

ABSTRACT

THAI GRADUATE STUDENTS' ERRORS IN
WRITTEN ENGLISH

by

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This study investigates grammatical errors in the written English of EFL students, and is an attempt to determine the major areas and the types of errors encountered in written English, made by 14 Thai students at the graduate level at the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), during the second semester of 1996. The data were the subjects' classroom written tasks. Each subject wrote two types of discourse in English, "the press release" and "the job application letter". The errors made by all subjects, appeared in 28 pieces of English written samples, and were marked by a native English instructor. The number of errors were analyzed and classified under items of grammatical errors based on Politzer and Ramirez's classification (1973) which was divided into two main categories: (1) morphological errors; and (2) syntactical errors. Quantitative data from the tally frequency of errors were statistically analyzed through percentage in order to find the numerical comparative values of errors found in both types of written discourse. Results demonstrated that syntactical errors were the major problems found in both types of discourse. The higher percentage of total syntactical errors and morphological errors were the incorrect use of noun phrase and definite article, respectively. Findings indicated that errors in EFL learning generally were influenced by three factors: level of difficulty; first language interference; and overgeneralization of the rule.

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