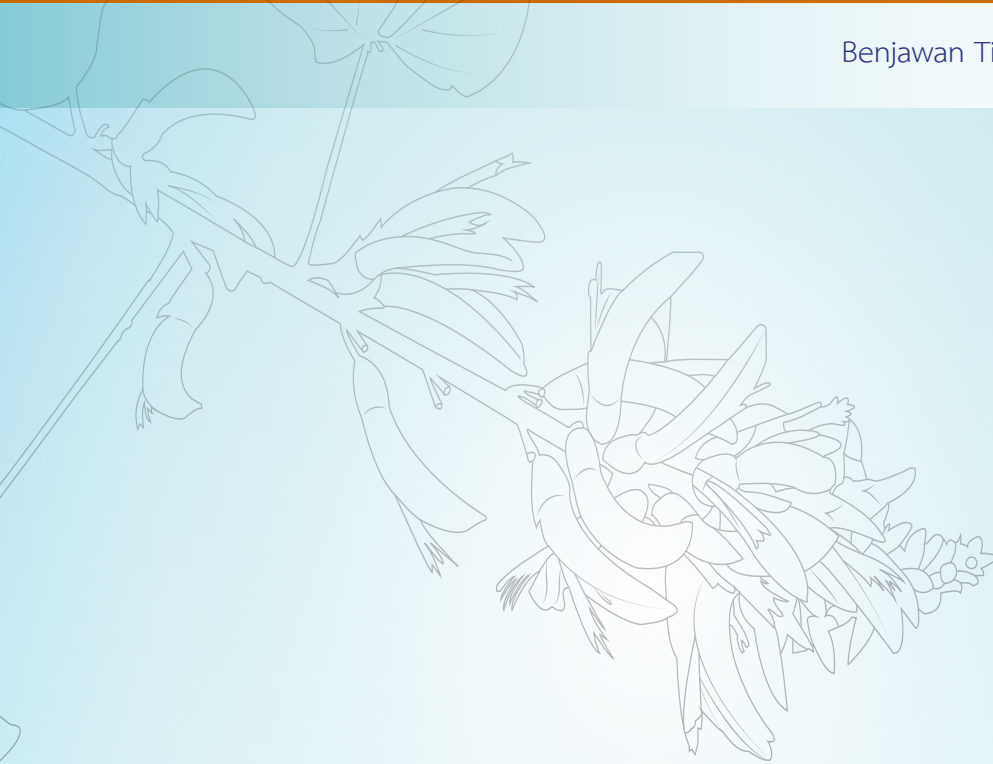


# An Analysis of factors in the First Language (Thai) that Influence the Learning of the Second Language (English)

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## Abstract

The purpose of this non-empirical study was to analyze the factors in L1 (Thai) that influence L2 learning (English) in Thai learners. It consisted of four sections. The first one is an introduction. The second one is an introduction to the Thai language and the English language. The third section illustrates the differences in syntax between Thai and English. Numerous supporting studies were reviewed, including a discussion of whether the Thai and English languages have an effect on L2 learning. The conclusion was drawn in light of numerous related studies and other recent empirical studies that support the conclusion in the final section. According to many studies reviewed in this paper, it was determined that intralingual errors, not interlingual errors or L1 interference, are the primary source of errors in learners' L2 production.

**Keywords:** First Language Influence, Interlingual Errors, Intralingual Errors, Second Language Learning

## 1. Introduction

Language is one of human being's most distinctive traits, intertwined with consciousness, sociality, and culture. Language is a symbolic system that allows us to engage with other humans [1]. In monolingual acquisition, the mother tongue, first language, or L1 is the language (or languages) that a child acquires from parents, siblings, and caregivers during critical developmental years from the womb to around four years of age. According to the Behaviorist theory, whose most famous proponent was B.F. Skinner (1957), it is hypothesized that children imitate the language and sounds of the people around them. When they continue to imitate and practice the pattern, they develop 'habits' of proper language usage [2]. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to any language learnt after the first language (L1 or L1s) as the second language (L2). SLA is an academic branch of research that focuses on the human capacity to acquire other languages in late childhood, adolescence, or maturity [1].

Thai students begin learning English (L2) in kindergarten. However, the majority of them only learn English in the classroom since they are not exposed to English contexts in daily life. According to Chomsky's Universal Grammar [3], we have a Linguistics Acquisition Device in our brain (LAD). Universal Grammar asserts that all humans possess identical language abilities that are generated in response to their linguistic environment. To learn a second language, a child's LAD allows access to promote L2 acquisition and develop it to L2 competence. According to Krashen and Terrell [4], children acquire L1 unknowingly (acquired system) when exposed to language environments such as everyday interactions, and then learn grammar rules and become eligible to use the language once lessons begin (learned system). Krashen and Terrell [4] claim the same for L2.

## 2. The introduction to the first language (Thai) and the second language (English)

### 2.1 First language (Thai)

Thai (or Siamese) is Thailand's official language, spoken by around 69.8 million people. There are distinct regional dialects of Thai, such as the Northeastern or Isan dialect. Standard Thai is taught and utilized in schools, media, and government. Thai is related to Lao, Shan, and Tai dialects spoken in Vietnam and southern China. Thai is the only language in the world with its own alphabet. It comes from Indic scripts and dates back to King Ramkhamhaeng's late 13<sup>th</sup> century reign (CE). Thai has five tones [5]. Although Thai written speech predates King Khunramkhamhang the Great's development of the Thai alphabets in 1383, written Thai speech was historically employed for religious and literary purposes, according to Jogthong [6]. It has only been used by academics and in schools since 1871 when the first Thai royal family school opened, and 1885, when the first Thai public school opened [6]. Thai is a Tai language spoken from northern Vietnam to northern India [7]. Tones define the meaning of each word in Thai, like in Chinese. The five tones of Thai are low, mid, high, rising, and falling. It is an inflected language that inflects randomly. The lexicon is predominantly monosyllabic. The lexicon that is polysyllabic is mostly borrowed from other languages, most notably Sanskrit and Pali from classical India. Thai uses an Indian alphabetic script. Words are not divided as they are in other European languages, and gaps in the script often equate to English punctuation marks, such as a full stop, or comma [7].

### 2.2 Second language (English)

English is a West Germanic language of the Indo-European language family that 600-700 million people, including Thai, speak as a foreign language. According to Sermsonswad and Tantipongsanurak [8], from the introduction of English language instruction into Thai schools in 1891, English curricula in Thailand have evolved continuously. The 1996 curriculum makes English required for all elementary school classes. Although Thai pupils begin studying English at a very young age, English proficiency remains low. English First proficiency index ranks Thailand 89th, 'very low proficiency' [9]. Thailand ranks 20th out of 24 Asian countries in terms of English proficiency [10]. Thai students begin learning English at a young age; some in preschool, others in elementary school. Many studies have shown that a lack of opportunities to use English in everyday life or in second language settings is a major barrier to Thai learners' English proficiency [12-15]. Also, most state schools charge extra for courses taught by foreign teachers, including the English Program, which only a few students can afford. Thailand is a country marked by extreme wealth and poverty, with the latter constituting the majority. The structures of Thai and English are also different [16], making it difficult for Thai students to learn English, and when students produce English, they typically

make errors, both interlingual and intralingual errors. According to Richards and Schmidt [17], an intralingual error is an error that results from improper or incomplete learning of the target language, as opposed to language transfer. The influence of one target language item on another may contribute to intralingual errors. A learner may produce ‘*Joe is walks*’, for instance, by combining the English structures ‘*Joe is walking and Joe walks.*’ Interference, language transfer, and cross-linguistic interference are interlingual errors caused by the native language of the learner [18].

### 3. Distinctions between English and Thai structural features

Prasitattasin [19] categorizes the differences between English and Thai constructions into two main types: parts of speech, and grammatical categories and construction.

#### 3.1 Parts of speech and grammatical category

In order to convey a message, *parts of speech* are essential in a language. The sentence is grammatically correct when the proper parts of speech are used.

*Grammatical categories* are associated with parts of speech and describe a language’s grammatical features. Languages may lack certain linguistic classifications.

##### 3.1.1 Noun

When Thai and English are particularly in comparison, critical linguistic characteristics or English markers are discovered to be irrelevant in the Thai language.

3.1.1.1 Person: a noun or pronoun in a sentence can refer to the first person (*I*), the speaker and others (*we*), the second person (*you*), or the third person referring to other persons or things (*they*) [20]. Moreover, in the third person singular (*he/she/it*), English adds the -s inflection to the verb. For example, ‘*he walks to school* (เขาเดินไปโรงเรียน).’ Because the -s form for third-person singular present tense is missing in Thai, ‘เดิน’ does not require the -s inflection. The issue arises when translating Thai to English because learners omit the -s inflection. ‘*He walk to school,*’ for example.

3.1.1.2 Number: *number* is a grammatical category used to denote a noun’s singularity or plurality. The number is an inflectional category for nouns: *girl* and *girls* are the singular and plural forms of the lexeme *girl*. For example, if we have a lexeme *girl*, the number will be chosen independently and formally expressed inflectionally in any given case of the lexeme [21]. Singular count nouns receive the indefinite article *a(n)* while non-count and plural count nouns get the zero article or the unstressed *some* (*any* in non-assertive contexts): *she needs a pencil/a number of pencils/a quantity of ink; she does not need a pencil, a number of pencils, or a quantity of ink* [20]. Thai has no singular or plural noun morphology. The issue arises when translating Thai to English because learners do not use the plural -s

inflection after plural nouns. For example, instead of saying ‘*I bought many apples,*’ Thai students would say ‘*I bought many apple.*’

3.1.1.3 Case: a case is a grammatical category that shows how a noun is connected to the other words in a clause. It is the *-s* and the *of* genitive that are most involved in the differences between the L1 and L2. The *-s* genitive of regular nouns is only recognized in the singular, where it appears as /ɪz/, /z/, or /s/ according to *-s* inflection rules. Regular nouns’ genitive is only written in the plural. A regular noun is inflected with an apostrophe after the singular *-s* and an apostrophe after the plural *-s*. The *of* genitive is most commonly used with nouns that are less gendered [20]. For example, the phrase ‘*my mother’s friend* (เพื่อนของแม่ของฉัน),’ which must be read from the back to be understood correctly, but Thai learners typically interpret it as ‘*my friend’s mother* (แม่ของเพื่อนของฉัน).’

3.1.1.4 Countable and uncountable: nouns in English are clearly different from nouns in Thai. Thai nouns are not preceded by a determiner. According to Parrott [22], English distinguishes countable and uncountable nouns; whereas countable nouns own a singular and plural version, such as *desk – desks*, uncountable nouns have a single form, such as *air* NOT \**airs*. The words that come before and after nouns are determined by their countability: the indefinite article (*a, an*) comes before singular nouns; the plural inflection *-s* comes after plural nouns; and certain quantifiers, such as *much, a little*, can come before uncountable nouns. This is one of the major issues of Thai students when doing Thai to English translation. Thai learners are unfamiliar with articles, determiners, and inflections because Thai does not have them. As a result, they frequently use them incorrectly or omit them from sentences. For instance, they may say ‘*there is a girl in the store*’ rather than ‘*there is a girl in the store,*’ or ‘*there are many students in class*’ rather than ‘*there are many students in class.*’

3.1.1.5 Definiteness: all English speakers learn the difference between definite and indefinite nouns as soon as they begin learning the language. ‘*a, an*’ denotes indefiniteness, while ‘*the*’ denotes definiteness. In Thai, this linguistic classification does not exist. Due to the absence of articles and determiners in Thai, they are usually confused regarding definiteness and make frequent errors. For instance, they might say ‘*give me car’s key*’ or ‘*give me a car’s key*’ instead of ‘*give me the car’s key.*’

### 3.1.2 Verb

English verbs are significantly more complex than Thai verbs due to the numerous grammatical aspects involved.

3.1.2.1 Tense: Thai uses temporal expressions and circumstances to convey time, whereas English uses verb inflections to correspond to its twelve tenses. For instance,

‘เขาออกไปแล้ว,’ the character ‘แล้ว’ indicates that this sentence should use the present perfect tense, ‘he has left.’ The issue comes when students say English because they do not know which tense to use.

3.1.2.2 Aspect: *the verb to be + the present participle (-ing)* expresses the continuous or progressive aspect of English, whereas the *verb to have + the past participle* conveys the perfective aspect. While Thai has no fixed system, certain words and time expressions are used to demonstrate a variety of meanings based on the context.

3.1.2.3 Mood: a verb’s *mood* expresses how it should be deemed (e.g., as a fact, a command, a wish, an uncertainty). The modal auxiliaries can be used to convey mood in English. Similarly, in Thai, the mood is expressed through the use of auxiliaries and adverbs such as ‘*aat ja* (อาจจะ),’ ‘*doo meuan* (ดูเหมือน),’ or ‘*baang tee* (บางที),’ and the verb retains its form. The issue typically arises when working on L2 writing or L2 translation as English’s mood is more varied, mandatory, and complicated than Thai’s.

3.1.2.4 Voice: in the *voice*, a subject’s relationship to action is expressed, such as whether the subject is active or passive. The passive voice is occasionally used and is required to obscure the subject and focus on the object.

Thai does not use passive constructions; instead, Thai uses a variety of words to indicate that the subject is being acted upon. Which words to use is determined by the sentence’s meaning. If the subject is acted upon negatively, the term ‘*tuk* (ถูก)’ will be used. For instance, ‘*I am hit*’ (I *tuk* hit), but if you say ‘*I am promoted*,’ the word ‘*tuk*’ cannot be used. We must substitute another term, ‘*dai rub* (ได้รับ),’ which carries a positive connotation: ‘*I dai rub a promotion.*’ Although the terms ‘*tuk*’ and ‘*dai rub*’ both can be replaced with the same word ‘*get*’ in English, they are used differently in Thai.

3.1.2.5 Finite vs. non-finite: an English clause may contain only one finite verb, which must match the tense, voice, and other structural indicators. When a sentence has too many verbs, students may need to start over. However, because Thai uses serial verb construction, learners can arrange multiple verbs consecutively without needing to make them infinite or start a new line of thought. For instance, this sentence contains serial verb formation, ‘*เขาลุกไปเปิดหน้าต่าง.*’ When using, students must distinguish between finite and non-finite verbs, and it is at this point that they are most likely to make a mistake, translating ‘*he got up to open the window*’ as ‘*he gets up go open the window.*’

## 3.2. Distinct English and Thai constructions

### 3.2.1 Noun Phrase construction: *Determiner + Noun (English) vs. Noun (Thai)*

In English, a singular countable noun (except proper nouns) requires a determiner. Determiners also help distinguish indefinite from specific nouns. English uses determiners

that Thai does not, e.g., ‘a house’ in English, ‘บ้าน’ in Thai.

### 3.2.2 Noun Phrase construction: *complement part + main part (English) vs. main part + complement part (Thai)*

*A beautiful house* is a good example of a compliment coming before the main part in English. For example, rather than ‘*beautiful house,*’ Thais say ‘*house beautiful*’ instead.

### 3.2.3 Passive construction

It is named after the subject-referent in action phrases: the actor or active participant is often called the actor; the patient or passive participant is usually called the passive participant [21]. In English, passive constructions consist of *subject/passive participant + verb (to be) + past participle + (by noun phrase/actor or active participant)*. Unlike the Thai language, which is more dynamic, passive constructions require specific terminology (see Section 3.1.2.4).

### 3.2.4 Subject-oriented language (English) vs topic-oriented language (Thai)

While Thai is a topic-oriented language, English is a subject-oriented language. For example, in English, ‘*I went to the beach yesterday,*’ but in Thai, ‘*yesterday, I went to the beach* [19].’ Students typically say English by first thinking in Thai, which causes English sentences to sound odd.

### 3.2.5 Serial verb construction

Unlike English, where each finite clause can only contain one finite verb, Thai can use serial verb constructions without turning them non-finite or launching a new phrase (see Section 3.1.2.5).

Tiprachaban [23] describes the differences between English and Thai as follows.

## Orthography and punctuation

### *Spelling and writing*

In Thai, unlike English, there is no distinction between upper and lower case. Thai words are not divided by spaces and the spaces that do appear correlate to punctuation marks in English. Thai learners frequently make translation errors. For instance, ‘*I traveled to the netherlands.*’ They may fail to capitalize the ‘N’ in Netherlands while translating from Thai to English.

### *Punctuation*

Thai uses spaces instead of punctuation to indicate pauses between words. The Western punctuation marks in Thai books are redundant. Many learners use question marks when writing and translating in Thai, which is influenced by the L2 (English). The question mark is unnecessary in Thai. For example, ‘*have you had breakfast?*’ is translated to Thai as ‘คุณทานอาหารเช้าหรือยัง?’

## Grammar

Thai and English grammars are very different. In Thai, noun and verb pluralism is often unmarked, and when it is, it is indicated by adding specific structural words rather than inflection. For example, *birds* are called ‘นกหลายตัว (Back translation: *bird many bird*)’ in Thai. There are no tenses in Thai. Thai uses temporal words and contexts to show time. Let me demonstrate the past simple tense in English. ‘*I went to Karl’s last night.*’ In Thai, we say ‘*I go Karl’s last night.*’ *Last night* is important because it tells the reader that the event happened without changing the verb form. Thai lacks plural -s inflection but has some words for indicating noun plurality. Thai adjectives and adverbs can be verbs, but the Thai pronoun system is more complicated and different from the English system. Although the word order varies, Thai sentences typically follow a ‘*subject + verb + object*’ pattern. When the subject is clear, it is often omitted from Thai sentences. Not only the sentence subject that can be omitted but other elements in the sentence when the meaning is clear or the context provides the understanding. For example, say that two friends talk about a bag purchase, they already know that it is about the newly bought bag. In Thai, we can say ‘*I bought from the mall.*’ The personal pronoun functioning as the object that refers to the bag can be naturally omitted and the sentence is completely understood [24].

### *Auxiliaries; questions and negatives*

Thai has no auxiliary verbs.

1. In Thai, a sentence becomes a question by adding a question word and the word ‘*mhai*’ at the end. For example, the sentence ‘*you want to go to school*’ is affirmative, when we add the word ‘*mhai*’ at the end, the sentence becomes a question ‘*you want to go to school mhai* (= Do you want to go to school?).’ Unlike English, we do not end Thai sentences with a question mark (?). To translate ‘*will you go?*’ into Thai, remove the subject and add ‘*mhai*’ after ‘*will go*’.

2. In *When?, Why?, How?* questions, the question words *when*, *why*, and *how* appear at the beginning of the sentence in English; for example, ‘*when do you have lunch?*’ or ‘*why don’t you go to school?*’. In Thai, they can appear both at the beginning or at the end of the sentence; for instance, ‘*why you walked to school?*’, or ‘*you go how?*’ Both of the above-mentioned positions for the aforementioned question words are equally acceptable in Thai. Learners of Thai frequently fail to incorporate auxiliaries in phrases and mistake the usage of the verbs to do and to be. Regarding yes-no questions, the issue is the same: Thai learners frequently misuse the verbs to do and to be in questions. For instance, they ask ‘*are you wish to attend church?*’ rather than ‘*do you wish to attend church?*’

3. In Thai, negatives are formed by adding the negative word ‘*mai*’ before the verb.

There is occasionally disagreement over whether this word should be translated as no or not: *'she not go'*, *'she no go'* (Note: also the uninflected verb). This could be L1-influenced.

#### *Time, tense and aspect*

Thai verbs are uninflected. For instance, the single verb *'Khub'* (*'drive'* in English) encompasses not only *'drive'* and *'drives'*, but also *'drove'*, *'was driving'*, *'has driven'*, *'is driving'*, *'will drive'*, and *'would drive.'* Circumstances and situations typically exclude ambiguity. When there is a potential for misunderstanding, temporal references are frequently clarified with structural words. To avoid ambiguity, these terms are often inserted right before the verb. In a generic story, it is often sufficient to employ merely the verb without any pre-verb modifiers to convey meaning (Smith, 1987). The issue emerges when students use English since they are likely to make tense errors. For instance, if they need to express *'ฉันไม่เคยขับรถมาก่อน'*, the verb *'ขับ'* in Thai is uninflected, but in English, they must use tense to indicate time, and they do not know which tense to use.

#### *Articles*

This is problematic for Thai English learners because Thai lacks an article system. Inconsistency in using and omitting articles frequently lead to errors. For example, *'you are good girl'*, *'what the music you like.'* English has a definite article to refer to something specific, a single instance of something, or a previously specified noun (the). In addition, English utilizes indefinite articles (a/an) when referring to generic objects, introducing something for the first time, and describing a person's occupation, whereas Thai does not. This is one of the most difficult components for Thai English learners, as they do not know when or how to use articles.

#### *Adjectives and adverbs*

Unlike in English, where adjectives come before the noun or verb they modify, in Thai, they come after. They also function as verbs expressing the state of being (the Thai equivalent of *to be* is not used with adjectives as a copula). So, *'dekdee (good boy)'* can be a phrase (*a good boy*) or a sentence (*a boy is good*). The verb is frequently omitted in Thai learners' English sentences: *'this boy not good.'* In other words, adjectives can be used as verbs in Thai, as in *'car beautiful'* or *'food delicious.'* Students frequently omit the verb when speaking, writing, or translating in English.

In Thai, adjectival/adverbial pairs are not distinguished. Adjectives are frequently used by Thai learners as adverbs in Thai; for example, *'she dances beautiful'* instead of *'she dances beautifully'* or *'you speak English very good'* instead of *'you speak English very well.'* Also, Thai adjectives and adverbs are synonymous and can modify nouns, pronouns,

verbs, and adverbs/adverbials. When producing the L2, learners may struggle to identify which part of speech they are (adverbs or adjectives).

In English, the suffixes *-er* and *-est* are used for one- and two-syllable adjectives, respectively. Most Thai learners are unsure when to use the words *-er/-est*, *more than/ the most*, and how to incorporate them into sentences. Also, superlative rules for adjectives and adverbs differ slightly. Students learning L2 frequently make mistakes.

For example: *'This school is competitive more than that one.'* (the correct form: *this school is more competitive than that one.*)

### Nouns

Thai nouns lack gender, case, and singular/plural distinctions. Context usually indicates whether a noun is singular or plural. To be more precise, Thai uses *'pluraliser words'* that have a fixed position corresponding to the noun, or accurate numerical descriptions. The unmarked form of an English noun is commonly used when the plural form is correct, e.g. *'I have a lot of book.'* Many people fail to pluralize a noun after a number.

Numerical expressions are more complex than English and require a specialized noun classifier. In Thai, 'ten pens' and 'six rulers' would be written as [7]:

<i>'pen</i>	<i>ten</i>	<i>dam'</i>	( <i>'dam'</i> is the classifier of <i>'pen'</i> )
<i>'ruler</i>	<i>six</i>	<i>aun'</i>	( <i>'aun'</i> is the classifier of <i>'ruler'</i> )
(noun)	+ (number)	+ (classifier)	

### Pronouns

Thai's pronoun system is more complex than that of most European languages, with broader terms indicating both hierarchical and intimate relationships. In order to convey intimacy, intimate words and pronouns are frequently used as first and second-person pronouns. In contrast to English, which has only one first-person pronoun (*I*), Thai has more than fifteen. The suitability of each depends on the relationship, hierarchy (social status, age), and level of intimacy between the interlocutors. When speaking English, pronouns are not an issue because English has a simpler pronoun system than Thai, but they are when translating from English to Thai. When choosing pronouns for Thai-translated texts, students must exercise extreme caution.

Thai pronouns do not distinguish between subject and object forms, nor do they have possessive pronouns. Because possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns have similar forms, Thai students usually make mistakes when writing English: *'this isn't my bag; it's yours.'* The word *'of'* is optional in Thai and is frequently left out. It is referred to as *'my pencil'* in English and *'pencil of I'* or *'pencil I'* in Thai. Furthermore, because English and Thai possessive phrases are written differently, Thai learners are more likely to make mistakes

when using more complex expressions. The phrase ‘*my father’s brother*’ is written in Thai as ‘*brother of father of I.*’ The first Thai word is the last English word. As a result, when Thai students write or translate ‘*my father’s brother,*’ they frequently misinterpret it as ‘*my brother’s father.*’

#### *Prepositions*

Combinations of ‘*verb + preposition*’ or ‘*adjective + preposition*’ in English are translated into a single-word Thai verb. Thai students, for instance, may say ‘*John interests you*’ when they should say ‘*John is interested in you.*’ Thai-to-English translation causes more problems in the proposition. According to Thong-lam [25], temporal prepositions and prepositional phrases are the ones that learners translate erroneously more often than correctly. Collocations with temporal prepositions frequently cause confusion among pupils. For instance, the prepositional collocation for days in English is ‘*on,*’ as in ‘*on Friday,*’ whereas in Thai it is ‘*in*’ or has no translation. Because they translate directly from Thai, students commonly utilize the incorrect prepositional word or remove it while using English.

#### *Subordinate clauses*

In contrast to Thai, English includes relative pronouns for person, thing, place, and time, whereas Thai has only one: *ti* (ที่). Common errors in written English include ‘*the woman which I adored.*’ The correct reading is ‘*the woman who(m) I adored or the woman II adored.*’ As ‘*woman*’ is a person and ‘*whom*’ is the relative pronoun used to refer to a person or group of people as an object, it follows that ‘*whom*’ is the appropriate relative pronoun to use here. As Thai does not modify the tense of verbs, conditional phrases are also difficult to speak, write, and translate from Thai to English.

#### *Vocabulary*

Sanskrit, Pali, and Khmer have all influenced the Thai lexicon. Western European students, who can draw on their knowledge of Latin and Germanic roots, have an advantage over Thai students. As European languages have the same roots, many words in different European languages are similar so European learners can guess the meaning of words. Vocabulary is a major issue for Thai students when speaking, writing, reading, or translating.

These are some significant differences between English and Thai that contribute to errors and difficulties with second language acquisition.

Second language acquisition is classified by Slabakova [26] as follows: acquisition of (functional) morphology, syntax, mental lexicon, syntax-semantics interface, syntax-discourse, and semantics-pragmatics interfaces. According to Gass & Selinker [27], a second language learner must first master the target language’s ‘*grammar,*’ which includes sound systems, syntax, morphology, lexicon, semantics, and pragmatics. According to Krashen [28], a second

language can be learned naturally, and communicative competence trumps grammatical competence. Also, grammar is something that can be acquired naturally through communication.

However, in many countries where EFL students are not exposed to English communicative situations in daily life, they must learn the second language in class [29]. Because most teachers are unqualified and undertrained, they cannot teach in English [30]. Despite the emphasis on grammar in Thai English classes, students consistently make grammatical errors. Cross-linguistic influences are one of the error sources cited as a major impediment to second language acquisition. Language transfer (interference, negative transfer, L1 transfer) is a term used by Mitchell and Myles [31]. Given their tenacity and depth, behaviourist theorists of the 1950s and 1960s saw L1 'habits' as a major source of error and interference in L2 learning. Towell & Hawkins [32] define SLA as the transfer of linguistic features from L1 to L2. It appears to affect all levels of linguistics, including phonetics, phonology, syntax, morphology, lexicon, and discourse (the communicative use that sentences are put to).

In terms of phonology, Thai learners struggle with sounds that do not exist in Thai, such as a voiceless dental fricative [θ]. Because Thai lacks the [θ] sound, Thai learners typically pronounce 'think' [θɪŋk] as [tɪŋk]. In other areas, like morphology, before writing this article, I did an informal study of my students' writing and found that most L1 interference errors involved word order and morphological marks. Some SVO declarative clauses resemble English and Thai declarative clauses (subject-verb-object). '*She drinks milk,*' for example; in Thai, we say '*she drinks milk,*' but the smaller components differ, such as noun phrase order. In English, an adjective precedes a noun, whereas, in Thai, the noun precedes the adjective. Aside from the descriptive structure, the two languages have distinct parametric differences. When learning English grammar, Thai students frequently struggle with nouns and numbers. Because Thai does not recognize plurality or singularity, learners frequently omit the plural inflection -s after plural nouns. For example, instead of saying '*I ate three bananas,*' we say '*I ate banana three + classifier.*' This shows how L1 influences second language acquisition. Another obvious L1 influence is definiteness, which I have taught English to Thai students of all ages. Thai students frequently omit indefiniteness (*a, an*) and definiteness (*the*). Despite this, they consistently misplace or omit these lessons because Thai lacks this grammatical category. We say '*he sees a cat*' in English and '*he sees cat*' in Thai. Thai has specific terms for expressing definiteness. In Thai, we use the preposition '*of*' instead of the genitive '*'s*', so when English says '*my friend's car,*' we say '*car of friend of I*' in Thai. The '*of*' structure is the only one used in Thai, so learners may say '*my car's friend.*' This is problematic for Thai EFL learners, as L1 meddles with L2 acquisition.

Syntactically, L1 blocks L2 from constructing negative and interrogative clauses. Both languages have syntactic parameters that must be reset when learning English. Thai verbs

are simpler than English verbs; they lack tense, aspect, mood, and voice. Because negative and interrogative verbs and auxiliaries do not exist in Thai, morphological marks are not required. Thai uses words, temporal expressions, and context to convey these messages. In English, ‘*she doesn’t want a pet,*’ but in Thai, ‘*she not want a pet.*’ Due to the lack of an auxiliary in negative sentences, many students made this mistake. As previously stated, Thai constructions such as noun phrase construction and passive construction affect L2 learning. In the same way, we ask ‘*it is what?*’ in Thai and ‘*what is it?*’ in English. This parameter is easily reset. For example, Thai learners may say ‘*how he get(s) to work?*’ instead of ‘*how does he get to work?*’ This influence may not be enough to cause grammatically incorrect L2 output, but it causes the unusual L2, as a native speaker would not speak it that way.

And at last, serial verb construction has a significant impact on Thai learners’ second language acquisition. Unlike English verbs, Thai verbs are all finite, and the ability to sequence verbs is a distinctive feature of the Thai language. For example, in the English sentence ‘*Janie sits down to watch television,*’ a Thai speaker could say ‘*Janie sits down watch television.*’ In English, the verb ‘*watch*’ must be non-finite, but not in Thai. When Thai English learners create a sentence with a lot of verbs, the L1 influence seems to affect their performance and contribute to grammatically wrong L2.

Based on the diagnosis-based category, errors can be classified as intralingual or interlingual. An intralingual error, according to Richards and Schmidt [17], is caused by the improper or partial acquisition of the target language rather than language transfer. Intralingual errors occur when items in the target language influence each other.’ For example, combining the English structures ‘*she is sleeping*’ and ‘*She sleeps*’ yields the phrase ‘*She is sleeps.*’ Interlingual errors are caused by native language interference, language transfer, and cross-linguistic interference [18]. As an example, the incorrect French sentence ‘*Elle regarde les*’ was created rather than the correct French sentence ‘*Elle les regarde*’ (literally translated as ‘*She them sees*’). According to behavioral theories, prior knowledge interferes with language learning [33]. These theories emphasize that the more dissimilar the language structures are, the harder it is to learn an L2 pattern. Interlingual errors (interference/negative transfer/L1 transfer) were the most frequently made in students’ writing, according to Phetdannuea & Ngonkum [34]. Khumphee & Yodkamlue [35] discovered that over half of identified error types were caused by L1 interference, including pluralizing nouns, omitting punctuation, and incorrect sentence structure. Khumphee & Yodkamlue [35] classified all grammatical, lexical, and tense errors as L1 interference or interlingual errors. Like Phetdannuea & Ngonkum [34] and Khumphee & Yodkamlue (35), I assumed L1 interference or interlingual errors caused the errors I encountered while teaching university students.

Regarding behavioral theories, there is some disagreement about how L1 influences second language acquisition. As pointed out by some researchers [36-38], L1 interference or native language transfer only contributes a minor amount to language learning performance. There are also empirical studies to back up their claim. Angguni [39] discovered that intralingual errors were the most common source of errors in students' writing. According to Ullah & Sijono [40], who studied descriptive text errors at a private university in Sintang, intralingual errors accounted for 68.75% of errors and interlingual errors for 31.25%. Suetae and Yok [41] found that intralingual errors accounted for 77.6% of all errors, while interlingual errors accounted for 22.4%. Sari [33] studied interlingual and intralingual errors made by Indonesian SMP (Middle school), SMK (High school), and university students when writing narrative texts. SMK students made 30.26% interlingual and 69.74% intralingual errors. SMK made 35.78% interlingual and 64.22% intralingual errors, while university students made 9.79% interlingual and 90.21% intralingual. The majority of errors were intralingual at all three student levels. Utami [42] also studies error sources. She studied the sources of grammatical errors in translation between Indonesian and English and discovered that intralingual errors accounted for the majority of errors (1737, 76.65%) and interlingual errors (529, 23.35%).

Tiprachaban [23] studied interference errors in university students' translations using 69 Thai students. They were mostly at A1 and A2 on the CEFR. The researcher focused on linguistic errors in student translations and used James' error taxonomy [43] to categorize them. She also classified these errors into the diagnosis-based category to identify their sources. She expected students to make a lot of interference errors based on her teaching experience and previous research. Regardless, the analysis of 13,800 sentences revealed that intralingual errors outnumbered interlingual errors (interference, L1 transfer) in both groups of research participants. Intralingual errors totaled 29,029, compared to 2,042 interlingual errors. The study found that intralingual, not interlingual errors, caused most linguistic errors in translation. Many early 1970s theorists, including Dulay, Burt, & Krashen [44]; George [36]; Whitman & Jackson [37]; Larsen-Freeman [38], discovered that very few errors in English language learning are caused by interference or L1 transfer, in line with recent studies such as Suetae & Yok [41], Ullah & Sijono [40], Sari [18], Utami [42].

#### 4. Conclusion

Behavioral theories have long assumed that L1 has the greatest influence on second language acquisition. Nonetheless, numerous scholars and studies have shown that intralingual errors caused by inadequate target language knowledge are the primary impediment to second language acquisition, particularly linguistic competence. These findings suggest that

the primary impediment to second language acquisition may be the way students are taught. As previously stated, most Thai students do not have daily access to L2 environments, so they learn it primarily in class. As a result, we may need to change the way we teach students. In other words, the school should have English signs and establish daily English-speaking hours, to name a few measures. To provide students with the opportunity to converse with foreigners, foreign teachers should be provided at no additional cost in all schools across the nation.

Even though Thai university students have been studying English for over ten years, they still make significant intralingual errors. In other words, they lack the grammar knowledge to effectively produce English. Other factors influencing Thai learners' L2 learning include their learning environment, opportunities to use the language in daily life, and access to L2 source materials. Even though English is taught as a second language in schools, it is considered a foreign language in Thailand because most people do not (and cannot) communicate in English. Although English is taught throughout primary and secondary schools, few Thais are fluent in it [6]. The fact that Thai students still struggle with English after more than a decade of study should prompt us to rethink our methods by changing from grammar-instructed methods to communicative instruction.

Saville-Troike [1] contends that children will never acquire language-specific knowledge unless they are surrounded by it. While I believe classroom instruction can improve linguistic competence, I believe learners must be exposed to facilitating conditions to effectively attain the language. For example, students get to use the language in real situations, with foreigners. Nonetheless, both the learning environment and instructional methods are ineffective in English education in Thailand. The failure of English education in Thailand may be due to decades of poor knowledge delivery, rather than L1 influences. As you can see, even with a heavy emphasis on grammar, Thai students retain a low level of linguistic competence. Moreover, the learning environments in Thailand do not promote the acquisition of a second language. In this regard, I completely agree that learners should be able to use the second language in everyday life to better adapt academic knowledge and thus acquire the second language.

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