'.

No. 3 (past continuous), only 1 student gets the right answer (was playing). The incorrect answers are "played, am played, play, playing". Many students saw 'yesterday' they just use 'played'. Students do not know the emphasis between 'yesterday' and 'at this time yesterday. Students who use 'am played/play' have a serious problem in understanding this tense.

No. 4 (past simple), students know that this sentence needs past tense, but the problem is they do not know what past tense form of 'lose'. Many answers are 'losed' instead of 'lost.

No. 5 (past continuous & past simple) is a little more complicating and students could not do it right. This question tests two situations: while one situation was going on and the other interrupted in between. No students get the score for this question. Very few get almost the correct answer (was watching/ called). But again they just wrote 'watching".

No. 6 (present perfect) is very clear to use present perfect tense (.....since 2010). However, a lot of students wrote the wrong answers like "work, worked,

was worked, is working". Students have no concept what tense is used for a situation that has happened in the past and has continued to the present time.

No. 7 (future simple –to be going to), many students seems to know that (next Wednesday) this is future simple tense or present continuous in the form of 'to be going to' but they cannot remember the structure of the tense. And many students do not really know what tense it should be. From the various incorrect answers (will flown, fly, is going to fly, flying, flown, flied, are fly, flys, had fly) make us know that this is a real problem for students.

No. 8 (future simple) only few students get the right answer. There is no clear key word to tell what tense it should be. Students need to understand the context or the meaning of the sentence to make this question correct. Students' wrong answers are "carry, carrying, am carry, carried". Their answers reflect their problems in understanding the meaning of the sentence.

No. 9 (past simple and past perfect), two situations happened in the past, which one happens

Table 6 The result of individual tense

No.	Tense	Year 1 (32)		Year 2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
		C	I	C	I	C	I	C	I	C	I
1	Present simple tense	8 (25)	24 (75)	17 (56.66)	13 (43.34)	31 (44.29)	39 (55.71)	8 (25)	24 (75)	64 (39.02)	100 (60.98)
2	Present continuous	3 (9.37)	29 (90.68)	7 (23.33)	23 (76.67)	26 (37.14)	44 (62.86)	3 (9.37)	29 (90.68)	39 (23.78)	125 (76.22)
3	Past continuous	1 (3.12)	31 (96.88)	0	30 (100)	0	70 (100)	0	32 (100)	1 (0.61)	163 (99.39)
4	Past simple	6 (18.75)	26 (81.25)	6 (20)	24 (80)	22 (31.43)	48 (68.57)	10 (31.25)	22 (68.75)	44 (26.83)	120 (73.17)
5	Past continuous & past simple	1 (3.12)	31 (96.88)	1 (3.33)	29 (96.67)	5 (7.14)	65 (92.86)	0	32 (100)	7 (4.27)	157 (95.73)
6	Present perfect	1 (3.12)	31 (96.88)	-	30 (100)	6 (8.57)	64 (91.43)	0	32 (100)	7 (4.27)	157 (95.73)
7	Future simple/to be going to	5 (15.62)	27 (84.38)	9 (30)	21 (70)	25 (35.71)	45 (64.29)	7 (21.88)	25 (78.12)	46 (28.05)	118 (71.95)
8	Future simple	3 (9.37)	29 (90.63)	3 (10)	27 (90)	9 (12.86)	61 (87.14)	2 (6.25)	30 (93.75)	17 (10.37)	147 (89.63)
9	Past simple & past perfect	0	32 (100)	0	30 (100)	0	70 (100)	0	32 (100)	0 (0)	164 (100)

"C" indicates correct use of tense, "I" incorrect use.

A high number of students make mistakes for each tense especially the fourth year students. All 4 year students have problem in using past continuous. They do not understand the concept of something happens at a certain time in the past. Only 1 student out of 164 does this tense right. Another serious tense is past continuous and past simple, 7 students (4.26%) do this correctly. 90% up of each group get it wrong.

They do not understand two situations happen in the past: one is a background ongoing situation (past continuous) and the other situation interrupts (past tense). For present perfect, the keyword is quite clear, but only 5 students do this tense correctly. The last critical one is past simple and past perfect, 100% of students get this tense zero score.

Different types of their mistakes reflect their low proficiency of English grammar. They do not understand the concept of different tense or how and when each tense is used in different time. Furthermore, they cannot remember the structure and function of each tense either.

3.2 Verb and adjective

Table 7 The overall result of verb and adjective

Topic	Year 1 (32)		Year 2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
Verb/adj	6 (18.75)	26 (81.25)	5 (16.66)	25 (83.33)	12 (17.14)	58 (82.85)	5 (15.62)	27 (84.37)	28 (17.07)	136 (82.93)

P is passing (50% up). F is failing (below 50%).

Adjective and verb is the second topic that students make mistakes. Around 80% of each group does not pass this topic.

Underline the correct word (verb or adjective) for the following sentences.

1. The football match we saw yesterday *(excited/* was *excited / <u>was exciting).</u>*
2. I don't know how to use this camera. The instructions *(<u>confuse</u> /are confused/ are confusing)* me.
3. Those scientists (disappoint/ *<u>are disappointed</u> / are disappointing)* with the results of the experiment.

Figure 1 Questions on verb and adjective

There are 3 questions which no. 1 tests 'adjective' ending 'ing'; no. 2 verb and no. 3 adjective ending ed'. When teaching this part, many students cannot remember the differences between adjective ending ed/ing and verb.

Table 8 The result of Adjective and verb in details

No.	Question	Year 1 (32)		Year 2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
		C	I	C	I	C	I	C	I	C	I
1	The football match we saw yesterday *(excited/* was *excited / **was exciting**).*	4 (12.5)	28 (87.5)	8 (26.67)	22 (73.33)	10 (14.29)	60 (85.71)	3 (9.38)	29 (90.62)	25 (15.24)	139 (84.75)
2	I don't know how to use this camera. The instructions ***(confuse** /are confused/ are confusing)* me.	9 (28.12)	23 (71.88)	7 (23.33)	23 (76.67)	22 (31.43)	48 (68.57)	4 (12.5)	28 (87.5)	42 (25.60)	122 (74.39)
3	Those scientists (disappoint/ **are *disappointed* /** *are disappointing)* with the results of the experiment.	9 (28.12)	23 (71.88)	10 (33.33)	20 (66.67)	20 (28.57)	50 (71.43)	16 (50)	16 (50)	55 (33.53)	109 (66.46)

"C" indicates correct use of tense, "I" incorrect use.

These words (excite, confuse and disappoint) can be used as an adjective (ed and ing) or verb. Students do not understand the meaning of the words functioned as verb or as adjective (ed and ing). Question no.1 is the worst. Students do not know what the subject is between 'The football match' or 'we' and they do not know the subordinate clause either.

This is the reason most students get the wrong answer. Generally, more than 70% of the students cannot differentiate between verb and adjective. It is like a blur picture for them, they know the different meaning but cannot remember what each type means or is used.

3.3 Translation

Table 9 The overall result of translation

Topic	Year 1 (32)		Year2 (30)		Year 3 (70)		Year 4 (32)		Total (164)	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
Translation	1 (3.12)	31 (96.87)	5 (16.66)	25 (83.33)	20 (28.57)	50 (71.42)	5 (15.62)	27 (84.37)	31 (18.90)	133 (81.09)

P is passing (50% up). F is failing (below 50%).

The result of Translation comes out in a very poor way. 81.09% do not pass this topic. The first year students' score is the worst, followed by year 4, 2 and 3.

Translate the following sentences into English.

1. วันนี้ฉันตื่นสาย เลยไม่ได้ไปเรียน
2. ฝนตก เดินให้เร็วหน่อย
3. ฉันสนใจผู้ชายคนนี้ เขาหน้าตาหล่อดี
4. เธอควรทาครีมกันแดดนะ แดดแรงมากเลย

Figure 2 Questions on translation

Some examples of translation below show students' English proficiency. Some students translate Thai to English in the literal translation (as in 1.4); some omit subject, verb to be, or do not use appropriate tense Examples of translation and vocabulary. These students can communicate in English for their survival, but using it in academic or for their professional career is still a real problem.

Examples of translation

1. วันนี้ฉันตื่นสาย เลยไม่ได้ไปเรียน

1.1 Today late get up, I don't go to school.

1.2 I wakeup to late is not to go to school.

1.3 Today I am get up late. I don't go to study.

1.4 Today, I weak up last. Then not go to study.

2. ฝนตก เดินให้เร็วหน่อย

2.1 It raining, walk up!

2.2 There is raining. Could you please run quickly.

2.3 Raining walk hurry up.

2.4 Raining ! Quick walk

2.5 Raining is walking fast. / Now Raining You should walk.

2.6 It's Raining you walking to fast.

It looks like students have words or vocabulary to say but they do not use the correct past tense. Some have problems in spelling or finding correct past tense verbs.

3. ฉันสนใจผู้ชายคนนี้ เขาหน้าตาหล่อดี

3.1 I'm interesting this man. He is so handsome.

3.2 I'm interest this him. He is handsome.

3.3 I interesting. He handsome.

3.4 I am interesting this boy. He very smart and good face.

3.5 I like that men. He so handsome.

Students are confused in using 'interest' with 'ed' or 'ing' ending. Many also omit 'verb to be' before 'handsome', just translate from Thai to English.

4. เธอควรทาครีมกันแดดนะ แดดแรงมากเลย

4.1 You must to should sun cream, cause the sun has too hot.

4.2 She should be makes sunblock. It's sunny.

4.3 You should use suncream and sun very hot.

Students know that the first part needs to use present continuous tense, but they have problems in remembering the form. Another problem here is using comparative.

4.4 She should to use sunscreen. It's very sunshine.

4.5 You should while skinning because weather so hot.

4.6 Could you please using a suncream. The weather is so hot.

4.7 You should sunbath sunshine is so hot.

Many students have problems in using auxiliary verb and main verb and in some cases they apply Thai structure without having 'verb to be' (4.3, 3.5). Finding or choosing appropriate vocabulary is another problem like the example 4.4 (sunshine for 'the sun is very strong').

Table 10 The result of translation in detail

No.	Question	Year 1 (32)			Year 2 (30)			Year 3 (70)				Year 4 (32)			
		C		I	C		I	C			I	C			I
		1	0.5		1	0.5		1	0.75	0.5		1	0.75	0.5	
1	วันนี้ฉันตื่นสายเลยไม่ได้ไปเรียน		2 (6.25)	30 (93.75)	1 (3.33)	4 (13.33)	25 (83.33)	7 (10)	1 (1.40)	15 (21.43)	47 (67.14)	1 (3.12)		5 (15.63)	26 (81.25)
2	ฝนตกเดินให้เร็วหน่อย	4 (12.5)	2 (6.25)	26 (81.25)	3 (10)	5 (16.67)	22 (73.33)	9 (12.86)	4 (5.71)	21 (30)	36 (51.43)	4 (12.5)		5 (15.63)	23 (71.88)
3	ฉันสนใจผู้ชายคนนี้เขาหน้าตาหล่อดี	1 (3.12)	8 (25)	23 (71.88)	4 (13.33)	13 (43.33)	13 (43.33)	7 (10)	5 (7.14)	21 (30)	37 (52.86)	6 (18.75)	1 (3.12)	6 (18.75)	19 (59.37)
4	เธอควรทาครีมกันแดดนะแดดแรงมากเลย	0	6 (18.75)	26 (81.25)	5 (16.67)	10 (33.33)	15 (50)	12 (17.14)	3 (4.28)	14 (20)	31 (44.29)	2 (6.25)	1 (3.12)	9 (28.13)	20 (62.5)

"C" indicates correct use of tense, and "I" incorrect use.

There are two clauses in each statement. Some students do correctly only one clause so the score is 0.5 and almost correct 0.75. A high number of year 1 students seem to have more problems in translating than other groups. Incorrect statements are more than 70%. Year 3 students have less number of incorrect answers than the rest three groups. The incorrect answer for no. 1 is rather high. Students do not use correct tense and do not know how to express this situation. No. 2 is present continuous in the first clause, many students just use 'raining' as a literal or word to word meaning in Thai. Many have problems in using adverb in the comparative sentence. The expression in no. 3 'เขาหน้าตาหล่อดี' is a familiar clause for students, but 'ฉันสนใจผู้ชายคนนี้' students do not use this part correctly. No. 4, year 1 (81.25%) and year 4 students (62.5%) do not know how to translate this statement. Many students use English for communication without correct grammar.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. Conclusion

This research was conducted to determine the Business English students' English grammar proficiency. The subjects consisted of 164 Business English students from years 1– 4 during the 1/2018 semester.

The data were collected by tests consisting of 8 topics: tense, part of speech, relative pronoun, quantity word, verb or adjective, adjective and adverb, infinitive or gerund verb and translation.

The overall result showed that 76.83% of students (126 students) did not pass the test whereas 23.17% of students (38 students) passed. The highest score was 26.5 out of 36 points and the lowest was 4. Tense was the most difficult section which 94.51% of students did not pass. The second and third most challenging topics were verb or adjective (–ed and –ing or verb) and translation which 82.93% and 81.10% of students did not pass. As for the remaining five topics, around 40%–60% of students answered the sections correctly.

For tense, all students could not distinguish the correct tense that should be used in various situations. They also could not remember the past tense form of some verbs, and they omitted the verb to be for the continuous tense. As for verb or adjective, they forgot how to use the correct form of the verb or adjective. For translation, they did not conjugate the verb to past tense for the past action. Their translations were translated word by word (literal translation). Also, the subject or verb to be (e.g he handsome) was omitted. Several other problems included using comparative sentences, as well as a lack of vocabulary.

The third year students proved to have better English proficiency than the other years. However, a high number of students did not pass the 3 topics mentioned above. The findings for each group of students will help teachers for their teaching.

2. Discussion

The Business English program accepts all students, whose English proficiency is moderate to low level. The test shows that students cannot apply the English grammar in different situations. Not understanding grammar rules, for example, the tense system, it is hard for them to understand the meaning (reading comprehension), or write and speak appropriately. The way these students use English is by putting English words together like in Thai, a monolingual language. They are able to use English for general communication and for survival, but not for formal or office correspondence. These students realize well about their English ability, so most do not aim to work in organizations that really need good English command. Grammar is important in gaining a better understanding of a sentence in English (Saengboon, 2017, p. 22). Studying grammar rules only in the classroom is quite boring and difficult for students to remember. Their motivation is on and off and they do not put enough effort into studying English. These are common problems found in different studies (Noom–ura, 2013; Sukasame, et al, 2014; Khumphee & Yodkamlue, 2017). Students who often use English with foreigners have better English grammar and communication. Therefore, teaching methods can help students learn and have better English command. Classes and activities should be arranged and assigned so that students have opportunities to use these rules in real, different situations. Visualization and real practices can be other ways in learning English. Srinon (2019)'s participants suggested that in teaching English grammar the teacher should use functional contexts and examples that students have opportunities to use and this will help them understand and remember the rules better. Ellis (2006, p. 102) also mentioned that teachers should focus on grammatical structures that are problems to learners rather than teaching the whole grammar.

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