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Research Article:

A Challenge of Online Teaching and Learning Pedagogy: Fundamental English Writing Class in a Thai Context

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ABSTRACT

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019-2021, most teaching and learning classes in Thailand were conducted through online platforms, including the fundamental English writing course for the non-English-majoring undergraduate students. This paper aims to shed light on how the undergraduates perceive themselves while experiencing the online fundamental English writing class. In addition, this study explores students' learning performance through results drawn from writing assignments and tests, including the learners' reflections on their improvement in English writing. The research also examines specific factors that fostered students' satisfactory learning outcomes throughout the online learning period. A mixed-method approach, comprising quantitative and qualitative strategies, was applied in seeking answers to the research questions. The analysis and interpretation of research data involved transforming qualitative themes or codes into numbers to triangulate the quantitative outcomes and interpreting them to explain phenomena emerging from the study. The findings suggest that students were content with the teaching and learning strategies employed throughout the course. They perceived they could improve their English writing skills and earn additional benefits from the designed online course compared with traditional in-class learning. The results of this research on the first-hand experience could be utilised as a guideline in preparing an online class, developing learning materials, and adopting or adapting helpful teaching strategies to deliver the fundamental English writing class through the online platform efficiently.

Keywords: Fundamental English writing, perceptions towards online English writing class, English writing perceptions, online English writing class in Thai context, online English writing learning performance

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INTRODUCTION

Following the global COVID-19 outbreak, which included Thailand, Thai people's routines and lives had altered dramatically to combat this unprecedented outbreak effectively. Thailand was no exception when it came to education. During the out-heavy break's ongoing spread, particularly in 2019–2021 (by the time of this study), the nation's educational system was encouraged to conduct virtually all available courses online (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2021). In addition, the fundamental English writing for non-English majors (English as a Foreign Language [EFL] for undergraduate students) was also a mandatory course taught using an online teaching and learning strategy at one of Thailand's most prestigious public universities, located in Bangkok, where this research was being undertaken.

Because online teaching and learning is a new and unanticipated pedagogy in Thai academic institutions, studies or research centred on online teaching and learning were limited, particularly in fundamental English writing for undergraduate students to examine the learners' perceptions and performance quantitatively and qualitatively. As a result, this study filled in some gaps by investigating students' perspectives on the new learning pedagogy, learning outcomes and factors influencing their performance.

In this study, there were three hypotheses concerning students who took an online fundamental English writing course. First, students' perceptions regarding online teaching and learning may be negative when contrasted to their previous experiences with traditional teaching and physical learning in the classroom. Second, due to potential downsides from online teaching and learning, students' academic achievement was likely lower than in traditional teaching and learning classes. Finally, some factors contributing to achieving students' learning performance were worth investigating. As a result, this study posed three research questions:

- 1. What were perceptions of non-English major students towards the online fundamental English writing class?
- 2. To what extent did students gain their fundamental writing knowledge and skills from the online class?
- 3. What factors did students consider essential in their online learning?

LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide validity to this study and a framework for the research, different relevant types of research and existing theories from various scholars were examined to guide the study's established objectives and research questions in the appropriate path. The importance of perceptions in improving EFL students' learning and reaching a goal was investigated. By re-examining existing literature from various researchers in the field, the review focused on conceptualising perception (e.g., Hewstone et al., 1983; Weiner, 1985; 2010). Students'

perceptions regarding language acquisition (e.g., Dörnyei, 1990; Ngo et al., 2017; Warden & Lin, 2000) were also covered in the review. Dörnyei's (1990) and Inkaew's (2020) studies, for example, indicated that students' positive attitudes towards foreign language acquisition, motivated by a desire to succeed, have a significant impact on their learning outcomes.

In addition, the scholarly literature on motivation was explored (e.g., Astaman, 2009; Gardner, 2009). The motivation in learning a second language, specifically English, was investigated using general learning motivation frameworks from many researchers (e.g., Hedricks, 1997; Seifert, 2004; Weiner, 1985; 2010). Furthermore, English as a second or international language learning situation in several parts of the world was discovered (e.g., Astaman, 2009; Bradford, 2007, Ngo et al., 2017; Wahyudi, 2017). For instance, Wahyudi (2017) studied Indonesian students' learning motivation and attitude towards English learning. The study's outcomes indicated that motivation is the cause or reason for the learners' actions or behaviour. It is a potent emotional variable in second language acquisition and significantly impacts second language learning.

One of the main focuses in this study was whether Thai EFL undergraduates could evaluate whether learning English in class or online best catered to their improved understanding and promoted appropriate English writing outcomes. Hofstede (1986) contends that preconceptions might influence students' ideas about their learning and the quality of English learning that occurs. Inevitably, English writing teachers play an essential role in facilitating students' motivation and demonstrating their proficiency. In addition, the instructors' involvement in writing class is crucial in assisting students in overcoming the challenges of the EFL writing classroom, such as frustration, insufficient information, inadequate approaches, low tenacity, and illusory self-efficacy (Sağlamel et al., 2015; Santangelo et al., 2007).

In this study, the researcher, who was also the course instructor, employed the foundation English writing rubrics developed by the English instructor team, which included both native and non-native teachers from the university's English department, as an essential guideline for grading and monitoring student performance throughout the semester. Some questions were raised concerning the drawback of using rubrics, such as Wilson (2007) stating that attempting to standardise language through rubrics and broad remarks degrades learners' writing and reading experience. However, in this study context, rubrics could affect student's achievement (Huba & Freed, 2000; Turgut & Kayaoglu, 2015) and were a vital tool for the instructor to grade student's work and provide explicit constructive comments in identifying their writing performance.

Concerning online learning facilities, several studies and considerations were addressed in relation to technology-enhanced language learning (TELL), which allows students to customise their learning process to meet their individual needs. Kawinkoonlasate (2020) argues that technology could play an essential role in learning, encouraging students to seek knowledge their teachers may not supply. Some studies (e.g., Alsaleem, 2014; Babacan & Gunuc, 2017; Costley, 2014; Kawinkoonlasate, 2020; Parvin & Salam, 2015; Xiao et al.,

2017) have found that online teaching and learning has both advantages and disadvantages. There were, however, numerous benefits for both instructors and students. Most learners were initially frightened, but they could adjust and adapt to the new "normal" teaching approach. As a result, they began to enjoy learning again after that (Kawinkoonlasate, 2020). Further research has revealed that incorporating more technology has a plethora of advantages. For example, an increase in learner motivation and social interactions linked to the topic being taught have also been found to occur as a result of the implementation of online learning technology (Parvin & Salam, 2015; Pourhossein Gilakjani, 2017; Ahmadi, 2018). Besides, online learning has the advantage of providing more opportunities for active learning and allowing learners more flexibility in their learning because they are not bound by a strict class schedule and are not required to attend class. Moreover, studying online could save travelling time for students due to heavy traffic in Bangkok (Bangkok Post, 2017) and mitigate the financial burden for some families (Bangkok Biz News 2020). Additionally, using an online platform to teach English language learners resulted in a dynamic and intriguing learning environment that encouraged student participation while enhancing student achievement (Cote Parra, 2015; Watson et al., 2012). Furthermore, it has been discovered that learning online via technology devices can help students engage in learning activities, encourage initiative, and improve the overall teaching effect in English class (Mofareh, 2019).

Several video-making applications, podcasting and voice recording, collaborative working and writing such as Google Docs, presentation tools such as Prezi, video conferencing such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Line, Skype, Facebook, WeChat and Google Classroom and other online learning platforms are among the technological tools that can enhance language learning – being useful for the creation, editing, and presentation of technology-enhanced tasks (Online Teaching Tools and Resources, 2015).

Alsaleem (2014) demonstrated that a computer-based classroom delivers a learning experience that promotes learners' accountability for their education in this regard. According to Alsaleem (2014), English learners could use WhatsApp applications in discussing journals to improve their writing, vocabulary, word choice, and speaking abilities. Besides, Disli (2012) focused on and improved students' writing skills using an online program. Furthermore, Crane (2012) and Donaldson (2014) suggested that teaching and learning with technology, or Web 2.0 tools, are perfect for students learning English because they allow them to use authentic language while also inspiring them to engage in all four language uses (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). However, teachers must understand that various tools and methods should be used to keep the material engaging and the lessons productive (Patel, 2013).

Concerning developing questionnaires to obtain insightful data from the respondents, Renis Likert's psychometric scale theoretical framework was operationalised to construct questions. This approach allows students to express themselves. A psychometric response scale is typically used in questionnaires to determine a participant's preferences or level of agreement with a statement or collection of statements (Aasa, 2016). In this study, students

were asked to use an ordinal scale to indicate their level of agreement towards each specific situational scenario by reflecting their thoughts on the given situational statements regarding online teaching and learning pedagogy adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic strike.

METHODOLOGY

In the online teaching and learning context of the fundamental English writing course for undergraduate students, this research provided an empirical explanation and analysis to analyse the perspectives, degree of learned knowledge, and elements that enhance EFL students' performance. This study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to examine the research problems thoroughly. Data were acquired from various sources, including learners and stakeholders, and combined to understand the overall results.

Geographical Context and Participants' Profile

A public university in Bangkok serves as the study's geographical setting. The chosen university has various faculties where students must pass four English foundation courses, one of which is fundamental English writing to continue their undergraduate studies. In terms of the major participants and their characteristics, 278 students were chosen at random from the fundamental English writing classes enrolled in four semesters between the end of 2019 and the classes conducted in the first half of 2021, regardless of their year levels, genders or areas of study. The class (teaching, learning and peer and teacher review activities) was delivered online via Zoom throughout the semester. Students were asked to submit their assignments via Google Classroom. The instructor highlighted errors and graded students' work using analytical rubrics communicated to students prior to each assignment. To help triangulate the data, seven English writing instructors who delivered fundamental English writing courses online during this research were interviewed to get a second opinion on the key participants' findings.

Instruments

In this study, two research instruments were employed. Both instruments were quantitative, with qualitative questionnaires thrown in for good measure. The first set of questions was delivered to the primary participants enrolled in the fundamental English writing course. All items in the questionnaires were written in Thai so that participants may fully comprehend them without any language obstacles.

The questionnaires were divided into four sections. The first section collected demographic data from participants. The second section contained 10 question items designed to elicit participants' opinions on their writing abilities. The following section comprised another 12 questions aimed at eliciting students' motivations for online English writing success. Parts 2 and 3 required participants to rate themselves on a 1–4 Likert-type scale. Each item is scored on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree," 2 indicating "disagree,"

3 indicating "agree," and 4 indicating "strongly agree." The EFL learners could freely express their thoughts in their English online classroom context, including seven openended questions. The second set of questions seeks feedback from the seven teachers who provided online English writing instruction during the study's chosen semesters. Regarding the questions' validation process, the three experts in English writing were asked to validate the question items of both proposed sets in terms of content, construct, and concurrent and predictive validity of each questionnaire by adopting the Index of Congruence (IOC) analysis suggested in Srisathidnarakul (2007) to examine the two sets of questions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

The concurrent mixed-method model is the approach for this study. The learners were asked to do a quantitative self-reflection. Meanwhile, informal qualitative interviews with direct stakeholders and English instructors were undertaken at the same time. This is the method provided by Creswell (2009) for obtaining reliable quantitative findings. It entails completing all essential data transformations, including qualitatively establishing codes and themes. The acquired data from the first category survey technique of self-reflection questionnaires were then stored using the SPSS 22 software package. This tool aids in the examination of statistical data such as the frequency, mean, and standard deviation of each question item. In addition, validation procedures were followed to ensure that data derived from both quantitative and qualitative findings were accurate. According to Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006), validity is related to research design and data collection, data analysis, and findings interpretation. The quantitative findings gathered from the primary group of EFL students were interpreted using the interpretation procedures in the final step of integration and interpretation. The stakeholders' results were then merged and evaluated for a complete picture of the findings.

FINDINGS

This section summarises the findings from the respondents regarding non-English major students' perceptions towards the online fundamental English writing class, the knowledge and skills they gained from learning online, and factors perceived to promote their online learning performance.

Perceptions of Non-English Major Students towards the Online Fundamental English Writing Class

The perceptions of non-English major students towards the online fundamental English writing class are reported in Table 1.

To investigate what the fundamental English writing learners held perceptions and motivations, the 10 questions were utilised to explore individual perceptions towards the English writing course conducted online. In addition to this, another 12 questions were

asked to identify the learners' motivations towards online learning. Finally, the primary results were triangulated by the open-ended questions to discover the undergraduates' online teaching and learning viewpoints. The results drawn from the surveys are illustrated in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1. Learners' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching and learning fundamental English writing through the online platform (quantitative approach's findings)

Questions	Value label	Frequency	Valid percent	Mean	SD
You perceive that teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform is appropriate in the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	6 26 100 146	2.2 9.4 36 52.5	3.3	0.7
You feel satisfied with teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform arrangement.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	2 4 62 210	0.7 1.4 22.3 75.5	3.7	0.5
You can gain maximum knowledge and skill in writing through teaching and learning via the online platform.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	2 4 100 170	0.7 1.4 36.2 61.6	3.5	0.5
You perceive that teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform will provide you with the same knowledge and skills as learning in a traditional classroom.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	2 30 86 160	0.7 10.8 39.9 51.6	3.4	0.7
You perceive that teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform arranged by the university can help you save learning expenses.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	22 22 48 150	7.9 7.9 30.2 54	3.4	0.9
You perceive that all students are ready for learning fundamental English writing through an online platform with the computer or other digital devices and the internet signal.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	12 56 120 90	4.3 20.1 43.2 31.4	3.0	0.8
You perceive that assessing teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform is practical and fair.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	12 34 104 126	4.3 12.3 37.7 45.7	3.2	0.8
You perceive that the assessment of teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform is reliable.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	4 24 114 132	1.5 8.8 41.6 48.2	3.3	0.7
You perceive that you have academic honesty in completing assignments and taking exams on the online platform.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	2 12 78 180	0.7 4.4 28.7 66.2	3.6	0.6
You perceive that your classmates have academic honesty in completing assignments and taking exams on the online platform.	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree	6 48 112 112	2.2 17.3 40.3 40.3	3.1	0.7

Table 2. Positive perceptions towards teaching and learning fundamental English writing through online platform (qualitative approach's findings)

Overall percentage 77		Positive themed perceptions	No. of respondents (%)
	1.	Convenient in terms of place and time	50 (17.9)
	2.	Saving expenses (travelling and accommodation)	40 (14.3)
	3.	Saving travelling time and reducing travelling fatigue	28 (10)
	4.	Minimizing the chance to face COVID-19	22 (7.9)
	5.	Suitable for the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic	22 (7.9)
	6.	Having direct interaction with the instructor and having a better relationship	18 (3.9)
	7.	Having more confidence and activeness in interacting with the instructor, like answering and asking questions	18 (3.9)
	8.	Having more attention and active participation in class	12 (4.3)
	9.	Having more time to review lessons before class	10 (3.5)
	10.	Improving English learning skills and efficiency	8 (2.8)
	11.	Having more privacy with self-concentration	6 (2.1)
	12.	Practical class controlling, monitoring, and providing feedback to students by the instructor	6 (2.1)
	13.	No difference compared with classroom learning in terms of quality of teaching and learning	6 (2.1)
	14.	<u> </u>	4 (1.4)
	15.	Other advantages such as not wearing the uniform, learning through technology, revisiting lessons after class via the online system, and seeing learning material in the learning devices clearer compared with a classroom projector	10 (3.5)

Table 3. Advantages perceived by respondents towards teaching and learning fundamental English writing through online platform (qualitative approach's findings)

Advantag	es of teaching and learning through the online platform	No. of respondents (%)
1.	Convenient in terms of place and time	88 (31.5)
2.	Saving travelling time and reducing travelling fatigue	54 (19.4)
3.	Having more confidence and activeness in interacting with the instructor, like answering and asking questions	42 (15.1)
4.	Saving expenses (travelling and accommodation)	32 (11.5)
5.	Having better direct interaction with the instructor and better relationships via class activities	26 (9.3)
6.	Minimising the chance to face COVID-19	12 (4.3)
7.	Being relaxed with no pressure in learning	12 (4.3)
8.	Practical class controlling, monitoring, continuation, providing feedback to students by the instructor	10 (3.5)
9.	Having more privacy with self-concentration, self-development, and more understanding of the contents	10 (3.5)
10.	Having more attention and active participation in class	8 (2.8)
11.	Improving English learning skills and efficiency and self-discipline, and responsibility	8 (2.8)
12.	Suitable for the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic	4 (1.4)

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Table 3 (continued)

dvantag	es of teaching and learning through the online platform	No. of respondents (%)
13.	Using less paper	2 (0.7)
14.	Open book exam	2 (0.7)
15.	Other advantages such as not wearing the uniform, learning through technology, revisiting lessons after class via the online system, and seeing learning materials in the learning devices more clearly than a classroom projector	10 (3.5)

When asked how respondents perceived whether teaching and learning fundamental English writing through an online platform was appropriate in the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of students (88.5%) agreed and strongly agreed that teaching and learning online is appropriate in the current situation of the intense pandemic in the country. At the same time, 28 of them added to the evidence by claiming that studying online could reduce the risk of contracting the COVID-19.

The students were satisfied with the online platform arrangement for teaching and learning fundamental English writing (97.8%). In addition to the previous question, 91.5% of students believed that teaching and studying fundamental English writing using an online platform would provide them with the same knowledge and skills as learning in a traditional classroom.

Concerning the question asked students if they thought the university's online platform for teaching and learning fundamental English writing could save them money, time, and fatigue, the majority of students (84.2%) argued that learning from home over the internet would save them money, time and prevent travel weariness because they would not have to pay for any travel expenditures or spend two or more hours on the road.

When asked about the fairness and reliability of the assessments of online teaching and learning in questions 7 and 8, respectively, even though students perceived that the assessment was practical and fair (83.4%) and reliable (89.8%), 46 students viewed that the assessment has some drawbacks due to possible cheating of the students. At the same time, 28 respondents thought the learners' academic results were untrustworthy.

This point of view was strongly linked to the last two questions, which asked whether respondents possessed academic honesty when taking tests or examinations and how they viewed the honesty of their peers. Most of the respondents (94.9%) stated that they conducted themselves in a manner consistent with academic honesty standards when taking the online class's tests or exams, and 80.6% of students believed that their peers also complied with academic integrity. Nonetheless, 54 out of 278 students alleged that their colleagues were likely to cheat on the exams.

The findings displayed in Tables 4 and 5 demonstrated that some students were opposed to online learning for various reasons.

Table 4. Negative perceptions towards teaching and learning fundamental English writing through online platform (qualitative approach's findings)

Overall percentage %	Negative themed perceptions	No. of respondents %
	Insufficient or lack of facilities for online learning, suc as computers, tab top, or other devices.	ch 32 (11.5)
	 No relationship with the instructor through face-to-facommunication and a lack of non-verbal communication between the two parties 	
	3. Low concentration due to disconnection with instruct and classmates, such as doing other tasks while learning	,
	4. Possible assignments and exams cheating of students	16 (5.7)
	5. Poor internet signal or internet problem	16 (5.7)
	6. No relationship with classmates through face-to-face communication and group discussion or work	16 (5.7)
	7. Having pressure when taking the exam due to time ar internet issue constraints	nd 12 (4.3)
	Improper learning environments at home, such as lou noise or no privacy space at home	d 8 (2.8)
	Hard to monitor and check students' attention and participation	8 (2.8)
	Having more expenses, such as more expenses to affor good internet signal or proper devices for online learn while paying the same tuition fee to the university	
	Lack of confidence since there is no body language to give a hint	4 (1.4)
	Relatively unreliable exams' results as students can conduct cheating	4 (1.4)
	13. Slow in-class progress due to the focus on individual review and feedback	4 (1.4)
	14. Difficult to understand lessons as it is a writing lesson	4 (1.4)
	15. Online system's consistency causing issues with assignment submission (sometimes)	4 (1.4)

Table 5. Disadvantages perceived by respondents towards teaching and learning fundamental English writing through the online platform (qualitative approach's findings)

Dis	advantages of teaching and learning through the online platform	No. of respondents %
1.	Poor internet signal or internet problem	66 (23)
2.	Insufficient or lack of facilities for online learning, such as computer, tab top, or other devices.	34 (12.2)
3.	Low or no concentration due to disconnection with instructor and classmates, such as doing other tasks while learning	32 (11.5)
4.	No relationship with the instructor through face-to-face communication and a lack of non-verbal communication between the two parties	26 (9.35)
5.	No relationship with classmates through face-to-face communication and group discussion or work	20 (7.1)
6.	Hard to monitor and check students' attention and participation or understanding due to a lack of non-verbal communication	16 (5.7)

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Table 5 (continued)

Disa	dvantages of teaching and learning through the online platform	No. of respondents %
7.	Noise from friends' microphones	16 (5.7)
8.	Improper learning environments at home, such as loud noise or no privacy space at home	12 (4.3)
9.	Having more expenses, such as more expenses to afford good internet signal or proper devices for online learning, electricity cost while paying the same tuition fee to the university.	12 (4.3)
10.	Assignments and exams cheating of students, fairness, no reliability of the test score	8 (2.8)
11.	Eyesore and fatigue conditions	8 (2.8)
12.	Having pressure when taking exams due to time and internet issue constraints	2 (0.7)
13.	Time-consuming for individual feedback activity	2 (0.7)
14.	Gaps of unequal knowledge and ability among learners	2 (0.7)
15.	Unable to handle simultaneous feedback	2 (0.7)

Teaching and studying fundamental English writing online, according to the respondents, has both benefits and drawbacks. Most respondents asserted that learning online was advantageous for convenience, time savings, and cost savings. Some of them also confirmed that learning online would boost their confidence, allowing them to perform better in class. On the other hand, despite the small sample size, other students pointed out that some of their classmates would have difficulty learning online due to inadequate facilities or intermittent internet signals since some of them lived in the provinces or the remote areas when they were learning online.

Another important perspective from the students was that when it came to the fairness and reliability of online teaching and learning evaluations, many of them (more than 80%) thought they were realistic and fair. But, on the other hand, some of them saw the possibility of academic dishonesty.

Knowledge and Skills Students Gained from the Online Fundamental English Writing Class

The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to obtain insightful information to determine learners' ability to acquire fundamental English writing skills online. First, the respondents were given five questions. They were asked to score their writing performance satisfaction with the online platform learning. Second, the students' writing performance was assessed using the scores from the four writing tasks assigned throughout the course and the midterm and final exams. To establish the validity of the offered score, each assignment was graded utilising foundation English writing rubrics developed by the English department's English instructor team. Finally, after completing each student's assignment, the instructor provided feedback and comments to ensure that students were aware of their errors in various areas, such as sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and contents or ideas, so that they would not repeat the same errors in subsequent tasks.

Also included are the findings from instructors who taught the online course during the research. Table 6 shows the data obtained from the students' perspectives in reflecting their learning performance.

Table 6. Students' reflections on their learning performance (quantitative approach's findings)

Questions	Value label	Frequency	Valid %	Mean	SD
You perceive that teaching and learning	Strongly disagree	0	0	3.3	0.7
fundamental English writing through	Disagree	42	15.1		
the online platform encourages you to	Agree	86	30.9		
concentrate more on studying.	Strongly agree	150	54.0		
You feel that you can gain more knowledge	Strongly disagree	4	1.4	3.1	0.7
and skills from teaching and learning	Disagree	52	18.7		
fundamental English writing online than in	Agree	114	41.0		
the traditional on-site classroom.	Strongly agree	108	38.8		
You perceive that the environment for your	Strongly disagree	20	7.2	3.1	0.9
online learning is suitable and promotes	Disagree	44	15.9		
your learning.	Agree	94	34.1		
	Strongly agree	118	42.8		
You perceive that teaching and learning	Strongly disagree	26	9.5	3.3	1.0
fundamental English writing through the	Disagree	32	11.7		
online platform allows you to get closer to	Agree	110	40.1		
the instructor.	Strongly agree	106	38.7		
You perceive that teaching and learning	Strongly disagree	4	1.4	3.3	0.7
fundamental English writing through the	Disagree	34	12.2		
online platform promotes your learning	Agree	114	41.0		
performance.	Strongly agree	126	45.3		

The findings displayed in Table 6 show that teaching and learning fundamental English writing through the online platform encourages students to focus more on their studies, with 84.9% (mean = 3.3, SD = 0.7). The respondents perceived that teaching and learning through an online platform gave them greater knowledge and abilities than teaching and learning in a traditional on-site classroom (79.8%). They had more privacy and could focus more on the lessons presented online. Because no one could see their faces while answering the questions, several participants felt more confident dealing with the instructor's inquiries. In addition, the respondents argued that the environment for online learning was suitable and promoted their learning. They did not have to travel to the university for the on-site classes. Travelling could make them exhausted, and that could affect their learning performance. They claimed they could have more time to review their lessons before the class by learning online since they did not have to travel. Besides, learning from home could make them feel relaxed without pressure to arrive at their class in time, as online learning allows learners more flexibility. The next factor that the learners reflected as the binding force for their better performance was being close to the instructor. The students viewed that online teaching and learning English writing classes promoted and bettered their learning performance (86.3%), and 51.8% of respondents perceived that online learning allowed direct interaction with the instructor.

Additionally, the data from the score records of the four assignments given during the course and the midterm and final exams were used to evaluate students' performance. The collected data were examined to triangulate the respondents' findings and analyse the students' performance. Tables 7, 8 and 9 illustrate significant findings.

Table 7. Students' scores gained from the four assignments

Score records of 278 students (ST)								
Score range (out of 15)		nment 1 ing place		nment 2 ng people		nment 3 ng opinion		nment 4
	No. of ST	Average	No. of ST	Average	No. of ST	Average	No. of ST	Average
8.5	2		0		0		0	
9.0	2		0		0		0	
9.5	4		0		0		2	
10.0	8		20		16		16	12.29
10.5	22		14		14		14	
11.0	26		24		33		22	
11.5	40	12.34	40	12.26	31	12.14	42	
12.0	26	12.34	46	12.20	52	12.14	52	12.29
12.5	40		42		44		16	
13.0	28		28		48		48	
13.5	22		22		18		34	
14.0	32		26		20		12	
14.5	18		6		0		18	
15.0	8		10		2		2	

According to the data obtained from the students' assignment scores, the total average score of the first to fourth assignments does not display a consistent pattern. However, when looking at the intricacies of the score records, the data show that learners steadily and significantly improve writing their scores.

Table 8. Students' scores gained from the mid-term and final exams

Score records of 278 students (ST)							
Score ranges	Midterm exam No. of ST	Final exam No. of ST	Score ranges	Midterm exam No. of ST	Final exam No. of ST		
21	2	0	44	8	4		
22	0	0	45	16	4		
23	0	0	46	8	12		
24	0	0	47	12	8		
25	4	0	48	8	16		
26	0	0	49	10	18		
27	4	0	50	10	12		
28	0	0	51	20	12		

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Table 8 (continued)

Score ranges	Midterm exam No. of ST	Final exam No. of ST	Score ranges	Midterm exam No. of ST	Final exam No. of ST
30	4	0	53	22	12
31	2	0	54	20	24
32	0	0	55	12	16
33	2	0	56	18	14
34	4	0	57	4	16
35	4	0	58	6	14
36	2	2	59	8	20
37	0	2	60	14	4
38	4	0	61	6	4
39	2	2	62	8	14
40	4	10	63	0	0
41	4	2	64	0	0
42	0	6	65	0	0
	Average So	core (Mean)		49.03	51.82

Additionally, the students' midterm and final exam records show that they began their first writing test of the midterm exam with a score of 20 out of 65 on a scale of 1 to 65, with an average score of 49.03 based on 278 test-takers. When they took the final exam or their second test, the beginning score was 36, which was greater than the score on the midterm. When the mean of all test takers was compared, the mean was higher at 51.82.

Table 9. Coefficient correlation (r) of given assignments and student's performance

		. ,	0 0				
Assignments	Mean	A: 1 Describing Place	A: 2 Describing People	A: 3 Expressing Opinion	A: 4 Telling Story	Midterm Score	Final Score
Describing place	12.35	1					
Describing people	12.27	0.976**	1				
Expressing opinion	12.15	0.974**	0.981**	1			
Telling story	12.29	0.978**	0.983**	0.983**	1		
Midterm Score	49.0360	0.944**	0.930**	0.945**	0.941**	1	
Final Score	51.8273	0.986**	0.978**	0.982**	0.982**	0.970**	1

Finally, to support the claim of the students' positive performance, the above Coefficient Correlation table for the four writing assignments assigned to the students, namely assignment 1 (Describing Place, 0.944 for midterm and 0.986 for final), assignment 2 (Describing People, 0.930 for midterm and 0.978 for final), assignment 3 (Expressing Opinion, 0.945 for midterm and 0.982 for final), and assignment 4 (Telling Story, 0.941 for midterm and 0.982 for final), indicated a positive significant correlation with the midterm

variable has a bearing on the results students receive on their midterm and final exams.

Factors Perceived o Promote Students' Online Learning Performance

A set of questions was distributed to the respondents to rate the offered strategies on a 1–4-Likert scale to explore the factors contributing to students' learning performance through online platforms. Table 10 reflects the teaching and learning strategies that students viewed as factors to support their learning performance.

Table 10. Strategies perceived to promote students' learning performance (quantitative approach's findings)

Questions	Value label	Frequency	Valid %	Mean	SD
You perceive those strategies employed by the instructor infundamental English writing through the online class are suitable and promote student's learning.	Strongly disagree	4	1.5	3.5	0.6
	Disagree	8	2.9		
	Agree	86	31.4		
	Strongly agree	176	64.2		
You perceive that asking volunteers or randomly selected students to answer questions effectively promotes student learning in the online writing class.	Strongly disagree	4	1.5	3.6	0.6
	Disagree	10	3.7		
	Agree	72	26.7		
	Strongly agree	184	68.1		
You perceive that the "teacher review and feedback" teaching strategy promotes student's learning through the online platform.	Strongly disagree	0	0	3.7	0.4
	Disagree	2	0.7		
	Agree	72	25.9		
	Strongly agree	204	73.4		
You perceive that encouraging student to practice analysing sentence level and paragraph writing components promotes student learning online.	Strongly disagree	2	0.7	3.6	0.5
	Disagree	2	0.7		
	Agree	80	28.8		
	Strongly agree	194	69.8		
You perceive that encouraging students to practice writing, analysing, and self-correction through the online platform promotes student learning.	Strongly disagree	2	0.7	3.7	0.5
	Disagree	2	0.7		
	Agree	72	26.1		
	Strongly agree	200	72.5		
You perceive that encouraging students to practice correcting their work before teacher review promotes students' learning on the online platform.	Strongly disagree	2	0.7	3.6	0.5
	Disagree	4	1.4		
	Agree	70	25.2		
	Strongly agree	204	72.7		

(Continue on next page)

Table 10 (continued)

Questions	Value label	Frequency	Valid %	Mean	SD
You perceive that encouraging students to participate in writing class activities regularly promotes students' learning through the online platform.	Strongly disagree	2	0.7	3.6	0.5
	Disagree	4	1.4		
	Agree	74	26.8		
	Strongly agree	196	71		

When the respondents were asked about different strategies employed by the instructor in fundamental English writing through the online class whether they were suitable and promoted student's learning, they perceived that the strategies were appropriate and practical in promoting students' learning (92.6%). Among strategies employed in the online classroom, the participants viewed that specifically and randomly selected students to answer questions effectively promoted student's learning in the online English writing class. In addition, the students asserted that they had more opportunities to involve in the class by taking turns asking and answering the questions with the instructor.

The students viewed the same direction with the SD value of 0.4 that the 'teacher review feedback' strategy (99.3%) promoted their learning through the online platform. Students could learn from the instructor's comments and the given examples during the teacher feedback. At the same time, the students could ask questions they were unclear or did not understand without any delay or barrier as in the on-site classroom. Besides, 98.6% of the participants voiced that teaching strategy by encouraging students to practice analysing sentence structure and paragraph writing components promoted student's learning through the online platform. They alleged that knowing the fundamental components of both sentence and paragraph structures aided them when working on assignments or taking exams, making them aware of patterns or format. As a result, practising analysing the sentence structure and paragraph components during the online class was beneficial to the learners.

The following strategy that promoted students' learning in the online English writing class was to encourage students to practice writing, analysing, and correcting sentences. In addition, the respondents (98.6%) claimed that they could learn and improve significantly from their own mistakes and their classmates' errors that the instructor feedback during the teacher review session. Lastly, the students (97.8%) perceived that teaching strategy by encouraging students to participate in writing class activities regularly promoted students' learning through the online platform.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the gleaned findings from the respondents are discussed to identify the significantly emerged perspectives to answer the study's three research questions.

Perceptions of Non-English Major Students towards the Online Fundamental English Writing Class

Regarding the learners' perceptions of the online fundamental English writing class, most students (88.5%) viewed teaching and learning online as appropriate in the current condition of the country's severe epidemic. The outcome was identical to the learners' open-ended questions about why they supported online learning. The status of the COVID-19 pandemic had become worse by the time this study was conducted, with daily cases of 21,379 and 191 fatalities on 6 August 2021 (the Center for COVID-19 Situation Administration - CCSA, 2021). As a result, the Thai government issued an emergency decree across the country, urging citizens to stay, work, and study from home.

According to the findings, using an online platform to teach English produced a dynamic and exciting learning environment that stimulates learners' participation while increasing student accomplishment (Cote Parra, 2015; Watson et al., 2012). In addition, most non-major students who attended this writing course, which the university requires, wanted to graduate on time and find a decent job afterwards, which is their ultimate goal for achieving success (Astaman, 2009; Gardner, 2009). Both the university's requirements and the desire to have a better life after graduation (Inkaew, 2020) motivated learners to strive for the highest score or, at the very least, pass the tests, regardless of the teaching or learning format, to progress to the next level of achievement.

Additionally, most students were satisfied with online learning as it could save their travel expenditures, energy, and time on the road owing to Bangkok's notoriously awful traffic (Bangkok Post, 2017). However, studying online did not satisfy all learners. It has both benefits and drawbacks (Kawinkoonlasate, 2020) because some learners are not ready or struggle to use the online learning facilities. Within a Thai context, those who opposed online learning viewed that some students lacked the necessary or adequate resources for online learning, such as computers, laptops, other devices, or an internet connection. In addition, free and robust network internet and other online facilities are still troublesome concerns for online learners due to the diversity of family backgrounds of students from various parts of Thailand with disparities in family income (Bangkok Biznews, 2020).

Despite the university's best efforts with various strategies, such as exam design, time and other constraints, some students were concerned about the fairness and reliability of online teaching and learning assessments. This was due to the nature of the online exam. Test-takers could potentially consult books, online sources, or even other people through various communication channels.

Overall, addressing any concerns was crucial so that university administrators and educational officials could appropriately examine and handle the issues in the future. In light of the findings in Tables 4 and 5 revealed that some students were opposed to online learning for various reasons. In addition, several noteworthy findings, such as a lack of learning resources and class attentiveness, should be considered.

To address the first research question of learners' perceptions of teaching fundamental English writing through an online platform, all results gathered from quantitative and qualitative methodologies were summarised through integration and interpretation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the online learning platform was well received by the students. They perceived that this learning approach was appropriate for the time being situation. It provided several advantages, including convenience, flexibility, time and cost savings, increased confidence, and a better relationship with the instructor, resulting in improved learning performance. The students, on the other hand, had some reservations. The most significant apprehension was the facilities to support their online learning, including the internet signal network. Lastly, the learners still had a question of whether it was fair to all students as there were some gaps for some dishonest students to cheat during the exams.

Knowledge and Skills Students Gained from the Online Fundamental English Writing Class

The results in Table 6 in the findings section suggested that teaching and learning fundamental English writing through the online platform motivates students to focus more on their studies. This finding was consistent with many research show that using technology to teach and learn English is advantageous (Alsaleem, 2014; Babacan & Gunuc, 2017; Costley, 2014; Parvin & Salam, 2015; Xiao et al., 2017). Online learning benefits autonomous and student-centred learning strategies by increasing the learner's responsibility for their education (Kawinkoonlasate, 2020). Besides, learning from home could make them feel relaxed without pressure to arrive at their class in time, as online learning allows learners more flexibility.

The next factor that the learners reflected as the binding force for their better performance was being close to the instructor. They asserted that the instructor played the role of monitoring, controlling, and providing necessary feedback to learners in real-time, the same as in classroom learning (Sağlamel et al., 2015; Santangelo et al., 2007). The significant difference from the classroom learning was that the learners had more confidence in interacting with the instructor. However, Patel (2013) remarked that this phenomenon depends on various elements, including the teaching and learning strategy, resources, and the teacher's class design. Teachers must understand that tools and methods should be employed to keep varied materials engaging and productive lessons.

The students' good performance reflections were identical to the findings of the instructors who taught this course online. Most of them viewed that learning online allowed students to focus on self-practice skills to deal with some of the drawbacks of online learning, such as the loss of face-to-face communication and non-verbal communication. However, students and teachers would learn how to work best together as time goes on; as Mofareh (2019) mentioned, the classroom allows instructors to engage with their students and resources and tools that can assist them in strengthening their classes and adapting learning.

As a researcher and the course's instructor, I believed that the instructor's teaching tactics in designing a class suited for the students also influenced students' self-perception of their improved performance. The non-English major students would perceive that English language learning is not beyond their proficiency to acquire since their teacher as a facilitator constantly supports them. This positive trend of improved learning performance is suggested by the study by Dörnyei's (1990), stating that students' positive attitudes towards foreign language acquisition, motivated by a desire to succeed, have a significant impact on their learning outcomes.

Although students were distant in online learning because they had their private comfort zone and kept the camera closed, I would try to keep them engaged by providing writing examples or exercises and soliciting their participation by asking for volunteers, and specifically and randomly assigning individuals or groups to complete the given examples or exercises publicly in an online class. When it came to the writing assignment, there were some stages to follow to complete each student's piece of work. First, I had each student write and submit a paragraph of 8 to 12 sentences online. I then went over each student's work. I pointed out by highlighting any grammatical or structural errors and issues with content or organisation on his or her file. The papers that had been examined were then returned to the students for their review and revision. Then, in class, each student reviewed his or her paper and corrected any errors that were discovered. I would assist students if they were unable to locate the correct correction. Depending on the size of the class, this exercise may allow students to learn from their classmates' various mistakes regularly. As a result, they became aware of all major errors and enhanced their writing skills in the following tasks.

Students' performance was also reviewed using data from the score records of the four assignments provided during the course and the midterm and final exams. Tables 7, 8, and 9 in the findings section show how the obtained data was employed to triangulate the respondents' findings and analyse the students' performance.

Even though the overall average score of the first to fourth assignments does not show a consistent improvement in English writing performance because the levels of difficulty on the assigned writing tasks differ, the findings revealed that when looking at the details of the score records, students gradually and significantly improve writing scores. Assignments 2 to 4 have higher starting scores than the first assignment, suggesting that students have progressed. This occurred to show that students had learned from their mistakes in the first assignment and used what they had learned in future challenges. Furthermore, despite the increasing difficulty level, more than 64.7% of students could obtain a total score of 80% or above on assignments 2, 3 and 4.

Furthermore, when the students' midterm and final exam records were analysed, these two data sets clearly revealed that the students had improved their learning performance. The students started their midterm exam writing test with a score of 20 out of 65 on a scale of 1 to 65, with an average score of 49.03 based on 278 test-takers. The key findings

demonstrated their learning development when they took midterm or final exams. The starting score was 36, which was higher than the midterm score. However, when all test takers' averages or means were compared, the mean was higher at 51.82. This significant finding was related to the learners' perceptions of themselves as having higher learning abilities because of the online teaching and learning platform.

In response to the second research question of knowledge and skills students gained from the online writing class, participants were satisfied with their learning performance in the online English writing class, as indicated by the following significant indicators. First, the learners perceived that their learning performance was better than on-site learning. Second, they claimed that their seclusion motivates them to focus on online classes. Third, learning from home promoted higher performance because they could devote all their efforts to learning. Finally, more frequent online interactions with the instructor could motivate students to study more and, as a result, improve their English writing skills.

Factors Perceived to Promote Students' Online Learning Performance

Concerning factors to promote students' online learning performance, the participants viewed that specifically and randomly selected students to answer questions effectively promoted student's learning in the online English writing class. In addition, the students asserted that they had more opportunities to involve in the class by taking turns asking and answering the questions with the instructor. This English language learning approach in a Thai environment may motivate students to prepare for the in-class activity. However, this strategy may cause Thai students to feel threatened, resulting in negative attitudes towardsEnglish learning (Ngo et al., 2017; Hofstede,1986). As a result, the teacher should adopt a pleasant attitude when employing this tactic.

Knowing that most Thai students are passive and shy in class, as well as lack confidence in speaking in front of an audience, I, as the class instructor, encouraged them to speak and engage in the classroom by asking for volunteers to answer questions, and specifically or randomly inviting individuals to deal with the given examples or exercises. However, they were initially hesitant and uneasy about participating in-class activities. After a few classes, the students adjusted well to willingly and actively participating in the assigned tasks. According to Kawinkoonlasate (2020), most Thai learners were initially scared. After that, however, they could acclimate and adapt to the norm of teaching technique, and they began to enjoy their learning again. Being aware of the learners' preconceptions about English learning is critical (Hofstede, 1986). As a result, their teaching class design and teaching strategies have the potential to significantly alter students' perceptions of English language learning (Wahyudi, 2017).

Another factor in promoting student's learning performance was a teacher feedback strategy. This approach was ranked high among the outstanding strategies perceived to improve student learning performance. Students could learn from their own mistakes, identified by the teacher, teacher comments, and additional examples. Furthermore, learning online

boosts students' confidence in interacting with teachers because they may hide behind the cameras. Most Thai students are shy in expressing their opinions in public, despite having a wealth of knowledge to contribute. Sharing ideas anonymously through online learning could motivate individuals and serve as a springboard for building their public speaking confidence (Kawinkoonlasate, 2020).

Furthermore, most participants stated that encouraging students to practice analysing sentence structure and paragraph writing components through the online platform aided their learning. Knowing the core components of both sentence and paragraph forms, they claimed, helped students when working on assignments or taking exams by allowing them to recognise patterns or format. As a result, the learners could perform well in their following midterm and final exams after completing four writing assignments.

Finally, Table 9 which displays the correlation between four independent factors and student performance on the midterm and final exams, indicated a statistically significant correlation. Students' exam performance is improved by strategies employed in the online class, such as encouraging learners to participate in various class activities, teacher-student review activities, being familiar with basic sentence construction, and practising writing. In other words, by experimenting with different learning approaches for each assignment, students could develop grammatical and structural writing awareness, which could subsequently be applied to their exams, resulting in higher grades.

In response to the final research question, which concerned factors promoting students' online learning performance, the findings suggested that several teaching and learning strategies for the fundamental English writing classroom could be implemented. Four key factors significantly influenced students' positive learning outcomes. First, the practical strategies included encouraging learners to participate in class activities voluntarily, specifically and randomly. Second, the teacher and the students completed a review and feedback task. Third, students were encouraged to practice identifying and analysing sentence and paragraph structures. Finally, students were given opportunities to practice writing, analyse their work, and practice autonomy learning through self-correction. These strategies were used repeatedly throughout the semester, resulting in improved writing skills for students at the end of the course.

CONCLUSION

fter integrating and interpreting the findings, several aspects needed attention concerning teaching and learning fundamental English writing online. On the one hand, the perceptions and motivations of the learners played a vital role in promoting their learning performance. On the other hand, the role of the instructor is also essential for online teaching. Some strategies for teaching and learning English writing on-site may not be practical to implement in an online class fully. The individual instructor must carefully consider and evaluate the nature of his or her specific class, including learner characteristics, the chosen

online teaching and learning platform, material and applied strategies. This study's first-hand experience could be used as a guideline in preparing, designing learning materials, or teaching English writing strategies through an online platform that could cater to the needs of the learners. With the pandemic still ongoing at the time of this study, online teaching and learning would be a viable option for education. Some intriguing aspects merit further investigation as future research, such as developing practical lesson plans for onlinefundamental English writing, developing materials for online teaching and learning, and implementing additional teaching strategies to maximise learners' performance throughout the online class.

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