



**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ARTICLE USAGE OF  
THAI ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS**

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**TITLE** AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ARTICLE USAGE OF THAI ENGLISH  
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS

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Patcharin Mungmay  
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### บทคัดย่อ

ชื่อเรื่อง : การสำรวจการใช้ Articles ของนักเรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษ  
เป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ  
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การศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อสำรวจประเภทของข้อผิดพลาดในการใช้ articles ในภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ และหาแหล่งที่มาของข้อผิดพลาดนั้น ตัวอย่างประชากรที่ใช้ในการศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้ คือ นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 จำนวน 2 ห้องเรียนของโรงเรียนพยุหวิทยา จังหวัดศรีสะเกษ ที่เรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษพื้นฐาน ภาคเรียนที่ 2 ปีการศึกษา 2557 จำนวน 52 คน โดยนักเรียนทั้งหมดอยู่ในกลุ่มอ่อน เนื่องจากมีคะแนนโอเน็ตน้อยกว่า 40 คะแนน จาก 100 คะแนน ประชากรทำแบบทดสอบโดยการเติม articles ในช่องว่าง จำนวน 35 ข้อ ซึ่งต้องใช้กฎการใช้ articles พื้นฐาน

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ข้อผิดพลาดในการใช้ articles ที่นักเรียนมีมากที่สุด คือ การเติม หรือการใช้ articles ในตำแหน่งที่ไม่ต้องใช้ articles ข้อผิดพลาดรองลงมาคือการแทน หรือการใช้ a/an แทน the หรือใช้ the แทน a/an และข้อผิดพลาดที่น้อยที่สุดคือ การละ หรือการไม่ใช้ articles ในตำแหน่งที่ต้องมี articles ผลการศึกษายังแสดงให้เห็นว่า นักเรียนใช้ the ผิดมากที่สุด โดยนักเรียนมีแนวโน้มที่จะใช้ the ในบริบทที่ไม่ควรใช้ หรือเมื่อนักเรียนไม่รู้ว่า articles ตัวใดถูกต้อง ผลการศึกษายังแสดงให้เห็นว่าปัจจัยภายนอกร้อยละ 86.42 มีผลต่อการใช้อarticles มากกว่าปัจจัยภายในร้อยละ 13.58 นั่นคือ ไม่ใช่เฉพาะภาษาที่หนึ่งเท่านั้นที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการเรียนรู้ articles ของนักเรียน แต่ความซับซ้อนของภาษาที่สอง การขาดการอธิบายที่ชัดเจน และระดับความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนยังส่งผลต่อการเรียนรู้ของนักเรียนอีกด้วย

## ABSTRACT

TITLE : AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ARTICLE USAGE OF  
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AUTHOR : PATCHARIN MUNGMAI  
DEGREE : MASTER OF ARTS  
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KEYWORDS : ARTICLES, OMISSION, ADDITION, SUBSTITUTION

This study investigated the types of errors that Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students made in the use of articles in English and examined the possible sources that influenced these errors. The participants were 52 EFL students from 2 classes in Matthayomsuksa 6 at Phayuwittaya School, Sisaket, Thailand studying the Fundamental English course during the second semester of the 2014 academic year. They were low proficiency learners based on their O-net scores of less than 40 out of 100. The participants were required to complete a gap-filling test consisting of 35 blanks which involved basic usage of English articles.

The results of this study revealed that errors of addition of articles were found most frequently followed by substitution errors. Omission errors were found to be the least frequent type of error. The results also indicated that the participants incorrectly used the definite article 'the' mostly, using it in inappropriate places when they did not know which article was correct. The results also showed that intra-lingual errors were more frequent (86.42%) than inter-lingual errors (13.58%). The study believed that it was not only the students' first language that influenced their acquisition of the correct use of articles but also the complexity of the target language, lack of clear explanations, and their proficiency may have affected their acquisition.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter includes the study's rationale, research questions, purposes, significance, scope, and definitions of key terms used.

### **1.1 Rationale**

The correct use of articles is one of the most difficult aspects in learning English grammar (Swan, 1995), especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners whose first languages, such as Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Bantu and Farsi, do not use articles. This results in many non-native English speakers being concerned about their correct use (Chanthop, 2007). A number of researchers – Alhaysony (2012), Berry (1991), Brown (1973), Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman (1983), Khansir and Shahhoseiny (2013), Pica (1983), Standwell (1997) and Yoon (1993) investigated the use of articles by EFL learners and tried to identify problems and solutions.

Articles are important because they are among the most frequently used words in English (Thornbury, 2006) and inappropriate use may negatively affect communication (Berry, 1991). Articles are used to indicate references to items known (definite) or not known (indefinite) to the speaker/writer and/or listener/reader (Swan, 1995). They also show references to items in general or in particular, and whether a noun is countable or uncountable (Alexander, 1988).

Articles are not used in the Thai language and Thai EFL students seem to have problems using them in English (Ellis, 1997). Poor teacher knowledge about types of article errors, unclear teacher explanations, and confusing presentations by grammar books of the many rules related to articles may cause additional difficulties. These difficulties may affect communication and students' test scores.

Based on the researcher's teaching experience, Thai EFL students at Phayuwittaya School had problems with the use of articles and most students could not use them correctly. No previous systematic investigation of article use of Thai EFL students at Phayuwittaya School had been done, so it was anticipated that this study would help to

promote an understanding of students' problems and an improvement in teaching and learning.

The study investigated the types of article errors made by 52 Thai EFL learners in Mathayomsuksa 6 at Phayuwittaya School in the 2014 academic year. In addition, it also identified the possible sources of these errors.

## **1.2 Research questions**

The research questions of this study were:

1.2.1 What are the types of article errors that Thai EFL students make?

1.2.2 What are the possible sources of these errors?

## **1.3 Purposes of the study**

The purposes of the study were to investigate the types of article errors that Thai EFL students made and identify the sources of these errors.

## **1.3 Significance of the study**

It was anticipated that the results of the study will help teachers to correct their students' use of articles errors and to understand the sources of these errors.

## **1.5 Scope of the study**

The study investigated the use of articles (a/an, the, and zero article) in a gap-filling test involving 52 EFL students in Matthayomsuksa 6 at Phayuwittaya School, Sisaket, Thailand. The students' use of articles were tested and analyzed.

## **1.6 Definitions of key terms**

Seven key terms were used in the research. Their definitions are:

**1.6.1 Articles** are the definite article (**the**), and the indefinite articles (**a/an, and zero article**).

**1.6.2 Omission** refers to the leaving out of an article that is required in a well-formed sentence in the target language.

**1.6.3 Addition** refers to the presence of an article not required in a well-formed sentence in the target language.

**1.6.4 Substitution** refers to the use of the definite article (**the**) in a sentence that requires the indefinite article (**a/an**) or vice versa.

**1.6.5 Inter-lingual** refers to errors which are caused by interference of the learners' first language (L1).

**1.6.6 Intra-lingual** refers to errors which have nothing to do with L1 interference.

**1.6.7 Basic uses of articles** refer to the use of indefinite and definite articles that can be explained by rules. That is, the indefinite articles '*a/an*' can be used to talk about one particular person, animal, or thing when the listener/reader or the speaker/writer does not know which one is referred to, or when it does not matter which one is referred to. The *zero article*, on the other hand, is used with a plural countable noun or an uncountable noun of the same conditions as '*a/an*'.

The definite article '*the*' can be used with singular countable, plural countable and uncountable nouns (which are always singular). '*The*' is used when reference is made to things that are known to the speaker/writer/listener/reader.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is a review of literature relevant to Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis, English and Thai article systems, the difficulties of the acquisition of the correct use of articles, and previous studies about types and sources of errors and ways that teachers can remedy incorrect use.

#### **2.1 Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis**

There are many studies that have been conducted to account for the process of L2 acquisition in many languages around the world. A lot were based on either the Contrastive or Error Analysis approaches.

##### **2.1.1 Contrastive Analysis**

Contrastive Analysis (CA) identifies difficulties of language acquisition by comparing two languages to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second language learning situation (Gass & Selinker, 2008). CA is rooted in behaviorism (habit formation) and structuralism (Magnan, 1983). It is used to predict errors that learners make by identifying the linguistic differences between their first language and the target language (Ellis, 1994; Mourtaga, 2004). If the two languages are similar, learning difficulties are not expected. In contrast, if they are different, then learning difficulties are expected. Lado (1957) stated that the greater the difference, the greater the expectation of difficulty.

##### **2.1.2 Error Analysis**

Error Analysis (EA) is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on errors committed by learners in their speech and writing (AbiSamara, 2003; Brown, 2000; Crystal, 1999; Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005; Magnan, 1983). It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language and within that language itself (Corder, 1967). The process of EA includes collecting, identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating learner errors (Corder, 1974; Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

According to Corder (1967), EA has two objectives, to understand what and how a learner learns when he/she studies an L2 and to enable the learner to learn more efficiently by discovering the rules of the target language. Brown (1994) stated that EA emphasizes the significance of errors in the learners' inter-language system (a language intermediate between the native and the target language). In addition, EA has three significant purposes, to find out the learner's level of language proficiency, to obtain information about common difficulties in language learning, and to find out how people learn a language (Sercombe, 2000).

Whereas CA looks at only the learners' native and target languages, EA provides a methodology for describing and explaining the errors committed by learners of L2.

## 2.2 English Article System

### 2.2.1 Types of English Articles

There are two types of articles in English, indefinite and definite.

#### 2.2.1.1 Indefinite Articles (a/an, zero)

The indefinite articles are determiners '*a/an*' that introduce a noun phrase and imply that the thing referred to is non-specific (as in *I want a pen*). Typically, indefinite articles are used to introduce new concepts into a discourse (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

The indefinite articles '*a/an*' can be used to talk about one particular person, animal, or thing when the listener or reader does not know which one is referred to (as in *She bought me a book; He went to a public school*). '*A/an*' can be used only with a singular countable noun. For example;

My brother's going out with **a French girl**.

(The listener does not know which particular French girl is referred to.)

She lives in **a nice big house**.

Could you lend me **a pen**?

*Zero article*, on the other hand, is used with a plural countable noun or an uncountable noun. For example;

**Children** usually start walking at around one year old.

**Oil** has nearly doubled in price recently.

#### 2.2.1.2 Definite Article (the)

The definite article '*the*' is a determiner that introduces a noun phrase and refers to something that has already been mentioned, is common knowledge, and/or is about to be defined (as in *the book on the table*; *the art of government*; *the famous public school in Berkshire*) (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

The definite article '*the*' can be used with singular countable, plural countable, and uncountable nouns (which are always singular). '*The*' is used when reference is made to things that are known to the speaker/writer/listener/reader. For example;

Did you lock **the car**?

(The listener knows which car is referred to.)

Have you fed **the dogs**?

(The listener obviously knows which dogs are referred to.)

The listener/reader may know which one(s) is referred to because:

A it/they has/have been mentioned before

She's got two children: **a boy and a girl**. **The boy's** fourteen and **the girl's** eight.

B specific reference is made of the one(s) mentioned

Who's **the girl over there with John**?

Tell Pat **the story about John and Susie**.

C it is clear from the situation which one(s) is (are) referred to

Could you close **the door**? (Only one door is open.)

Ann's in **the kitchen**.

Did you enjoy **the party**?

#### 2.2.2 Use of English Articles

Many linguists suggested the basic uses of articles as follows:

'*The*' is used with *specific* nouns – nouns do not refer to a general category, but to one particular thing (or group of things) known to the speaker/writer and listener/reader, singular and plural countable nouns, and uncountable nouns. '*A/an*' is used with *non-specific* nouns – nouns refer to a general category, an entire category of identical things, or a representative member of a category (*ex. a tree*) – in a singular

countable form, while [ $\emptyset$ ]*zero article* is used with non-specific nouns in the plural, proper nouns, and non-countable nouns, such as [ $\emptyset$ ]rice and [ $\emptyset$ ]water (Quirk, 1972; Quirk & Greenbaum, 1978).

Brown (1973) showed a way of visualizing the interaction between the speaker/writer and listener /reader with regard to article usage of non-generic common nouns in English:

		Speaker/writer	
		Specific referent	Non-specific referent
Listener/ reader	Specific referent	Definite: Can I have <b>the</b> car?	Indefinite: I heard you once wrote <b>an</b> article on X.
	Nonspecific referent	Indefinite: I saw <b>a</b> funny- looking dog today.	Indefinite: We did not know that John bought <b>a</b> car.

Brown's matrix shows that the definite article '*the*' is used only when the noun referred to has a specific referent for both the speaker/writer/listener/reader. If the noun did not have a specific referent for the speaker/writer/listener/reader, the indefinite article '*a/an*' is used. Hawkins (1978) stated the speaker/writer must evaluate the background of the listener/reader to judge which article to use.

'*The*' can be used with singular countable, plural countable, and uncountable nouns, and normally has a definite reference; that is, the person, animal, or thing referred to is assumed to be known both to the speaker/writer and listener/reader, while '*a/an*' and *zero article* have an indefinite meaning; that is, the person, animal, or thing referred to may be not known to the listener/reader and/or the speaker/writer as well. They are also used to show that what is being talked/written about is general, as in [ $\emptyset$ ] *Apples* are good for you but [ $\emptyset$ ]*sugar* is not. '*A/an*' can be used only with a singular countable noun, and *zero article* is put in front of a plural countable noun or an uncountable noun.

Seubsunk (1996) simplified the words and proposed the concept of article usage to help learners have better comprehension of article usage in the table below:

		Speaker/writer	
		Known	Unknown
Listener/ reader	Known	<b>The:</b> Can I have the car?	<b>A/An/Ø:</b> I heard you once wrote an article on X.
	Unknown	<b>A/An/Ø:</b> I saw a funny-looking dog today.	<b>A/An/Ø:</b> We did not know that John bought a car.

In this table, the definite article '*the*' is used when both the speaker/writer/ listener/reader know the referent denoted by the noun. In contrast, the indefinite article (*a/an/Ø*) is used when the referent of the noun is not known by both the speaker/writer/listener/reader.

Besides the rules just presented, there are some special rules and exceptions that cause difficulties for learners in the appropriate use of articles (these uses of articles are not included in this study).

#### 2.2.2.1 Use of A/An

1) *A/An* is used after a copular verb or to classify people or things to say what class, group, or type they belong to (Alexander, 1988; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Swan, 1995), for example:

Carla is *an engineer*. My father is *a farmer*.

She is *an American*. He is *a Thai*.

2) *A* is used with Mr/Miss/Mrs + surname to show that the speaker does not know that person or that person is strange in the eyes of the speaker /writer (Kunprasert, 1997; Tiewwatanakul, 2003), for example:

*A Mr John* has called to see you.

*A Mrs Allen* will come to see you tomorrow.

#### 2.2.2.2 Use of *The*

1) *The* is used with a number of expressions referring to the physical environment – the world around and its climate – or to other common features of people's lives. The use of *the* suggests that everybody is familiar with what we are talking about (Alexander, 1988; Swan, 1995), for example:

Do you prefer *the town* or *the country*?

My wife likes *the seaside*, but I prefer *the mountain*.



I love listening to *the wind*.

2) *The* is used after a noun to make it clear that the person referred to is the well-known one. (Alexander, 1988; Swan, 1995) , for example:

She married Richard Burton, *the actor*.

I'd like you to meet Cathy Parker, *the novelist*.

3) *The* is used with adjectives which are used like nouns to classify types of people (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

the old	the young	the sick	the blind
the poor	the rich	the Japanese	the dead

4) *The* is used with the names of languages that contain the word 'language' (Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

*The Spanish language* is easy to study.

Jane can speak *the Chinese language* very well.

5) *The* is used with geographical positions (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

the South	the Middle West	the Orient
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6) *The* is used with times, seasons, and places (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

in <i>the morning/afternoon/evening</i>	in <i>the middle</i>
at <i>the beginning of the spring at the back</i>	

7) *The* is used with kinds of place names such as seas, mountain groups, island groups, rivers, deserts, most hotels, most cinemas and theatres, most museums and art galleries, places whose name is (or contains) a common noun like republic, state, union. (Murphy, 1997; Swan, 1995; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

<i>the Atlantic</i>	<i>the Himalayas</i>
<i>the West Indies</i>	<i>the Rhine</i>
<i>the Sahara</i>	<i>the Grand Hotel</i>
<i>the Odeon; the Playhouse</i>	<i>the British Museum; the Frick</i>
<i>the United Kingdom</i>	<i>the United States</i>
<i>the People's Republic of China</i>	

Note also *the Netherlands*, and its seat of government *The Hague*.

In American English, *the* is often used in the titles of principal public buildings and organizations of a town (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Swan, 1995; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

<i>The San Diego Zoo</i>	<i>The Detroit City Council</i>
<i>the Brooklyn Bridge</i>	<i>the Hudson Tunnel</i>
<i>the Eiffel Tower</i>	

8) *The* is used with titles that contain such words as Empire or Dynasty (Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

<i>the Ottoman Empire</i>	<i>the Ming Dynasty</i>
<i>the British Commonwealth of Nations</i>	

9) *The* is used with daily newspapers (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
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10) *The* is used with the names of scientific instruments and inventions, and musical instruments (Swan, 1995), for example:

Life world be quieter without *the telephone*.  
*The violin* is more difficult than *the piano*.

#### 2.2.2.3 Omission of articles or zero articles

1) With names of subjects in general such as chemistry, history, and music:

We are learning *English*.

I love pop *music*.

2) With sports and/or entertainment such as tennis, golf, dancing, and singing:

They like to play *golf*.

Are you enjoying *dancing*?

3) With meals such as breakfast, lunch, dinner, and supper (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewratanakul, 2003), for example:

We have *breakfast* at 7 o'clock.

Did you have *lunch*?

4) With seasons such as spring, summer, and winter (Jenpanas et al, 1994; Teng-am-nuey et al, 1994; Tiewwatanakul, 2003), for example:

I like *spring* more than *summer*.

### 2.2.3 Importance of Articles in Communication

Articles are important in communication because they are used to show:

2.2.3.1 whether reference is being made to things that are known to the speaker/listener and/or writer/reader (definite) or not known to them (indefinite)

### 2.2.3.2 whether reference is being made to things in general or particular

### 2.2.3.3 whether a noun is countable or uncountable

Moreover, absence and/or misuse of articles may make a sentence sound and/or look unusual to native speakers. For example:

Dog ate my shoe.

Although the meaning of this sentence is quite clear, it is grammatically incorrect English because it lacks an article, and the sentence can be confusing.

*A dog ate my shoe. (an unfamiliar dog)*

*The dog ate my shoe. (a familiar dog)*

In the previous two sentences, different articles are used and the lack of articles may confuse the listeners/readers about which dog is being referred to and communication may not be so successful. The correct use of articles helps the listeners/readers to understand what is being referred to.

### 2.3 Lack of an Article System in Thai

There are no articles in Thai; repetition of a noun in later sentences is used to show the relation between the words used. Demonstrative determiners – this, that, these, those – sometimes are used to specify nouns, and often an adjective or a relative clause is used. However, most references in Thai may have situational or linguistic contexts to indicate definiteness. For example;

A      Thai: ฉัน ซื้อ รถยนต์ ใหม่ เมื่อ ยาน      = I bought a **new car** yesterday.  
              (chan sue rot yon mai mua wa:n)

I buy **car** new yesterday.

B Thai: รถยนต์ ที่ ฉัน ซื้อ มา มี สี แดง = **The car** I bought is red.

(rot yon thi: chan sue ma: mi: si: dæŋ)

**Car *that I buy*** has color red

C Thai: ฉัน ได้ ย้าย มา อยู่ ที่ บ้าน ใหม่ แล้ว = I have moved into a **new house**.

(chan dai yai ma: yu: thi: ba:n laŋ mai læw)

I moved live at **house** new already

D Thai: บ้าน ใหม่ นี้ พ่อ ฉัน ซื้อ ให้ = My father bought me **the house**.

(ba:n laŋ ni: pə: chan sue hai)

**House *this*** father my buy give

In the examples, the word 'car' occurs for the first time in A. When it is referred to again, the word 'car' followed by a relative clause is used in B to show the relation between the old and new information. For C and D, the word 'house' in D is specified by the use of the demonstrative 'this'.

## 2.4 Difficulties in the Acquisition of the Correct Use of Articles

There are various factors that make the acquisition of the correct use of articles problematic for EFL learners.

### 2.4.1 First Language Transfer

The language transfer theory states that differences between the target language and L1 result in interference or negative transfer, and similarities result in positive transfer. Thus, L1 can either impede or facilitate the acquisition of L2 (Ellis, 2002). It appears that the acquisition of English articles (*a/ an, the, and zero article*) depends on whether or not they occur in the learner's first language (Brown, 2001; Burton, 1976; Connor, 1996; Lado, 1957; Master, 1995). Therefore, it is the negative transfer that impedes the article acquisition.

### 2.4.2 Perceptions of Appropriateness of Using Articles

It seems to be difficult for EFL learners as speakers/writers to judge which article to use and, as a result, they tend to use the article that they 'feel' most appropriate. This feeling depends on the perceptions of articles they receive from textbooks (Butler, 2002). They use 'a' with the first mention of a singular countable

noun beginning with a consonant sound, '*a*' with the first mention of a singular countable noun beginning with a vowel sound, and '*the*' with the second mention, for example:

(She's got two children: **a boy and a girl**. **The boy's** fourteen and **the girl's** eight.)

The number of errors made by non-native speakers in the use of articles is high and most native speakers are unable to give clear explanations of their use (Celce-Murcia & Larsen Freeman, 1983; Hultforrs, 1986; Master, 1995; Pica, 1983; Standwell, 1997).

### 2.4.3 Confusion between Countable and Non-countable Nouns

Yoon (1993) found inter-language variations in the use of indefinite and zero articles. Non-native speakers may have different perceptions from native speakers of what are countable and non-countable nouns, and that may influence their use of the indefinite *a/an* and *zero articles* in particular contexts. For example, the word '*suitcase*' is a countable noun while the word '*luggage*,' semantically similar to it, is an uncountable noun. Therefore, non-native speakers may use '*a luggage*' or '*luggages*.'

## 2.5 Previous Studies

Many researchers investigated the article usage of EFL learners, focusing on types of errors, sources of errors, and activities to treat errors effectively.

For types of errors, Alhaysony (2012), Bukhari and Hussain (2011), and Smith (2001), among others, found that omission was the error most frequently made by EFL learners. The omission of the indefinite article '*a*' with singular and plural countable nouns was the most common. In contrast the omission of the indefinite article '*a*' was the least frequent error. The indefinite article was the most problematic as learners usually replaced indefinite articles with definite ones and vice versa. Khansir and Shahhoseiny (2013) studied written errors of Iranian EFL pre-university learners and found that the omission of the definite article '*the*' was the most common error.

Although omission was the most frequent error, there were some differences between the results of several studies. Alhaysony (2012) looked at other errors and found that addition errors were the second most common error. The definite article

*'the'* was the most frequently added. Additionally, the author found that substitutions were the least frequent. Bukhari and Hussain (2011) and Snape (2005) found substitution or confusion with examples of indefinite articles being used for definite ones and vice versa as the second common error. Furthermore, they stated that addition or insertion (unnecessary use of articles) was the least common error.

As for sources of errors, many researchers (AbiSamra, 2003; Bataineh, 2005; Khansir and Shahhoseiny, 2013; Mizuno, 1999; Snape, 2005; Wang, 2003) claimed that L1 interference strongly influenced the process of the correct acquisition of the use of articles in L2. In other words, if learners' first language was similar to the target language, it helped learners to acquire L2 better than if both L1 and L2 were different. Khansir and Shahhoseiny (2013) claimed that the complexity of the English language and learners' incomplete knowledge or lack of certain structures in English were the sources of errors. These may have caused learners to be confused with some rules in English, especially when they have learned many complex rules. They were unable to acquire the rules completely and that caused them to misuse the target language.

Brown (1994) and Connor (1996) classified errors into two categories, inter-lingual transfer and intra-lingual transfer. Inter-lingual transfer errors are those caused by the interference of the learners' L1 as the learners' native language directly or indirectly affects the new language, especially in the early stage of learning L2. Intra-lingual errors may be caused by inadequate learning, difficulties inherent in the L2 itself, faulty teaching, confused thinking, or lack of contrast of both languages (Ho, 1973). Richards (1971, cited in Darus & Ching, 2009) defined the causes of intra-lingual errors, highlighting ignorance of grammar rules, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized, developmental errors (when learners tried to build up a hypothesis about English from limited experience of it in the classroom or from a textbook), and faulty generalization.

In another study, Butler (2002) examined the acquisition of the English article system by Japanese learners with varying levels of proficiency and found that the higher proficiency level students achieved better usage compared to the lower proficiency learners who were strongly influenced by sets of rules that they received from teachers and textbooks. The low proficiency learners may receive many rules

from teachers and textbooks leading to confusion to achieve the rules, while the high proficiency learners understood the rules better.

Ways to treat errors effectively have been proposed by many researchers. Mizuno (1999) suggested that teachers teach the definite article first because it is most common and general to the learners' background knowledge and the most frequently used. Teachers also need to give more attention to the use of the zero article, the pragmatic-semantic domain (to see the meaning of communication in contexts, not only from sentences), expose learners to authentic, meaningful English and comprehension activities, and present the core meaning of each article in comparison with L1. AbiSamra (2003) and Alhaysony (2012) recommended that to reduce errors, learners required exposure to English in real situations, at home and outside. Also, teachers needed to teach the rules and conventions of writing more effectively. Chantop (2007) suggested that using the concepts of generic and assumed shared and non-shared knowledge of the referent in the English classroom could help students to use articles more correctly. He also proposed that teachers should avoid many and confusing terms or rules of articles. Jayasundara and Premarathana (2011) stated that teachers must discover new ways of creative teaching and design interesting grammar games to make students familiar with the rules subconsciously in the primary stage of L2 learning. Further, to enable students to write more accurately, they needed more practice of reading and thinking in English, especially exposing them to English newspapers. They believed that this approach guided readers to use the language correctly. Khansir and Shahhoseiny (2013) suggested that teachers should concentrate on their students' most common errors and use good methods and techniques to increase their students' competent knowledge of English and prepare exercises related to the problematic areas of the target language.

The above discussion reveals that EFL learners found the correct use of indefinite articles difficult to acquire. Correct article usage is problematic for EFL learners due to many factors, especially L1 interference. It is, therefore, necessary to know the students' problems so that the teacher is able to find appropriate methods of teaching and learning.

There are several relevant studies about the use of articles that showed different results to this research. There has been no study conducted with EFL learners in the

researcher's school, Phayuwittaya School, so the researcher took the opportunity to investigate the use of English articles by 52 students from Matthayomsuksa 6 at the school. The study focused on three aspects, types of errors, possible sources of errors, and activities to treat errors effectively.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research methodology used in the study and includes descriptions of the participants, instruments, research procedures, and data analysis.

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants in the study were 52 EFL students from 2 classes in Matthayomsuksa 6 at Phayuwittaya School, Sisaket, Thailand studying the *Fundamental English* course during the second semester of the 2014 academic year. They were low proficiency learners based on their O-net scores of less than 40 out of 100.

#### 3.2 Instrument

The instrument that was used in the study was a **gap-filling test** consisting of 35 blanks to be completed by the students. There were three parts in the test: Part I (items 1 – 18) included sentence level items, and Part II (items 19 – 26) and Part III (items 27 – 35) included essay level items. The distribution of these items in regard to the types of articles was as follows: *a* (5 items), *an* (5 items), *zero article* for an uncountable noun (5 items), *zero article* for a plural noun (5 items), *the* for an uncountable noun (5 items), *the* for a singular noun (5 items), and *the* for a plural noun (5 items) (see Appendix A).

#### 3.3 Research Procedures

The study was conducted in the second semester of the 2014 academic year. The 52 EFL participants took two hours to complete the gap-filling test. They were allowed to use dictionaries and ask the teacher if they did not know any word meanings. The students were also told the noun types with regard to their countability of all target nouns used in the test. These were provided to eliminate some factors that may influence the results of the study. A list of vocabulary was provided to make sure

that the students knew which word was a countable or an uncountable noun (see Appendix B). The researcher then analyzed the results of the test to determine what they could do (correct use of articles) and could not (incorrect use of articles). The errors were classified into three categories, substitution (*a/an* for *the* or vice versa), omission, and addition.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher classified the errors in the gap-filling test according to the Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) into errors of substitution, omission, or addition, recording the frequency of each type and calculating the percentage of the total. Furthermore, students' errors were classified into inter-lingual (errors caused by L1 interference) and intra-lingual (errors which had nothing to do with L1 interference) according to their possible sources, and the numbers of these errors were recorded (see Appendix C). This analysis involved the use of two methods, contrastive analysis to identify inter-lingual errors and errors analysis to identify intra-lingual errors. Omission errors were identified as inter-lingual because of the lack of an article system in the Thai language. Substitution and addition errors were classified as intra-lingual.

Totals for each article error type were out of 260 (52 students and 5 items of each type of articles). Totals for omission errors and substitution errors were out of 1300 (*a/an*, and *the* for three noun types). Totals for addition errors were out of 520 (only addition for plural nouns and uncountable nouns). The total number of errors was out of 1820 (52 students and 35 items). After recording the numbers of errors and their possible sources, the data were changed into percentages.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the study.

#### 4.1 Results

The researcher followed the steps of collecting, identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating learner errors to identify the types of article errors made by Thai EFL students and the possible sources of these errors using the gap-filling test consisting of 35 blanks of basic usage of English articles.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher classified errors according to the Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) into errors of substitution, omission, or addition, and to their inter-lingual and intra-lingual sources.

##### 4.1.1 Types of Errors

**Table 1 Numbers of Errors according to SST**

Error type	a	an	the			zero		Total	Full scores	% of 'Total'
			sin	plu	unc	plu	unc			
Omission	19	39	18	14	64	NA	NA	154	1,300	11.85
Addition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	237	177	414	520	79.62
Substitution	105	107	161	103	90	NA	NA	566	1,300	43.54
Error total (out of 260)	124	146	179	117	154	237	177	1,134	1,820	62.31

**Table 2 Percentage of Each Error Type**

Error type	'a' %	'an' %	'the' %			'zero' %	
			sin	plu	unc	plu	unc
Omission	12.34	25.32	11.69	9.09	41.56	NA	NA
Addition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	57.25	42.75
Substitution	18.55	18.90	28.45	18.20	15.90	NA	NA

The SST as shown in Table 1 comprises three types of errors of the article use. The overall numbers of errors made by Thai EFL learners were 1,134 out of 1820. Tables 1 and 2 show clearly that addition errors were the main type of error (414 out of 520 – 79.62%).

Substitution was the second most common (566 out of 1300 – 43.54%). The maximum errors observed were the substitution of the definite article '*the*' for the indefinite articles '*a*' or '*an*' for singular nouns. In this sub-category, the number of the participants' errors was 161 out of 566 (28.45%). The minimum number of substitution errors was the use of the definite article '*the*' for uncountable nouns (90 out of 566 – 15.90%).

Omission errors were the least common (11.85%). Table 1 shows that the participants omitted the definite article '*the*' for uncountable nouns more frequently than for other articles (64 out of 154). The omission of the indefinite article '*an*' was second (39 out of 154). The results also revealed that the omission of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns was the smallest number (14 out of 154). However, the omission of the indefinite article '*a*' and the definite article '*the*' for singular nouns was reasonably equal.

**Table 3 Numbers of Articles Used in Substitution and Addition Errors**

Error type	Substitution					Addition		Total	Full scores	% of 'Total'
Article	a	an	the			zero				
			sin	plu	unc	plu	unc			
a	NA	31	106	75	50	87	68	417	1,560	26.73
an	31	NA	55	28	40	36	33	223	1,560	14.29
the	74	76	NA	NA	NA	114	76	340	1,040	32.69
Total (out of 260)	105	107	161	103	90	237	177	980	1,820	53.85

Table 3 shows the numbers of English articles used in addition and substitution errors. The definite article '*the*' was incorrectly used the most by the participants (340 out of 1,040 – 32.69%) while the indefinite article '*an*' had the smallest incorrect use (223 out of 1,560 – 14.29%). For substitution, the participants of this study frequently used the indefinite article '*a*' for the definite article '*the*' for singular nouns (106 out of 161). In contrast, the indefinite article '*an*' used for the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns was the smallest (28 out of 103). Additionally, substitution of the indefinite article '*a*' for the other indefinite article '*an*' or vice versa was found.

Table 3 shows that, in regard to the use of an article when it was not essential in a well-formed sentence (addition), the participants used the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns in inappropriate places most frequently (114 out of 237). The results also revealed that the addition of the indefinite article '*an*' for uncountable nouns occurred least frequently (33 out of 177).

### 4.1.2 Sources of Errors

**Table 4 Numbers of Errors according to Sources of Errors**

Error source	Omission	Addition	Substitution	Total	% of the total errors
Inter-lingual	154	NA	NA	154	<b>13.58</b>
Intra-lingual	NA	414	566	980	<b>86.42</b>
Total	154	414	566	1134	<b>100</b>

As shown in Table 4, most of errors were identified as intra-lingual (86.42%) compared to inter-lingual (13.58%).

## 4.2 Discussion

This study had two purposes, to investigate the types of article errors and to examine the possible sources of the errors.

The gap-filling test revealed that addition was the most frequent error that the participants in this study committed, followed by substitution and omission.

The results of this study showed many differences to previous studies. They indicated that most errors were of the addition type while previous studies showed omission was the most frequent error (Alhaysony, 2012; Khansir & Shahhoseiny, 2013; Smith, 2001). Moreover, Bukhari and Hussain (2011) stated that substitution or confusion with examples of indefinite articles being used for definite ones and vice versa were the second common error. They also found that addition or insertion (unnecessary use of articles) was the least common error. In contrast, this study revealed that substitution was the second most common error and omission was the least common.

Factors that cause the differences between this study and previous studies could be the instruments used, learners' proficiency level, and mother tongue.

Firstly, essay writing was used in the previous studies while this study used a gap-filling test. That may have influenced the participants in this study to insert some articles in the blanks although they did not know which ones were appropriate.

Another explanation may have been that the participants had learned that, in English, some nouns required articles in front. Thus, they tended to add some articles in each blank rather than leave them blank. Secondly, the learners' proficiency level may have affected the errors. As mentioned earlier, the participants in this study were low proficiency learners. Butler (2002) stated that higher proficiency level students were better able to use the target language than lower proficiency learners. The participants in this study may have been confused about the rules of article use and made many errors in the test. Finally, the differences of an article system in the learners' mother tongue may have influenced their making of errors. Learners whose first language has an article system may more effectively acquire skills than learners whose native language does not have an article system (Brown, 2001; Burton, 1976; Connor, 1996; Lado, 1957; Master, 1995).

Among the omission errors, the definite article '*the*' was the most frequent made by the participants. This result agreed with Khansir and Shahhoseiny (2013). The omission of the definite article '*the*' for uncountable nouns was the most common (64/154) and the omission of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns was the least common (14/154). This may have been caused by the participants' background knowledge. They may have remembered that uncountable nouns can stand alone in some contexts. They did not fully master the rules of article use. Thus, they tended to omit the articles when they found uncountable nouns. As for the omission of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns, the participants may have learned the indefinite articles '*a/an*' are used with singular nouns, and the definite article '*the*' is used for plural nouns. When they found plural nouns, they may have chosen to add the definite article '*the*'. Therefore, the omission of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns was the least common error.

Additionally, the results indicated that the participants used the definite article '*the*' in an inappropriate way most frequently. This result corresponded with the findings of Alhaysony (2012). In the present study, the definite article '*the*' was most frequently added in places where plural nouns occurred (114 out of 237) as shown in Table 3, although it was not needed. The instrument in this study – the gap-filling test – may have encouraged the participants to insert an article rather than to leave the blank empty. The participants also may have realized that the indefinite articles '*a/an*' are

used with singular nouns, but the indefinite articles '*a/an*' cannot be used with plural nouns. Thus, they tended to use the definite article '*the*' in places where plural nouns occurred.

Moreover, the results showed that most of the errors can be identified as intra-lingual (86.42%) compared to inter-lingual (13.58%). This implied that it was not only L1 transfer that influenced the participants' acquisition of English articles, but that there are other factors that may affect the participants' learning, such as inadequate learning, difficulties inherent in the second language (L2) itself, faulty teaching, confused thinking, and students' lack of knowledge and/or understanding of the differences between L1 and L2. In other words, intra-lingual errors were the important factor impeding participants in the acquisition of the correct use of English articles. Although the test used in this study consisted of only the basic rules of article usage and a table of countable and uncountable nouns was provided, the participants still committed errors. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, the participants in this study were low proficiency learners. The participants in this study may have been confused about the rules of article use that they had learned from teachers and textbooks and did not fully understand the rules. The participants tended to use the article that they 'felt' most appropriate and used the definite article '*the*' most frequently when they did not know the appropriate article, as shown in Table 3. This may explain the fact that the definite article '*the*' occurred more frequently than other articles as the participants may have been more familiar with it (Mizuno, 1999). In other words, the definite article '*the*' can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns, and both singular and plural nouns. Additionally, the article system is very complicated and, although appearing easy to learn, most native speakers cannot give clear explanations of the use of particular articles (Celce-Murcia & Larsen Freeman, 1983; Hultforss, 1986; Master, 1995; Pica, 1983; Standwell, 1997). The study found that there have been a number of sources other than L1 that influenced learners' acquisition of the correct use of articles, including rules in the target language, lack of clear explanations, and the learners' proficiency.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study, limitations of the research, and recommendations for further studies.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The purposes of this study were to investigate the types of article errors made by Thai EFL students, and to examine the possible sources that influenced these errors. The study was conducted with 52 EFL students from 2 classes in Matthayomsuksa 6 at Phayuwittaya School, Sisaket, Thailand studying the *Fundamental English* course during the second semester of the 2014 academic year. The students were low proficiency learners based on their O-net scores of less than 40 out of 100. The participants were required to complete a gap-filling test consisting of 35 blanks which included basic usage of English articles.

The research data were analyzed by following the steps suggested by Corder (1974) and Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005). These steps consisted of collecting, identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating the learners' errors. The errors were classified according to the Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) into errors of substitution, omission, or addition. The sources of the errors were classified into two types, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors.

The results of this study indicated that the largest number of errors committed by the participants was addition errors, and the addition of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns seemed to be the most frequent of this type of error. On the other hand, the addition of the indefinite article '*an*' for uncountable nouns was the least frequent. That is the students tended to overuse or overgeneralize the definite article '*the*' to contexts where the definite article '*the*' is inappropriate. Further, substitution errors were the second most frequent after addition errors. Looking more closely at this type of error, the use of the definite article '*the*' for singular nouns was most frequent, and the substitution of the definite article '*the*' for uncountable nouns was the least

frequent. Omission errors were found to be the least frequent type of error. In this sub-category, the definite article '*the*' for uncountable nouns was omitted by the participants more frequently than other articles. Additionally, the omissions of the indefinite article '*a*' and the definite article '*the*' for singular nouns occurred in almost equal numbers. The omission of the definite article '*the*' for plural nouns seemed to be the least frequent error that the participants made. These findings may relate to the lack of an article system of Thai and the existence of one in English. The results of this study that addition errors were the most frequently made errors differed from previous studies that found that omission was the most common type of error made by EFL learners (Alhaysony, 2012; Khansir & Shahhoseiny, 2013; Smith, 2001). There were three aspects that may have caused the results of this study, the instruments used, learner level, and first language.

The results also revealed that intra-lingual errors may have been the important source hampering participants in the acquisition of the correct use of articles in English. In other words, it was not only L1 interference that influenced the students' errors but that learners' proficiency, complexity of the target language, and lack of clear explanations were the source of many errors as well. It seemed that the proficiency level of the learners also crucially affected their acquisition of the correct use of articles in English. The lower proficiency learners were still in the beginning period of acquisition and scored very low in the test. The English article system is very complicated, and most native speakers cannot clearly explain why a particular article is used (Celce-Murcia & Larsen Freeman, 1983; Hultforrs, 1986; Master, 1995; Pica, 1983; Standwell, 1997), so the students used the articles that they guessed were most appropriate. As shown in this study, the participants tended to use the definite article '*the*' most frequently when they did not know the appropriate article.

## 5.2 Implications of the Study

As seen from the results of the present study, the definite article '*the*' is the most difficult article for learners to acquire. It is crucial to teach the correct use of the definite article initially as it is most common and general to the learners' background knowledge and the most frequently used, because the definite article '*the*' can be used with all types of nouns. Teachers also need to give more attention to the use of the

indefinite article, especially zero article, pay more attention to indefinite articles, present the central meanings of each article, and compare them with corresponding construction in the first language (Mizuno, 1999). This is because they are also used often in communication. Teachers should use simple rules for the concepts of generic and assumed shared and non-shared knowledge of the referent, and avoid the many confusing terms or rules of articles (Chantop, 2007). Teachers should let students use English in real situations, exposing them to authentic, meaningful English, and comprehension activities such as reading newspapers and practicing writing with emphasis on article usage in those media and activities. Additionally, the first language should be used initially and during the teaching processes to make students better understand the rules, and present the core meaning of each article in comparison with the Thai language. Using articles correctly is one of the most difficult aspects in learning English grammar and takes time to master, so learners require a lot of time to practice. Thus, teachers should focus on students' errors and use appropriate methods and techniques to reduce them.

It is anticipated that the results of the study will enable teachers to examine their error correction practices from the learners' perspective, so that they will adjust their techniques, if necessary, to cater to the needs of their students.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study**

This study had a number of limitations. The number of participants was restricted to 52 Thai EFL students in one year (Matthayomsuksa 6) at one school (Phayuwittaya School, Sisaket, Thailand). These participants were all low proficiency learners. Therefore, generalization of the findings of the research is limited in regard to application to groups of Thai EFL students in other years, at other schools, and other proficiency levels. The instrument in this study was the gap-filling test. If the participants had been required to write an essay, the results may have been different. Also, the present study did not ask the participants to justify the choice of articles they used for each blank.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for further study**

It is recommended that article usage in English by different groups of students, such as high school and university students, be investigated, and also that consideration be made of the performances of learners of different proficiencies. The research instrument of this study was the gap-filling test consisting of only basic rules of article use, so further studies should include other rules or other types of test, such as essay writing. Moreover, researchers should ask participants to justify the choice of articles they use for each blank. Researchers interested in article use may consult the results of this study to find out the best methods to solve students' errors according to their sources of errors. Additionally, other specific variables which may influence students' processes of acquisition of English article, including interest and motivation, should be investigated.

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## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**THE TEST PAPER**

### Paper Test

**Directions:** Complete the text by choosing the best word, *a*, *an*, *the*, or – (zero article) to complete the gaps. You can consult the given vocabulary sheet for the noun type of each item.

#### Part I

- A: There isn't (1) \_\_\_\_\_ airport near where I live. The nearest airport is 70 miles away.
- B: This morning I bought (2) \_\_\_\_\_ newspapers and magazines.  
(3) \_\_\_\_\_ newspapers are in my bag but I don't know where I put  
(4) \_\_\_\_\_ magazines.
- C: My city experienced (5) \_\_\_\_\_ earthquake recently. I was riding my bicycle when (6) \_\_\_\_\_ earthquake occurred.
- D: The sun is a star. We need the sun for (7) \_\_\_\_\_ heat, (8) \_\_\_\_\_ light, and (9) \_\_\_\_\_ energy.
- E: I bought a bag of flour and some sugar to make some cookies. (10) \_\_\_\_\_ sugar was okay, but I had to return (11) \_\_\_\_\_ flour.
- F: I witnessed (12) \_\_\_\_\_ accident this morning. (13) \_\_\_\_\_ car crashed into a tree. The driver of the car wasn't hurt but the car was badly damaged.
- G: My friend lives in (14) \_\_\_\_\_ old house in a small village. There is (15) \_\_\_\_\_ beautiful garden behind the house. I would like to have one like that.
- H: Yesterday while I was walking to work, I saw some birds in a tree. I also saw a cat under (16) \_\_\_\_\_ different tree. (17) \_\_\_\_\_ birds didn't pay any attention to the cat, but the cat was watching (18) \_\_\_\_\_ birds intently.

## Part II

One afternoon when I was coming home from school, I saw an accident. It was a cold day and there weren't many people around. I was on my motorbike and I stopped at a traffic light. There was (19) \_\_\_\_\_ old lady in (20) \_\_\_\_\_ small yellow car in front of me, waiting for the light to change. (21) \_\_\_\_\_ traffic light went green and (22) \_\_\_\_\_ car moved off slowly. Suddenly I heard a loud crash. (23) \_\_\_\_\_ lorry coming out from the other street and hit the car. Luckily no one was hurt. (24) \_\_\_\_\_ drivers got out and (25) \_\_\_\_\_ lorry driver started shouting terribly at (26) \_\_\_\_\_ poor lady. "You should look where you are going and you shouldn't jump the light," he shouted.

## Part III

### The Truth about Paper

This story is printed on paper.

Have you ever wondered how paper is made?

Paper is produced in paper mills. They make (27) \_\_\_\_\_ wood thin and dry by passing it through hot rollers that press (28) \_\_\_\_\_ wood. But before that, it has to go through several steps first.

The material used to produce paper is called *wood pulp*. It is made from small pieces of wood mashed together until it is gooey. However, before pressing and grinding wood into pieces, the wood's bark has to come off first. When (29) \_\_\_\_\_ wood pulp is ready, it is put into tanks to mix it with water. Then this mixed pulp is moved to a screen so that (30) \_\_\_\_\_ water can be drained off. When that procedure is done, we get a thin wet sheet of pulp. The last step is left to machines with hot rollers to flatten and dry (31) \_\_\_\_\_ pulp. And we finally get a roll of paper.

Lastly, paper mills shift this paper to factories. These factories are the ones who produce things made of paper, such as (32) \_\_\_\_\_ books, (33) \_\_\_\_\_ newspapers, (34) \_\_\_\_\_ bags, or (35) \_\_\_\_\_ boxes for us.

**APPENDIX B**  
**LIST OF VOCABULARY**

### List of Vocabulary

Items	Countable Nouns	Uncountable Nouns
1. airport	✓	
2. newspapers	✓	
3. newspapers	✓	
4. magazines	✓	
5. earthquake	✓	
6. earthquake	✓	
7. heat		✓
8. light		✓
9. energy		✓
10. sugar		✓
11. flour		✓
12. accident	✓	
13. car	✓	
14. old house	✓	
15. beautiful garden	✓	
16. tree	✓	
17. birds	✓	
18. birds	✓	
19. old lady	✓	
20. small yellow car	✓	
21. traffic light	✓	
22. car	✓	
23. lorry	✓	
24. drivers	✓	
25. lorry driver	✓	
26. poor lady	✓	
27. wood		✓
28. wood		✓

**List of Vocabulary (Continued)**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Countable Nouns</b>	<b>Uncountable Nouns</b>
29. wood pulp		✓
30. water		✓
31. pulp		✓
32. books	✓	
33. newspapers	✓	
34. bags	✓	
35. boxes	✓	



**APPENDIX C**  
**THE TABLE OF ANALYSIS OF ERRORS**

## Types and Sources of Errors Analysis

Types of Articles	Items	Correct	Incorrect				
			Types of Errors			Sources of Errors	
			omission	addition	substitution	inter-lingual	intra-lingual
a	13	36	1	0	15	1	15
	15	25	4	0	23	4	23
	16	20	11	0	21	11	21
	20	32	2	0	18	2	18
	23	23	1	0	28	1	28
<b>Total</b>		<b>136</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>105</b>
an	1	27	0	0	25	0	25
	5	27	1	0	24	1	24
	12	19	16	0	17	16	17
	14	22	9	0	21	9	21
	19	19	13	0	20	13	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>114</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>107</b>
the for singular nouns	6	15	1	0	36	1	36
	21	18	7	0	27	7	27
	22	20	0	0	32	0	32
	25	12	1	0	39	1	39
	26	16	9	0	27	9	27
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>161</b>
the for plural nouns	3	26	4	0	22	4	22
	4	23	4	0	25	4	25
	17	32	2	0	18	2	18
	18	33	4	0	15	4	15
	24	29	0	0	23	0	23
<b>Total</b>		<b>143</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>103</b>

## Types and Sources of Errors Analysis (Continued)

Types of Articles	Items	Correct	Incorrect				
			Types of Errors			Sources of Errors	
			omission	addition	substitution	inter-lingual	intra-lingual
the for mass nouns	10	13	11	0	28	11	28
	11	13	11	0	28	11	28
	28	23	12	0	17	12	17
	29	28	14	0	10	14	10
	31	29	16	0	7	16	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>106</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>90</b>
Ø for plural nouns	2	1	0	51	0	0	51
	32	5	0	47	0	0	47
	33	9	0	43	0	0	43
	34	4	0	48	0	0	48
	35	4	0	48	0	0	48
<b>Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>237</b>
Ø for mass nouns	7	19	0	33	0	0	33
	8	16	0	36	0	0	36
	9	13	0	39	0	0	39
	27	15	0	37	0	0	37
	30	20	0	32	0	0	32
<b>Total</b>		<b>83</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>177</b>

Numbers of Errors according to SST

Error type	a	an	the			zero		total	'a' %	'an' %	'the' %			'zero' %		'total' %
			sin	plu	unc	plu	unc				sin	plu	unc	plu	unc	
Omission	19	39	18	14	64	NA	NA	154	12.34	25.32	11.69	9.09	41.56	NA	NA	11.85
Addition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	237	177	414	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	57.25	42.75	79.62
Substitution	105	107	161	103	90	NA	NA	566	18.55	18.90	28.45	18.20	15.90	NA	NA	43.54
Error total	124	146	179	117	154	237	177	1,134	47.69	56.15	68.84	45.00	59.24	91.15	68.08	62.31
Correct	136	114	81	143	106	23	83	686	52.31	43.85	31.16	55.00	40.76	8.85	31.92	37.69
Total	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	1,820	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### Numbers of Article Use of Addition and Substitution Errors

Error type	Substitution					Addition		total	'total' %
Article	a	an	the			zero			
			sin	plu	unc	plu	unc		
a	0	31	106	75	50	87	68	417	26.73
an	31	0	55	28	40	36	33	223	14.29
the	74	76	0	0	0	114	76	340	32.69
Total	105	107	161	103	90	237	177	980	53.85

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