

AN INVESTIGATION OF SYNTAX, SEMANTICS, AND RHETORIC
IN THE ENGLISH WRITING OF FIFTEEN
THAI GRADUATE STUDENTS

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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Salakjit Siriphan entitled "An Investigation of Syntax, Semantics, and Rhetoric in the English Writing of Fifteen Thai Students." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English with a concentration in Rhetoric.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated with love, respect, and gratitude to my parents, Mr. Somkid and Mrs. Kanitta Siriphan, who told me when I was a child that education is the only treasure nobody can take away. Because of their love, support, and confidence in their daughter, I am able to come this far.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine and analyze the writing of Thai students at the graduate level in order to discover their writing problems in the areas of syntax, semantics, and rhetoric.

Fifteen Thai students enrolled at an intensive language institute of a southwest public university volunteered to be the subjects in this study. These subjects had acquired their college degrees and had formally studied English as a foreign language for at least eight years in Thailand prior to coming to the U.S. They were asked to write an essay on the topic of "My First Week's Experience in America." They also answered two questionnaires, one on their English background and the other on their composing processes. Then the researcher identified and classified syntactic and semantic errors in all of the fifteen essays, using an error taxonomy developed and adapted from several studies. Errors were divided into two categories (syntactic and

semantic) with 15 concomitant subcategories. Possible sources of errors were conjectured according to suggested error-analysis theories and the information attained from the interviews with the subjects. The rhetorical styles and the students' composing processes were also examined to see if cultural differences between Thai and English influenced the thinking and writing of these students.

The results of this study showed that verb errors ranked first in the syntactic error category, followed by awkward expressions in the semantic error category. Possible sources of these errors included interlingual interference, intralingual interference, transfer of training, ignorance of rule restrictions, cultural thought patterns, memory limitations, and other affective variables. Most of the Thai students in this study admitted that English rhetorical style was never known to them prior to their coming to the United States, so they wrote according to what they thought was appropriate. They spent very little time in the invention process.

The results of the investigation revealed that Thai students in this study made errors both on syntactic and semantic levels. Errors which should receive first attention were those on verb, word-choice, preposition, and whole-construction. The English essay organization should also be taught to Thai students.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Each academic year American colleges accept new students from foreign countries, one of which is Thailand. Like other students whose native language is not English, Thai students usually bring with them some knowledge of English to be used in the new environment and in the college classrooms. The English language is one of the required subjects for Thai students from secondary school to high school. In most private schools in Bangkok, English is taught from the first grade. The Thai Ministry of Education has control over English curricula and textbooks to be used for the English programs in public schools throughout the country. Thus Thai students who come to study in American colleges have received standard English education in Thailand, yet they may possess different levels of English proficiency. As Alice Horning states, a second language skill may come easily and effortlessly to a few learners but not to the majority (32). Therefore, although English has long been a compulsory subject at all levels in Thai schools, and Thai students have worked at English for at least nine years before they come to the United States, they often find it difficult to communicate effectively with

native speakers. This problem also results partly from the fact that English in Thai education has been traditionally viewed as a branch of study rather than as a material for practice or use in daily life. Outside the classroom in Thailand, Thai students have no actual contact with English-speaking people. Much of the course work, therefore, concentrates on grammar rules, word-for-word translation, and vocabulary memorization. The medium of instruction at all levels in most public schools is Thai, never English. Nevertheless, some students seem to be gifted with language skills and are better prepared in English than others. Thus they can enter a bachelor's program in an American college and fulfill the requirements for a degree without much difficulty, whereas those with less proficiency in English may have to pass certain English tests, enroll in an intensive English program, or struggle hard in regular college classes as a result of their language barrier.

Evidently, American professors as well as Thai students themselves have experienced frustration and helplessness when they discover that the students' lack of English fluency affects the students' class performance negatively. Among the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the last skill to be acquired, writing, is the students' most immediate need because it enables them to get what they know on paper to pass an exam.

This study was therefore motivated by the desire to investigate the difficulty in English language learning with a focus on the writing skill of Thai students who come to study in an American college. Such a study should contribute to the better understanding of Thai students' writing problems and can also provide a guide for establishing the proper teaching approach and for selecting the relevant materials required to improve writing courses for Thai students.

Statement of the Problem

Research in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) has increased substantially over the past few decades due to the increasing number of ESL specialists and the growing interest in the field. Notwithstanding this increase in ESL research, very little has touched on the Thai language, particularly in the area of writing. Most ESL research studies have dealt with Indo-European languages. Thus an investigation dealing with such an uncommon language as Thai is called for. Besides, studies on the writing of Thai students are scarce, so this study will undoubtedly contribute more cumulative evidence for a better understanding of the Thai students' writing problems, their composing processes, and the effects of cultural differences on their styles of writing. This investigation

will, moreover, shed further light on other issues related to the ESL study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the English writing of fifteen Thai students enrolled at the Intensive English Language Institute of the University of North Texas. It can readily be observed that most Thai learners of English as a foreign language find it difficult to convey their ideas in English written form. Therefore, the researcher attempted to investigate the students' writing difficulty by interviewing them about the writing process and by examining the errors appearing in their English essays.

Delimitation

The study is limited to the writing performance of Thai students who have completed English courses at the high school and college levels in Thailand and who have come to the United States for further study at the graduate level. These Thai students' English proficiency ranges from beginning to advanced levels. The study focuses only on writing skill because it is the most useful skill for graduate studies and the most difficult one to perfect among the language skills.

This study does not attempt to provide a full account of all the affective variables involved in second-language learning. Such a comprehensive study is no doubt beyond the capacity of a single investigator and is especially hard to accomplish for languages such as Thai which modern linguists have not done much research in. Since this study examines second-language learning for a rather strictly defined population, the findings will be generalizable only to similar populations under similar second-language learning circumstances, unless findings from other and further studies in second-language learning support the extension of these findings to other second-language situations.

Definition of Terms

Contrastive Analysis: "A method of linguistic analysis which shows the similarities and differences between two or more languages or dialects with the aim of finding principles which can be applied to practical problems in language teaching and translation, with special emphasis on transfer, interference, and equivalences" (Hartmann and Stork 53). In this study, contrastive analysis is a method of linguistic analysis between the English and the Thai language.

Error Analysis: "A technique of measuring progress by recording and classifying the mistakes made by an

individual or by groups of students" (Hartmann and Stork 78). In this study, error analysis is the technique used to record and to classify mistakes made by native Thai students in their English writing.

Inflecting Language: "A type of language established by comparative linguistics using structural . . . criteria, and focusing on the characteristics of the word. In this kind of language, words display grammatical relationships morphologically: they typically contain more than one morpheme but, unlike agglutinative languages, there is no one-to-one correspondence between these morphemes and the linear sequence morphs" (Crystal 157).

Isolating Language: "A type of language established by comparative linguistics using structural criteria . . . and focusing on the characteristics of the words: in isolating languages, all the words are invariable, and syntactic relationships are primarily shown by word order. [M]any South-East Asian languages [including Thai] are . . . good instances of isolating languages. An alternative term is analytic, seen as opposed to synthetic types of language (agglutinative and inflecting), where words contain more than one morpheme" (Crystal 166).

Procedure

The subjects of the study were requested to write an essay under the topic "My First Week's Experience in America." They were allowed to use a dictionary freely and were not pressured by time. After they turned in the essays, the subjects were interviewed individually about their writing processes. The essays were then analyzed by the researcher, who attempted to categorize errors and indicate their possible sources according to the information from the interview. The essay development and its organization were also examined. This dissertation includes six chapters. Chapter one contains an introduction to the study and the review of literature. Chapter two compares the general characteristics of the Thai language with those of the English language with a focus on their contrasting features which may cause learning difficulty to native Thai learners. Chapter three explains the procedure and findings of the study. Chapter four presents an analysis of the findings. Chapter five discusses the rhetorical aspect of the fifteen essays and the student composing process. And Chapter six offers a conclusion and implications for further studies.

Review of Related Literature

Four major topics related to this research study will be under review: contrastive analysis, error analysis, language and culture, and the student composing process.

1. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis (CA) was first developed by Charles C. Fries as an integral component of the methodology of foreign language teaching. In his Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language (1945), Fries notes that the foreign language learner tends to bring with him portions of his first language (L1) knowledge. He suggests that this fact should be taken into consideration in the teaching of second language (L2), for in the comparison between L1 and L2 lies the key to easing the difficulty of the ESL learners. Furthermore, Fries recommends that

the most effective materials [for teaching a second language] are those that are based on a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.

(9)

Robert Lado confirms in his Linguistics Across Cultures (1957) that "those elements that are similar to the native language will be simple for him, and those that are

different will be difficult" (2). He agrees with Fries that pedagogical materials should be designed which will address the target language in a systematic fashion based on the predicted difficulty of structures as derived from CA. Proponents of CA believe that because languages are essentially different, most errors found in second-language learning can be attributed to first-language interference (Pierson 10). ESL curriculum development has been influenced by this belief because it appeals to the common sense of researchers and teachers alike. However, the CA theory, like several other language theories which seem to be true logically but not necessarily true empirically, has lost some of its credibility after several tests. Later research has discovered that a great number of student errors cannot possibly be traced to their native language and that interlingual errors are a small percentage when compared with the number of intralingual errors (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 103).

Among several critics of CA, Ronald Wardhaugh (1970) examined the CA hypothesis, recognized the explanatory quality (the weak version) of CA, but rejected its claim about the ability to predict areas of difficulty and nondifficulty in language learning (the strong version) (125). To Wardhaugh, the claim that CA can predict errors is quite unrealistic and impractical, and he questions:

Does the linguist have available to him an over-all contrastive system, within which he can relate the two languages in terms of mergers, splits, zeroes, over-differentiations, under-differentiations, reinterpretations, and so on . . . ? (126)

This question points to the fact that many linguists who believe in CA theory are not using a theoretically justified scientific tool but a subjective method (Brown 157).

Nevertheless, he praises "the weak version" of CA as "the best linguistic knowledge available . . . to account for observed difficulties in second-language learning" (126) and commends its recognition of the significance of interference across language which can explain the difficulties in language learning. According to the CA hypothesis, an ESL teacher can utilize his or her knowledge of the target and native languages to understand sources of errors which may result from interference of the first language (Brown 157).

The most convincing criticism of the CA-hypothesis strong version was offered by Whitman and Jackson, who in 1972 undertook to test the practicability of CA hypothesis. They applied the predictions of four separate CA's to a forty-item test of English grammar to 2,500 Japanese learners of English. Whitman and Jackson found no support for the predictions of the CA and concluded that the four

analyses were inadequate, theoretically and practically, to predict the interference problems of a language learner (Brown 158). This study seems to reveal that L1 interference plays such a small role in language learning performance that no CA could correlate highly with performance data, but Phinit-Aksorn (1973) argues that Whitman and Jackson's study was focused on students who had been studying English for several years , so they did not make as many mistakes due to interference as did the beginning students (6-7).

Testing the accuracy of CA hypothesis, Oller and Ziahosseiny (1970) studied the spelling errors of ESL learners and found that English spelling was more problematic for people whose native language used a Roman script, such as French or Spanish, than for those whose native language used a non-Roman script, such as Arabic or Japanese (183-89). The result of the study proves against the strong version of CA hypothesis which predicts that the learning of an entirely new writing system in a new language is more difficult than learning what is closely related to the existing knowledge of one's own language spelling system. Contrary to this prediction, Oller and Ziahosseiny explain that interference can actually be greater when items to be learned are similar to existing items than when items are entirely new and unrelated to existing items. As Brown

further explains, when human beings learn something, it is common for them to overgeneralize to the extent that minimal differences are overlooked and that greater differences do not always result in greater learning difficulty (159). Studies like that by Oller and Ziahosseiny underscore the significance of intralingual errors, which are as important in second-language learning as interlingual errors (Brown 159).

In summary, the attack on the CA hypothesis has been both on theoretical grounds and on the basis of empirical investigation. Yet proponents of the CA hypothesis still insist that the differences between the source language and the target language are the chief source of difficulty and that such differences are the most important factor in second language learning (Phinit-Aksorn 4-5). They claim that the CA hypothesis has contributed a great deal to translation theory, the description of particular languages, language typology, and the study of language universals. In fact, researchers have discovered that many error types, although produced by learners from several languages, are produced much more frequently by speakers of certain language group than by others. Thus some error types can be said to be characteristic of speakers of certain language groups (Brown 156).

2. Error Analysis

The discovery of the limitations of the CA approach led to the development of a new approach which was more psychologically oriented toward an explanation of second language acquisition. In "The Significance of Learners' Errors" (1967), S. Pit Corder states that "the learner's errors are evidence of the system" (166) and maintains that errors are a valuable source of information about the learning process of the student. Error Analysis (EA) methodologies have been developed from Corder's view that making errors is a normal part of language learning and that errors are valuable data on the status of the learner's progress in learning a language (Pierson 10). To EA proponents, second language acquisition is seen as a creative construction process rather than the transfer of habits from the first language to the second. Thus EA has become a research technique to provide empirical data for verifying and supplementing contrastive studies. In its new important role, EA has merged with studies in interlanguage (Selinker 1972) and has its scope broadened toward a psycholinguistic orientation concerned with evolving an explanatory theory of the learner's performance. Early EA theorists include Corder (1967, 1971, 1973), Burt and

Kiparsky (1972), Selinker (1972), Oller and Richards (1973), Schumann and Stenson (1974), and Burt and Dulay (1975).

Before the error analysis movement, errors in ESL writing were traditionally looked upon as a display of the learner's ignorance of the correct form of the target language. Lado, influenced by Bloomfield, asserts that "to learn is to change habits" (5); therefore, the audiolingual approach suggests that these habits can be changed or eradicated through drill and overlearning of the correct form. But the teachers who used an audiolingual approach later discovered that the students who performed flawlessly under drill conditions often failed completely when asked to communicate orally or in writing (Horning 32).

The turn from the behavioristic approach to cognitive approach in language learning during the late 1960s and the 1970s was influenced by Chomskyan generative linguistics. The paradigm shift that occurred in linguistics and psychology during this period no longer emphasized that language acquisition was a process of forming correct habits through repetition and reinforcement but as the result of an innate language acquisition device which operates through a process of hypothesis testing (Irujo 289). Proponents of this approach consider errors as an essential step in the learning process. Dulay and Burt (1974), for example, maintain that we cannot learn without "goofing" (95).

Errors are now treated as exponents of the learner's system and are understood with reference to the provisional grammar that the learner constructs and develops while learning a second language. They are not viewed as a pathological manifestation to be eradicated, but as constructive features of second language learning. EA proponents also hold that human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes, misjudgment, miscalculations, and erroneous assumptions. Like any other human learning, language learning is a trial-and-error process (Brown 164). The fact that learners do make errors and that these errors can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something of the system operating within the learner constitutes the basic theory of EA study, and it has become distinguished from CA by its examination of errors attributable to all possible sources, not just those which result from negative transfer of the native language. Error analysts look at errors which may arise from several possible sources: interlingual errors (the interference of the native language), intralingual errors (those resulting from difficult and illogical rules within the target language), the sociolinguistic context of communication, psycholinguistic or cognitive strategies of the language learners, and countless other affective variables (Brown 166) such as each learner's personality, memory lapse,

pressure to perform, cultural thought patterns, and transfer of training .

While EA is found to be a better and more useful theory than CA, Brown (1980) as well as Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) warn researchers and teachers about too much emphasis on student errors. Brown reminds them that too much concern with correctness of language can make the teacher forget about free communication. He contends:

While the diminishing of errors is an important criterion for increasing language proficiency, the ultimate goal of second language learning is the attainment of communicative fluency in a language.

(166)

One of the EA weaknesses, according to Brown, is its failure to account for the strategy of avoidance (166). An error analyst may assume that a learner who avoids a particular sound, word, structure, or discourse category has no difficulty therewith since no error appears in such category. Such assumption and conclusion can be misleading (Brown 166-67). Finally, Brown cautions that EA can lead to an overemphasis on production data, making the researcher forget that comprehension data or an understanding of the process of second language acquisition is of equal significance (166).

In addition to Brown's criticism, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) observe that EA looks at the surface characteristics of errors and tends to interpret their causes as negative transfer (142). EA also lacks sufficient precision and specificity in the definition of error categories. Several terms in error analysis theory need to be defined so that everyone can at least have the same concept of those terms (143). Another crucial weakness of EA, according to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, is its inappropriate use of simplistic classifications to explain learners' errors. Some errors cannot be put in one category, and some are due to several sources. As these three critics put it,

[s]ome errors that look like a structure in the learner's native language cannot automatically be attributed to transfer of the first language to the second; they may have been caused by some other mental process. (145)

3. Language and Culture

Contrastive analysis and error analysis are concerned with syntactic aspects of language. In studying a complete language learning process, one cannot ignore the semantic component of language in which the culture of the learner plays a significant role. The understanding of the

relationship of language and culture is believed to be a prerequisite to the understanding of the process of cross-cultural communication and second language acquisition (Lado vii). Linguists have been interested in culture and language relationships for years. In the preface to Linguistics Across Cultures, Lado writes:

The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and the culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student.
(vii)

Banathy, Trager, and Waddle, like Lado, believe that [t]he change that has to take place in the language behavior of a foreign language student can be equated with the differences between the structure of the student's native language and culture and that of the target language and culture. (37)

Because language is an integral part of the total culture of a society, it cannot be transferred to another society without some changes because the need and activities of the two societies are different (Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens 22). The native monolingual speakers of any

language might be tempted to think that the meanings of lexical items are independent of the language which they happen to speak and that translation from one language to another is simply a matter of finding the lexical items which have the same meaning in the other language, selecting the grammatically appropriate forms and putting them together in the right order. However, as Sapir (1949) contends, "No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality" (162). For example, when one learns the word "house" in a foreign language, the notion of this house will be identified with the "house" in his generalized memory. The concepts of "house" in the native and non-native speakers' imaginations are often arbitrarily and mistakenly assumed as identical, although in actuality the "house" concept of the native speakers and that of the non-native speakers may be different in detail (Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens 23).

Researchers in linguistics and anthropology have long agreed that language is part of culture. Some even assert that there can be no exact correspondence between the vocabulary of one language and that of the other as long as the two cultures are different. Malinowski's anthropological field work in Polynesia (1956) demonstrates that it is impossible to translate terms and texts from the

language of one culture to the language of another. Language, according to Malinowski, is far from self-contained; it is entirely dependent on the society in which it is used. It evolves in response to the specific demands of any given society; therefore, its nature and use reflect specific characteristics of that particular society. Thus an ESL learner will discover that there are some words and expressions in his native language that can never be translated into another language with the exact connotations. Sapir (1921) recognized the intimate relationship between the content of language and culture. Lexical items originate in the specific needs of people from a certain culture and reflect the unique way of life of those people. For example, in the Asian cultures where the aged and the learned are revered, these people are addressed in special ways. In the Vietnamese language, for instance, more than twelve words can be used for "I" or "you" to show social or family status of the speaker and the listener (Cheng 8).

Cultural differences can easily cause problems in the communication between people from two different cultures. In writing, one of the means of communication, this fact has not been sufficiently investigated. Researchers have focused their studies on grammar and syntax because they assume that problems in language communication, especially

in writing, occur because of faulty grammar or the production of unintelligible sentences. From my own experience, I have found that the problems of different attitudes, culture, and way of thinking can interfere with communication as much as, if not more than, the problems of language differences. As a result, one usually feels that it is easier to communicate with people of the same culture than to communicate with people of a different culture, even when linguistic competence is not a problem. A non-native speaker who does not have a shared understanding of the cultural background in the new language environment may not communicate successfully on those ideas in which a culture-specific concept is involved. In other words, people of different cultures misunderstand each other when the listener is unable to respond correctly to the concept that the speaker or writer is trying to communicate. Therefore, the chances for successful communication are increased by learning more about the target language culture and by experiencing it.

Since cultural thoughts and writing are related, the expression of certain world views differs from one language to another (Kaplan 44). It is also common that there may be a preferred rhetorical style in one culture unlike another's. In other words, Western rhetorical organization can be different from the Eastern. There have been several

studies on the writing styles as shown in the foreign students' English academic writing. The pioneering work was done by Kaplan in 1966, in which he claimed that the rhetorical organization used by students from a certain culture differed from that taught in English. A Chinese pattern of paragraphing, for example, is indirect, whereas that of English is linear and direct (Kaplan 49). According to Kaplan, the general Oriental style of writing

is marked by what may be called an approach by indirection. In this kind of writing, the development of the paragraph may be said to be "turning and turning in a widening gyre." The circles or gyres turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential views, but the subject is never looked at directly. Things are developed in terms of what they are not, rather than in terms of what they are. Again, such a development in a modern English paragraph would strike the English reader as awkward and unnecessarily indirect. (49)

In comparison with the above style, Kaplan views the English writing style as more organized and precise in the following manners:

An English expository paragraph usually begins with a topic statement, and then, by a series of

subdivisions of that topic statement, each supported by example and illustrations, proceeds to develop that central idea and relate that idea to all the other ideas in the whole essay, and to employ that idea in its proper relationship with the other ideas, to prove something, or perhaps to argue something. (45)

Kaplan's claims, however, were challenged by Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo (1985), who contend that the source of rhetorical differences does not lie in a preference for "indirectness" in the language and culture of Chinese, but in the emphasis of the English language instruction programs to which the students are exposed (528). Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo also mention two previous studies by Hinds (1983) and Das (1985). Hinds points out that different essay organizations do not always reflect the influence of the rhetorical style of the first language since "it has now been recognized that . . . some errors in the target language are not the result of negative transfer from the first language" (Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo 516). Das observes that the students' rhetorical strategies in their first language tend to be as deficient as in their second language and that the students' rhetorical level of second-language composition is a more important factor than the first-language interference (Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo 516-17).

Kaplan's claim that styles of writing vary from one culture to another may be supported by Okabe's article, "Cultural Assumptions of East and West: Japan and the United States" (1983). In his article, Okabe compares the rhetoric of the Western world with that of the Eastern. Rhetoric, in the Western sense of the word, is concerned with persuasion pursued at public forums. In writing, the concept of rhetoric persists in aiming at strengthening or changing an attitude on the part of the reader. Western rhetoric, therefore, is basically argumentative and logical in nature (Okabe 37). "The spirit of Western civilization is the spirit of inquiry," writes Okabe. "Its dominant theme is the logos. Nothing is to remain undiscussed" (Okabe 39). To the Western audience, to communicate well means to express oneself clearly, logically, and persuasively. Thus, the Western writing style values precision and the use of explicit and concise words. As Richard Hughes and P. Albert suggest,

[a] piece of writing may be considered unified when it contains nothing superfluous and it omits nothing essential to the achievement of its purpose. (Kaplan 45)

Okabe hypothesizes that the values of precision and clarity in Western communication, especially American, result from a "low-context" culture, one that is "highly individualized,

somewhat alienated, [and] fragmented" (35). The "low-context" culture lacks the shared assumptions of thoughts and concepts, requiring the speaker or writer in this culture "to verbalize his or her message to make his or her discrete intent clear and explicit" (Okabe 35). On the contrary, the Japanese culture, or most Oriental cultures, is a "high-context" one in which "people are deeply involved with each other, most information is shared, and simple messages with deep meaning flow freely" (35). In such a culture, claims Okabe, the people have traditionally established and preserved a great number of specific rules of conduct and forms of expression, so they do not have to elaborate their speech codes. In other words, they already have the "shared assumptions" of what they communicate to each other (Okabe 35).

Interestingly, Okabe believes that analytical thinking characterizes the thought pattern of Americans; they tend to analyze and dissect things into elements in order to understand them properly and to "pursue absolute dichotomies such as good and bad, God and the devil, the individual and the whole" (27-28). Contrary to the American way of thinking, the thought pattern of the Japanese is synthetic. The people with this thought pattern try to grasp reality in its totality, seeing things as they are in themselves. "They do not analyze or divide things into categories, so

much as they synthesize elements into a unified whole," Okabe concludes (28). The following is what Okabe describes as the thinking patterns of the Americans and Japanese:

The logicality of the English language may be thought of as a line. The Japanese language, on the other hand, tends to make for a pointlike, dotlike, spacelike thinking. The speaker organizes his or her ideas and thought in a stepping-stone mode. The listener is supposed to supply what is left unsaid. In the homogeneous society of Japan, much commonality is taken for granted, so that the Japanese tend to value these loose modes of communication that leave much room for various interpretations. (29)

Differences in prose style between the West and the East may have roots in the classical rhetoric movement more than two thousand years ago. According to George Kennedy (1980), after the defeat of the Greek states by Macedon at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 B. C., the Greek prose style changed significantly due to the contact with Judaism and Christianity (86). Two distinguished styles were found in this so-called Hellenistic age. One is a simplified form of Attic Greek, and the other is an "artificial and undisciplined style" known as Asiatic style (Kennedy 86). Contrasting with the clear, simple, polished, and witty

style of Atticism, the Asiatic style is "voluble, excited, and given to ornamental words" (Kennedy 86). This style, according to Kennedy, became popular in the East, especially in Asia Minor, in the Hellenistic period. It may be possible that the preference of ornamented and indirect style in the Eastern literature is the result of the Asianism movement since the classical time.

4. The Student Composing Process

Along with the study of the ESL learner's culture, his cognitive strategies should also be examined. Recent research in first-language writing has provided important insights into the student composing process. Janet Emig's classic study in 1971 represented one of the first attempts to investigate what writers do when they compose. This and other studies have reinforced the notion that writing is indeed a process of discovering and making meaning and that writing cannot be separated from its context; audience and intention should affect every stage of their creative process (Hairston 22). Furthermore, the writing process is not linear, the view traditionally held by writing teachers, but it is "messy, recursive, and uneven" (Hairston 23). Moreover, writers "plan, revive, anticipate, and review throughout the writing process" (Hairston 23).

However, Flower and Hayes (1977) have observed that the basic methods of teaching writing in the classroom today are still focusing on the written product (269). The teacher helps the students analyze the product, but he or she leaves the process of writing up to the student's inspiration. Richard Young (1976) also contends that there has been an overemphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process and the misconception that no one can really teach anyone else how to write because writing is "a mysterious creative activity that cannot be categorized or analyzed" (31). This continuing focus on the composed product is, to some extent, responsible for the failure in teaching students how to write. As Hairston (1984) predicted, by mentioning Thomas Kuhn and his theory of "paradigm shift," the new paradigm for teaching writing has emerged, and it will focus on the writing process, not product (15).

Following research on first-language writing which has begun to shift its focus from the student's written product to the composing process, ESL research has recently moved toward the "process" approach (Kroll and Shafer 208-09). ESL researchers have realized that although the studies done in the areas of CA and EA have provided some useful information about the ESL student's writing performance, these studies reveal only the surface features and thus

limit their understanding of the whole notion of how the ESL students write, where their ideas come from, and how they are formulated and developed. For advanced ESL students who are proficient enough that their linguistic errors do not obfuscate meaning and who demonstrate control of organization skills, their writing processes need to be investigated by the ESL researchers.

Vivian Zamel (1983) has conducted her research on the composing process of advanced ESL students at the University of Massachusetts. The results of Zamel's study are remarkably similar to those found in first language writing. Apparently, advanced ESL students go through the same writing processes as native students, but the difficulty in English writing of these students is, of course, greater than that of the native students in that they have to be more concerned with correct grammar and appropriate lexicon. This difficulty must certainly increase the slowness in their composing process (Zamel 181).

Contrastive analysis, error analysis, cultural differences, and the student composing process are major areas related to the study of ESL writing. Although both contrastive analysis and error analysis have weaknesses, they are helpful to researchers since there has not been any completely well-developed method to be used in accounting for student errors. Thus both methods were used carefully

in this study. In the next chapter, contrastive analysis will be used for the discussion of different characteristics of the English and Thai languages by focusing on those that may cause English learning difficulties to the Thai students. Then in Chapter 3, the researcher will discuss how error analysis was used in classifying the errors found in the fifteen essays.

CHAPTER II

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE THAI AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES WITH A FOCUS ON AREAS OF WRITING DIFFICULTY

Before a researcher attempts to compare and contrast any two languages, he or she needs to understand, as Hong Ghee Seah (1980) points out, that no adequate theory of language exists that can account for all aspects and phenomena of natural language (48). We have not developed any model of language description that is complete, uncontroversial, and universally applicable based on any specific linguistic theory (Seah 48). This study by no means attempts to make a complete comparison between Thai and English but to investigate certain aspects of the two languages relating to the writing difficulties of Thai learners at the collegiate level. Although there have been a number of studies on the similarities and differences of the Thai and English languages, most of them have focused on spoken language. Lekawatana (1970) and Phinit-Aksorn (1973), for example, have explained what mistakes Thai students are likely to make in their speaking of English and why and how they make them. They have concluded that the English mistakes of Thai students are mainly due to three causes: a) the differences in the phonological,

morphological, and grammatical systems of the two languages; b) transference of L1 to L2; and c) problems with rule applications. As with native speakers, some common mistakes Thai students make involve the use of English articles, of prepositions, of tense, and of collocations. Chaiyarattana (1961) applied transformational grammar theory to her comparative study of Thai and English syntax. She concluded that the structural differences of the two languages caused the major problems in language learning (103). Other studies were also useful in providing information concerning major characteristics of the Thai language. For example, Warotamasikkkhadit (1963) gave an outline of Thai syntax, again using transformational grammar as his model. Fasold (1969) investigated noun compounding in Thai. Chutisilp (1985) presented a sociolinguistic study of the English language used in Thailand. Jarujumpol (1983) looked at the lexical simplification of Thai students when they tried to communicate with American natives. Kruatrachue (1960), Rudhavanich (1967), Palakornkul (1974), and Thepkanjana (1986) have all worked on spoken language. None of them concentrates on the difficulty of writing for Thai students at the graduate level. The following is a summary of major characteristics of the Thai language which differ from English and which can contribute to the Thai students'

writing difficulties.

Basic Nature of the Thai Language

Linguists have classified Thai as an isolating language and have considered English as a much more inflecting language (see Chapter I for definitions). Although English is more analytic than other Indo-European languages, it is far more inflecting than Thai, which is completely analytic. This difference in the nature of the two languages contributes to difficulties when Thai students learn English. When Thai is compared with English, the first typological feature that strikes one's attention is its lack of grammatical morphology. In Thai, grammatical meanings and relations are conveyed through different devices like word order or separate function and content words, or are left unmarked and implicit through extra-linguistic contexts. The major characteristics of the Thai language which differ from English are that: 1) its verb forms are never conjugated to indicate person, tense, or number; 2) its noun forms are never inflected to indicate number, gender, and case; 3) articles do not exist in Thai, nor do case forms of pronouns; 4) a copula is not needed in Thai translations of English predicate adjective constructions; and 5) Thai basic word order is stable and simpler than that of English (Fasold 4).

Li-Rong Lilly Cheng (1987) mentions some morphological and syntactical differences between English and Laotian, most of which can be applied to the Thai language as well. Since Thai and Laotian are both grouped in the Sino-Tibetan family of non-Indo-European languages (Hartmann and Stork 271) and no convenient summary of Thai was found, Cheng's description of Laotian can be used to explain the characteristics of Thai:

- Adjectives follow nouns in Laotian [and Thai], for example, dress that have color good.
- Personal pronouns do not change in Laotian [and Thai]. There is only one word for the words I, me, my, and mine. . . .
- In Laotian [and Thai], the meaning of plurality and possession is expressed with different combinations of words, rather than with markers.
- There are no tense markers in Laotian [and Thai]. The meaning of past, present, or future is expressed through the words of time in the sentence. For example, I go to school yesterday.
- A Laotian [and Thai] verb does not change its form when there is a change in subject. For example, I go, you go, he go.

- Laotian [and Thai] has no verb to be for sentences with predicate adjectives, for example, food good, dress beautiful.

- There are no articles in Laotian [and Thai].

(Cheng 48-49; emphasis added).

Most Thai words are monosyllabic, although there are some compound and polysyllabic words borrowed from Sanskrit and Pali, two languages from India. The Thai graphemes were also adapted from Sanskrit and Pali. The Thai alphabet consists of forty-four consonants and thirty-two vowels. Thai also has five phonemic tones: 1) mid, 2) low (\), 3) falling (^), 4) high (/), and 5) rising (v) tones (See Appendix A for Thai consonant and vowel charts).

In his study of noun compounding in the Thai language, Ralph Fasold (1969) mentions that several western grammarians believe that Thai grammar is simpler than that of European languages in many respects (3). To the traditionalist-prescriptivists, in particular, Thai seems to be a language that does not possess any grammar in the European sense of the term. On the surface, Thai grammar is rather loose and disorganized. But Thai grammarians may contend that "Thai has all the machinery necessary to express anything that English can, but does not express some things in every sentence which must always be expressed in English" (Fasold 5). A Thai person can express precision in

number or tense when it is necessary in communication. But when such precision is unnecessary, which is often the case in Thai communication, he tends to leave out those items. In fact, the preciseness of Thai can be seen in its regular system of pronouns which designates the sex of the speaker, which is necessary in Thai but is lacking in English. Thai also pays far more special attention to the speaker's status and that of the speaker than English does. Three major areas of contrast will be discussed in this chapter: grammatical morphology, word order, and function words. Other areas which may also contribute to the writing problems will be grouped under "Other Aspects."

1. Grammatical Morphology

Since English is an inflected language but Thai is not, the latter naturally lacks certain morphemes which are present in English. Semantic distortion may occur frequently as a result of neglecting affixal and suprasegmental morphemes or misplacing morphemes. It is predictable that stylistic errors will occur

- (a) in connection with certain optional elements which tend to be less often used by native speakers, and

(b) where two alternatives are equally grammatical but have a social or other cultural difference of connotation (Chaiyaratana 107).

Examples of these occurrences will be illustrated in the next chapter. Six morphological areas in the two languages under discussion include: 1) the plural markers, 2) the tense markers, 3) the verb system, 4) the noun and pronoun systems, 5) the possessives, and 6) the comparative and superlative degrees.

1.1 The Plural Marker

In a Thai sentence, number is usually unmarked or not required to be indicated, so Thai students tend to underdifferentiate plurality when they write in English. English also has more clues and concord rules which are not paralleled in Thai; therefore, learning to use correct plural markers in English may be difficult for Thai students.

1.2 The Tense Markers

The tense morphemes, like the plural and number morphemes, do exist in Thai but not in the same manner as in English. For example, an English sentence "John sleeps." shows the number of the speaker as well as the tense through the morpheme [-s] and the verb "sleep." In Thai, this sentence can be translated as /khaw nɔn/ (He sleep) with the

verb being completely unconjugated even when this sentence is changed into the past tense.

It is true, as Fasold points out, that Thai has classes of morphemes comparable to English tense, but they are time adverbs or separated morphemes to be added in front of or behind the verbs (5). Moreover, since verbs in Thai are not inflected, modification of verb form, a grammatical device that many languages use to indicate the time of the activity relative to the time of the locutionary act, is foreign to the language. Time in Thai is either overtly marked by a time adverbial: /phrûṇní/ (tomorrow), /dǎwní/ (at the moment); by a time particle: /kamlaŋ/ (in progress), /lɛ́ɛw/ (already); or is unmarked; that is, there is no element in the surface structure to indicate the time of the event. This unmarked tense rarely causes confusion to the listener because when the speaker reports an activity or an event, the act of reporting presupposes that the event or the activity has already taken place or is taking place (Lekawatana 9). Thus when a Thai speaker leaves the time of activity unspecified, the listener knows when it occurs relative to the time of the locutionary act. He knows it, not from any one element in the sentence but from the sentence as a whole (Lekawatana 9-10).

Of course, the English grammatical tense is not synonymous with time reference. As observed by Hong Ghee

Seah, a logical tense in English can have several grammatical tenses in different forms (66). The future time reference in the following sentences is expressed by five different grammatical tenses:

Simple Present:	I leave tomorrow.
Present Progressive:	I am leaving tomorrow.
Future Progressive:	I shall be leaving tomorrow.
Simple Future:	I shall leave tomorrow.
Copula + Infinitive Verb:	I am to leave tomorrow.

(Seah 66)

On the other hand, a tense in English can mean several kinds of time. The simple present tense in the following sentences does not refer unequivocally to present time:

Habitual:	He drives to school everyday.
Future:	The steamer leaves for China next week.
Historical Present:	[In this novel], there lives a king.
Partaking of Past, Present, and Future:	Knowledge puffs up, but wisdom and charity edify
Timeless:	Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

(Seah 67)

By contrast, Thai lacks the finer and more precise distinction in tense and aspect as well as the multiple

overt markers for these grammatical categories and their variants. Intralingually, English "displays inherent complexities in the irregular verb forms and the lack of one-to-one correspondence between time reference and grammatical tense" (Seah 67). Undoubtedly, Thai students will have difficulty understanding these complexities, let alone producing them correctly in writing or speaking.

1.3 Verb System

In the English verb system, we can see a variety of grammatical categories in which grammatical morphology is displayed (Seah 62). The auxiliaries HAVE, BE, and DO, moreover, make up the multiple forms of verb phrases which mark person, number, tense, aspect, mood, and voice. In no other area of syntax does English display such a variety of grammatical categories together with their overt forms as in the verb system. By contrast, the auxiliary transformations do not exist in Thai. And although gender and number are present, the formations which indicate them are not. The English verb system, therefore, is an area with which Thai students may have problems.

The complexities inherent within English in terms of its internal asymmetry constitute another source of Thai students' writing difficulty. The English use of the strong verb preterites can be seen in the morphological forms for

the English past and past participle, such as those of the following categories:

eat, ate, eaten

teach, taught, taught

set, set, set

. . . .

(Seah 65-66)

1.4 The Pronoun and Noun Systems

Like English, Thai has pronouns which must be marked as first person, second person, and third person. However, in Thai, according to Richards and Sukwiwat,

there is a greater degree of social distance implied in the difference between the most informal and the most formal level than the corresponding contrast implied in English. (119)

The pronoun system of the Thai language is more complicated than that of English in that the kinship or honorific system valued in the Thai society influences the pronoun system. In order to address people appropriately and to use appropriate language, Thai speakers must determine the listener's relative social rank. When this is not clear, they are uneasy about responding (Cheng 47-48). To illustrate, below are pronoun sets which can all be translated as "I" in English.

Situation	First Person
1. General, polite, male speaker	ph [~] om
2. General, polite, female speaker	dich [~] an [dit [~] h [~] an]
3. To non-royal but extremely high-ranking superior, male speaker	kraph [~] om [kraph [~] om]
4. Adult to child	ch [~] an [t [~] h [~] an]
5. Child to adult	nu [~] u
6. Intimate, among older girls (less often, boys)	raw
7. Intimate, among older girls	kh [~] aw [kh [~] aw]
8. Intimate, among adolescent boys	ua [~]
9. Intimate, among boys and young men	kan
10. Crude, among boys and men	kh [^] aa
11. Crude, among boys and men	kuu

(Noss 99-101; some categories are omitted)

English nouns are classified as count and non-count, whereas all of the Thai nouns can be counted using various classifiers. The fact that English puts an emphasis on the

distinction between count and non-count nouns has an effect on the obligatory co-occurrence of certain modifiers, such as determiners (this, these, that, and those), quantifiers (a few, a little, a lot of, much, and many), and definite and indefinite articles (a, an, the). Moreover, this system involves formal changes on the part of the nouns themselves and the pronouns used as substitutes of those nouns (Chaiyaratana 120). By contrast, Thai divides its nouns on the basis of a classifier which obligatorily conforms to the preceding noun (Chaiyaratana 125). Following is a list of the most common unit classifiers in Thai:

Classifier	Reference
1. /khon/	ordinary people
2. /onj/ [ʔŋ]	royal personages, Buddha images
3. /tua/	non-human things with anthropomorphic characteristics (arms and legs), e.g. animals, dresses, tables, and chairs
4. /tôn/	plants
5. /chabàb/ [tʰabàb]	newspapers, magazines

(Noss 106; some categories are omitted)

Thus classifiers in Thai are nouns, generally of very general meaning, which are used to count or precisely

designate specific nouns. For example, the noun /khon/ (person) is the classifier for all nouns referring to ordinary people. Thus in order to say "two men" in Thai, one says:

/khon	son	khon/
	∨	
(man	two	person)

The recognition that there are possible substitutive morphemes for all nouns in Thai and English but that matching between the Thai and English substitutes is entirely impossible, sheds light on one difficulty that Thai students encounter when they learn English. Since the difference in gender and/or number does not impose formal changes in Thai, the distribution of the English morphemes for the pronouns he and she is often unused by Thai students (Chaiyaratana 126).

1.5 Possessives

The Thai possessor may be explicitly marked by adding the morpheme /khon/ before the noun, which parallels suffixing the morpheme [-'s] to the noun in English. However, the English possessive covers various complex forms, as in his, my, her, their, and its. This difference will certainly cause English learning difficulty for Thai students (Chaiyaratana 131).

1.6 Comparative and Superlative Degrees

The bound form [-er] denoting comparative degree is to be directly equated with the Thai bound form [/^hkwà/] (Chaiyaratana 138). The derivation of more and most to [-er] and [-est] in English is entirely unparalleled in Thai. As a result, they constitute difficulty for the Thai; there is a tendency to confuse [-er] with more, and [-est] with most or to use both forms within one word (Chaiyaratana 139). For example, a student may write, "She is more prettier than her sister."

2. Word Order

The basic word order in a Thai sentence is similar to that of an English sentence: subject + verb + object. However, subjects are often omitted in Thai. Using phrase-structure grammar, one can say that the basic layout in both the English and Thai languages is NP (noun phrase) VP (verb phrase), although NP is obligatory in English but not in Thai. It is possible, therefore, that Thai students may neglect what is obligatory in English but not in Thai (Chaiyaratana 108).

In addition, Thai word order remains stable in a variety of circumstances in which English sentences undergo rearrangement (Fasold 12). Thai shows a rigidity in the positioning of modifiers like adjectivals, relative clauses, and adverbials, while English shows variability and

flexibility in its counterparts. This difference may cause Thai students to misplace noun modifiers in their English writing.

2.1 The Position of Noun Modifiers

In English, noun modifiers can precede the head noun under some conditions or follow it under other conditions (Seah 53). In Thai, noun modifiers consistently follow the head noun. Below are some examples. Thai noun phrases corresponding to (1) are given in (2).

- | | | |
|--------|--|------------------------|
| (1) a. | red roses | modifier-head |
| b. | friends whom I like | head-modifier |
| c. | that thick book on the shelf | modifier-head-modifier |
| d. | the pretty cat which came from Siam | modifier-head-modifier |
| | | |
| (2) a. | /kulaab dɛɛŋ/ | head-modifier |
| | rose red | |
| b. | /phian khon thi tshán tshóp/ | head-modifier |
| | friend classifier whom I like | |
| c. | /nansii bon tshán lém nán/ | head-modifier |
| | book on shelf classifier that | |
| d. | /mɛɛw tua suay thi ma tshaak sayam/ | head-modifier |
| | cat class pretty which come from Siam Modifier | |

The difference between English and Thai in the internal structure of NP can be summed up in the following diagram:



[Art = article, Num = numeral, Quant = quantifier, Dem = Demonstrative pronoun, Adj = adjective, N = head noun, S = adjectival phrase or relative clause. Parentheses indicate that the item within them is optional.]

2.2 The Position of Verb Modifiers

Similarly, in Thai, all adverbs occur after the verb phrase. The various positional shifts of English adverbs cause difficulty for Thai students. It is possible that Thai may be confused when learning proper placement of English adverbial expression and may tend to place all English adverbs after the verb according to the Thai model (Chaiyaratana 118).

3. Function Words

Another striking typological feature that distinguishes Thai from English is the lack of articles. Thai also has fewer prepositions than English.

3.1 The Definite and Indefinite Articles

Unlike English, Thai does not require an article, definite or indefinite, in front of a noun. In general, the grammatical concepts of definiteness or indefiniteness are marked optionally or sporadically in Thai sentences. This lack of function words such as articles in Thai together with the hard-to-formulate rules of the article usage in English make this the most difficult grammatical rule to master by Thai students. Hong Ghee Seah (1980) has observed that the indefinite and definite articles not only quantify and particularize but also generalize, identify, and name a class (69). Because of the "heavy semantic load carried by these two articles," an overlapping of form and semantic function occurs inevitably (Seah 69). To illustrate, the following sentences reveal the generic function of the English article system which can be expressed in many different forms, such as

A tiger	}	is a member of the cat family.
The tiger		
∅ Tigers	}	are members of the cat family.
The tigers		

(Seah 69)

On the other hand, one form of article can convey several semantic functions. In the sentences below, the

article the can be anaphoric, generic, presuppositional, and conventional:

Did you feed the dog?

The Dog is man's best friend.

While I was doing the dishes, the phone rang.

He listens to the radio.

The moon is full tonight. (Seah 70)

3.2 Prepositions

Thai has far fewer prepositions than English.

Moreover, many of the English prepositions or particles used with lexical verbs are non-existent in Thai, their semantic distinctions being conveyed through different lexical items as shown in the following:

look at	/tʰŏng/
look for	/mɔŋ hǎa/
look up	/khón/
look after	/duu lɛɛ/
look around	/khón hǎa/

The concept of position in the Thai language is different from that in the English language, in some respects. For example, "The girl sleeps in bed" is correct in English, but the correct translation into Thai is "The girl sleeps on bed."

The use of wrong prepositions, therefore, owes partly to the different concepts of positioning in the two

languages as well as the confusion resulting from the inherent complexities of the English usage of prepositional words.

4. Other Aspects

4.1 System of Writing

Thai writing is from left to right as in English, but vowels, tone marks, and other symbols are not confined to positions in the base-line of writing. Thai words are normally written together without space between them. This different system of writing confuses Thai students when they write English, especially with punctuation, since question marks, exclamation points, and quotation marks are not necessary in Thai, and periods, commas, semi-colons, and colons are rarely used in Thai writing. It may be said that space is used instead of punctuation to designate the pause of each syntactical unit. Capitalization is not used in Thai. Each letter is always basically the same in appearance, whether printed or handwritten (See Appendix B for illustration). Thus Thai students may have problems learning the rules of punctuation in English.

4.2 Spelling

Unlike English, Thai has very few exceptions to the sound-symbol correspondences. This fact may contribute to

the difficulty in learning the spelling of certain English words in which letters and sounds do not agree, such as

beard VS heard

comb VS tomb

word VS sword

sew VS few

Summary

This chapter has presented a comparison and contrast of certain characteristics of Thai and English and has provided information on several major areas, including grammatical morphology, word order, function words, and other aspects, which may cause writing difficulty. The sources of student writing difficulty can be attributed to the two types of interference: interlingual and intralingual. Interlingual interference has been described in terms of the lack of the grammatical categories in Thai which exist in English, the different appearances of these grammatical categories in Thai, the optionality in the use of other grammatical devices, and the divergence phenomena. Intralingual interference has been explained in terms of irregularity, inconsistency, and the lack of one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. In the next chapter, we will see where and how both types of interference occur in the essays written by a group of Thai students at the graduate level.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE AND FINDINGS

This chapter describes the procedure of the study which includes: 1) the selection of the subjects, 2) the collection of data, 3) the categorization of errors, and 4) the explanation of error categories and findings.

1. The Selection of the Subjects

The subjects used in this study were volunteers, fifteen Thai students enrolled in the English intensive program during the summer semester of 1988 at the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) of the University of North Texas. Of the fifteen, eight were male and seven were female participants, with their ages ranging from twenty-three to twenty-seven years. Educationally, all of them had acquired their college degrees and had formally studied English as a foreign language for a minimum of eight years in Thailand prior to their coming to the U.S. Seven of the students were at the beginning level, whereas eight were at the intermediate level of English proficiency according to the IELI classification criteria. Their fields of study were mostly in business, economics, and computer science. Only one female participant was an education major. The

fact that most of the subjects majored in Physical and Mathematical Sciences could affect the nature of their writing, since studying in these fields generally requires less writing than studying in the fields of education and humanities.

Coincidentally, all of the fifteen students were from the central region of Thailand where the standard Thai dialect is used. However, although Thai has its regional dialects, the differences among them do not affect the standard written language.

2. Collection of Data

The questionnaire was developed to find out about their educational background (see Appendix C). After the student had completed the background questionnaire, he or she was asked to write a composition on the topic "My First Week's Experience in America." There was no timing, and the student was allowed to use the dictionary freely.

When the student turned in the essay, the researcher interviewed each one about the composing process (see Appendix D for questions used in the interview). The purpose of this interview was to observe the relationship between the student's writing process and the written product.

3. Classification of Errors

Errors, after being identified, were first classified into two major types: (1) syntactic errors and (2) semantic errors. These two types of errors were subdivided into 43 subcategories in order to provide more precise information about the errors. A sentence that contained more than one error was categorized two or more times, once for each type of error. For example,

I have sicked for three days.

This sentence contains two possible errors:

I was sick for three days. (Tense--The essay was about the.past experience.)

I have sicked for three days. (Wrong form of verb)

The error categories used in this study were adapted from several sources, including those used by Herbert Pierson (1977) and Carol Ford (1982). The researcher believes that there is no one perfect error taxonomy. The purpose and nature of each study of errors determine the outlook of the taxonomy. However, in order to insure the accuracy and consistency of the researcher's error classifications in this study, a panel of three judges--an English professor, an English teaching assistant, and a writing lab assistant--confirmed the classifications of the errors that were problematic (see Appendix E). The three experts agreed that if at least two out of the three of them

disagreed with a particular error classification, then it would be judged inappropriate. Of the 165 selected errors, only one was decided to be inappropriate and was changed.

The two major types of errors and 15 concomitant subcategories are:

I. Syntactic Errors

1. Verb

- 1.1 Wrong Tense
- 1.2 Wrong form
- 1.3 Superfluous auxiliary
- 1.4 Auxiliary omitted
- 1.5 Lack of subject-verb agreement
- 1.6 Incorrect or missing infinitives or gerunds
- 1.7 Verb particle omitted or misused

2. Noun

- 2.1 Plural morpheme omitted
- 2.2 Superfluous plural morpheme
- 2.3 Wrong form

3. Pronoun

- 3.1 Pronoun omitted
- 3.2 Remote or no antecedent
- 3.3 Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent
- 3.4 Wrong pronoun
- 3.5 Vague pronoun reference
- 3.6 Superfluous pronoun

4. Adjective

- 4.1 Misplaced adjective
- 4.2 Wrong form

5. Adverb

- 5.1 Superfluous adverb
- 5.2 Wrong form

6. Conjunction

- 6.1 Wrong conjunction
- 6.2 Conjunction omitted

7. Preposition

- 7.1 Preposition omitted

- 7.2 Superfluous preposition
- 7.3 Wrong preposition
- 8. Determiner
 - 8.1 Determiner omitted
 - 8.2 Superfluous determiner
 - 8.3 Wrong determiner
 - 8.4 Wrong form
- 9. Punctuation
 - 9.1 Apostrophe omitted
 - 9.2 Superfluous comma
 - 9.3 Comma omitted
 - 9.4 Misuse or omission of colon, semi-colon, quotation marks
 - 9.5 Omission of hyphen
- 10. Capitalization
- 11. Spelling
- 12. Whole construction error
 - 12.1 Non-Parallel Construction
 - 12.2 Fragment
 - 12.3 Run-on
 - 12.4 Comma splice

II. Semantic Errors

- 1. Ambiguous expression
- 2. Awkward expression
- 3. Redundancy or wordiness

Besides the syntactic and semantic errors, the researcher also looked at the development of the essay, its style and rhetoric, which are considered significant in English writing. The writing style and essay development will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4. Explanation of Error Categories, Examples, and Findings

Errors have been divided into syntactic and semantic errors. The error classification system yielded 492 errors. The following is an explanation of the error categories, with examples obtained from fifteen compositions and an indication of their relative frequency. The definitions of the grammatical terms used in this study were based on those provided in Harbrace College Handbook (10th edition), since this handbook is widely used in college English classes, particularly in most English intensive courses at the Intensive English Language Institute of the University of North Texas.

Many errors below may not look deviant out of their contexts. Realizing this problem, the researcher will include words, phrases, or clauses surrounding each error when necessary. The full contexts of these errors are supplied in Appendix F, where all the fifteen essays are displayed.

I. Syntactic Error

1. Verb

In this study, verb refers to "a part of speech denoting action, occurrence, or existence" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 526). Of the 492 errors, the verb errors occurred 88 times and comprised 17.89 % of the errors

collected. The student essays displayed a considerable number of different verb errors. Accordingly, a series of subcategories was developed to classify verb errors.

1.1 Wrong tense

This category includes wrong verb tense, tense sequence, and conditional statement. Examples of these types of error are:

- I have remembered the day when I arrived
- my very first week was not too bad, but my second week would be worse
- I didn't understand what he said. If I understood him, I had to wait and checked my baggage

1.2 Wrong form of verb

Misformed verbs classified under this category were misconjugated verbs or those belonging in other categories or parts of speech such as:

- My brother leaded me
- I had a quietly sitting
- Some things that difference between the two cultures

1.3 Superfluous or misused auxiliary

An auxiliary is a helping verb which "regularly indicates tense but may also indicate voice, mood, person, number" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 504). Auxiliary verbs include be, do, have, seem, appear, will, and should.

Examples of superfluous auxiliary and misused auxiliary verbs are:

- another thing which was interested me
- It didn't like the country I used to dream

1.4 Auxiliary omitted

Two examples of this type of errors are:

- I__confused
- All I could do__just knock my head

1.5 Lack of subject-verb agreement

This category includes errors due to the misuse of third-person-singular [-s] morpheme, the use of singular verb for the plural noun or vice versa, and the use of the stem form or unmarked form regardless of person and number, such as

- most residents lives
- Thai culture differ from American culture
- American writing have

1.6 Incorrect infinitives or gerunds

The researcher discovered four errors in this category.

- They let me went ahead to bed.
- I saw Mom cooked breakfast
- The best thing to do was adapting myself
- I have to looking for a job

1.7 Verb particle omitted or misused

A verb particle is found in a phrasal verb which is "a unit consisting of a verb plus one or two uninflected words like after, in, up, off, or out (particles) and having the force of a single-word verb" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 521). The following are two examples of the omission of a particle in a phrasal verb or a misuse of these particles:

-Thai family takes care__its children

-I'm interested about

2. Noun

The word noun is defined as "a part of speech that names a person, place, thing, idea, animal, quality, or action: Mary, America, apples, justices, goose, strength, departure (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 517). There were 37 errors found in this category which comprised 7.5 % of the total errors.

2.1 Plural morpheme omitted

Examples of this type of error are:

-for the first two week

-one of the U.S. high school

-I went downstair

2.2 Superfluous plural morpheme

Examples of this type of error are:

-baggages

-anythings

-everythings

2.3 Wrong form for a noun

This type of error occurs when students use a word with parts of speech other than noun. Examples of this kind of error are:

-was terrible for me was homesick

-I lost my self-confident

-Difference situation make one to understand the America.

3. Pronoun

Pronouns "take the position of nouns and function as nouns do" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 522). Thirty-four errors were found in this category, which comprised 6.91 % of the errors collected.

3.1 Pronoun omitted

Examples of this kind of error are:

-First day I came here, __ have a lot of things I interest about it.

-Many instructors helped us to cope with problems if__ ever happened

3.2 Remote or no antecedent

This type of error includes the use of a pronoun to refer to a noun which is not in the immediately preceding sentence. Two examples of this kind of error are:

-People seemed strange. Their characteristics were different from mine. Some looked friendly, but some were not.

-I met a lot of friends from other countries. I had the good teachers. We understood and shared every thing together.

3.3 Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent

Examples of this type of error are:

- If problems ever came to me, I should talk it out.
- everyone in the family did their best

3.4 Wrong pronoun

Example of this type of error are:

- to see our another sister
- It smell and taste did not entice me
- Thai family takes care of his children

3.5 Vague pronoun reference

An example of this type of error is:

- Some day was 80 F. at day but it changed to 40 f at night.

3.6 Superfluous pronoun

Examples of this kind of error are:

- The main problem which I thought it was very terrible
- Another thing which interested me, they were highways.

4. Adjective

Adjective is "a part of speech regularly used to modify a noun or a pronoun" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 502).

Errors in the adjective category occurred 14 times and comprised 2.85 % of the total errors.

4.1 Misplaced adjective

An example of this type of error is:

-two first week

4.2 Wrong form of adjective

Examples of this type of error are:

-I was an exchanged student

-two hours drive

-cheer-leader routine

5. Adverb

Adverb is "a part of speech regularly used to modify (describe, limit, or qualify) a verb, an adjective, or another verb" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 502). Only two errors were found in this category, which comprised .41% of the total errors.

5.1 Superfluous adverb

An example of this type of error is:

-Everytime when I woke up

5.2 Wrong form of adverb

An example of this type of error is:

-This American culture very impress me

6. Conjunction

Conjunction is defined as

a part of speech (such as and or although) used to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences .

There are two kinds of conjunctions: coordinating and subordinating. The coordinating conjunctions--and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet--connect and relate words and word groups of equal grammatical rank. Subordinating conjunctions--although, if, when--mark a dependent clause and connect it with a main clause. (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 509)

Errors in this category occurred seven times or comprised 1.42 % of the total errors.

6.1 Wrong conjunction

An example of this type of error is:

-America is just a country that people speak English

6.2 Omission of conjunction

Examples of this type of error are:

-We talked and ate until 6 AM__then went to bed

-We stood__shared every thing together

-It surprised me__I could see the sun in the sky

-do chores, wash clothes and dishes,__cook

7. Preposition

A preposition is defined as "a part of speech that links and relates a noun or nominal to some other word in

the sentence" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 522). A high number of 50 errors occurred in the student essays and comprised 10.16 % of the errors collected.

7.1 Preposition omitted

Examples of this type of error are:

-America is the first place I've ever been__out
of Thailand

-I ate only fried chicken__all of the six meals

7.2 Superfluous preposition

Examples of this type of error are:

-Going to shopping

-I visit in Dallas once a week

7.3 Wrong preposition

Examples of this type of error are:

-I should talk it out to someone in the family.

-I should not eat it until next three months

-When Thai people go to the public

8. Determiner

A determiner is "a word (such as a, an, the, or my, their) which signals the approach of a noun" (Hodges, Whitten, and Webb 511). Errors in determiners occurred 41 times and comprised 8.3 % of the errors collected.

8.1 Determiner omitted

Examples of this type of error are:

-the crew in__ fast food center

_you could catch__cold easily

-for__first two weeks

-I arrived in__USA

8.2 Superfluous determiner

Examples of this type of error are:

-Ordering the food is a big problem

-having a roommate could bring the problems to me

-teach me everything about the life here

-I wrote the letters to my parents

8.3 Wrong determiner

Examples of this kind of error are:

-I knew I couldn't leave my life to be like these

-I had to buy the mattress, many things used in the kitchen, and food.

8.4 Misformed determiner

An example of this type of error is:

-It was such a uncomfortable experience

9. Punctuation

This category includes all of the marks used in English writing such as apostrophe, comma, period, colon, semi-colon, quotation mark, question mark, dash, and hyphen. Errors in this category occurred 17 times and comprised 3.46 % of the errors collected.

9.1 Omission of apostrophe

An example of this type of error is:

-My first weeks experience in America

9.2 Comma omitted

Examples of this type of error are:

-After that I could find my apartment

-Everything was confusing especially to myself

9.3 Superfluous comma

An example of this type of error is:

-The traffic system, in my country is different

9.4 Misuse or omission of colon, semi-

colon, quotation mark

Examples of this type of errors are:

-Everything looked strange, the big airport,
the big eight-lane road

-My first meal was "Fried Chicken"

-I had to do chores; wash clothes and
dishes, cook, and clean

-The good news is the best experience; such as, culture

9.5 Omission of hyphen

Examples of this type of errors are:

-a three day orientation

-one story house

10. Capitalization

Twelve errors were found in this category, which comprised 2.44 % of the errors collected.

- english
- Summer
- Fried Chicken
- The University

11. Spelling

As many as 42 misspelled words were found, which comprised 9.76 % of the total errors. Examples of misspelled words are:

- my self
- carefull
- diffent
- vedio
- eventhough
- straight (for strange)

12. Whole construction error

Errors in this category occurred 48 times and comprised 9.76 % of the errors collected.

12.1 Non-Parallel construction

Examples of this kind of error are:

- We had to part and flew to meet
our own host families
- Some looked friendly, but some were not.

-America's traffic was opposite from__Thailand.

12.2 Frangment

An example of incomplete sentences or fragments is:

-The week I can never forget even though
it was eight years ago.

12.3 Run-on

Examples of run-on or fused sentences are:

-I was so busy but it made me excited

-These three days were fun we played
games and sang some songs.

-When I first reached America, my sponsor gave
me and all my friends, there were
about 83 of us, a three-day orientation at UCLA.

12.4 Comma Splice

An example of this type of error is:

-She started to ask me all kinds of questions, I knew
then that my English needed a lot of improvement.

II. Semantic Errors

Errors concerning word choice, awkward expression, and redundancy are categorized here. These errors occurred 100 times and comprised 20.33 % of the total errors collected.

1. Ambiguous expression

Examples of this type of error are:

- She would take care and schedule us to all the activities that would occur each day.
- Because of the different time, I need to change my habbit.

2. Awkward expression

Examples of inappropriate word choice and awkward expression are:

- He gave me to order my lunch by my self
- I tried to listen, but it was in my left ear and go my right ear out.
- My first week's experience in America will be impressed in my heart.
- it fluctuated from day to night.
- I really changed my life after my foot stepped on this land
- I was confused by the way and sign of traffic in America.
- Two cultures differ in the way to brought up children
- my decision to study in America is true
- They tried to make feel like home
- when I had the first meal for American food
- I was very surprised it was still sunshine

-I fail in sleep again

-It made me surprise

-I had ever been to a town like this before

3. Redundancy or wordiness

Examples of this type of errors are:

-I could not understand any

English at all the day after one day I arrived

-I took a test the day after one day

I arrived

-I got so much nervous

-Even though I had ever had it before I came here

-I adjusted myself to be get used to

-Americans always shout and make

rediculous things in public such as yelling

-The best experience was doing everything by

myself because nobody worked or did for me

-I brought some food from my home

for having lunch at IELI

-He would repeat it again and again.

Summary

Below is a table reporting the error distribution data of the two major categories and their 15 sub-categories.

Table
Distribution of the 15 Error Categories in Terms of Number
of Errors, % of Total Errors, and Rank

Error Category	No. of	% of	Rank
I. Syntactic Errors			
1. Verb	88	17.89	1
2. Noun	37	7.52	7
3. Pronoun	34	6.91	8
4. Adjective	14	2.85	11
5. Adverb	2	.41	14
6. Conjunction	7	1.42	13
7. Preposition	50	10.16	3
8. Determiner	41	8.33	6
9. Punctuation	17	3.46	10
10. Capitalization	12	2.44	12
11. Spelling	42	8.54	5
12. Whole Construction	48	9.76	4
II. Semantic Errors			
1. Ambiguous expression	22	4.47	9
2. Awkward expression	66	13.41	2
3. Redundancy or wordiness	12	2.44	12

Total	492	100.01*
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* The .01 is due to rounding off.

Chapter IV

Analysis of the Syntactic and Semantic Errors

This chapter discusses syntactic and semantic errors that have been identified in the data examined. As Abbot points out, "No one can claim to know precisely what causes a particular error" (122). Thus the researcher will not make any generalizations as to the sources of errors. Rather, errors will be discussed and explained according to the available evidence before any attempt is made to substantiate or endorse any source(s) of error.

Most errors may be traceable to L1, L2, and other sources, while some errors cannot be traceable to any conscious rules acquired by the students. Other errors are due to carelessness or forgetting of rules at a particular circumstance. These are simply mistakes rather than errors. Since errors may have more than one possible source of explanation, it is more productive that all of these sources be discussed. An error analyst must first realize that the following problems in error categorization exist:

the division between errors traceable to L1 interference and those that are independent of L1 interference is not invariably clearcut; the phenomenon of errors caused by the cross-

association of both L1 and L2 also seems to exist; the identification and establishing of various L1 independent interference factors is far from easy; the learner's psychological processes of second language learning in terms of learning strategies can at best be marginally inferred from his performance data. (Jain 190)

The interview with the writer, therefore, plays an important role in making this analysis as accurate as possible, since numerous errors do not submit themselves easily to any precise analysis. The following definitions of commonly used terms in EA are necessary before an analysis of errors and their possible sources.

1. Interlingual Errors

These are errors believed to appear more obviously at the beginning stages of L2 learning. The interference of L1 on the performance of L2, according to the CA theory, causes this type of error. Errors which can be attributable to first language influence make up about one-third (Chutisilp 220) or sometimes only 25% of the deviant sentences, with the percentage being higher for adults than for children (Krahnke and Christison 635). Knowledge of the learner's native language, therefore, may help the teacher in detecting such errors.

2. Intralingual Errors

The negative transfer of items within the target language or the incorrect generalization of rules within the target language is a major source of errors. According to Brown, interlingual errors occur in early stages of language learning, but intralingual errors are found to be predominant at advanced stages. As the student progresses in the second language, he begins to depend more on his knowledge of the new language rules. Jack C. Richards (1974) divides intralingual errors into 1) faulty generalization, 2) incomplete application of rules, and 3) failure to learn conditions under which rules apply ("Non-Contrastive," 174).

2.1 Faulty generalization or overgeneralization "covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his knowledge of the learned language" (Obeidat 81). For example, an ESL learner may produce "maked" by analogizing it to the weak English verb for past tense.

2.2 Incomplete application of rules occurs when the student omits the transformations required to make a statement complete (Richards, "Non-Contrastive," 177). The deviancy reveals the degree of development of the students' grammar rules but not fully developed ones. For example, the omission of the auxiliary "do" in a negative sentence

but not in a question sentence reveals that the student has acquired the rule that "do" appears in questions when there is no auxiliary but does not know that the rule is also applied in negative sentences.

2.3 Failure to learn conditions under which rules apply or ignorance of rule restrictions is "the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply" (Obeidat 81). In a question, "Where did you went last night?" for example, the writer knew that English verbs must be conjugated when used in the past tense but did not know the restriction that "every finite clause in English has only one place for the tense: on the first verbal word" (Burt and Kiparsky 29).

3. Developmental Errors

These are errors similar to the ones made by children learning their first language. Developmental errors are "a natural product of gradually developing ability in the new language" (Krahnke and Christison 635). These errors "illustrate the learner attempting to build up hypotheses about the English language from his limited experience" (Richards, "Non-Contrast," 174), and they have been found to make up the majority of errors exhibited by second language learners at early stages (Krahnke and Christison 635).

4. Global and Local Errors

It has been recognized that not all errors have the same communicative effect. Error gravity has been studied.

Burt and Kiparsky (1972) distinguish between global and local errors, the former interfering with communication more than the latter (Krahnke and Christison 635). Global errors affect overall sentence organization, thereby confusing the reader. Global errors include misordering of sentence elements, using wrong conjunctions and prepositions, and regularizing exceptions to syntactic rules. Local errors include errors in noun and verb inflection, articles, and auxiliaries. Most of the errors that learners produce result from incomplete but gradually increasing control over a new linguistic system.

5. Transfer of Training or Context of Learning

Another major source of error can be the classroom context of learning, the textbook rules (popular rules), and teacher's misunderstanding of certain grammatical rules. According to Richards, "In a foreign language setting, where the major source of the input for English is the teaching manual and the teacher, the concept of transfer of training may be a basic analytic approach" ("Social Factors," 89). Many errors are caused by students creating false concepts or misapplying rules taught in certain contexts in the English course.

6. Communication Strategies

These strategies are used by the learner to get the message across. They result in awkward expression and

lexical errors. Jarujumpol (1983) lists six major communication strategies: 1) lexical transfer, 2) superordinate terms, 3) synonym, 4) word approximation, 5) word coinage, and 6) circumlocution. Details on each strategy are provided later in this chapter.

7. Translation

Direct word-for-word translation is a common strategy used by ESL students. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, an ESL learner may use his or her first language structure to formulate English sentences when certain English structures are not yet part of the learner's subconscious linguistic system. The word-for-word translation is usually the learner's "communication strategy of last resort" (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 59).

8. Performance and Competence

According to Corder, performance failure occurs when the student knows the rules of the target language but fails to apply them successfully. Writing under time pressure and memory lapses may be two of the factors.

9. Universal Hierarchy of Difficulty

Since many of the errors found in ESL students' writings are identical, researchers believe that certain learning strategies are universally employed by students from different language backgrounds. The knowledge of these

strategies will help in developing teaching procedures (Richards, "Learner English," 15).

10. Fossilization

Various erroneous features persist in some ESL learners "despite what is otherwise a fluent command of the language" (Brown 181). Fossilization occurs in the students at the level where they have reached a stage when they are no longer testing their hypotheses about the language but have arrived at a system, whatever it is (Jain 203). When the system is fossilized in the students, it is difficult to change.

Syntactic Errors

1. Verb

Verb errors identified in this study include seven areas as follows:

1.1 Wrong tense

Tense and tense sequence in English are one of the most problematic areas for Thai ESL learners perhaps due to the difference in the tense system between Thai and English. Thai distinguishes between four basic tenses: past, present, present continuous, and future tenses. Because Thai is not an inflecting language, the Thai verbs do not change their form. As discussed in Chapter II, tense markers are used instead. The Thai adverbs like those of

English yesterday, already, for example, denote the past, whereas tomorrow and will indicate the future tense. The progressive marker [-ing] indicates the continuing action. The English tense system, on the other hand, is much more complex. It is not easy, therefore, for the Thai students to be able to use the proper tense and tense sequence when the concepts of several tenses do not exist in Thai.

A typical grammar book used in an English class in Thailand explains the usage of the present perfect tense as follows:

The present perfect tense describes an action that happened at an indefinite time in the past It also describes an action that was repeated several times in the past We also use the present perfect tense to describe an action that began in the past and has continued up to the present. (Dixson 80-82)

It is possible that the student overgeneralizes the last rule to all of the verbs including non-action verbs, so she wrote:

I have still remembered the day when I arrived in America.

Like some native basic writers , the Thai students shifted tenses from past to present when they wrote about a past event. The majority of tense errors found in this

study are those concerning the tense shift from the past to present tense. Thus the tense shift is perhaps caused by the intralingual interference, namely the preference of the present tense over the past tense since the former is used more often in spoken language.

The tense sequence in English is difficult for the Thai students, especially in the conditional statement. In an English class, Thai students are often taught that there are three types of conditional statement: 1) the future-possible, 2) the present-unreal, 3) and the past-unreal (Dixson 141-44). Because the system of conditional sentences is complicated, it may take a Thai student more time in producing them, especially the third type of conditional statement. The students who failed to understand the differences among the three types of the conditional statement produced sentences like this:

-I didn't understand what he said. If

I understood him, I had to wait and checked my baggage.

1.2 Wrong form

Misconjugated verbs and the use of wrong parts of speech in the verb slot were classified under this category. This error is considered intralingual in that English infinitives and gerunds are interchangeable in some contexts and contrastive in others, which causes confusion to Thai

learners. Thus Thai students produced the following sentences:

-My brother leaded me to Jack in the Box.

-I had a quietly sitting on the plane for several hours.

-Some things that difference between the two cultures.

The first error is obviously intralingual. The weak verb conjugation causes an overgeneralization of the verb "to lead."

The second error is also intralingual, since the verb with "-ing" form is similar to a gerund which functions as a noun. The student might be confused whether he should use this form of verb as a noun or a verb. The article a and the adverb quietly reveal the confused state of the student.

From the interview with the student, the third error resulted from the spoken language familiarity. The student confessed that he heard English-speaking people say the noun "difference" more often than the verb "differ"; therefore, he used the wrong form when he wrote under pressure.

In summary, it seems that understanding different English parts of speech and how they function in sentences plays an important role in using the right form of the verb.

1.3 Superfluous or misused auxiliary

The kinds of errors identified in this category are classified into the following: (a) the use of copula with

an action verb, (b) the use of two consecutive auxiliaries, c) the use of the wrong auxiliary, and (d) the misuse of passive voice. Examples of these errors are:

- It was too long for me to remember everything which was happened in the very first week.
- It didn't like the country I used to dream.
- A question was appear in my mind.
- The last day was difficult because we had to be parted.

In the first sentence, the student inserted "be" in the context where it should not have been used. The redundant use of the copula in the above examples is due to intralingual sources. A possible explanation of this kind of error is faulty generalization. The student had been taught that the "verb to be" is a marker of tense, so he used it superfluously with an action verb.

1.4 Verb omitted

Students sometimes omit an auxiliary where it is required. Since Thai lacks the copula, the use of the copula in English is difficult to understand. For example,

- I kept wondering what all the people around me__talking about.
- Right now everything__not seem too strange for me.

Burt and Kiparsky (1972) suggest that omission of the copula is a developmental error, one that is common in

native children. Several research studies also indicate that learners from different languages omitted the copula as a result of L1 interference. That the omission of the auxiliary is common to L1 learners seems to suggest that there exists a common (universal) factor that governs the occurrence of such deviation (Obeidat 86).

In summary, three possible sources of errors in this category can be 1) the lack of a copula system in the Thai language, 2) the student's use of simplification strategy, such as in pidgins or creole language, and 3) the incomplete application of rules. Interference is here assumed to be the reason for the absence in equational sentences, whereas the omission of "be" when it is used as auxiliary is assumed to be the result of a simplification strategy. Incomplete application of rule was the source of the second error because, from the interview, the student reported that she remembered the rule that auxiliaries were used in questions but forgot that they can also be used in negative statements.

Simplification would be a reasonable explanation had the native-speaking children demonstrated knowledge of the existence of the copula in the grammatical system of English. This conclusion, however, does not adequately answer the question of why it is that copula omission materializes in the acquisition of language regardless of

language background and whether L1 has the copula or not. This implies that "language acquisition [is] subject to universal regularities that [can] be described within a linguistic framework" (Obeidat 111).

In summary, intralingual sources such as lack of mastery of English rules and overgeneralization are the sources of deviations in the use of verb forms. Inadequate retention of grammar rules is also one of the possible contributing factors.

1.5 Lack of subject and verb agreement

Since in English all grammatical persons take the same zero verbal ending except for the third person singular in the present tense, omissions of the [-s] in the third person may be accounted for by the heavy pressure of all the other endingless forms. The endingless form is generalized for all persons (Richards, "Error Analysis," 120). Since omission of the third-person singular [-s] is common to all English learners, regardless of language background, one cannot explain this category in terms of interlingual source. In a child learning English this type of error is also common (Obeidat 114-15). It is perhaps more accurate to say that all language learners, children and adults alike, possess a universal parameter which treats the third-person singular as an unmarked case. Such a universal is activated during the acquisition or learning of a new

language. Thus, learners at a later stage in the learning process adjust their universal parameter to fit the grammar of the new language, as is the case of English where the third-person singular is exceptionally the marked case (Obeidat 117). Like learners from other languages, Thai learners produce errors in subject and verb agreement, such as

-Thai culture differ__from American culture.

-American writing have a lot of ugly words.

1.6 Incorrect infinitives or gerunds

The deviations include the use of gerund instead of infinitive. This type of error is intralingual in that English infinitives and gerunds are interchangeable in some contexts and contrastive in others. The confusion caused a student to write:

-The best thing to do was adapting myself.

Ignorance of the use of infinitives after certain verbs might have led the students to write:

-I saw Mom cooked breakfast for my little brother.

-They let me went ahead to bed.

-I have to looking for a job.

1.7 Verb particle

Because Thai is an isolating language, it lacks verb particles. Thai verbs, unlike English verbs, do not change their meanings according to their particles. It is common,

therefore, for Thai students to omit verb particles perhaps because they see them as optional and unnecessary. For example, the students wrote:

- It didn't like the country I used to dream__.
- Thai family takes care__its children.
- I could live here without the food problem that I heard__from others.

It is also common that the students use the wrong verb particle, such as

- There were a lot of things I was interested about.

Phrasal verbs are often taught to Thai students by way of listing the commonly used ones, and the students will memorize these verbs with their particles and meanings which are different from one-word verbs, such as "to ask for" (to request), "to call off" (to cancel), "to give up" (to surrender), and "to put away" (to set aside).

When the students come across new phrasal words they have never seen before, they are not able to understand their meanings. In their own writing, students tend to use wrong particles because phrasal verbs are idiomatic, as their appearances and meanings do not coincide.

The fact that verb error ranks first in this study reveals that Thai students need help in the verb area.

2. Noun

As mentioned in Chapter II, English nouns are classified as count and non-count, but Thai does not. Thai grammarians attempted to follow English grammar by dividing nouns into collective, concrete, and abstract nouns. But the major characteristics of Thai nouns is that they are all countable through the use of classifiers, as discussed in Chapter II. Being singular or plural, a Thai noun does not change its form, nor does it create any changes in its copula as in English, again because Thai is not an inflecting language. The lack of plural morpheme in Thai may explain the omission of a plural morpheme in the English writing of Thai students. Error analysts often attribute the cause to the simplification strategy in which the learner unconsciously omits the plural morpheme, since this linguistic feature does not exist in his language and seems to be unnecessary in communication.

Most noun occurrences for number in the surface structure of English are regularly governed by "count and non-count" generalization. Accordingly, the Thai learner seems to adopt this generalization for all occurrences, excluding only a few nouns which have been given the status of "exception" through a particular teaching strategy or a popular school grammar (Jain 194). Yet students are sometimes confused and are likely to produce the following:

- anythings
- each groups
- baggages

When asked during the interview, the students often said they forgot about the rule exceptions or were confused about singular and plural nouns. Of course, in their native language, the concept of singular and plural noun is obvious in the use of number and classifier separately from the uninflected noun.

Students sometimes use the wrong form of noun, such as

-What was terrible for me was homesick.

-I Lost my self-confident.

Again, the intralingual interference may be the source of this type of error. An English stem form can be changed into other parts of speech by using prefixes and suffixes. Generalizations of several inflections based on a fairly high degree of regularity in the surface structure of English are common both for foreign learners and native children.

3. Pronouns

Because in Thai a pronoun can be omitted, the omission of pronouns in Thai students' compositions may be traced to interference from Thai. But the problem in agreement in pronoun and antecedent can be interlingual because Thai

pronouns are divided into those used for animate and those for inanimate for both third-person and plural pronouns.

Context of learning may also be a possible source of error in a sentence:

-have a lot of things I interest about its.

The student reported in the interview that the structure of an English sentence, according to his knowledge, was Subject + Verb + Object, so he inserted a pronoun at the end of the above sentence to make the structure complete.

4. Adjective

Errors in adjectives are those concerning the misplaced adjective and misformed adjective. The first type of error may be due to interlingual interference since adjectives in Thai always follow the noun in no particular order, whereas English adjectives normally precede the noun and must be placed in a certain order. The student, therefore, made the following error:

-I had stayed with my cousin for two first week.

The misformed adjectives could have been the student's inability to distinguish between based adjectives and derived adjectives. According to Obeidat,

Based adjectives in English serve as stems from which nouns are formed by [certain] derivational suffixes. Derived adjectives, on the other hand,

are those formed by means of suffixation to free or bound stems. (99)

5. Adverb

Errors in adverbs may be due to redundancy, resulting in superfluous adverbs, and the ignorance of rule restrictions, resulting in wrong form of adverb as in

-Everytime when I woke up

-This American culture very impress me.

6. Conjunction

Only seven errors were found in this category, the majority of which were the omission of and between words, phrases, or clauses. It is possible that mother-tongue interference caused this type of error, since the conjunction is optional in Thai.

7. Preposition

Preposition error ranks third among all the errors collected. Because there are fewer prepositions in Thai than in English, the concepts of position in the two cultures are different, and because the preposition usage in English is sometimes irregular, mistakes in prepositions are common in the writing of Thai students. Rote learning of rules may also result in errors such as the misuse of prepositions. Thai students often learn English prepositions by memorizing sets of verbs with prepositons such as: arrive at/in, live in/on, located at/on, receive

from, and walk in/into. When writing under pressure, students are likely to omit, add, or misuse prepositions due to confusion in the use of English prepositions.

8. Determiner

The reduction of the target language to a simpler system seems to be best effected through generalizations, which are very often restricted in nature and thus carry within them potential errors through over-application of these generalizations that say that nouns in English are either count or non-count; that the former are used both in the singular and the plural--the singular form is preceded by the indefinite article a and the plural is marked by plural morphemes; that the latter have no plural form, nor are they marked by a. (Jain 192-93). Since the Thai language does not have the same system of noun division as English, Thai students may find it difficult to arrive at firm generalizations for the use of articles in English. Basic rules for them are that members of the noun class alone can be preceded by the article, that singular nouns may be preceded by a or an depending on the initial sound, and that the is used in front of a specific noun. Other restrictions of article usage are almost impossible for Thai students to observe. A Thai speaker normally thinks of an object in general as unmarked for number, whereas in English it must be either singular or plural. A Thai student,

therefore, tends to write "Sparrow is a small bird" rather than "A Sparrow is a small bird" or "Sparrows are small birds" as an American student would have written. Certain abstract nouns in English can be count or non-count nouns. No grammar books used in Thailand, to my knowledge, explain these rules. For example, how does one decide whether "information," "explanation," "classification," or "derivation" are countable or uncountable? From my own experience, observation seems to be the only way of learning article usage in English. Fortunately, errors in this category are not considered global, and even English native speakers have different opinions of article usage. However, these errors may cause annoyance to the native speakers if the basic rules of determiner are not acquired by ESL learners, so they are not to be ignored completely. Thai students may not know that other determiners or possessive pronouns are possible alternatives for definite and indefinite articles in various contexts. Drilling exercises out of context can cause incomplete rule application in this circumstance.

9. Punctuation

Since punctuation is not necessary in Thai, punctuation usage in English is foreign to Thai students. The rules of punctuation should be taught with all possible cases available; otherwise, they may cause confusion. A student,

for example, omitted an apostrophe in the possessive case because she remembered the teacher had told her a possessive apostrophe was used only with animate nouns. She wrote:

-My first weeks experience in America will be
impressed in my heart.

According to the interview, the student felt uncertain about the apostrophe usage in this sentence although she had seen such writing as "today's newspaper." The transfer of training, therefore, was the source of this error.

Errors in comma usage are found in the writing of both native and non-native students. Thus intralingual interference or the difficulty within the language itself, must be the major cause. Because punctuation plays a significant role in making meaning in English, its usage should not be taken for granted.

10. Capitalization

In the Thai system of writing, capitalization is not used, and each letter appears the same whether printed or handwritten. Capitalization in English, therefore, should be taught, because students will tend to base their usage on their own observation. Several students in this study reported that they capitalized the words "Video," "The University," and "Summer" because they have seen them on signs, in magazines, or on television.

11. Spelling

Like other types of errors, spelling errors reveal the learner's system of learning. The students used such strategies as separation, combination, double letters, missing letters, substitution, and misplaced letters, respectively in the following misspelled words:

- my self
- eventhough
- carefull
- diffent
- difficuld
- vedio

12. Whole Construction

12.1 Non-Paralell Construction

Thai syntax is less restricted in parallel construction, whereas English is more exact in preciseness and correctness, balance and parallelism.

12.2 Fragments

Fragments are not considered ungrammatical in Thai because a predicate can stand without a subject when it is understood by the reader. Surprisingly in this study, there were fewer errors in fragments than expected, possibly because the subjects were proficient enough to know that an English sentence requires both subject and predicate to make it complete.

12.3 Run-Ons

Errors in run-ons are related to the fact that Thai writing is continuous, using space between clauses or phrases.

12.4 Comma Splices

Like errors in run-ons and in punctuation usage, errors in comma splices may be interlingual in that the Thai system of writing does not require any type of punctuation. As a result, Thai students have difficulty understanding the comma rules. However, since native basic writers also have problems in comma splices, this type of error may also be intralingual, namely the complexities of comma usage in English.

Semantic Errors

As Krahne and Christison observe, studies of the sources of error in ESL student writing have focused mainly on syntactic error (634). Linguistic research has also emphasized linguistic forms and descriptions of the structure of language. Not until recently have we seen a shift of interest to semantics (Brown 190). In this study, such semantic error as awkward expression ranks only second to verb error, which suggests that ESL teachers pay more attention to this error category.

Unlike syntactic errors, semantic errors are sometimes grammatical and sometimes ungrammatical, but they share the

common characteristics of being awkward, imprecise, or ambiguous. Although many of these expressions are intelligible, they are plainly not the way a native speaker of English would express himself (Pierson 58). In other words, they are understandable but awkward to the native speaker of English.

In this study, semantic errors were divided into three categories: ambiguous sentences, awkward expression, and redundancy or wordiness.

2.1 Ambiguous Expression

Although some errors in this category resulted from the wrong choice of words, the majority were due to cultural differences. Several sentences in the student essay were vague and broad in ideas resulting in the ambiguity of the whole paragraph. These sentences contain words of broad concept, while a native speaker of English demands a more exact term. In a culture in which people have shared assumptions as in Thai culture, the way the meaning is conveyed can be implied. Direct or exact sentences are not necessary.

2.2 Awkward Expression

The majority of the errors in this category are a matter of lexical choice. Vocabulary is a neglected area in the teaching of English as a foreign language in Thailand. As a result, the student command of words is limited. When

faced with a situation in which the student cannot find the right word to convey his or her intended meaning, he or she uses several communication strategies. Jarujumpol (1983), in her study of lexical simplification of Thai students in oral communication, lists six communication strategies employed by the Thai students in communicating in English. These strategies can be found in written communication as well. Jarujumpol observes that

[w]hen a person faces any linguistic difficulty, these strategies come in handy for him to handle the problem. When facing a lexical difficulty, a speaker tended to use strategies such as transfer, superordinate term, synonym, word approximation, word coinage, and circumlocution. (Jarujumpol 109-10)

There are two types of lexical transfer: direct word-for-word translation and semantic transfer. Direct word-for-word translation includes positive and negative transfer. Positive transfer is the result of the use of an acceptable term in the target language. This is possible if the terms of the two languages happen to use a combination of the same or similar basic words (Jarujumpol 165). The negative transfer occurs when the two cultures perceive a given object or action in very different ways and, as a

result, the two cultures assign different basic words to signify the concepts.

Semantic transfer also occurs when the two cultures do not perceive certain aspects of the world in the same way. Different cultures sometimes impose a particular "categorization" upon the world and draw the boundaries arbitrarily at different places. As a result, the "referential boundaries" of lexical items of the two cultures do not fall at the same line.

Superordinate term "refers to the use of a term that is less register-restricted in a situation in which a term with specific register is required" (Jarujumpol 121). For example, a student may use the terms "light" or "lamp" to refer to "chandelier" or "closet" for "cabinet."

The use of synonyms is generally acceptable to the native speakers. In this study, the verb "reach" is used instead of "arrive" many times by several students, such as in

-When I reached the house, I was so tired.

-The first week that I reached America, I was surprised that why it was so big.

Word approximation "refers to the use of a word which is perceived by speakers as having a meaning close to the most appropriate word, which was not available to him at the moment", such as using

shelf	for	showcase
flower	"	wreath
cart	"	wheelbarrow
curtain	"	blinder

(Jarujumpol 125-26)

The use of word approximation could allow a speaker to find the best word choice as an alternative. The selected word may communicate more than using a superordinate term or circumlocution. However, it can also present a problem because it may mislead the hearer (Jarujumpol 127).

Semantic transfer refers to that of the reference to things in the native language to the use of another language. As previously mentioned, people from different cultures might perceive the world from different viewpoints. Thus the lexicalization of the two cultures can be different. Similar objects may be viewed as two variations of the same object. Consequently, only one term is assigned to represent the two objects in one culture, while two different words are assigned to these two objects in another culture. People who have grown up in the former culture may be less sensitive to the differences between the two objects and perceive them as variations of the same kind, while people of the latter culture may be more perceptive to the differences between the two concepts because they have learned the two separate concepts as part of their growing

up. For example, "curtain" and "drapery" for Thai people are the same thing (Jarujumpol 118-19). Thai does not distinguish between "plants" and "trees," nor between "painting" and "picture"; "boat" and "ship"; or "desk" and "table"; "closet" and "cabinet"; "porch" and "balcony"; "sweater" and "jacket"; or "cold" and "cool."

When there is only a single word in Thai to refer to the concept, the student has to know the word-for-word equivalent or else he may not be able to translate. For example, a student asked me how to translate the terms /kwam nai tʃai/ (literally "message in the heart") into English. After a long pause, I found "inner feelings" to be the closest term. Thus a person has to know the equivalent word in the target language, or else the translation cannot take place (Jarujumpol 116).

The use of word coinage "refers to the use of a word that does not exist in the target language" (Jarujumpol 128), such as using

wood plate	for	cutting board
baby chair	"	high chair
corpse box	"	coffin

The use of coined words requires a great deal of imagination on the reader's part. If the reader is unfamiliar with the writer's culture, it will be more difficult for him to guess the real meaning (Jarujumpol 128-29).

Circumlocution "refers to the use of description or definition of an object or action when the most appropriate word to refer to the object or action is not available to the speaker [or writer]" (Jarujumpol 130). In circumlocution, the students usually begin the description with "Something which. . . ," "It is a place where . . . ," "When you . . . ," or "she is" An object is described in term of its function. For example, a "cutting board" is described as "thing you use for cutting meat or vegetable" (Jarujumpol 131). Circumlocution is a very effective strategy. The reader can usually draw a conclusion about the meaning intended to be conveyed by it.

Certain idioms in English also exist in Thai although they may be expressed differently. For instance, a subject in this study wrote:

-I have to listen carefully, but it
was in my left ear and go my right ear out.

Apparently, this student was never taught the English cliché "to go in one ear and out the other," but she suspected that such concept might exist in English. An idiom is defined by Twaddell as "an expression whose meaning is not really grasped from a knowledge of the totality of the ordinary meanings of its parts" (65). Idioms, therefore, cannot be taught systematically since they may resist comprehension if the student simply applies common strategies such as

guessing. Idioms should be taught by showing them how a particular idiom appears in several contexts (Twaddell 65).

A number of lexical choices resulted from the influence of spoken language. The students admitted that they had chosen certain expressions because they had heard the Americans use them in conversation. Examples of the sentences influenced by spoken language are:

-I got a ride with him about half an hour.

-My story was not so exciting, and it
was kind of boring more than anything else.

3. Redundancy and Wordiness

In the interviews, several subjects admitted that they did not realize that they had written any redundant words or ideas. Clarity and precision required in English expository writing were characteristics unknown to them before coming to study in America.

Summary

Linguistic research in the past has focused on linguistic forms and upon descriptions of the structure of language or syntax. Not until recently have we seen a shift of interest to semantics, to sociolinguistics, and to language as part of the person's total culture. The differences in syntax, in the non-equivalent forms, and in

cultures discourage the translation approach. When we translate, much of the original English is lost because

1) some cultural concepts do not exist in the Thai language system, so students who try to explain the concepts according to their own cultural background will not succeed.

2) The sentence structures of English are different from those of Thai; therefore, students who are accustomed to doing word-for-word translation from English to their native language will be confused when they encounter some English sentence structures.

3. Some English connotations cannot be translated directly into Thai; thus the real meanings are not conveyed to the students who are used to relying on the literal translation method (Chutisilp 8).

Chapter V

Rhetoric and the Student Composing Process

1. Rhetoric

Language components include not only syntax and semantics but also rhetoric. Various definitions have been given to the term "rhetoric" by classical and modern rhetoricians. In this study, the study of rhetoric in the student essays focused only on the canons of invention, arrangement, and style.

It is generally recognized that many Thai students who have come to study in the U.S. have difficulties with academic writing in English. This study has proved that some of these difficulties are sentence-level problems with grammar and vocabulary. However, problems in discourse organization and rhetoric also exist. A question arose during the investigation of development in the student essay: "Is the essay organization of academic writing in English culture-specific, or is the problem in discourse organization caused by the lack of the students' training in essay organizational skills?"

In a widely known study on ESL academic writing, Kaplan (1966) claims that problems of organization in academic writing by ESL students are due to cross-cultural

differences in rhetoric. His view is that deviations from the expected organization of English academic discourse result from negative transfer from the rhetorical organization of the writer's first language. Supporting Kaplan's work, Hinds (1983) exemplifies cross-cultural differences in rhetoric by documenting an expository writing schema in Japanese which does not exist in English. This schema is accepted by Japanese readers as better in organization, but not by English readers.

Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo (1985) argue that it is doubtful that L1 interference has caused academic writing problems in the area of essay organization,

since it has now been recognized that at least some errors in the target language are not the result of negative transfer from the first language. (516)

These two researchers question Kaplan's claim that the organizational patterns in ESL student writing reveal the transfer process of rhetorical organization from the writer's mother tongue and culture. Their study found no support for such a claim, although it was possible that language transfer took place during the writing process. Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo believe that developmental factors are the real causes of the organization problem. Research in first-language composition has found that organizational

skill develops late in students and can be reinforced by appropriate composition practices. For the Chinese students in Mohan and Au-Yeunng Lo's study, the teaching objective focused on how to write correct English and how grammar rules and English usage can be learned. These Chinese students were never taught how an academic paper should be organized and developed; much time was spent on correcting the sentence-level errors.

The information attained from the interviews with the Thai students in this study and their essay organizations support both Kaplan's and Mohan and Au-Yeung Lo's claims. My opinion is that in applying CA hypothesis and EA theory, a researcher should not discard one theory and consider the other solely, because several elements in both theories hold true to ESL learning. As research has discovered, the theories usually complement each other. For example, the Thai students in this study admitted that they unconsciously wrote according to the Thai style. At the same time, they also recognized that the expected organization of English expository writing was not known to them until they came to study in an American university. The format of an English term paper was never taught at any level in Thai colleges, except in an optional writing course provided by the English department.

1.1 Cross-cultural difference

Richards and Sukwiwat (1983) examined how cross-cultural differences affected communication. In Thai, the concept of face is referred to by the term /kreenj t{ai/, which means taking the other person's face, needs, and feelings into account, so that either the speaker or the hearer feels no threat. This leads to indirect strategies for the performance of certain types of communication in situations where English speakers would not necessarily see the need for indirectness, since they perceive no threat to face. Talking around the topic is very common because Thais are taught to mask their negative emotions toward the hearer, especially when the other party is higher in social rank or age. Many western cultures, on the other hand, value individualism. A child or adult who displays views and opinions which are at variance with commonly held beliefs is seen as having an independent mind (Richards and Sukwiwat 121). In Thai, this is seen as arrogant and disrespectful. The tendency for Thai to downplay disagreement can be seen in the classroom, where students rarely disagree with what the teachers say.

Influenced by their culture, the Thai students were likely to use indirect words, vague vocabulary, and broad concepts in the essays for several reasons. For example, I asked a student why she avoided indicating the country she

was living in as America by using the terms "another country" in several places in the essay. She replied that the sense of using a specific term was sometimes too strong in the Thai culture. The pronoun "you," for example, is often avoided in a direct conversation. Thai speakers usually omit or substitute this pronoun with the addressee's social rank or name. The same student also employed word approximation as her strategy when trying to convey a meaning of a word she did not know. She wrote, for example,

-I could do grammar test but it was very difficult
for one word.

At the time of writing the essay, she could not remember the terms "cloze test," so she used "one word," hoping that the reader would be able to understand what she meant. The first judge in this study had no problem understanding it after reading the context. Certain communication strategies, therefore, are effective and should be taught to ESL students.

Word approximation often produced awkward expression, however, although it is one way to help students in conveying their messages. Another student, for instance, wrote:

-I had a lot of imagination about America,
but everything in my imagination was gone
when I arrived.

I, at first, did not see any error in the above sentence until one of the three judges pointed out to me that the word "imagination" was inappropriate. I then realized that writing in English required an exact word in conveying an exact idea. Thai students who come from the culture and language that do not pay as much attention on exactness in communication need to be aware of this important characteristic of the English language.

As discussed in Chapter IV, several word choice errors were due to the limited command of L2 vocabulary, so the students chose the alternate words that were close in meaning to the unknown term. Besides using such communication strategies as lexical simplification, synonym, and circumlocution, the students might try to skip over one idea and move to the next. When asked what they did if they were unable to convey an idea in English, most of the subjects reported that they either passed that idea or tried to explain it in details. It is possible, therefore, that wordiness, redundancy, and circumlocution in the student essays resulted from the attempt to explain an idea with which the students were having difficulty. Total avoidance to write about that idea also affects rhetoric. If such an avoidance occurs with the important idea in a paper, the essay will be irrelevant or will lose its coherence.

Using circumlocution to explain one word or expression may be an interlingual interference. As mentioned in Chapter two, the preference for wordy style in Thai might reflect the influence of Asianism on the oriental writing style, which continues in the present time. Opposite to the clear, simple style of the Western Attic prose, the Asiatic prose encourages subtle, indirect, wordy, and flowery style. In Thai writing, as Chutisilp observes, wordiness or redundancy is considered to be an elegant style

because the writer has the opportunity to use "more words." For Thai English writers, getting to the point too soon does not stimulate the readers' curiosity nor does it create suspense. It is common, therefore, to find an elaborate maze of wordiness before arriving at the topic sentence which is normally placed at the end of a passage (Chutisilp 176).

The essays collected in this study contained many wordy expressions, such as "the first day after the day I arrived," but the overall essay arrangement generally followed that of a three-paragraph essay. Two students did not divide their writing into paragraphs, and two other students, though they wrote separate paragraphs, wrote incoherently and discussed subjects irrelevant to the assigned topics (See Appendix F for these essays). The rest

of the subjects (eleven students) showed an understanding of English essay arrangement and relevancy of ideas necessary in academic writing.

1.2 Writing Course in Thailand

In the interviews, many students reported that the two rules they could remember in Thai composition classes were to use descriptive words, flowery words, or to play on words when narrating something. For the essay organization, only a few students vaguely recalled that the teacher mentioned how an essay should consist of three parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Thai writing style, then, pays more attention to the use of words with descriptive power. Organization is taught but not emphasized, and it basically follows that required in an English composition. The requirement for a three-part structure was probably developed and added in the writing curriculum later due to the influence of western expository style described in the English textbooks. Thai students also need to practice using a variety of English sentence structures in their writing. It is noticeable that embedded sentences, adverbial clauses, infinitive clauses, and participial phrases were rare in all of the fifteen essays. Most of the sentences used were subject + verb + object, the structure found in most isolating languages such as Thai. Considering the fact that these students had studied English

for at least nine years, their writing style needs much more development. Reading assignments on professional or literary essays and exercises in sentence combining or in using different sentence structures in an essay will enrich the writing skills of these students.

2. The Student Composing Process

Traditionally, definitions of composition have clustered around two major poles: one which emphasizes the ideas and thought processes involved in writing and the other which emphasizes the form of the ideas (McKay vii). For a long time research in composition has focused on form and investigated the composed product. Current research, however, moves toward an emphasis on the composing process and the strategies used by the writers before they arrived at the final product (McKay vii).

Becoming aware of the paradigm shift in composition teaching, ESL teachers and researchers are beginning to consider the extent to which the findings of process-centered studies are related to the teaching of ESL composition. Raimes (1979, 1981), McKay (1981), and Taylor (1981) have all recognized the importance of these findings and have suggested approaches to the teaching of composition that take these findings into account. One major discovery from recent research is the fact that the process of writing

rarely proceeds in a linear fashion. Various components of writing such as generating ideas, organizing, and editing are called into play throughout the writing process. In addition, the manner in which each aspect is utilized varies from individual to individual and from task to task (McKay 1). Adding to this discovery, Barry Taylor asserts that writing "is a creative discovery procedure characterized by the dynamic interplay of content and language: the use of language to explore beyond the known content" (4).

Thus the view of composing which has emerged from recent research is that writing is a discovery procedure. This view has raised important questions about three common composition teaching practices:

- 1) teaching students to fully outline and plan prior to writing rather than using writing as a discovery procedure;

- 2) teaching revision as a mechanical and formal editing job rather than as a powerful writing tool;

- 3) teaching students to fit their ideas into preexisting organizational molds (implying that there is a limited number of supposedly correct ways to organize) rather than teaching them that organization grows out of meaning and ideas (Taylor 6).

Sondra Perl (1979) in her study of the unskilled ESL writers' composing processes found that prewriting, writing, and editing appeared in sequential patterns in ESL

subjects (328). During the prewriting process, however, the students in her study began writing within the first few minutes. The average time they spent on prewriting was four minutes (Perl 328). The Thai students in this study also admitted that they spent very little time thinking or planning before writing. Most of them did not realize that prewriting or invention can be significant in the writing process.

Perl also discovered that recursive movements appeared throughout the student writing process. The students in Perl's study were "backtracking, rereading, and digesting what had been written" (330). Similarly, the Thai students in this research reported that they often stopped and went back to reread what they had written and corrected the grammar or misspelled words in the previous paragraph(s). Only two students at the advanced level told me that they did not stop writing until they finished the whole essay because they did not want their thoughts to be interrupted. The revision in these students' composing processes began only after the whole essay had been completed. Interestingly, I found their essays to be more coherent than those written by the students who moved "back and forth" during the writing. The non-stop writing during the first draft, then, is advantageous in that it allows the writer's thoughts to move freely without any interruptions.

In the editing process, Perl reported several aspects being corrected by the unskilled ESL writers. Syntax and lexicon were major areas of student concern. However, despite the students' attempt to correct these errors, serious grammatical and lexical problems still existed. The Thai students in this study acted similarly. According to the interviews, the students confessed that they had tried their best to correct any errors, both syntactic and semantic, they could catch, but the problem was always that they did not recognize their own errors until the researcher pointed them out later. Two possible conclusions can be that the students lack the training in proofreading skill and that their performance did not measure up to their competence in language. Such is always the case in second-language learning. The receptive skills of listening and reading have proved to be higher than the productive skills of speaking and writing in an ESL learner.

Summary

Invention, arrangement, and style, three important cannons of rhetoric, play significant roles in the student writing process. Textbooks written for composition classes in American colleges today have adapted classical theories of rhetoric to the modern teaching of writing. Teachers of

English composition believe that knowledge of classical rhetoric will provide good background information for basic writers. For Thai students, understanding Western rhetoric will make them realize what is expected when they write in English. Teaching the significance of invention or pre-writing process, arrangement or organization, and style or effectiveness of various sentence structures in English to Thai students will prepare them for writing tasks required in graduate studies.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion and Implications

1. Conclusion

The primary concern of this study has been to investigate the writing problems of Thai students at the graduate level in an American university. By examining the syntactic and semantic errors and the rhetoric in the student compositions, the researcher discovered new insights, which can be helpful to the teaching of English to Thai students.

The study was conducted by collecting fifteen compositions from fifteen Thai students enrolled in the summer semester of 1988 in the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) of the University of North Texas. After the students finished the writing, all were interviewed about their English background, how they felt about the English program in Thailand, and how they usually composed an essay in English. The information from these interviews was valuable for the understanding of the learner's development in the writing skill.

The researcher then examined the errors made by the students and classified them into two major categories and 43 concomittant sub-categories. Both syntactic and semantic errors, after being identified and categorized, were

explained according to their possible sources, using the information provided by the writers and suggested EA theories. The researcher found that although the EA theories were accurate, there were cases when the students made errors for unexpected reasons. Problems in error classifications, of course, arose as expected, and a number of errors did not yield to any one category easily. To lessen this problem, a panel of three experts helped to confirm the accuracy of the classification. Errors were counted and tabulated to see the rank of difficulty and frequency of occurrence. This data should be a helpful guideline for future development of English writing teaching curricula for Thai students at the collegiate level.

The researcher also examined the style of writing, the development of the essay, and its organization to find out what weaknesses, problems, or difficulty the subjects had in composition writing. It was discovered that the lack of training in essay writing, both in the native language and English, could have been the source of weakness. The fact that English programs in Thailand concentrate more on grammar study and the syntactic level than on rhetoric and semantic level sheds light on the writing problems. Taylor has commented on this issue that "as long as ESL students continue to have serious written language problems . . . , many ESL writing programs will concentrate primarily on

teaching language form and correctness" (Taylor 6). This practice makes the student unable to experience the processes of discovery and thorough revision. Teaching practices such as this may encourage an "obsession with error" (Taylor 6), which may create a misconception for the student. This is supported by Mina Shaughnessy (1977):

So absolute is the importance of error in the minds of many writers that "good writing" to them means "correct writing," nothing more (6)

The unfamiliarity with English professional writing and the expected format and organization in English academic papers all contribute to the undeveloped writing skill. If the writing program in Thailand continues to focus on grammar and correctness and ignores the importance of rhetoric and the student composing process, the problem of writing will never be solved or reduced. All of the subjects in this study felt that knowing grammar well did not result in good writing. When asked to rate their writing skill, fourteen students rated themselves poor to fair. Only one student believed that her writing skill was good, because she had come to America as an exchange student for one year. Her essay, indeed, displayed more complexities in sentence styles and more sophisticated vocabulary.

The findings of this study may be helpful to teachers of English writing to Thai students at the graduate level. The researcher has further suggestions concerning the teaching of writing in the following topics: meaningful exercises, reading and writing relationship, the treatment of error, and teaching objective.

1.1 Meaningful Exercises

Like the native basic writers, the Thai writers need to be guided by the writing teachers starting from the beginning of the process of writing, and not just from the written product. While errors on syntactic levels are significant to the understanding of the meaning of the whole essay, the rhetoric or the way the ideas are presented is the key to powerful writing. Of course, the readiness and maturity in the learners play a significant role in the success of teaching rhetoric, because

Composing in either a first or second language presupposes that an individual has sufficient competency in the language to give form to his or her ideas. Because of this, instruction in composition, as opposed to grammar, requires that students have a basic foundation in English so that attention can be given to both content and form. (McKay 80)

Thai students, after acquiring sufficient command of English grammar, need to be taught how their message can be delivered with clarity and precision through the teaching of rhetoric. After nine years of grammar study, students at the collegiate level should be ready for a discussion of essay organization, varieties of writing styles and modes, and effective use of language. Such activities as practice in proofreading, sentence combining, and word substitutions are strongly recommended. But these activities must be carefully planned and evaluated as to whether they are really helpful and practical to the students, because, as McKay has warned:

There are many types of highly controlled exercises which require students to do such things as make simple substitutions or transformations in a text or to answer a series of highly structured questions so as to generate a short paragraph. While such kinds of exercises may have value in teaching students something about the grammatical structure of English, their value in helping students learn to effectively express and organize their own thoughts is questionable. (McKay 79-80)

For the students at an advanced level, translation is a good technique used to test application of the rules of grammar and the ability to transfer meaning comprehensively

from one language to another. A few students in this study were asked to translate a newspaper article from Thai into English as extra work for practice. These translations showed fewer syntactic and semantic errors than their written essays. It is possible that in the translation process these students' tasks were reduced to only selecting the right words without having to find ideas to write about and to write them correctly; as one student indicated, most grammatical errors in his essay resulted from the pressure of thinking about the topic and the correct grammar at the same time.

1.2 Reading and Writing Relationship

Several studies show that good writers are also good readers. As Rivers and Temperley state,

to be able to write well, students need to read widely, thus familiarizing themselves with the way recognized writers write in English. They must, through much experience with written texts, develop their ability to assimilate information directly in English and to think in English so that their writing acquires the rhythms and associations of the English-language writer. (312)

1.3 The Treatment of Error

The treatment of error is another important aspect in the effective teaching of writing. Raimes has observed that

We damage the important reader-writer relationship if we pick out in red all mistakes we can find We do the writer harm if we are interested solely in the product and not in the process of writing. (6)

To encourage creativity and divergent production, teachers should make the students feel confident in expressing their ideas on paper. Making errors, as repeatedly stated, should not be viewed as a bad habit. . Fear of correction, humiliation, and feeling of total failure may result from the teacher's feedback on student writing. Students react differently upon receiving the feedback, and teachers should be careful not to discourage them with error correction and grading. Many language educators strongly believe that students do not usually benefit from the procedure in which teachers provide students with the corrected forms of their errors. Vivian Zamel (1985), for example, discusses this issue. She suggests that teachers should use a discovery approach to help students make inferences and formulate concepts about the target, and to help them store this information in their long-term memory. A checklist for sentence level errors can

be used before the students turn in the essay. A list of questions about the development of the essay may accompany it for the semantic errors. Each individual student has specific weaknesses. Patterns of errors found in each student's writing can be built up into a classified inventory of errors. As suggested by Hendrickson, this inventory of classified patterns of errors can be further organized in view of possible factors affecting a particular instructional situation. It can be further developed into a working syllabus for teaching English composition in that situation (Hendrickson 68).

· Knowing which errors are global, which are local, and which interfere with meanings, teachers can establish priorities of their correction and remedies by focusing on those errors that interfere with communication. Several studies on error gravity according to the native speakers' reaction or faculty opinions of ESL errors have been helpful in suggesting which types of error were annoying to native readers (Vann, Meyer, Lorenz, 1984; Zamel, 1985). A rating scale suggested by Rivers is helpful and can be adjusted by each teacher to reflect what the teacher wishes to stress or to indicate those areas in which students need to improve. But the students themselves should be informed about how their compositions are going to be evaluated. Teachers should try to determine which errors are signs of incorrect

learning, which errors seriously interfere with comprehensibility, and which errors are inappropriate at the learner's stage of development. The errors which are simply signs of incomplete learning, those which do not interfere with communication, or those which are persistent for all learners may be treated later than the first (Krahnke and Christison 642-43).

Positive reinforcement is recommended rather than pointing out errors all the time. This does not mean that errors are unimportant, but errors are natural in the learning process. Finally, cultural differences should be pointed out in class. The ways culture influences the thinking which is usually transcribed into English, often results in awkward expression. This is a difficult task for the teacher. Again, getting the student to be more familiar with the English way of writing through reading assignments and imitating good models may be one of the solutions. As long as the teacher realizes that all problems have causes which can always be determined, improvement can be made through the investigation of these sources.

To cite what McKay has written:

The complexity of the writing process makes it clear that we will not be able to give our students simple formulae for good writing. What we can do is to engender in our students an

awareness of the complexity of the writing process and help them better manipulate each component of the process in order to meet their specific writing objectives. (1)

1.4 Teaching Objective

It is obvious that teaching writing to ESL students is not an easy task. Teachers who have taught in the traditional way--assign topic, collect essay, correct grammar, return the essay to the student--soon realize how ineffective the teaching method is. To teach more effectively, teachers have several things to consider, such as student's background and cultural differences. The most important thing to be considered is the student's need, which is to write something they want to convey and write it with clarity and good organization, with their own ideas, style, and wit.

The objective of teaching writing in Thailand should take the student's need into consideration. Rivers (1983) conducted a survey of foreign language learners' goals in fifty countries. The goals reported from Thailand are:

To form a harmony between academic learning and professional training or career education as contributing to the goals of liberal education,

e. g., to combine linguistic skills with a professional speciality--law, accounting, chemistry, etc., for a practical or utilitarian value (138).

For the students who plan to pursue a study in an English-speaking country, writing instruction should aim at providing students with the strategies that will enable them to write a message that a native speaker of English can understand. These students should be equipped with necessary writing techniques before leaving the country. The goal of learning English writing will be more practical, realistic, and satisfying to the students if it aims at the student's ability to write what he wants to write with clarity and precision.

2. Implications for further research

The researcher realizes the limitations of this study and hopes that further studies on Thai students' writing will eliminate some of these limitations. A larger population may be selected for a statistical analysis, and the writing of Thai students at different levels and different background should be examined.

As a pilot study, this dissertation has attempted to examine the student composing process, which is a new area in ESL research. The information from such a study is

valuable to the understanding of the learner's cognitive process. Thus more studies in this area are encouraged.

During this study, the researcher experimented with the translation method by asking a few subjects to practice translation, but this experiment was not developed to its completion due to the time limit of the study.

Nevertheless, findings seem to suggest that the translation method may help reduce errors in writing; it may be an effective method for students at intermediate and advanced levels. However, this assertion must be confirmed by other research studies with a focus on the relationship between translation and ESL writing.

Finally, findings of this study and other research on Thai student writing should be considered in developing English writing curricula in Thailand.

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APPENDIX A

Thai Consonant and Vowel Charts

Thai Consonant Chart*

Thai Consonants									
			BOTH LIPS (bilabial)	LOWER LIP AND UPPER TEETH (labiodental)	TIP OF TONGUE AND TEETH (interdental)	TIP OF TONGUE AND TOOTH RIDGE (apicoalveolar)	FRONT PART OF TONGUE AND HARD PALATE (laminoalveolar)	BACK OF TONGUE AND SOFT PALATE (velar)	THROAT (glottal)
stops	aspirated	vl	ph			th		kh	
	unaspirated	vl	(p)			(t)		(k)	(ʔ)
	unaspirated	vd	b			d			
affricates	aspirated	vl					tʃh		
	unaspirated	vl					(tʃ)		
fricatives				f		s			h
nasals			m			n		ŋ	
laterals						l			
semivowels			w			r	y		

* From A Contrastive Study of English. Defense Language

Thai Vowel Chart *

Thai Vowels						
	FRONT		CENTRAL		BACK	
	short	long	short	long	short	long
HIGH	i	ii	ɨ	ɨɨ	u	uu
MID	e	ee	ə	əə	o	oo
LOW	ɛ	ɛɛ	a	aa	ɔ	ɔɔ

Note that although English contains all but one of these vowel positions, it does not maintain vowel length as a phonemic contrast. The English equivalents of these nine vowel positions are approximately half-way between the short and long Thai pairs.

Thai Diphthongs	ia	ɨa	ua
-----------------	----	----	----

Although these three diphthongs are the only ones cited as "pure" diphthongs, there are many other diphthongal and triphthongal combinations in Thai ending with the semivowels /y/ and /w/. Thus, Thai contains diphthongs almost identical with the three traditional English diphthongs /aɪ/, /aʊ/, and /ɔɪ/ if we consider these sounds to end in the semivowels /y/ and /w/.

* From A Contrastive Study of English and Thai. Defense

APPENDIX B

Thai Printed Characters and Scripts

Thai Printed Characters and Scripts

ผมเขียนเรื่องนี้กับประจวบกับเวลา ไม่อยากให้เหตุการณ์ทั้งขบถอย่างเกิดขึ้นบ่อย ๆ
ปัญหาที่จริงเป็นปัญหาของนักเรียนเอง สำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ เองก็เบงร้อนใจ และประสบความ
ยากเข็ญในการแก้ไขปัญหาก็กล่าวที่รู้จากนักเรียนเมื่อเกือบสัปดาห์ไปแล้ว ไม่ทันเวลา เพื่อประโยชน์
ร่วมกัน สำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ ขอให้นักเรียนในความดูแลของ ก.ท. ซึ่งเกินทางมาศึกษาใหม่
รับรายงานการเกินทางถึงสหรัฐอเมริกา หรือประเทศแคนาดา ทางแบบที่ไ้ได้รับจากกองการศึกษา-
ทางประเทศ สำนักงาน ก.ท. ไปยังสำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ สำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ มี
คำแนะนำ และบริการหลายอย่างขออำนวยความสะดวกนักเรียนอยู่ เช่น การลงทะเบียนศึกษา
การประกันสุขภาพ เงินค่าใช้จ่ายจะให้ส่งไปให้ ณ ที่ใด เป็นกัน สำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ ขอให้
นักเรียนในความดูแลของ ก.ท. ซึ่งไ้เกินทางมาศึกษาอยู่แล้ว ช่วยแนะนำนักเรียนใหม่เกี่ยวกับการ
รายงานตัวมายังสำนักงานยูทูแลนักเรียน ๆ และเรื่องอื่นจำเป็นที่ควรทราบในระยะปรับตัว ไปรกให้
ความเห็นใจ เข้าใจ และเป็นเพื่อน เช่น จุลสาร "เพื่อนนักศึกษา" ซึ่งให้ความเป็นเพื่อน เป็นสื่อ-
กลางระหว่างนักเรียนในความดูแลของ ก.ท.

กรุงเทพฯ เป็นเมืองหลวงของประเทศไทยตั้ง
แต่พ.ศ. ๒๓๒๕ (ค.ศ. ๑๗๘๑) ตั้งอยู่บนฝั่ง
ตะวันออกของแม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา เมืองสำคัญของ
ประเทศนอกหากกรุงเทพฯคืออยุธยา ตั้งอยู่เหนือ
กรุงเทพฯ ตามฝั่งแม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา หิมมิลโลก
ลำปาง และเชียงใหม่ เป็นเมืองใหญ่ทางภาคเหนือ
ทางภาคใต้มีเมืองใหญ่หลายเมืองเช่น เพชรบุรี
นครปฐม ราชบุรี สุพรรณบุรี นครศรีธรรมราช
สงขลา ตรัง ภูเก็ต และ ปัตตานี

APPENDIX C

Background Information Questionnaire

BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Male_____ Female_____
2. Year of birth_____
3. Date of arrival in the U.S. month_____year_____
4. I have studied English since
 - A. kindergarten
 - B. first grade (Prathom I)
 - C. fifth grade (Prathom V)
 - D. eighth grade (M.S. I)
 - E. _____
5. What was your college major?_____
6. Have you ever been to any country besides the U.S.?
If so, what country?_____
7. How long was your visit to that country?_____
8. When did you take a Thai composition course?
9. What were the rules taught in that class?
10. When did you take an English composition class?
11. What were the rules taught in that class?
12. How do you rank your English writing skill with other Thai students?

- ☐ A. excellent
- ☐ B. good
- ☐ C. fair
- ☐ D. poor

APPENDIX D

Composing Process Questionnaire

COMPOSING PROCESS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Before you started writing, did you spend time to think about the topic or organize your thoughts?
2. About how long did you do that?
3. Did you think in Thai before you wrote each sentence?
4. Did you think in English at all?
5. Did you make an outline on the paper before you began writing? Or did you do that in your head?
6. When you couldn't express certain ideas you wanted to, what did you do?
7. Were there any words or sentences you couldn't convey in English?

8. How often did you use a dictionary while you were writing? If you did not use it, give reasons:

9. Did you stop occasionally while you wrote? Did you go back to reread what you had written so far?

10. Did you make any changes? Did you correct the grammar and misspelled words along the way?

11. Did you change the whole paragraph while you were writing?

12. How many drafts did you do before your final one?

13. Do you like writing in Thai?

14. What do you write in Thai?

15. Do you like to read?

16. Do you read in English?

17. How often do you read English writing?

18. What kinds of books do you read?

19. Do you observe the writing style while you are reading English books?

20. Do you think writing skill is important to us, Thai students? In what way?

21. Please evaluate the English composition program in Thailand? Would you prefer English to be used as a medium of instruction rather than Thai?

22. What do you think can help improve the teaching of English in Thailand?

APPENDIX E

Evaluation of Error Classifications

Evaluation of Error Classifications by Panel of Experts

Instruction: Please put number 1 at the end of each phrase or sentence if you agree with its classification, number 0 if you disagree.

Error	Judges	A	B	C
<u>I. Syntactic Errors</u>				
<u>1. Verb Errors</u>				
<u>1.1 Wrong Tense</u>				
-I have been here since August 25th, 1982. Until present time, <u>it is</u> about 6 years.		1	1	1
-Therefore, my very first week was not too bad, but second week <u>would be</u> worse.		1	1	1
-I <u>have remembered</u> the day when I arrived		1	1	1
-It was good for me that I didn't under- stand him. If I <u>understood</u> him, I <u>had</u> to wait and checked my baggage.		1	1	1
<u>1.2 Wrong form</u>				
-I had a quietly <u>sitting</u> for 20 hours		1	1	1
-Some things that <u>difference</u> between the two cultures		1	1	1
-My brother <u>leaded</u> me		1	1	1
-I was <u>exciting</u> and <u>interesting</u>		1	0	1
-I <u>fail</u> in sleep again		1	1	1

1.3 Superfluous or misused auxiliary

-it was too long for me to remember everything which <u>was</u> happened in the very first week.	1	1	1
-It <u>didn't</u> like the country I used to dream.	1	1	1
-all the activities that would <u>be</u> occurred each day	1	1	1
-The last day was difficult because we had to <u>be</u> parted	1	0	1
-another thing which <u>was</u> interested me	1	1	1
-My flight <u>was</u> landed in Dallas	1	1	1
-I <u>was</u> never think	1	1	1
-A question <u>was</u> appear in my mind	1	1	1

1.4 Auxiliary omitted

-I__faced with many interesting things	1	1	1
-I__confused	1	1	1
-I kept wondering what all the people around me__talking about	1	1	1
-All I could do__just knock my head	1	1	1
-Right now everything__not seem too strange for me.	1	1	1
-I have__sicked for a week	1	1	1

1.5 Lack of subject-verb agreement

-Thai culture <u>differ</u> from American culture	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

-Thai family <u>take</u> care of its children	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

1.6 Incorrect infinitives or gerunds

-I saw Mom <u>cooked</u> breakfast	1	0	1
------------------------------------	---	---	---

-They let me <u>went</u> ahead to bed	1	1	1
---------------------------------------	---	---	---

-The best thing to do was <u>adapting</u> myself	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

-I have to <u>looking</u> for a job	1	1	1
-------------------------------------	---	---	---

-Difference situation make one <u>to know</u> and <u>to understand</u> the America.	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

1.7 Verb particle omitted or misused

-It didn't like the country I used to dream__.	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

-Thai family takes care__its children until they are mature	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

-I could live here without the food problem that I heard__from others.	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

-I'm interested <u>about</u>	1	1	1
------------------------------	---	---	---

2. Noun

2.1 Plural morpheme omitted

-for the first two week__	1	1	1
---------------------------	---	---	---

-one of the U.S. high school__	1	1	1
--------------------------------	---	---	---

-I went downstair__	1	1	1
---------------------	---	---	---

2.2 Superfluous plural morpheme

-he cooked Thai foods	1	0	1
-----------------------	---	---	---

-each groups	1	1	1
--------------	---	---	---

-baggages	1	1	1
-anythings	1	1	1
-everythings	1	1	1

2.3 Wrong form of noun

-What was terrible for me was <u>homesick</u> .	1	1	1
-I lost my <u>self-confident</u>	1	1	1
-Difference situation make one to know and to understand the <u>America</u>	1	1	1

3. Pronouns

3.1 Pronoun omitted

-First day I came here, __have a lot of things I interest about it.	1	1	1
-Many instructors helped us to cope with problems if __ever happened.	1	1	1

3.2 Remote or no antecedent

-I met a lot of friends from other countries. I had the good teachers. <u>We</u> understood and shared every thing together.	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

3.3 Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent

-If problems ever came to me, I should talk <u>it</u> out.1 1 1	1	1	1
-everyone in the family did <u>their</u> best	1	1	1

3.4 Wrong pronoun

-We went to see our <u>another</u> sister	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

- <u>It</u> smell and taste did not entice me	1	1	1
-Thai family takes care of <u>his</u> children	1	1	1
- <u>others</u> modern facilities	1	1	1
-Korat <u>where</u> is a town in the north-east of Thailand	1	1	1
- <u>He</u> went into Jack in the Box and gave me to order lunch by myself.	1	1	1

3.5 Vague pronoun reference

-I was surprised that at 9:00 PM it was still sunshine. <u>It's</u> impossible in Thailand	1	1	1
-Some day was 80 f. at day but <u>it</u> changed to 40 f at night	1	1	1
-I enjoyed eating very much because <u>it</u> was my first good meal	1	0	1
-Usually in Thailand at 7 PM <u>it</u> was already dark	1	1	1

3.6 Superfluous pronoun

-The main problem which I thought <u>it</u> was very terrible	1	1	1
-Another thing which interested me, <u>they</u> were high ways	1	1	1
-I was surprised that <u>why</u> it was so big	0	0	0

4. Adjectives

4.1 Misplaced adjectives

- <u>two first</u> week	1	1	1
-------------------------	---	---	---

4.2 Wrong form of adjective

-I was an <u>exchanged</u> student.	1	1	1
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- <u>two hours</u> drive	1	0	1
--------------------------	---	---	---

- <u>cheer-leader</u> routine	1	0	1
-------------------------------	---	---	---

- <u>America</u> life style	1	1	1
-----------------------------	---	---	---

- <u>Britain</u> English	1	1	1
--------------------------	---	---	---

-Thai life style is very <u>simply</u>	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

- <u>Difference</u> situation	1	1	1
-------------------------------	---	---	---

- <u>gold hair</u> people	1	1	1
---------------------------	---	---	---

5. Adverbs

5.1 Superfluous adverb

- <u>Everytime</u> <u>when</u> I woke up	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

5.2 Wrong form of adverb

-This American culture <u>very</u> impress me.	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

6. Conjunction

6.1 Wrong conjunction

-America is just a country	1	1	1
----------------------------	---	---	---

<u>that</u> people speak English	1	1	1
----------------------------------	---	---	---

6.2 Omission of conjunction

-We talked and ate until 6 AM__then went to bed	1	0	1
-We understood__shared every thing together	1	1	1
-It surprised me__I could see the sun in the sky	1	0	1

7. Preposition

7.1 Preposition omitted

-America is the first place I've ever been__out of Thailand	1	1	1
-They gave me and all__ my friends	1	1	1
-If I can do well__adjusting myself, I will have a happy life in America	1	1	1
-I had quietly a quietly sitting__about 20 hours	1	1	1
-__two days that I lived with my sister's friend	1	1	1
-I ate only fried chicken__all of the six meals	1	1	1
-We had a talent show__which we danced with Thai classical music.	1	1	1

7.2 Superfluous preposition

-Going <u>to</u> shopping	1	1	1
-and always called <u>to</u> Thailand	1	1	1
-Mom showed me around the house and <u>in</u>	1	1	1

the garden			
-and spent my first few days <u>by</u> sleeping	1	1	1
-I must do it by myself <u>in</u> here	1	1	1
-I came to America <u>for</u> eight years ago	1	1	1
-I visit <u>in</u> Dallas once a week	1	1	1
-I will move to L.A. <u>at</u> soon	1	1	1

7.3 Wrong preposition

-Thai people go <u>to</u> the public	1	1	1
- <u>In</u> the third day	1	1	1
-I should not eat it <u>until</u> next three months	1	1	1

8. Determiners

8.1 Determiner omitted

-the crew in__fast food center	1	1	1
-you could catch__cold easily	1	0	1
-for__first two weeks	1	1	1
-I arrived in__USA	1	1	1
-in__summer	1	0	1
-I studied in__intensive course	1	1	1
-Because of__different culture	1	1	1

8.2 Superfluous Determiners

-Ordering <u>the</u> food was the most difficult thing	1	1	1
-having a roommate could bring <u>the</u> problems to me-teach me everything	1	1	1

about the life here

-I wrote the letters to my parents 1 1 1

8.3 Wrong determiners

-I had to buy the mattress, many things used in 1 1 1
the kitchen, food, and a lot of necessary things

-I knew that I couldn't live my life 1 1 1
to be like these

-so I must take this advantage to see another 1 1 1
country

8.4 Misformed determiner

-It was such a uncomfortable experience 1 1 1

9. Punctuation

9.1 Apostrophe omitted

-My first weeks experience in America 1 1 1

9.2 Comma omitted

-After that I could find my apartment 1 1 1

-Everything was confusing especially to myself 1 1 1

9.3 Superfluous comma

-The traffic system, in my country is different 1 1 1

9.4 Misuse or omission of colon, semicolon, quotation marks

-Everything looked strange, the big airport, 1 1 1
the big eight-lane road

-My first meal was "Fried Chicken" 1 1 1

-I had to do chores; wash clothes and dishes, cook, and clean	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

-The good news is the best experience; such as, culture	1	1	1
---	---	---	---

9.5 Omission of hyphen

-a three day orientation	1	1	1
--------------------------	---	---	---

-one story house	1	1	1
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10. Capitalization

-english	1	1	1
----------	---	---	---

-Summer	1	1	1
---------	---	---	---

-Fried Chicken	1	1	1
----------------	---	---	---

-The University	1	1	1
-----------------	---	---	---

11. Spelling

-my self	1	1	1
----------	---	---	---

-carefull	1	1	1
-----------	---	---	---

-diffent	1	1	1
----------	---	---	---

-vedio	1	1	1
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-difficuld	1	1	1
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-eventhough	1	1	1
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-straight (for <u>strange</u>)	1	1	1
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12. Whole construction error

12.1 Parallel construction

-We had to <u>part</u> and <u>flew</u> to meet	1	1	1
--	---	---	---

our own host families	1	1	1
-Some <u>looked</u> friendly, but some <u>were</u> not.	1	1	1
-America's traffic was opposite from Thailand.	1	1	1
12.2 <u>Incomplete sentence (fragment)</u>			
-The week I can never forget even though	1	1	1
it was eight years ago.	1	1	1
12.3 <u>Run-ons and fused sentences</u>			
-I was so busy but it made me excited	1	1	1
-These three days were fun __ we played	1	1	1
games and sang some songs.			
-When I first reached America, my sponsor gave	1	1	1
me and all my friends, there were			
about 83 of us, a three-day orientation at UCLA.			
12.4 <u>Comma Splices</u>			
-She started to ask me all kinds of questions,	1	1	1
I knew then that my English needed a lot of			
improvement.			

II. Semantic Errors

1. Ambiguous expression

-She would take care and schedule us to	1	1	1
all the activities that would occur each day.			

2. Awkward expression

-He <u>gave me to order</u> my lunch by my self	1	1	1
-I tried to listen, but it was	1	1	1

<u>in my left ear and go my right ear out.</u>			
-My first week's experience in America will be <u>impressed in my heart.</u>	1	1	1
-it flutuated <u>from day to night.</u>	1	1	1
-I really changed my life after <u>my foot stepped on this land</u>	1	1	1
-I was confused by <u>the way and sign of traffic</u> in America.	1	1	1
-Two cultures differ in the way <u>to brought up</u> children	1	1	1
-my decision to study in America is <u>true</u>	1	1	1
-They tried to make <u>feel like home</u>	1	1	1
-when I had <u>the first meal for American food</u>	1	1	1
-I was very surprised <u>it was still sunshine</u>	1	1	1
-I <u>fail in sleep</u> again	1	1	1
-It <u>made me surprise</u>	1	1	1
-I had ever been to a town like this before	1	1	1
3. <u>Redundancy or wordiness</u>			
-I could not understand <u>any English at all</u> <u>the day after one day</u> I arrived	1	1	1
-I took a test <u>the day after one day</u> I arrived	1	1	1
-I got <u>so much</u> nervous	1	1	1
-Even though I <u>had ever had</u> it <u>before</u> I came here	1	1	1

-I adjusted myself <u>to be get used</u> to	1	1	1
-Americans always <u>shout</u> and make rediculous things in public such as <u>yelling</u>	1	1	1
-The best experience was <u>doing</u> everything by myself because nobody <u>worked</u> or <u>did</u> for me	1	1	1
-I brought some food from my home for <u>having</u> lunch at IELI	1	1	1
-He would repeat it <u>again and again.</u>	1	1	1

APPENDIX F
Students' Essays

BEGINNING LEVEL

First day I came here, have a lot of thing I interest about its. Who I knew first is Mu, he is head of Thai student in Denton. I still remembered, when I downed at airport, Mu took me here.

After two days I went to Chicago with my brother, Mu and sit by my brother car. We through many city before there.

Climate in Chicago better than Texas, in Texas It's very hot now. in Chicago we stayed at mu's grandmother's house near downtown. We saw beautiful building there, and met some friens. We protested at Art Institute of Chicago with many Thai people in Chicago, we walk by the institute, and everybody shoted that "Return Visanu". After there I went to NewYork. We visited Chinatown and we lift on empristate blilding.

Then we came back here by plane because my brother is still there. I though I will move to L. A. at soon because there are good weather and I have another brother there. I though when I see the moon and the son here it's biggest. I visit in Dallas once a week, I haven't car because I stay near the school and I think to move. Many my friend here have some problem about English languag, car, house, and assistant because he doesn't know where someone is help him.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

I have been in the U.S. for one month. I came from Thailand. When I came to the U.S., it was the first trip for me.

First week in the U.S., I excited in something that I have never seen such as, traffic system, in my country is different here. I have driven a car that I must be careful because I didn't drive in the U.S. I went to the supermarket I surprised in the big parking car and the big cart. I didn't put gas by myself but I must do it by myself in here. I have met international students when I went to Intensive English Language Institute that they can't speak Thai so everybody must speak English, often, I didn't understand that they said. Price of food in the U.S. is more expensive than my country so I have brought some food from my home for having lunch at IELI. I confused in the way and sign of traffic. I must pay money for tax when I bought everything but I have never paid tax in my country.

I think that many thing in the U.S. is different from my country so that it is experience for me.

Because of different culture, language and life style, I faced with many interesting things and I had to adjust my life in order to get along with America life style.

Thai culture differ from America culture in the way to brough up children. Thai family take care his children for short time. Many American culture very impress me.

Most of Thai students learn Britain English. Normally, Britain English writing look like American writing, but American writing have a lot of ugly word that forein student can't understand such as "Kar-Klinic" mean Car Clinic, Catsup mean Katchop, etc. I had this problem when I went to the supermarket.

Thai life style is very simply. When Thai people go to the public, they are very polite and don't do anythings that disturb anyone, but American alway shout and make rediculous thing in public such as yelling across the street when they meet their friends because they like to show off.

Difference situation make one to know and to understand the America. It is beautiful for me to adjust my life to get along with America culture. If I can do well, adjusting myself, I will have a happy life in America.

When I arrived in the United States, My friend picked me up at the airport. During the time from the airport to the house, I watched around the place which I passed. The first thing, I was surprised to me that there were many lanes on the freeway and a lot of cars. By the way, the drivers rode very fast, I felt afraid. When I reached the house, I was so tired and went to sleep early. My first week in America, I have the good and bad news. The good news is the best experience; such as, culture, technology, and education. Because America has taaken the lead in technology, I would like to know. The bad news is the sleeping, because the time in America is different from in Thailand. I can't adjust my body in America, but I feel better now.

When I checked in the passenger room, I felt I had completely missed everything. I missed my family and my friends. Then, I arrived in America, everything seem to be strange for me. I got sick and wanted to go back home. I didn't eat anything except hot soup. I slept almost all day. everytime when I woke up, I cried until I fail in sleep again. I have sicked for a week. I knew that I couldn't leave my life to be like these any more so that I must take this advantage to see another country. I went to study Intensive course. I had new experiences everyday; therefore, I adjusted myself to be get used to living in America. Right now everything not seem to strange for me anymore, but I still miss my family and my friends anytime.

The first day that I reached here was June the second. After the first step from the plain, I felt alone. Everything in texas looked strange, the big airport, the big eight-lane road, and the blond or gold hair people.

After I already passed the custom' step at the airport, I saw my sister's friend who came to pick me up. I was really glad that I had a chance to speak Thai after I had a quietly sitting about twenty hours on the plane. I get a ride with him about half an hour. His apartment was in Arlington. That night I went to have dinner with him at

9:00 PM. It made me surprise, I could see the sun in the sky at 9:00 PM. It's impossible in Thailand.

The first meal in America was "Fried Chicken". It was a big meal, Five fried-chicken pieces, vegetable salad, cole-slaw, french fry, and a large coke. It was delicious and I thought I could live here without the food problem that I heard from others "The food problem is a big problem for that student who have studied in USA"

Two days that I lived with my sister's friend. I ate only fried chicken all of the six meals. In the third day I knew I made a wrong decision. I could not continue eat the fried chicken. I suffered from fried chicken and I attened that I should not eat it until next three months.

In the fourth day, my sister's friend sent me to Denton. He did not know the way so he lost the way. I arrived at Denton about 11:00 PM. and lived with Mr. ADISAK for three day. After that I could find my apartment which I have live now.

America is not the first country where I used to stay. I expect that America shold consist of huge buildingd, electronic machine and others modern facilities.

My flight was landed in Dallas FW airport. I met my friend, and he drove me to Denton. Durring my first week in Denton, I was never think that Denton is in The USA. I had ever been to a town like this before in Thailand, for it is Korat where is a town in the north-east of Thailand. Korat is very hot town and surrounded by drought areas, like Denton. Some things that difference from each other are race of people, language traffic rule. I don't like to stay in Korat, so I neither like to stay in Denton.

I could not find every things that I expected in early of the first week. I noticed that most residents lives in a one story house which make of wood; furthermore I found that most shopping centers was located beside high-way in form of one story building. I could not believe that it was America because I had never known something like this. A question was appear in my brian, it was why I stayed in Korat, but I had to speak English. My English speaking caused me many problems.

In late of the week, my friend took me to Dallas, Where I felt like America. I could see and taste every things that I thought about. This made me to conclud that America likes others countries because the civilization can be found only in metropolis.

It was my first time in America. I have come in America for eight years ago. But It was completly different because I came here in order to study in The University in this time. Last time, I came for travelling. I feel excited in America because I had to know everything which was important. And I had to stay her a long time. It was diffent from travelling that I came here in short time. The first day, my brother leaded me to tour around University of North Texas. He went into Jack In The Box and gave me to order my lunch by myself but he taught me how to order step by step before. He taught me that they would ask me in the same questions when we ordered. The big problem in my first week is time. The time in Thailand is different from here. At noon I would like to sleep but at night I couldn't sleep. I have slept at four o'clock AM every day for two weeks. In July 3 I tested placement test. I could do grammar test but it was very difficuld for one word. Before the test date, my brother ordered me to watch Vedio, and he asked me what they said. If I didn't know, he would repeat it again and again until I would answer and he would correct me. When I began to learn in I.E.L.I. at first day, I felt very bad. There were few students who pass level 2 to lever 3. They could listen and speak English well but their grammar was not good. I didn't say anything in first day except my name. One hour later I could hear anything. I was very tired. I have to listen carefully but it was in my left ear and go my right ear out. I had a lot of homework every day and I went to bed at 2:00 AM every night until my homework was finished.

My first weeks experience in America will be impressed in my heart.

The first week that I reached America, I was surprised that why it was so big. Everything was big, for example, cars, carts and so on. I was confused in traffic because America's traffic was opposite from Thailand; Thailand's traffic keeps left, but America's traffic does not. So when I wanted to cross the road, I had to watch a car carefully. I live with my friend's aunt. Her house is in Flowermound. It is far from UNT about twenty miles. The first time that I came to UNT, I thought it was big and far from the house. In the first week I could not sleep well because of the time. I always went to bed at 23:00, but I did not sleep I would sleep at 12:00 AM. I met many students from many countries, for example, Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean. The best experience that I learnt from living in America was doing everything by myself because nobody work or did for

me. I ought to take care myself. When I lived in Thailand, I did not do anything because I had a maid, but in America I did not have, so I had to do chores; wash clothes and dishes, cook.

I think that I decided to study in America was true because I learned many experiences in America which were different from experiences in Thailand.

In Thailand whenever we students talked about America, it looked great for me. America in my imagination is a powerful country. It seemed like America had a lot of power and could control our world. I had never thought before I would come here to study. I came here on 24 May, 1987. I have been here for 1 year. It isn't a long time. I have still remembered my first week in America. I was so exciting and interesting.

As soon as I arrived America, everything I saw was surprised me. I couldn't understand anything. When I walked into the immigration section, the officer said something to me. I didn't know what he said. He spoke so fast. I guess he let me go, so I walked out of that section. I went out quickly without checking my baggages. I brought some food from Thailand. It's good for me that I couldn't understand him. If I understood him I had to wait and checked my baggages and maybe I would lost my food. After I met my sister, we had Mexicaan food for our dinner. I enjoyed eating very much because it was my first good meal since I have left from Thailand. Mexican food is almost like Thai food, it's spicy and hot (no wonder why I liked Mexican food). We finished dinner about 9 p.m. I was very surprised it was still sunshine. At first I thought my watch didn't work, but my sister told me we had a long daytime in Summer. Usually in Thailand at 7 p.m. it was already dark even though it was in Summer. It looked straight for me. After we arrived home, I called my mother. We talked and ate until 6 a.m. then went to bed. I slept all day and spent my first few days by sleeping. Because of the different time, I needed to change my habits. I couldn't eat American food. It had no taste for me. I had to add salt, peper and some source every time I had to eat American food. I had never liked cake or pie, but right now I like any kind of cake, pie and dessert. I'm getting fat because of American food.

Another thing which was interested me, they were highways. The first time I saw them, I was very surprised and excited. I still wonder how they can build those highways. They are a lot of roads across each other. I also like people in Texas. They are so friendly. Always smile and talk even though we have never known before. When I studied in Intensive Course, I enjoyed very much. I met a lot of friends from other countries, I had the good teachers. We understood, shared every thing together. Though we don't spend time together like in the past, I have still remembered them.

Sometimes I felt that I was wrong I was decided to study here. I felt lonely and homesick. But in fact I'm so glad I have come here. I met a lot of things, a lot of

experiences which I have never met before. I will feel sorry if I refuse to come here. I know that when I graduate and go home, America is always still in my mind.

First step in America made me feel like I was in another world. I dreamt a lot of new things in America. But after I realized that America was just a country that people speak English. It didn't like the country I used to dream. I thought I should graduate as fast as I could and return home immediately.

Ordering the food was the most difficult thing that I faced during my first week in America. I couldn't order the food that I really wanted. Most of the crew in fast food center spoke very fast I couldn't catch any word at that time. I got only a small coke and a piece of junk for my first breakfast.

Going to shopping was the most important thing during the first week. I had to buy the mattress, many things used in the kitchen, food and a lot of necessary things for survival. At the same time, I had to study English for preparing the placement test. I was so busy but it made me excited at that time.

Weather at Texas is really bad. It fluctuated from day to night. Some day was 80 F at day but it changed to 40 F at night. If your body was vulnerable, you could catch cold easily. But at the bottom line, I really changed my life after my foot stepped on this land.

ADVANCED LEVEL

America is the first place that I've ever been out of Thailand. When my parents told me that they would like me to study aboard, I was so excited that I had no idea what I had to do first. I had a lot of imagination about America, but everything in my imagination was gone when I arrived.

In my first week, I was busy because I had many things to do. I had to take the placement test in the day after one day I arrived and had to find an apartment for myself at the same time because my cousin, who has been living here for 5 years, told me that I should live alone. He said having a roommate could bring the problems to me; therefore, I decided to live alone. I had stayed with my cousin for two first week. He tried to teach me everything about the life here as well as I tried to go everywhere with him. Sometimes he cooked Thai foods at home so I thought that foods would not make any problems for me at that time. The main problem which I thought it was very terrible for me was homesick. Before I came here, I had never thought about it. I left home to live with my aunts in Bangkok when I was sixteen; homesick hardly happened to me. In first week here, I wrote the letters to my parents and my closed friend every day and always called to Thailand. I didn't know that I called too much until the end of first month, I saw the telephone bill which I had to pay about 250 dollars for.

However, America has a lot of interesting things which I would like to learn. This idea happened to me after I had lived with my cousin for two weeks because I saw many things that are much different from those in Thailand, particullary development.

Have you ever been in the same situation as I have been--being a student in a foreign country ? I have remembered the day when I arrived at U.S.A. It was on January 8, 1987. As soon as my feet stepped on Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, I knew my life has been changing not only physically but also mentally.

Physically, I have perceived the changes by my senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Looking around myself, I felt as if I had stayed in another world. People seemed strange. Their characteristics were different from mine. Some looked friendly, but some were not. They talked in their own language. I tried to listen what they were talking. It seemed useless; I could understand just a few words. Especially, when I had to contact to them by myself, I got so much nervous and was so embarrassed. I quite often lost my self-confidence when I had to speak to them in their language.

Environmentally, a lot of gorgeous and well-designed buildings as well as advanced technology surrounded me. I was so excited to see or touch them. When I had the first meal for American food. I forced myself to eat; even though, I had ever had it before I came here. Its smell and taste did not entice me to eat at all. For the weather in the spring, it was severely cold. I almost could not stand this kind of weather. If I could hibernate, I would do so.

Everything surrounding me had completely changed. While I was so lonely, these changes had increased my pressure. I thought how I could live in this alien world and how I could manage my life smoothly. The best thing to do was adapting myself. Although I missed my family and my country extremely, I knew that living in the alien world was the great challenge that I had to win thoroughly for my survival and my education.

It has been such a long time since I first came to the U.S.A. In fact, it was too long for me to remember everything which was happened in the very first week. I have been here since August 25th, 1982. Until present time, it is about 6 years. Therefore, I will try my best to say all about my first week as I can remember.

By the first day that I have got here at the DFW airport by the Thai international airline, my brother and his wife went there to pick up my sister and me. It was the first time that we have been out of the country. Everything was so confusing especially to my self. It was such a un comfortable experience to me because I could not understand any English at all. I kept wondering what all the people around me talking about. All I could do just knock my head without a word from my lips. In fact, my very first week was not so bad because I have got my sister with me on the plane and my brother and his wife too care of us after we have got to the airport. They took us to Austin to see our another sister. Therefore, my first week was not too bad but my second week would be worse because my brother put me in the dormitory at Texas Wesleyan College alone.

My story for the very first week as I remember, was not so exciting and it was kind of boring more than any thing else.

My real first week in the U.S. was during the second week of July 1980. The week I can never forget even though it was eight years ago.

I was an exchanged student and came to study my senior year in one of the U.S. high school. When I first reached America, my sponsor gave me and all my friends, there were about 83 of us, a three day orientation at UCLA. We were separated into groups and each group had a "Mom" who would take care and schedule us to all the activities that would be occurred each day. We were provided with many instructors to help us understand the way of life in America and how to cope with problems if ever happened. The very good advice that I got if problems ever came to me was to talk it out to someone in the host family or the chaperon in the area. These three days were fun we played games, and a talent show which we danced with Thai classical music and sang some songs. We also got to know each other a lot more. The last day was very difficult because we had to be parted and flew to meet our own host families. It was sad, although we only knew each other for a few months but the feelings were so close.

I flew from LA to Chicago, Illinois to meet my family. They were all there when I got out of the plane. I really did not know how I felt at the time, they all gave me a hug and took me home. My host family lived in the town called Gridley about two hours drive south of Chicago. I got home quite late so they, my host family, let me went ahead to bed.

I shared a room with my host sister named Chris, when I woke up Chris had gone out with Dad already. I went downstairs and saw Mom cooked breakfast for my little brother, Ken. She started to talk to me and asked me all kinds of questions, I knew then that my English needed a lot of improvement, anyway, Mom showed me around the house and in the garden where she grew some red grape. I felt more comfortable than I thought I would because everyone in the family did their best to make me feel like home. Dad came back around noon and after lunch he took me and Chris out to the corn field owned by one of Dad's friends. We picked our own fresh corn. Dad owned a trucking business and had an office near the house. He was a sweet man and always introduced me as a new daughter to his employees and friends. During my first week, I hardly stayed at home Chris took me around town and to the nearby towns. Mom brought me along to see some of their relatives. Amy, my other sister, tried to teach me how to roller skate and some cheer-leader routine. My first week had gone so fast that I did not have time to miss my friends or even my family back in Thailand.