

Thai EFL University Students' Writing in the Digital Age: Error Analysis Revisited

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Article information

Abstract

Writing is often considered the most difficult language skill for EFL learners due to its persistent grammatical and lexical challenges. Although tools such as Google Translate and ChatGPT are increasingly used, concerns persist regarding overreliance and reduced learner autonomy. This study investigated the grammatical errors and writing strategies among Thai EFL university students, with particular attention to the impact of digital tools. Data were collected from 70 undergraduates through in-class writing and a questionnaire on writing attitudes, strategies, and resources. Errors were analyzed using a five-stage error analysis framework. The results revealed that mechanical errors, especially punctuation and capitalization, were most frequent, followed by word- and sentence-level errors. These were attributed to both interlingual and intralingual interference. Further, the survey findings showed that while the students moderately enjoyed writing, they recognized its value beyond exams. Digital tools were widely used and viewed as helpful for improving structure and coherence, yet the study highlighted the need for teacher guidance in order to ensure responsible use. The findings have suggested that effective writing instruction should combine explicit grammar teaching, written corrective feedback, and the guided use of generative AI tools in order to improve writing accuracy and to foster learner independence.