

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter is an explanation of the methods used in this study. It provides the background information of the subjects, instruments, and data collection procedures. Besides, data analysis is also discussed.

#### **3.1 Subjects**

The subjects of this study consisted of 50 fourth-year students from Prince of Songkla University (PSU), Pattani, majoring in English language both from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The students comprised of 8 male and 42 female students whose ages ranged from 19-23 years old. 44% of them came from secular schools whilst 56% were from religious schools. According to their residence, 54% of them live in the three southern border provinces, Pattani, Yala, and Naratiwat while 46% live in other provinces. Most of them from the south are from Nakhon Sri Tammarat, Songkla, Satul, and Pannga. They have all studied English which is taught as a compulsory subject in primary and secondary education for a minimum of 8 years. They had been admitted to the English Department based on their scores in the national entrance examination. Moreover, based on grade of the writing course that the subjects obtained, the English Department considered the students to be at the intermediate level as shown in table 3.1 and figure 3.1 and 3.2.

**Table 3.1**

**National Entrance Examination Scores  
and Grade of the Writing Course**

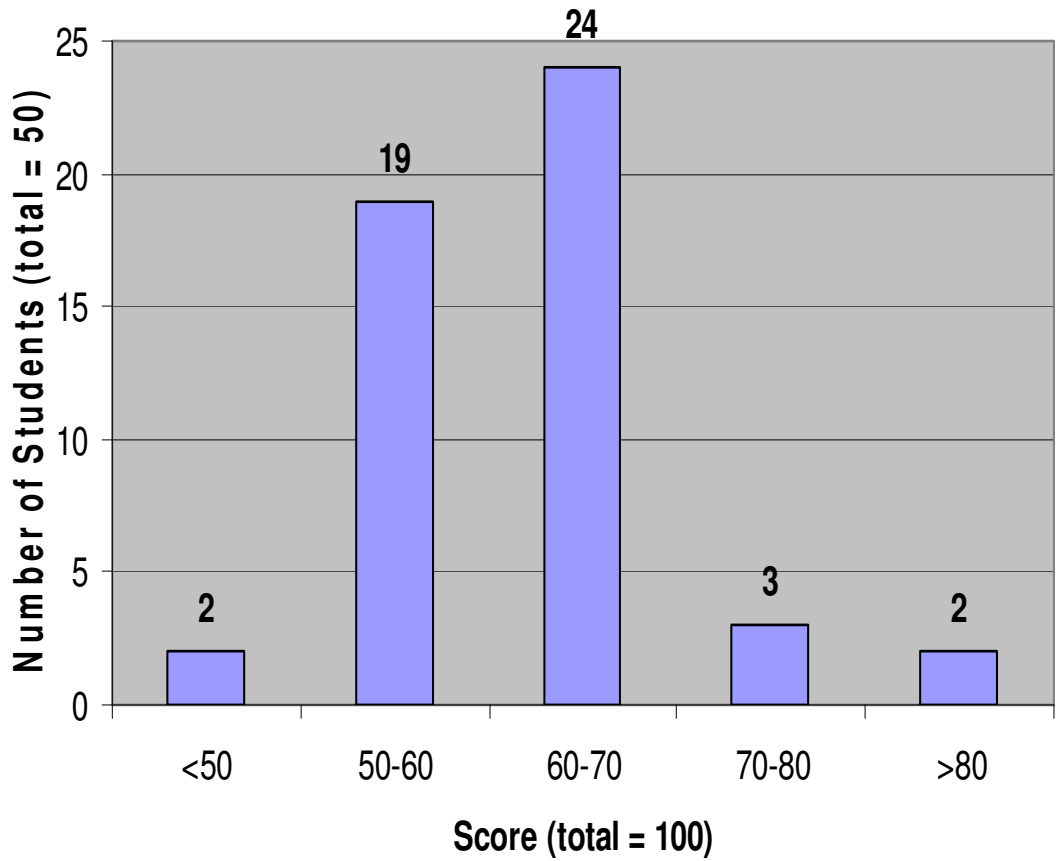
<b>National Entrance Examination Score</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<50	2	4.0
50-60	19	38.0
60-70	24	48.0
70-80	3	6.0
>80	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

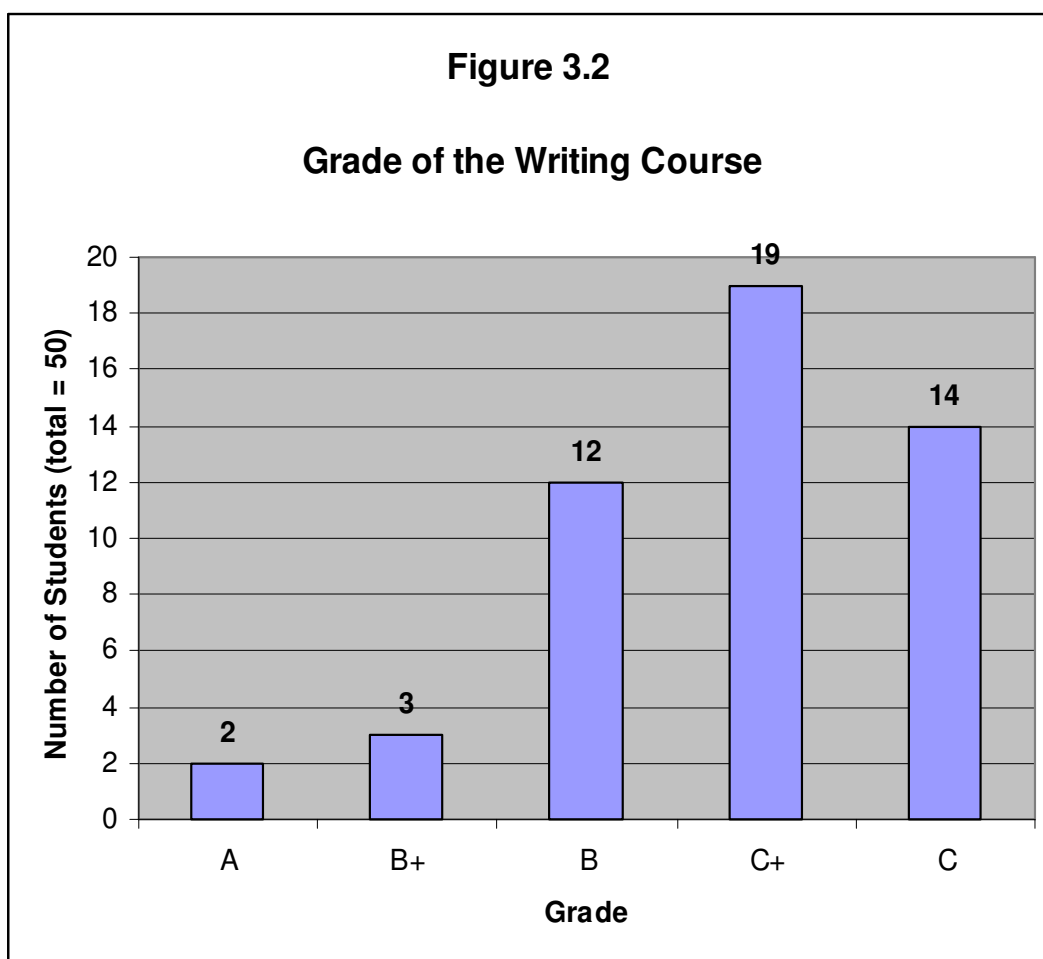
  

<b>Grade of the Writing Course</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
C	14	28.0
C+	19	38.0
B	12	24.0
B+	3	6.0
A	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

**Figure 3.1**

**Students' National Entrance Examination Score**





As English major students, from the first year of study until the fourth year, they are enrolled in three to four writing courses; one as a core subject, namely, Paragraph and Composition Writing and two or three courses as elective subjects, that is, Introduction to Translation, Expository Writing, and Argument and Persuasive Writing.

The rationale for the choice of this group of students is based on the learning experience they have had. Having followed English writing courses, they are more skillful

in writing than their juniors. Moreover, they are the most appropriate target group for this study as they have had more exposure to the TL than students of other majors.

### **3.2 Instruments**

The researcher used three instruments for this study. They consisted of the students' written work, vocabulary test and questionnaire.

#### **3.2.1 The written work**

There were two sets of the written work and each set comprised four topics. The topics in the first set are narrative in nature and are familiar to the subjects. The subjects can use their personal experiences, impressions and feelings in their writing. In the second set, the topics are factual descriptions which require the use of abstract and technical words that might not be frequently used in daily speech. To obtain the different performance and quality of vocabulary use, the two different sets of topics were given to the subjects. The two sets of the topics are given below:

##### **1. Narrative composition**

Topics:

- A typical day in the university
- A story or a movie that I liked
- An accident
- A day at the beach

## 2. Factual descriptive composition

Topics:

- My favourite pastimes
- Thai TV programmes
- Education and the Internet
- Why learn English as a foreign language?

The analysis of the students' written work was employed in this study because it is an effective method for examining the students' language competence. This is acknowledged by many error analysts such as Ong (2007), Ebrahim (2004), Woon (2003), and Zahira (2003). It is also the most effective way to collect a large corpus of written English in a short period of time from a large number of subjects. However, the quality of writing, style, content and organization of the composition were not included in the scope of the study. The researcher selected six different (good, intermediate, and poor) compositions as the sample of the subjects' written work. They are illustrated in appendices 1a, 1b and 1c respectively.

### **3.2.2 Vocabulary test**

The test consisted of 15 multiple-choice items from a text completion. The task for the subjects was to complete the passage by choosing the answer from multiple-choice items given. The objective of using this multiple-choice test was to measure the level of the subjects' vocabulary knowledge. Various aspects of vocabulary, namely nouns, adjectives, verbs, and conjunctions were included in the test. The test was adapted from "*The Royal White Elephants*" by Dominic Faulder (see Appendix 2).

To obtain validity and reliability of the test, the researcher piloted this test with 50 English major, fourth-year students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Yala Rajabhat University (YRU). When the pilot study was collected from the students, the head of the foreign language department and other two English lecturers at this university were appointed as the committees to check the defects of the tool and give the marking scheme. The results of the pilot study showed that majority (37) of the students obtained 6-10 marks, 4 of them obtained 1-5 marks, and 9 of them obtained 11-15 marks. According to the results of the test, the committees agreed that the items in the test were not too easy or too difficult to fourth year English major students. The marking scheme then was set by the committees to determine the level of vocabulary knowledge as follows:

- (1) The score from 0-5 marks for a low level
- (2) The score from 6-10 marks for an intermediate level
- (3) The score from 11-15 marks for a high level.

### **3.2.3 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire in this study was adapted from Cha (1996). It obtained some relevant information, such as, socio-economic and educational background, scores and grades of English examinations, opportunities for English instruction, opportunities for using English, the frequency and the length of time in the use of English, attitudes towards the difficult aspects of English, strategies used in choosing words when writing an English essay, dictionary use, and vocabulary learning strategies (see Appendix 3). There were 26 questions all in the questionnaire. Most questions were in the form of inventories and some were in the form of open-ended questions. The rationale for using a questionnaire is that it is easy for the subjects to complete in a short time. Due to the large number of subjects, it is

the most efficient and economical research tool. Moreover, the researcher needs only to roughly assess the information given.

The objectives of this questionnaire were as follows:

- (1) To evaluate the subjects' socio-economic background
- (2) To analyze the subjects' TL background
- (3) To examine the subjects' vocabulary learning and ways to improve their TL

The researcher piloted the questionnaire with the same group of students who were involved in the pilot study for the vocabulary test. Before being used in the main study, items which were ambiguous were edited and revised under the supervision of the committees who checked the vocabulary test.

### **3.3 Data Collection Procedures**

There were three main procedures of data collection. To start collecting the data, the researcher obtained permission from the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Head of the English Department at Prince of Songkla University (PSU) to conduct this research. Secondly, the lecturer of the writing course, namely, "Paragraph and Composition Writing" was informed the purpose of this study. Finally, discussions were held to clarify the methods and details of the study tools.

#### **3.3.1 The written work**

The subjects were divided into two groups. Each group comprises of 25 persons. The first group was assigned to choose and write one topic from the first set of the



written work, narrative composition, whilst the second group was assigned to choose and write one topic from the second set, factual descriptive composition. The reason the researcher divided the students into two groups and assigned each group to do the different set of the written work because the time was very limited. They cannot finish their written work within 2 hours of a class period if the researcher asked them to write both narrative composition and factual descriptive composition together with completing the vocabulary test at the end of the class. The topics were given to the subjects as the assignment during the class of Paragraph and Composition Writing. They had to finish their writing in the class hour together with the vocabulary test. Due to the normal teaching schedule, the first 30 minutes of the class period was spent for the class introduction and the explanation of doing the composition and the vocabulary test. The lecturer gave 1 hour after the class introduction to the students to finish the writing part. The length of the essay was about 200-400 words to be written under the supervision of the lecturer of the course. In order to maintain the authenticity of the data, dictionaries were not allowed.

### **3.3.2 Vocabulary Test**

After the subjects wrote their written work, the vocabulary test was distributed to the subjects. The lecturer gave the time to the subjects to do this part only 30 minutes. Excluding the first 30 minutes of the class introduction, the subjects had to complete both instruments within 1.30 hours. The vocabulary test was administered to the subjects in the last 30 minutes after the lecturer collected the written work.

### **3.3.3 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was administered to the subjects after the vocabulary test was collected at the end of the class. The students were asked to complete it outside the class, at home or dormitory and return it to the lecturer next class.

After the lecturer obtained all the data from the students, he kept the photocopy of the written work in order to give the mark to the students as a part of his assignment. The original of the written work, vocabulary test, and questionnaire, then, were returned to the researcher.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

After the data was collected, lexical errors, vocabulary test and questionnaire were computed and analyzed.

#### **3.4.1 The written work**

The students' errors are explained by means of Error Analysis (EA). This study uses the following four procedures adapted from Corder (1974) for analyzing the students' lexical errors. The procedures are:

- i) Identification of Errors
- ii) Counting of Errors
- iii) Classification of Errors
- iv) Description and Explanation of Errors

These four procedures are explained briefly in the following sections:

### 3.4.1.1 Identification of Errors

'Errors' as defined in the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (1992: 127) is "the use of a linguistic item (in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner) for example, a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc. in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning". Faulty or incorrect lexical forms were identified as errors in this study. Only errors related to lexis were identified. The taxonomy of identification was adopted from the work of researchers such as Woon (2003), James (1998), Laufer (1992), Zughoul (1991), and Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982).

### 3.4.1.2 Counting of Errors

The quantification of data is an important stage of EA. To obtain the overall results of errors made by the subjects, the erroneous items were counted based on the frequency of occurrences. The same word which was wrongly used in two or more sentences and where the correct answer was the same word was considered as one error. When the reverse happens, it was counted as two or more errors, for example:

1. \*Every language is importance. (important)
2. \*English is importance like other languages. (important)
3. \*Internet is the important tool for reduce my strain. (to)
4. \*I always sit in front of a computer more than 2 hours for a day.  
(I always sit in front of a computer more than 2 hours a day.)

According to the examples above, all the erroneous items in sentences 1-4 were considered as lexical errors. The errors in sentences 1 and 2 were the

same word, that is '*importance*'. They were counted as one lexical error because it exhibited in the same context and the correct word '*important*' was also the same. In contrast, even though sentences 3 and 4 represented the same lexical errors. The word '*for*' in these sentences was counted as two different errors because it appeared in different context and the correct word choices were not the same. In sentence 3, '*to*' is more appropriate while '*for*' in sentence 4 has to be omitted.

If an item has more than one type of errors, they will be counted based on the different forms of errors according to the classification of errors, for example:

5. \*I very relax when I stayed at the beach. (was, relaxed)
6. \*when I wacthed ghost 1990, I always happy and active. (watched, was)

Sentence 5 illustrates two different types of errors, the omission of the copula and the confusion of derivatives; '*relax-relaxed*'. The former was counted as the "omissions" error and the latter was counted as the "confusion of derivatives" error type. In sentence 6, the first error was considered as "distortions" because the subject misplaced the letters <c> and <t> in the word '*wacthed*' and the second error was the "omissions" error type as the subject omitted '*was*' in the sentence. So, such errors were counted as two errors.

Errors which were regarded as performance errors were excluded in the process of data analysis because such errors are "random guess or a "slip" in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly" (Brown, 1994: 205). They are the errors occur due to non-linguistic factors which are unrelated to any system in the TL, for example:

7. \*We had dinner together under the star light. The food was not not delicious as it should be.
8. \*The kinds of books that I read, for example, novels magazines etc. especially heath magazines. I like to read it so much because I think our health is very important.

In sentence 7, the subject could have intended to use '*not*' to make a statement negative, but it was presented two times in a sentence. Sentence 8 represents the use of the word '*health*'. At the first time the subject used this word, the letter <l> was omitted. In contrast, the subject performed that word correctly for the second time of use. Such errors were considered as performance errors and not counted as the errors in this study.

#### **3.4.1.3 Classification of Errors**

The lexical errors found in the essays were classified in order to provide information on different types of errors. The reason given for the classification of errors was aptly emphasized by Ngara (1983: 40) who states that "the end of all theories in the applied sciences lies in its application to practical problems in practical situations. It is therefore appropriate to make some observations on the significance of the type of errors identified." The errors were classified into 2 main categories with 13 subcategories. They are illustrated as follows:

## **I Interlingual Errors**

1. Direct translations
2. Misordering
3. Use of native words

## **II Intralingual Errors**

1. Confusion of sense relations
2. Collocational errors
3. Distortions
4. Omissions
5. Additions
6. Confusion of derivatives
7. Redundancy
8. Paraphrasing
9. Confusibles
10. Confusion of binary terms

#### **3.4.1.4 Description and Explanation of Errors**

After the classification of errors, they were interpreted, describe, and explain according to the linguistic nature and causes of errors.

However, to obtain validity and reliability of errors found in the written work, the lecturer of the Paragraph and Composition Writing and the head of English departments from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prince of Songkla University, and the head of foreign language department from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Yala Rajabhat University were appointed as the committees to check and revise the analysis of lexical errors done by the researcher. After that, they were counterchecked by the supervisor.

#### **3.4.2 Vocabulary test**

The vocabulary was checked to evaluate the level of the subjects' vocabulary knowledge according to marking schemes given by the committees.

#### **3.4.3 Questionnaire**

Responses of the questionnaire were computed into a percentage. The same kind of questions was grouped to the same categories for discussion and explanation, which includes (1) opportunities for English instruction outside the school and the university, (2) opportunities of using English, (3) Frequency and length of time using English, (4) attitudes towards the aspects of English, (5) strategies of vocabulary choice when writing an English Essay, (6) dictionary use, and (7) vocabulary learning strategies.

### **3.5 Summary**

This chapter provides information which is used for the data analysis and discussions in the next chapter. The subjects, instruments and data collection procedures gave an overview of how the researcher conducted this study.