

มุ่งมองและความคาดหวังของนักศึกษาไทยที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศที่มีต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์

Thai EFL Students' Perspectives and Expectations on Learning English Online

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Received: September 15, 2021

Revised: November 11, 2021

Accepted: November 12, 2021

บทคัดย่อ

เป้าหมายของงานวิจัยฉบับนี้คือเพื่อสำรวจมุ่งมองและความคาดหวังของนักศึกษาจำนวน 107 คน จากคณะครุศาสตร์ อุตสาหกรรม คณะวิศวกรรมศาสตร์ และคณะบริหารธุรกิจและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ มหาวิทยาลัยราชมงคลอีสาน วิทยาเขตขอนแก่น เกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษออนไลน์ เครื่องมือในการวิจัยประกอบด้วยแบบสอบถามที่มีสามส่วน สองส่วนแรกมีเป้าหมายในการสำรวจมุ่งมองของนักศึกษาต่อการเรียนการสอนออนไลน์และประสิทธิภาพของผู้สอนในการสอนออนไลน์ ส่วนสุดท้ายเน้นไปที่ปัญหาและอุปสรรคต่างๆ ในการเรียนออนไลน์ รวมถึงคำแนะนำจากนักศึกษา ข้อมูลถูกวิเคราะห์ด้วยสถิติเชิงพรรณนา (Descriptive Statistics) และการวิเคราะห์แก่นสาระ (Thematic Analysis)

ผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่า นักศึกษามีประสบการณ์ในการเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษแบบออนไลน์ เชิงบวก โดยมีค่าเฉลี่ย 3.70 มุ่งมองของนักศึกษาต่อความมีประสิทธิภาพของผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบออนไลน์ เป็นบวก เช่นกัน โดยมีค่าเฉลี่ย 3.87 ซึ่งตรงกับวัตถุประสงค์ข้อแรกของงานวิจัย สำหรับข้อแนะนำจากนักศึกษา ร้อยละ 21.4 ให้คำแนะนำว่า ควรจะมีการพัฒนาทางด้านการจัดการห้องเรียน และรูปแบบในการสอนของผู้สอน ซึ่งตรงกับวัตถุประสงค์ข้อที่สองของงานวิจัย จากคำตอบแสดงให้เห็นว่า นักศึกษาร้อยละ 21.4 อยากให้การเรียนมีปฏิสัมพันธ์มากกว่าเดิม ซึ่งสรุปได้ว่า แม้นักศึกษามีมุ่งมองเชิงบวกกับการเรียนการสอนออนไลน์ อย่างไรก็ตาม วิธีการในการสอนออนไลน์ยังคงมีความจำเป็นที่จะต้องพัฒนาด้านความสามารถในการสร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์กับผู้เรียนออนไลน์

คำสำคัญ: การเรียนออนไลน์ การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ มุ่งมองของนักศึกษา ความมีประสิทธิภาพของครู

Abstract

The research aimed to explore the perspectives and expectations of 107 students from the Faculty of Technical Education, Faculty of Engineering, and Faculty of Business Administration and Information Technology at RMUTI, Khon Kaen Campus, on learning English online. The tool consisted of a three-part questionnaire which was

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utilized as a data collection instrument in the first two parts aimed to reveal students' perspectives towards teachers' online teaching effectiveness and teachers' effectiveness in teaching online courses, and the last part focused on the problems and obstacles with online learning and suggestions from students. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

The results showed that students had a positive experience of learning English online with a mean score of $\bar{x}=3.70$. The students' perspective towards the effectiveness of teachers' teaching English online was also positive ($\bar{x}= 3.87$), which addressed the first research objective. For further suggestions to online learning, 21.4 percent of the students suggested an improvement in class management and teaching styles of the teachers, which addressed the second research objective. The responses revealed that many desired teachers to be more interactive during online classes. However, the methods in online teaching still needed to be improved to have more interactive with the online learners.

Keywords: Online Learning, Learning English, students' perspective, teachers' effectiveness

Introduction

The worldwide disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in diverse impacts on educational systems. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions to confine the virus's spread (UNESCO, 2020). In Thailand, to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school settings, the government has implemented social and physical distancing measures similar to other countries around the world. These measures include the mandatory closure of all physical classes on campus and have now shifted to online classes.

The Rajamangala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI) Announcement dated 16 March 2020, stating that all instructions have to be offered to students through the university-provided online learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Learning Management System (LMS). All evaluations and assessments also need to be shifted to alternative methods such as online examinations, assignments, reports, or take-home examinations.

Due to the social and physical distancing policy, RMUTI instructors had to convert all traditional instructions and learning activities to be full online learning systems. Instructors had to spend more time and effort preparing for classes and doing additional personal research to ensure that they could provide online instructions and evaluation methods with the most

efficiency. Through online platforms and applications, RMUTI lectures continued to interact with students and teach through synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid learning environments.

This sudden shift to the online learning environment due to the widespread of COVID-19 only allows for a short period of preparation for the online classes on both teachers' and students' end. According to Saekow & Samson (2011), there was still the "lack of technical skills for online courses" (pp. 129-130) amongst many Thai educators as opposed to the American counterparts which possessed "good technical skills for online courses". The lack of technical skills came from the fact that many Thai educators failed to see the importance or the need for online learning (ibid). In conclusion, this sudden move to online learning environment and the time constraint on the re-opening of the classes might not have left enough time for many teachers to prepare themselves for laying out their online classes.

Nartiningrum & Nugroho (2020) found that the challenges students faced during their online classes were the instability of the network, the lessened social interaction that affected the understanding of the course, as well as the commitment of the students. The research by Phacharuen et al. (2021) revealed that online learning, especially in the provinces outside Bangkok, students still lacked the ability to get high-speed broadband Internet. Teachers also lacked the familiarity to different programs used in online learning needed the support from the government. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore the students' perspectives and expectations on the current online English learning being offered at RMUTI.

Research Objectives

1. To explore students' perspectives on learning English online
2. To explore students' expectations on learning English online

Research Questions

1. What are students' perspectives on learning English online?
2. What are students' expectations on learning English online?

Research Scope

This research was aimed at 107 students from three faculties: Faculty of Technical Education, Faculty of Engineering, and Faculty of Business Administration, at RMUTI, Khon Kaen Campus. These students enrolled in the four following summer courses in 2020: English Reading for Academic Purposes, English for Communication, English for Study Skill Development, and English Conversation for Daily Life. The participants' selection was

done through Convenience Sampling method which included all the students who enrolled in the English classes during the summer courses. The participants varied from the first to the fourth years. The four courses were parts of the regular degree requirements, General Education, which all students needed to enroll. As for their English background, students were from different high schools, and therefore, having different English background. English is a part of the general education requirements, which consisted of five different courses. However, one course wasn't open for enrollment during the summer while this research was being conducted. The curriculum of the faculty determined which course students should enroll.

The research scope covered two dependent variables: students perspectives towards online teaching, such as participation, interactions, and the technology used by teachers during online classes; and the expectation of students to online learning, such as the obstacles that students faced during their online classes and some suggestions of how those might be resolved.

Literature Review

Synchronous learning environment is commonly known as web-conferencing or e-conferencing systems (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Walker, 2009, p. 175). Virtual classrooms allow students and instructors to communicate in real-time synchronously using features such as audio, video, text chat, interactive whiteboard, application sharing, instant polling, emoticons, and breakout rooms supported by video conferencing applications. Synchronous approach to English language instruction provides an opportunity for learners to receive immediate feedback from teachers and peers. It also enables language learners to participate actively in the process of learning and self-monitoring their learning progress (Son, 2008, pp. 41). Synchronous approach to language learning improves learners' understanding of complex subject matter and creates a stress-free learning environment, appropriate for shy and anxious students (Khodaparast & Ghafournia, 2015, p. 119). This includes the ability for students to access lectures slides, respond to interactive questions, and engage with discussion threads.

Asynchronous learning environment is “learning as the process of acquiring and converting knowledge within an online environment that is independent of space and time” (Wu, Bieber, and Hiltz, 2008, p. 323). As opposed to synchronous learning, asynchronous learning allows each student to access the information at a space and time that is more convenient for them. Although synchronous learning offers real-time

engagement and feedback between the teachers and the students, there are also some drawbacks, such as fixed-scheduling or the issues of technical difficulties. Since online learning relies mainly on an Internet connection, not being able to choose the time or being in an area with an unstable or lack of Internet connection could lead to the failure in joining classes.

Hybrid learning environment is a combination of synchronous learning, where both teachers and students need to simultaneously be present, and asynchronous learning, where students can access online activities on their own pace without needing real-time interaction with the teachers (Perveen, 2016, p. 21).

Interaction in Online Learning

Interaction is another important aspect in online learning. Interaction can help learners to be more motivated and have a better learning experience. According to Aristika & Juandi (2021, p. 443), motivation is a crucial factor in the learning process since motivated learners can understand what is being taught more through their self-encouragement. No matter how good the information or the materials are, unmotivated students will have difficulty understanding them. Therefore, it is also the duty and responsibility of teachers or educators to keep the learners motivated. Although an online learning environment has the potential to provide useful, enjoyable, supportive, flexible, and motivated for students, these alone are not enough to help learners succeed in their learning. Teachers need to have more engagement with students in this kind of settings and help foster relationship through collaborative works. Therefore, interaction during online classes is needed in creating good learning experience (Dilmurod & Akmal, 2020, p. 152).

Technology in Online Learning

Technology is another aspect that can either help or hinder the learning process of students. Institutional support for teachers is needed to train teachers on how to create a meaningful online learning environment where all the resources are designed with mobile learners in mind to help encourage students to think of their device as a space for learning, which help foster a student-centered instructional environment, with the support from the technology design and execution (Bennett, Knight, and Rowley, 2020, p. 1199; Washington, Penny and Jones, 2020, pp. 6-7).

Context of Online Learning in Thailand

For the context of Thailand, Sathientharadol et al. (2021) stated in their study on Effects of Online Learning in the Epidemic Situation of Coronavirus Disease 2019: A Case Study of Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts Students, Program in English, University of Phayao, and found that the students online classes affected students' motivation phase and performance phase, the inefficiency in receiving the information due to poor Internet service, as well as the inability to fully comprehend the lesson due to the lack of feedback phase.

Conceptual Framework

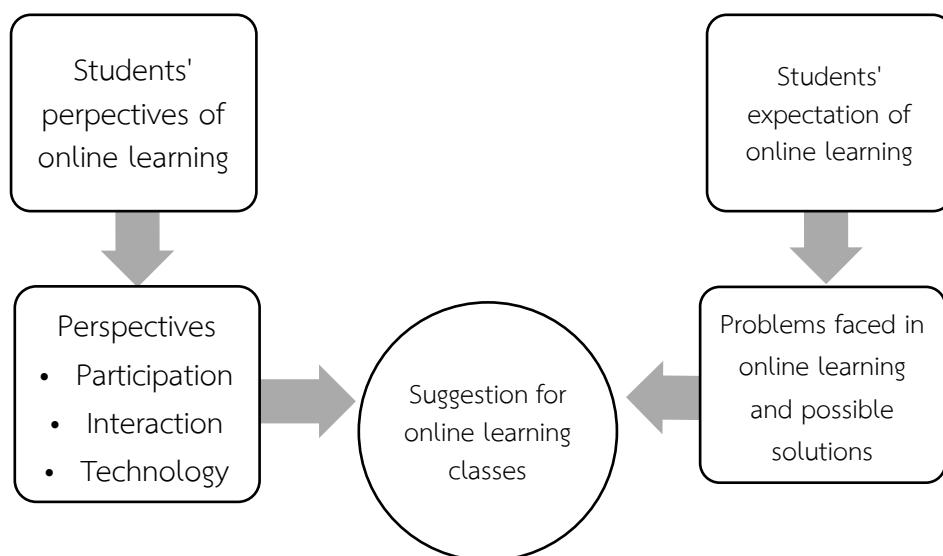


Figure 1 Conceptual framework for the study on Thai EFL Students' Perspectives and Expectations on Learning English Online

The research focuses on revealing the students' perception in online-class formats, the teachers' abilities in teaching online, and other problems they might have faced during their online classes. The findings will be able to shed light on the different factors affecting the learning experience of students and help provide the suggestions on how they can be solved in future online classes.

Methodology

Mixed-method research designs were employed in this study using quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting and analyzing data.

Population and Samples

The participants of this study were selected using Convenience Sampling Method, which covered 107 students at RMUTI, Khon Kaen Campus. The students were from the Faculty of Technical Education, Faculty of Engineering, and the Faculty of Administration and Information Technology. These students enrolled in one of the four following required summer courses: English Reading for Academic Purposes ($n=25$), English for Communication ($n=22$), English for study skills Development ($n=39$), and English Conversation for Daily Life ($n=21$). The faculties which the students were from determined which courses they needed to enroll. Therefore, different students from different faculties would enroll different courses.

Data Collection Instruments

The data were collected using a set of questionnaires consisting of three parts: the first two parts were created using the Likert scale of one to five to find students' perspectives towards the online course and towards the teachers' effectiveness. Part one consisted of 15 statements aimed at revealing students' attitude towards online learning (Statements 1-15). The second part consisted of five statements aimed at revealing students' perception of the teachers' ability in teaching online during the online classes (Statements 16-20). The last part consisted of two open-ended questions on the problems concerning online learning and suggestions.

The online questionnaire was distributed to all students at the end of the course. The responds were generated online and analyzed using a statistical program.

Limitation of the Study

The data were collected only through the distribution of the questionnaire. The information, therefore, might be limited to the surface or the emergence of the phenomena of online learning and not being able to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomena.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data from the first two parts of the questionnaire concerning the students' perception on the online learning (statements 1-15) as well as the effectiveness of teachers (statements 16-20) were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). The last part of the questionnaire concerning the elaborated detail and the suggestion for online learning from students was analyzed using thematic analysis.

The followings were the statements for the first and second part of the questionnaire.

Part 1.

1. Learning English online is more convenient than face-to-face learning.
2. Learning English online helps support collaborative learning.
3. Learning English online helps students become enthusiastic.
4. Learning English online helps learners to participate in more varieties of learning activities.
5. Learning English online helps learners to pace their learning according to their own ability without the restriction on time or teacher's availability.
6. Learning English online is more effective than traditional English learning.
7. Face-to-face interaction is necessary in learning English.
8. Online test allows for cheating to happen more easily.
9. I am able to effectively manage class times and submit my assignments before the due dates
10. I can create self-motivation in learning English online and complete my assigned work.
11. Face-to-face communication is clear and more fluid than online learning.
12. I am able to use personal devices such as smartphones, computers, or tablets, as a tool for online learning.
13. I have sufficient skills in technology and computer to complete my assigned work.
14. I can conveniently and easily access the Internet for online classes.
15. Slow Internet connection is the problem for online learning.

Part 2.

16. The teachers explained the syllabus at the beginning of the online teaching.
17. The teachers created a supporting and encouraging atmosphere for learning.
18. The teachers provided activities to support the learners to have more participation in the classes.
19. The teachers apply various activities and media to support learning.
20. Overall, I am satisfied with the management of online English learning

Part 3.

21. Problems I encountered in learning English online and my solutions to the problems.
22. My expectations and suggestions in developing the activities in learning English online.

Discussion of Results

For the result of the research, statements 1-20 focused on exploring the students' attitude towards learning English online which addressed the first research objective. The open ended part of the questionnaire addressed the second research objective of revealing the students' expectation on learning English online.

Overall Perceptions of Students in Online Learning

Both the overall perceptions of the students in online learning and the perception on teachers' effectiveness addressed the first research question.

The result showed that students had positive perception of online learning with an overall average of 3.70. Only statements 9: *I am able to effectively manage class times and submit my assignments before the due dates* ($\bar{x}=4.12$, $S.D.=.866$) and statement 12: *I am able to use personal devices such as smartphones, computers, or tablets, as a tool for online learning* ($\bar{x}=4.31$, $S.D.=.829$) received the mean score of $M>4.00$.

The statements which received the lowest mean was statement 6: *Learning English online is more effective than traditional English learning* ($\bar{x}=3.01$, $S.D.=1.232$),

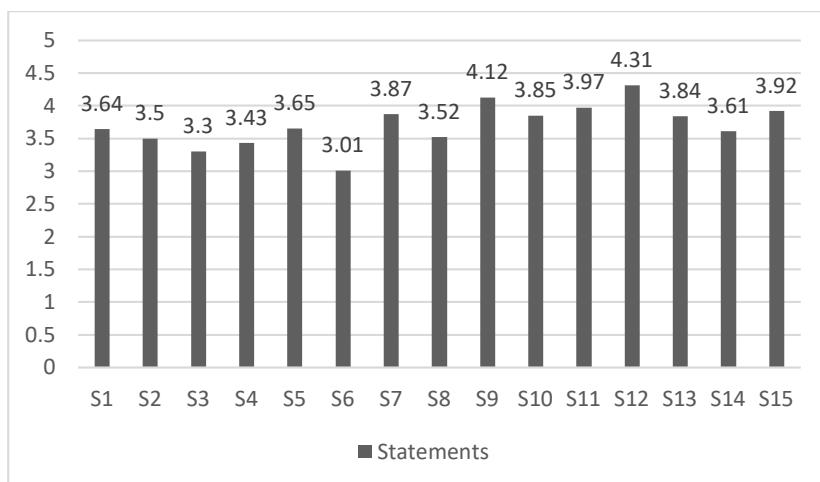


Figure 2 Means for statements 1 to 15 showing students' perception on learning English online

Perceptions of Students in Teachers' Effectiveness

For the perspectives on the effectiveness of teachers, the overall mean score was 3.87. Only statement 16: *The teachers explained the syllabus at the beginning of the online teaching* received the mean of 4 ($\bar{x}=4.00$, $S.D.=.813$). The statement with the

lowest mean was statement 20: *Overall, I am satisfied with the management of online English learning* ($\bar{x}=3.71$, S.D.=1.133).

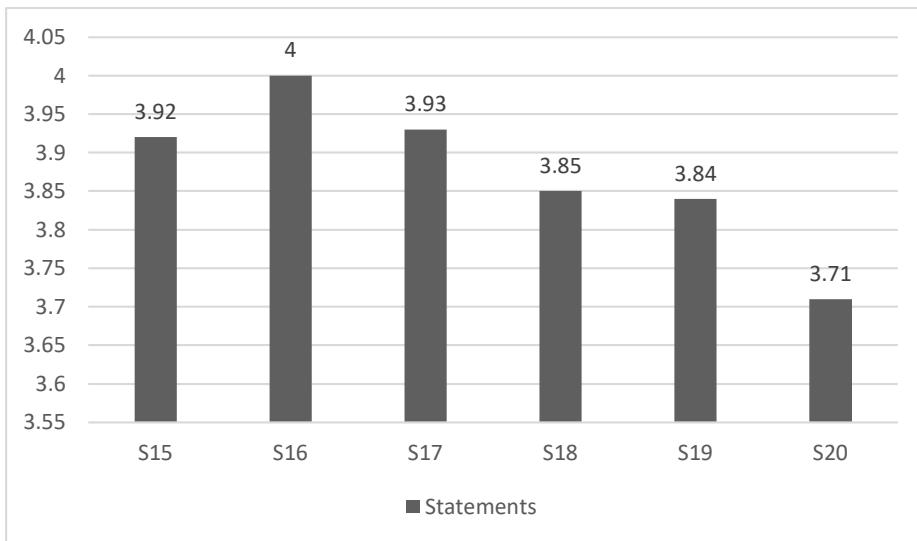


Figure 3 Means for statements 16-20 showing students' perception on the effectiveness of teachers in teaching English online

Students' perception of online learning by course

The results showed that only two out of fifteen statements for the first part got the highest means from all four courses, shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Means and standard deviation for the two most positive statements on learning English online from the four courses

Courses	Means	Std. Deviation
Statement 9: I am able to effectively manage class times and submit my assignments before the due dates		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	4.36	.700
English for Communication	4.32	.839
English for Study Skills Development	3.90	.940
English Conversation for Daily Life	4.05	.865
Statement 12: I am able to use personal devices such as smartphones, computers, or tablets, as a tool for online learning		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	4.76	.436
English for Communication	4.27	.883
English for Study Skills Development	4.13	.864
English Conversation for Daily Life	4.14	.910

Two aspects that students from all four courses found to be most positive were the fact that they were able to effectively manage the class time with no issues of turning in their assignment on time and the easy access to the online learning environment via the devices that were available to them.

On the contrary, the aspects that most students found to be the least positives were that online classes did not make students more enthusiastic, and most still believed that traditional physical classes were more effective in learning English than online classes. The results could be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Means and standard deviation for the two least positive statements on learning English online from the four courses

Courses	Means	Std. Deviation
Statement 3: Learning English online helps students become enthusiastic.		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	3.24	1.200
English for Communication	3.50	1.102
English for Study Skills Development	3.21	1.128
English Conversation for Daily Life	3.00	1.265
Statement 6: Learning English online is more effective than traditional English learning.		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	3.04	1.241
English for Communication	3.05	1.397
English for Study Skills Development	2.97	1.158
English Conversation for Daily Life	3.05	1.071

Students' perception of the teacher's effectiveness during online learning by course

Unlike the perception of students on learning English online where the two same statements received the highest mean from all the four courses, students within each course had slightly different opinions on what they felt positive about the effectiveness of the teachers during online classes. The results are shown in Table 3.

It should also be noted that due to the abrupt change from physical to online learning environment, class management by the teachers also needed to be adjusted. Therefore, each teacher had to teach more than one course, and each course was taught by more than one teacher. Therefore, the different attitudes of students towards the effectiveness of teachers in teaching online might be towards an individual teacher. In other words, this reflected the need for teachers to work together in terms of teaching styles and techniques, so that the improvement of online teaching could be achieved.

Table 3 Means and standard deviation for the two most positive statements on the teachers' effectiveness during online English classes from the four courses

Courses	Means	Std. Deviation
Statement 16: The teachers explained the syllabus at the beginning of online teaching.		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	4.48	.586
English for Communication	3.91	.921
English for Study Skills Development	3.92	.739
Statement 19: The teachers apply various activities and media to support learning.		
English Conversation for Daily Life	3.81	.981

Students from three courses expressed that the teachers provided an explanation of the syllabus to them at the beginning of the course, while students from the other course expressed differently. They revealed that the teacher did apply various activities and media to support their learning within the online environment while students from the other three courses did not have the same experience.

Table 4 shows the statements with the lowest mean for the teachers' effectiveness in online teaching.

Table 4 Means and standard deviation for the two least positive statements on the effectiveness of teachers during online English classes from the four courses

Courses	Means	Std. Deviation
Statement 19: The teachers apply various activities and media to support learning.		
English for Communication	3.73	.827
Statement 20: Overall, I am satisfied with the management of the online English learning		
English Reading for Academic Purposes	3.92	1.152
English for Study Skills Development	3.69	1.080
English Conversation for Daily Life	3.48	1.078

Students from the four courses regarded slightly differently on the aspects they felt were the least positive. Students from the English for Communication course felt that the teacher did not integrate sufficient activities and media within the class, while the students from the other three courses were not satisfied with the management of the online English learning.

Students' satisfaction with online learning

The result from the study showed that the level of satisfaction of students towards online learning was not very high ($\bar{x}=3.71$, $S.D.=1.133$). Students did not consider that online learning helped them to be more enthusiastic. Many still felt that traditional classes were more effective than online classes.

Due to the sudden shift, neither teachers nor students had enough time to adjust to this new kind of environment. Even with the availability of the technology that supported the online environment, many teachers still taught students as if they were in physical classrooms. Since the nature of online settings was different from those of physical classrooms, teachers needed to adjust their teaching methods to fit and support students in this new environment. This was reflected in Statement 19: *The teachers apply various activities and media to support learning*, which was one of the statements that received a lower mean ($\bar{x}=3.84$, $S.D.=.943$) from one of the courses.

The following data from the thematic analysis provided detailed information.

Thematic Analysis

This part of the questionnaire consisted of the thematic analysis which addressed research question number two.

From the analysis, five following themes were identified: 1. Internet connection, 2. Financial issues, 3. Adaptation to online learning, 4. Class management, and 5. Inconvenience. The most reoccurring theme from this question was the issue of the Internet connection, which made up forty-two percent of all the students.

Internet Connection

Forty-two percent of the students stated that Internet connection was a main obstacle for their online learning. A majority of the students explained that the lack of good Internet connection prevented them from getting the most out of the classes:

“*The Internet is slow.*”

“*The on and off-Internet signal created difficulties in communication.*”

“*I often got disconnected from the Internet.*”

“*Problems with the audio and video.*”

The issue of Internet speed and stability was still prevalent in Thailand, especially in certain areas outside the city. According to the study by Sukkong (2020) titled Digital Divide through Individual Factors Analysis, there was a significant evidence on the relationship between financial and social status and digital discrepancy. The result expressed that there was an evident relationship between financial problems and social status of individuals and their access to digital technology and the Internet system. In addition, there was a clear evidence that individuals with better financial status generally had more access to high speed broadband Internet needed in online classes. Even with the increase in the coverage of high-speed Wi-Fi Internet in recent years, the quality of

the Internet was not always guaranteed. Within a synchronous learning environment, teachers had less visibility in terms of noticing whether some students were not following or paying attention during class time.

“Slow Internet caused me to not able to keep up with the teacher.”

“The Internet sometimes stuttered and caused me to miss important information.”

“The problem of an Internet connection prevented the learning from going smooth because I could not hear some of the words clearly.”

Nine percent of the students who had expressed their concerns about Internet connection issues stated that the problem of losing Internet connection or having to leave the class early was due to power outages that happened during class time.

“The power went out.”

“The Internet connection was cut because the power went out.”

“There was no electricity and my phone died.”

This finding was in line with the research of Sathientharadol et al. (2021), who stated that online classes affected students' motivation phase and performance phase due to the inefficiency in receiving the information via poor Internet service. Furthermore, Internet connection issues did not only affect the ability of the students participating effectively in class but also led to another theme, which is a financial issue.

Financial Issue

The Internet connection issue also led to financial issues for some students. Since Wi-Fi coverage was not available in many areas, students needed to connect through smartphones. The price of Internet packages in Thailand varied depending on different companies. This might not be the issue for many students, but for some students who were having financial problems.

“Due to the loss of Internet connection and power outage, I had to buy an Internet package on my phone to log into class.”

“The power outage caused my Wi-Fi to lose connection. I had to put money on my phone and get an Internet package.”

“The Internet was slow, so I had to buy a monthly Internet package.”

Adaptation to online learning

From the analysis, the sudden shift in class settings from physical classes to online classes proved to be difficult for some students due to their different learning styles, which needed further investigation.

“I have trouble following and understanding.”

“I don’t fully understand what was taught.”

“I have a problem following along.”

“It is more difficult to understand what was being taught.”

One apparent difference between the physical classes and the online classes was the use of a whiteboard. Even in classes where teachers were actually using whiteboard, many students accessed the class through their smartphones with smaller screens than computers. When visibility became an issue, students only relied on their listening skills. If this skill was weak and they could not see what was written on the whiteboards and the teachers’ facial expressions or body language, they would not be able to learn effectively.

Another issue was the unfamiliarity with the program or application used in online classes. For instance, most applications came with the chat function. However, many students, or even teachers, might not take advantage of this function. For example, students can write their questions in the chat box of the Zoom application if they do not want to interrupt the teachers when he or she was speaking. This might prove to be ineffective if teachers did not have their chat box on.

Class management

The online learning environment made it more difficult for many teachers to manage their classes. Similar to the fact that students had difficulties observing the teachers’ facial expressions and body language in online classes, teachers also faced the same problem.

“The teachers were not able to take care of all the students.”

“The teachers did not pay enough attention to the students and lacked good relationships.”

In online classes, it was difficult for teachers to observe student’s expression and body language to determine whether students were following along or having difficulties understanding the lessons.

Wekke, Yandra, and Hamuddin (2017, pp. 4-5) stated about Learning Strategy in Class Management: A Reflection from Manado Case that every student had different tendencies and characteristics. The same kind of teaching methods or treatment might not be appropriate for all students and might not help the teachers to achieve their goals. This was also in line with the study of Sathientharadol et al. (2021), which revealed

that the inability to fully comprehend the lesson due to the lack of feedback phase was one factor that kept online learning from reaching its full potential.

Inconvenience

Some students expressed that one obstacle for the online classes was the fact that they did not have personal space that would allow them to focus during class time. They had to study online in common space with the rest of their families.

“I don’t have a room of my own.”

Future expectations and suggestions from students on improving online English classes

Three themes were identified from the analysis: 1. Class management and teaching styles 2. Internet quality, and 3. Preferring the traditional style of learning.

Class management and teaching styles

Twenty-one point four percent of the students suggested changes in the class management and teaching styles of the teachers. From the students’ comments, many prefer teachers to be more interactive during class.

“Encourage more interaction between teachers and students and create a friendly atmosphere.”

“Should have more activities to support learning.”

“...[teachers] should have techniques to help students understand more easily.”

“Teachers should not have students only watch videos but also having conversations.”

“Teachers should turn on their cameras as well.”

“Teachers should try to ask questions to every student.”

“Teachers should have the same amount of interactions with students as in physical classrooms.”

Online classes do not have to infer that teachers solely rely on the technologies to be the source of knowledge rather than use them as tools to help create the learning environment where the knowledge can come from both the teachers and the students.

Several students also point out that the content teachers brought to class should be able to apply in real life.

“The knowledge that teachers taught should be the knowledge that we can apply in the future.”

“...[the content] should be something that we can use in our daily lives.”

“...[teachers] should focus on things that can be applied in real life.”

The fact that students regarded what they were learning could not be applied in their daily lives might be the reason why they were not enthusiastic in the class.

Internet quality

In terms of the stability of the Internet connection, one comment suggested that each of the class sessions should be recorded to allow students to go over the recordings if they were having problems with the Internet connection during the actual class times.

“There should be recordings of the class in order for students to watch in case of Internet connection issues.”

Some online platforms have a built-in function where videos are automatically recorded and saved locally on teachers' computers. Teachers can then upload the recordings on one of the many cloud services and send those to all the students.

Preferring traditional classes to online classes

The result of the analysis also revealed that some students wanted to go back to traditional physical classes.

“Learning in the old style is the best.”

“It is better to see each other face-to-face.”

“Learning in classrooms is better.”

“Stop the online classes and wait until it is okay to go back to class.”

“I want us to be able to go to university again.”

One statement that was already mentioned earlier about classroom management also reflect this aspect:

“Teachers should have the same amount of interactions with students as in physical classrooms.”

From the comments above, it could be concluded that there was a belief amongst the students that online classes were inferior to physical classes. This was true in certain aspects and false in other aspects. This was the case that the interaction between the teachers was limited and could only be done through the video conference programs. However, with good and creative planning, online classes could be made as interactive, or in some cases, even more interactive than in physical classrooms.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The COVID-19 situation has transformed all nations around the globe in all aspects of life, and education is not an exception. As we are moving forward in unknown,

or unfamiliar territories, educational institutions, and teachers need to keep in mind that not only does the pandemic lead societies to countless chaos and limitations, it also allows us to see the possibilities and opportunities that we never expect to happen this rapidly. The traditional trend of education believed that teachers needed to physically be at schools in order for learning to be possible. Then, the idea of out-of-classroom learning came in as a new trend. Today, the situation has forced all classes to be exclusively online, which has proven to be possible on many levels. It might be true that when the epidemic passes, things will go back to the way they are. But that will only leave us with questions of whether this new reality of online classes will become the mainstream educational trend in the future. And if that happens, what can we do to make sure that all the values of traditional classes will also be carried over to online classes?

It will be beneficial for this issue if future study focuses on the perspective of both the teachers and the administrator teams of educational institutes to understand the overall phenomenon of the current trend of online classes. Researchers can build from this research to better improve the quality and creativity of online classes while figuring out ways to overcome all the issues of online classes and to make sure that the online classes are efficient and address each student's needs and learning styles.

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