

## Retrospective Views on Online Assessment: Mismatches between EFL Teachers and Students in Thailand

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At the outset of the shift to online learning during the Covid-19 outbreak, Thai university teachers were faced with challenges they never experienced before, especially in an assessment part. Practices and approaches to online assessment among Thai EFL teachers varied significantly during this transition. Despite the continued use of online assessments after the pandemic, there remains limited empirical research on how EFL teachers and students in Thailand perceive online assessment and each other's practices. This gap includes how students view the assessment approaches of their teachers and how teachers interpret students' engagement with online assessments. Therefore, this mixed-method research study aims to examine the retrospective views of Thai EFL tertiary-level teachers and students on online assessment. Questionnaires were administered to 41 teachers, 11 course coordinators, and 320 students to explore their perspectives and experiences regarding online assessment. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 50 purposely selected students to gain deeper insights. The study found that assessment methods remained consistent before and during online learning, with some modifications made to the scoring distribution. The findings also revealed mismatches in perspectives between teachers and students concerning online assessment. While teachers generally held unfavorable views, citing concerns about students' integrity, fairness, and reliability in this format, students had a more positive perception of online assessment. Insights from this study contribute to more effective planning and implementation of online assessment in order to enhance its alignment with the unique demands of tertiary education.

### Research Article

### Abstract

### Keywords

online assessment;  
language assessment;  
English language teaching

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## การศึกษามุมมองย้อนหลังที่มีต่อการประเมินผล ในรูปแบบออนไลน์: มุมมองที่ขัดแย้งกันระหว่างผู้สอน กับผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ ในประเทศไทย

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ในช่วงเริ่มต้นของการเปลี่ยนแปลงการจัดการเรียนการสอนสู่รูปแบบออนไลน์ในช่วงการระบาดของโควิด-19 ครูผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศในระดับมหาวิทยาลัยของไทยต้องเผชิญกับความท้าทายใหม่ๆ โดยเฉพาะเรื่องการประเมินผล ส่งผลให้แนวปฏิบัติและวิธีการประเมินผลออนไลน์ของครูผู้สอนมีความหลากหลายอย่างมากในช่วงการเปลี่ยนแปลงนี้

แม้การประเมินผลออนไลน์ยังคงถูกใช้อย่างต่อเนื่องหลังการแพร่ระบาด แต่การศึกษาเชิงประจักษ์ที่เจาะลึกมุมมองและแนวปฏิบัติของครูและผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยเกี่ยวกับการประเมินผลออนไลน์นั้นยังมีอยู่ค่อนข้างน้อย ช่องว่างการวิจัยนี้ครอบคลุมถึงมุมมองของผู้เรียนที่มีต่อผู้สอน และมุมมองของผู้สอนที่มีต่อผู้เรียนในการประเมินผลแบบออนไลน์ ดังนั้นงานวิจัยแบบผสมผสานนี้จึงมีเป้าหมายเพื่อศึกษามุมมองย้อนหลังของครูและผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในระดับอุดมศึกษาในประเทศไทยที่มีต่อการประเมินผลออนไลน์ การศึกษานี้เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลโดยใช้แบบสอบถามกับครูผู้สอน 41 คน ครูผู้ประสานงานรายวิชา 11 คน และผู้เรียน 320 คน เพื่อสำรวจมุมมองและประสบการณ์เกี่ยวกับการประเมินผลออนไลน์ พร้อมทั้งดำเนินการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้างกับผู้เรียนที่คัดเลือกโดยวิธีการเลือกตัวอย่างแบบเจาะจง 50 คน เพื่อให้ได้ข้อมูลเชิงลึก

การศึกษานี้พบว่าวิธีการประเมินยังคงเหมือนเดิมทั้งก่อนและระหว่างการจัดการเรียนการสอนออนไลน์ แต่มีการปรับเปลี่ยนสัดส่วนคะแนนผลการวิจัยยังเผยให้เห็นมุมมองเกี่ยวกับการประเมินผลออนไลน์ที่ขัดแย้งกันระหว่างครูผู้สอนกับผู้เรียน แม้ว่าครูจะมีมุมมองในเชิงลบโดยแสดงความกังวล

### บทความวิจัย

### บทคัดย่อ

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เกี่ยวกับความซื่อสัตย์ของผู้เรียน ความยุติธรรมและความน่าเชื่อถือในการประเมินผลออนไลน์ แต่ผู้เรียนนั้นมีทัศนคติที่ดีต่อการประเมินผลในรูปแบบนี้

ข้อมูลเชิงลึกจากการศึกษานี้นำไปสู่การวางแผนและดำเนินการประเมินผลออนไลน์ที่มีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้นเพื่อให้สอดคล้องกับความต้องการของการศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษา

## 1. Introduction

Most teaching and learning processes have embodied and witnessed the merits of technologies to teaching. However, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the integration of technology in education around the world, including Thailand. The nationwide lockdown necessitated the transition of teaching and learning to online platforms. Although the schools and universities have resumed on-site currently, online teaching remains a crucial component of education, gaining recognition as both a substitute and a supplement to traditional face-to-face classes.

For English language teaching, the sudden shift to online learning during the outbreak of Covid-19 was implemented as a complete substitute, not as just a supplement. This has presented great challenges for teachers and students (Abid et al., 2021; Watson Todd, 2020). This is also the case in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language arena (EFL) in Thailand.

At the outset of online learning, the shift to online learning was instant at that time and there was no prior guidance or specific pedagogical models that the Thai teachers could adopt. Plus, many of them had a very limited experience of using technology in their English language teaching (Jeh-Awae & Wiriyakarun, 2021). To deal with this abrupt education shift, they had to improvise and articulate the teaching and assessment practices they thought best meet the nature of such a virtual teaching and learning environment, whether it be a synchronous or asynchronous class (Watson Todd, 2020).

Assessment, as part of the teaching and learning process, was significantly impacted by the transition to online platforms during the pandemic. This shift brought new challenges and experiences for both educators and students. For teachers, ensuring the reliability and validity of assessments through methods such as proctoring, open-book exams, quizzes, and projects became increasingly complex and demanding. Students, on the other hand, faced difficulties in adapting to this new format, which often affected their performance (Jeh-Awae & Wiriyakarun, 2021). The psychological aspects of online assessments, such as stress and anxiety, worsened these challenges further.

Online assessments are expected to remain a valid mode of evaluation beyond the pandemic. They offer several advantages, including flexibility, scalability, and the potential for personalized learning experience. However, they also come with drawbacks, such as difficulties in ensuring reliability and validity, increased stress and anxiety for students, and the challenges of preventing academic dishonesty. As a result, this transition requires not only a change in medium but also a fundamental rethinking of assessment practices in education.

Despite the continued use of online assessments, there remains limited empirical research on how EFL teachers and students in Thailand perceive these assessments and each other's practices. This study, therefore, attempts to investigate the retrospective views of EFL tertiary-level teachers and students towards online assessment within the context of online learning. It aims to answer three research questions:

firstly, to examine what assessment practices were adopted by EFL teachers in Thailand during online instruction; secondly, to explore how both teachers and students perceive these assessments; and thirdly, to identify the similarities and discrepancies between the viewpoints of the two groups.

This study addresses the research gap by offering valuable insights into online assessment through a comprehensive design framework that incorporates both teachers' and students' perspectives. By exploring how students view their teachers' assessment approaches and how teachers interpret students' engagement with online assessments, the study aims to contribute to the more effective planning and implementation of online assessments to ensure their better alignment with the specific demands of tertiary education. Moreover, the findings have the potential to influence pedagogical practices and inform policy development for more robust and efficient online assessment strategies.

## **2. Literature Review**

A comprehensive overview of established theories in language assessment, the transition of traditional language assessment to the online environment as well as advantages and criticisms of online assessment in language classrooms is presented.

### **2.1 Assessment in Language Education: A Shift from Traditional to Online Approach**

Assessment is an important part of language learning and teaching. It entails multiple methods of collecting information about what students know and are able to do at different times and contexts (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Brown & Hudson, 1998). It is closely linked to teaching, as teachers use assessment results to tailor instruction to students' specific needs (Tuvachit, 2017). Traditionally, assessments are categorized into two types based on their objectives: summative and formative.

Summative and formative assessments serve distinct yet complementary purposes in language education. Summative assessment, conducted at the end of a learning period, measures students' overall performance and determines whether course objectives have been achieved, often assigning grades (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Sadler, 1989). Despite its widespread use, it has been criticized for its reliance on teacher-led evaluations, which may detract from broader learning objectives and limit opportunities for constructive feedback (Sadler, 1989). In contrast, formative assessment is ongoing and provides continuous feedback which allows teachers to adapt their instruction to meet students' evolving needs while helping students develop their skills throughout the learning process (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Tuvachit, 2017). Together, these two types of assessment contribute to a balanced approach, with summative assessment focusing on achievement and formative assessment guiding improvement.

However, the landscape of assessment has transformed significantly with technological advancements. The concept of online assessment originated in the 1970s with the advent of the first computers during that period. Subsequently, significant advancements occurred in the 1990s with the widespread proliferation of the internet (Rajeh Alsalmi, et al., 2022). Over time, language assessment has undergone substantial transformations.

The Covid-19 pandemic further accelerated this shift, as online learning became the primary mode of instruction in many institutions worldwide. In Thailand, universities largely adopted live remote learning through platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet. As a result, traditional assessment methods, long dominant in education, were increasingly supplemented—or even replaced—by online assessment. Unlike traditional assessments, which are constrained by time and location, online assessments offer greater flexibility and access to digital resources that enhance the overall evaluation process (Rubab & Imran, 2023; Benson & Brack, 2010).

## 2.2 Online Assessment in Language Classrooms

The evolution of online assessment has expanded its assessment mode, allowing teachers to integrate multimedia, simulations, and interactive components to evaluate various skills and competencies. This diversity enables a more comprehensive assessment of students' capabilities, including digital literacy, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. Consequently, online assessment extends throughout the learning continuum and can encompass teacher observation, learning discussions, and group collaboration (Hricko & Howell, 2006).

To effectively conduct online assessments, Rahim (2020) presents a framework that comprises of eight aspects: 1) ensuring alignment of assessment activities with learning objectives, 2) considering the diversity of students' circumstances, 3) incorporating both formative and summative assessments, 4) fostering student learning, 5) contemplating the format of online assessments, 6) ensuring clear communication with students regarding assessment matters, 7) providing high-quality feedback, and 8) addressing threats to assessment validity.

Similarly, Westhuizen (2016) proposes best-practice principles for online assessment. These principles encompass 1) providing higher-quality feedback, 2) incorporating longitudinal reflection for online formative assessment, 3) utilizing ready-made tools (such as rubrics or assessment standards) as performance criteria, 4) embracing technology-enabled authentic learning, 5) encouraging the integration of real-life value in assessment, and 6) enhancing discussion and collaboration among students.

By enhancing collaboration through technology-enabled discussions and group activities, these frameworks not only support individual skill development but also cultivate a sense of community among learners. This holistic approach is essential for successful language learning in digital environments, as it

empowers students to take ownership of their learning while equipping them with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital world.

### **2.3 Advantages of Online Assessment**

The literature underscores various advantages of online assessment. For teachers, one significant benefit is cost savings, as online assessments eliminate the need for printed materials. This offers logistical convenience, reduces administrative burdens, and supports environmental sustainability (Tuah & Naing, 2021). Additionally, free tools and resources, such as online quizzes and e-portfolios, provide teachers with practical and accessible options for both formative and summative assessments. These tools simplify assessment management, enabling teachers to design, implement, and evaluate tasks more efficiently.

Another advantage is the ability to provide continuous and immediate feedback. Prompt grading systems help teachers identify student performance trends quickly, allowing for timely interventions and adjustments to teaching strategies (Gikandi et al., 2011; Spivey & McMillan, 2014). This dynamic feedback loop fosters a more responsive and effective teaching process.

For students, one key advantage of online assessments is their flexibility. Students gain autonomy over when and where they complete evaluations, which enhances accessibility and fosters adaptability within the learning process (Spivey & McMillan, 2014; Tuah & Naing, 2021). This convenience can accommodate diverse schedules and learning preferences, which make assessments more inclusive.

Online assessments also provide continuous and immediate feedback, empowering students to quickly identify areas for improvement. Real-time insights enable them to refine their understanding and skills promptly, leading to a more dynamic and self-directed learning experience (Gikandi et al., 2011; Spivey & McMillan, 2014).

Moreover, online assessments align with sustainable practices by reducing the use of paper and other physical materials. This approach not only contributes to environmental conservation but also enhances the efficiency of the assessment process for students.

To conclude this part, the advantages of online assessment address some limitations of traditional methods, making a strong case for their continued use in contemporary education, even post-pandemic. While traditional assessments remain relevant, teachers increasingly recognize the value of online assessments in creating a more responsive, efficient, and effective learning environment.

### **2.4 Criticisms on Online Assessment**

Despite the advantages of online assessment, several challenges and criticisms must be addressed (Hedayati & Marandi, 2014; Jahanban-Isfahlan et al., 2017). For teachers, a key concern is the

validity and reliability of online assessments, particularly in capturing the complexity of language skills (Rahim, 2020). Teachers face challenges in designing assessments that are both fair and effective, as the remote format can complicate controlled testing conditions. Another significant issue is the potential for academic dishonesty, such as cheating and plagiarism (Benson & Brack, 2010; Khan & Khan, 2019). The unsupervised nature of online assessments makes it easier for students to access unauthorized resources, share answers, or use AI tools, raising serious concerns about maintaining academic integrity.

Additionally, technological proficiency among teachers plays a crucial role in the effective administration of online assessments. A lack of digital skills can lead to inconsistencies in grading, difficulty in supporting students, and even student skepticism about the reliability of assessments (Chirumamilla et al., 2020). Teachers must also navigate disparities in technological infrastructure, such as access to reliable internet or advanced tools, which can hinder smooth implementation (Tuah & Naing, 2021).

Similarly, students also face challenges in maintaining consistent conditions during online assessments, as factors like unstable internet connectivity, varying device capabilities, and uncontrolled environments can affect their performance and fairness (Tuah & Naing, 2021). Another issue is the digital divide, where disparities in access to technology and variations in digital literacy hinder some students from fully engaging in online assessments (Benson & Brack, 2010; Tuah & Naing, 2021). Limited access to reliable infrastructure can increase inequalities and make it difficult for students in under-resourced areas to compete on equal footing. Lastly, the psychological impact of online assessments is also significant. Unfamiliar tools and platforms, combined with technical issues, can create stress and anxiety among students, further affecting their performance. This highlights the importance of ensuring technological readiness and user-friendly assessment systems to support students effectively.

## 2.5 Related Past Studies

Past studies have predominantly focused on exploring the perceptions and attitudes of students and teachers regarding the transition from traditional classrooms to online learning. For instance, Abid et al. (2021) presented a study on the experiences of Pakistani university teachers in online instruction during the pandemic. Their qualitative analysis revealed five central themes: culture and gender issues, teaching effectiveness, online teaching challenges, coping strategies, and post-COVID perceptions. Although the study highlighted faculty adaptation to immediate instructional challenges, it showed a lack of engagement with global practices and this may hinder the broader application of effective online assessment strategies. Similarly, Davies et al. (2020) examined the experiences of tutors in five English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses across four Sino-foreign universities. Their findings stressed the necessity for tutors to embrace experimentation and adaptability and pointed out that no universally applicable approach exists for online learning.



While studies by Fitriyah & Jannah (2021), Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021), and Sharma & Holbah (2022) offered valuable insights into improving online assessment across various EFL contexts, they identified common challenges and advantages such as flexibility, instant feedback, heightened autonomy, internet accessibility issues, and technological failures. The key recommendation across these studies is that a comprehensive approach, integrating technological, pedagogical, and administrative strategies should be taken into account to enhance online assessment.

In the Thai context, research has primarily involved undergraduate students. For example, Watson Todd (2020) examined Thai teachers' perceptions of online teaching. The findings indicate that despite being adaptable, teachers maintained mixed feelings about online teaching benefits, recognizing practical advantages while also noting difficulties in achieving language objectives. Further studies, including those by Chiablaem (2021), Jittisukpong (2022), Sakulprasertsri (2022), Sukman & Mhunkongdee (2021), and Chumworatayee (2023), reported overall satisfaction among Thai undergraduate students concerning their online English learning experiences. However, findings, with the exception of Khuankaew & Trail (2021), indicated a marked disparity in learning achievement, with traditional classroom instruction yielding better performance than online formats.

These studies collectively identify key areas for improvement in online teaching and learning practices while also signaling notable research gaps. In particular, there is a lack of empirical studies examining how EFL teachers and students in Thailand perceive online assessment and their respective practices. This gap includes an exploration of students' views on their teachers' assessment methods as well as teachers' perceptions of students' engagement with online assessments. Future research should address these gaps by examining the specific dynamics of online assessment within EFL contexts and highlighting its implications for the implementation of more effective, reliable, and valid online assessments. Such research could significantly enhance student evaluation and contribute to a positive washback effect on learning outcomes.

### **3. Methodology**

The study employed a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative data from questionnaires with qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews.

#### **3.1 Population and Sample**

The target population was EFL teachers and students at a public university in Thailand. The teachers were of various nationalities. They had experiences teaching integrated-skill English courses online and conducted online assessments during the online learning period. These courses included

English for Everyday Life, English for University Life, English for Job Opportunities, English for Pre-medical Students I and II, Technical English, Communicative English for Careers, English for Employment, and English for Tourism. The students, regardless of genders, years of study, and majors, had experiences in online learning and had undergone online assessment in the English courses at the university. Random sampling technique was adopted to recruit the teacher and student participants. The study involved 41 teachers and 320 students. Additionally, course coordinators (teachers who had dual roles, involving both instructing and coordinating the previously mentioned courses) were recruited through purposive sampling. These coordinators were part of the same pool of teachers within the target population. A total of 11 course coordinators were involved in this study.

### 3.2 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires and interviews were employed as the research instruments in this study.

#### 3.2.1 Course Coordinator's and Teacher's Questionnaires

To gather data from online assessment implementors, two forms of questionnaires were administered: one to the course coordinators and one to the teachers. Both questionnaires entailed multiple-choice questions, checklists, and open-ended inquiries. Given the participation of teachers from various countries, the questionnaires were provided in English.

The course coordinator's questionnaire examined the online assessment methods employed by the course coordinators and the modifications they made to assessment for their subjects in light of the online learning setting. It gathered information about the assessment approaches before and during the transition to online learning, exploring changes in scoring distribution, alterations in the types of assessment methods, or any combination thereof. In addition, it sought to understand the rationale behind these adjustments in the hope to offer a comprehensive understanding of the shifts in assessment in response to the online learning environment.

The teacher's questionnaire explored the views of the teachers towards online assessment, including their thoughts, preferences, and concerns regarding online assessment. Additionally, it addressed the challenges that teachers had encountered while navigating the online assessment and sought insights into how teachers perceived students' behavior within the online assessment environment. The questionnaire was designed based on items informed by the studies of Fitriyah & Jannah (2021), Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021), and Sharma & Holbah (2022), and it comprised two sections. The first section included a screening question to ensure that only EFL teachers with prior experience in online assessment participated. The second section, the main part of the questionnaire, aimed to explore teachers' retrospective views on various aspects of online assessment, such as its reliability and validity, their perceptions of students' behavior during online assessments, their experiences with online assessments,

the strengths and downsides of these assessments, their assessment preferences, and the future prospects of online assessment.

### 3.2.2 Student's Questionnaire

The questionnaire explored views of students regarding online assessment using multiple-choice, checklist, and open-ended questions. To prevent any potential ambiguity, misinterpretation, or confusion, the student's questionnaire was conducted in Thai.

Similar to the teacher's questionnaire, the student's questionnaire was designed based on items informed by the studies of Fitriyah & Jannah (2021), Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021), and Sharma & Holbah (2022), and it was divided into two main sections. The first section included a screening question to ensure that only students with prior online assessment experience participated. The second section, the main part of the questionnaire, aimed to explore students' retrospective views on various aspects of online assessment, including its reliability and validity, their experiences with online assessments, their perceptions of teacher behavior during online assessments, the strengths and downsides of online assessments, and their preferences regarding the types of assessment.

Before data collection, the three questionnaires—the course coordinator's questionnaire, the teacher's questionnaire, and the student's questionnaire—were validated by experts in assessment and testing in English language teaching using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) protocol and piloted to address validity and reliability issues. Items with mean scores between 0.5 and 1.00 were deemed valid, while those below 0.5 were revised based on expert suggestions.

### 3.2.3 Semi-Structured Student Interviews

After collecting the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students to gain detailed insights beyond what the questionnaires provided, particularly concerning their perspectives on online assessment and its future use. The interviewees were purposely chosen based on their intriguing questionnaire responses. The interviews were conducted in Thai to avoid language barriers and were video recorded with the participants' consent.

## 3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The process of collecting data was split into two distinct phases: the questionnaire and the interview. Firstly, the questionnaires, presented as a Google Form, were distributed online. For the teachers and course coordinators, the links to the questionnaires were sent to them via email. For the students, the teachers of the randomly selected students were requested to send a QR code for accessing the questionnaire to the students through their preferred online communication channels, such as email,

Google Classroom, and chat applications. Every participant was required to read a description and consent statement on the first page of the questionnaire. Participants' completion of the questionnaire was an equivalent to their confirmation to engage in this research. There were 41 teachers, 11 course coordinators and 320 students with experiences of online assessment who responded to the questionnaire.

Subsequently, a total of 50 students were invited to participate in the semi-structured interviews via the Zoom platform due to their valuable and perceptive contributions in the questionnaire. Focus-group interviews were organized with the students given their substantial number. Each group consisted of 5-6 students, with a total of 8 groups. Each group was interviewed by the researcher. The duration for each interview session was 25-30 minutes.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Different measures of data analysis were employed in this study. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire for course coordinators, teachers, and students. The alpha coefficient was 0.93, 0.77 and 0.89 respectively, suggesting that the items in the three questionnaires were consistent.

The descriptive statistics were applied in the analysis to provide a summary of the data from the questionnaires. The checklist and multiple-choice questions were calculated for frequency count and percentage. Statements that were rated at the level of importance using a 5-point Likert scale were processed to find the mean score as well as the standard deviation. Meanings were then assigned to four ranges of mean values. Based on Watson Todd (2018), a mean value from 3.26 to 4.00 indicated strong agreement, 2.51 to 3.25 indicated agreement, 1.76 to 2.50 indicated disagreement, and 1.00 to 1.75 indicated strong disagreement.

Moreover, the qualitative data from the open-ended items in the questionnaires and the interview questions were transcribed and subjected to analysis through data reduction, meaning condensation, and theme assigning. To ensure the confidentiality of participants, the findings of this study were reported in an anonymous manner.

## 4. Findings

The report on the findings of this study is divided into four major parts: the assessment approaches before and during online learning, the teachers' retrospective views on online assessment, the students' retrospective views on online assessment, and mismatches between the teachers and students' views concerning online assessment.

#### 4.1 Assessment Approaches Before and During Online Learning

In response to the first research question, findings suggest that the course coordinators decided to maintain consistency in the assessment methods before and during online learning for the most part. However, what they implemented was the modifications to the scoring distribution by reducing scores for timed exams and increasing scores for projects and presentations. Quizzes were also modified in their purpose from assessing achievement to encouraging self-study. These adjustments were reported to aim at curbing exam cheating and cultivating student autonomy to suit the nature of online assessment.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the most frequently employed assessment methods before online learning were oral presentations and projects at 81.8%. Midterm and final examinations, along with assignments, ranked second at 72.7%. Quizzes and role-plays were also prevalent assessment methods at 45.5%.

During online learning, assessment methods largely remained unchanged across English courses, with assignments, oral presentations, examinations, and quizzes continuing to be prevalent. However, the format shifted from traditional paper-based assessments to online, virtual ones. Notably, assignments and oral presentations emerged as the dominant assessment methods during online learning at 90.9%, while the use of projects declined to 72.7%, aligning with midterm and final examinations. It is also interesting that role-plays were not commonly employed for online assessment (18%) since their reliance on spontaneous, authentic interactions and teamwork made them challenging to implement in a virtual setting.

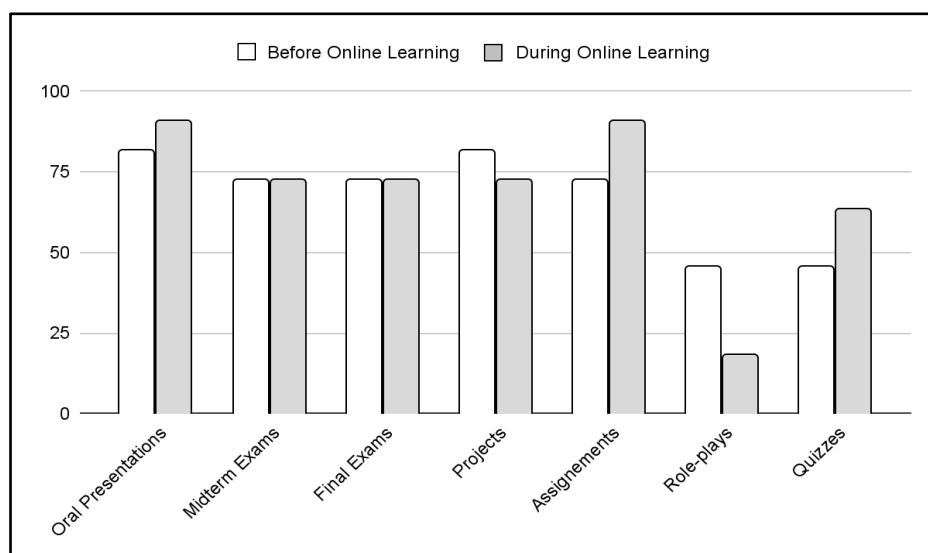


Figure 1. Comparison of Assessment Methods Before and During Online Learning

The other noteworthy finding is that course coordinators made significant adjustments to the scoring distribution of the courses. They reduced scores for examinations and timed tests while increasing scores for projects and presentations. This change aimed to decrease the emphasis on high-stakes

assessments, such as timed exams, in online evaluations. In addition, they shifted the objective of the quizzes. Instead of being solely achievement-oriented, the quizzes were increasingly used for formative purposes—to promote self-study, emphasize learner autonomy, and guide improvement, rather than simply measure a one-time accomplishment.

#### 4.2 Retrospective Views of Teachers towards Online Assessment

The findings from the second research question reveal that teachers tend to hold unfavorable views towards online assessment. They appear to be skeptical about students' integrity and honesty in online assessments. Additionally, teachers express concerns about the fairness of students' home environments and access to equipment, as well as the overall reliability of online assessments.

Table 1 presents the 11 most significant items from the 25-item of the 5-point Likert scale in the second section of the questionnaire, including the top 5 highest and lowest mean scores. These aspects reflect strong views from teachers. The highest mean scores indicate strong agreement among teachers regarding their perception that students engage in cheating ( $\bar{X} = 3.70$  and 3.20) and that online assessments are considered unfair ( $\bar{X} = 3.57$  and 3.35). Conversely, the lowest mean scores reveal that teachers disagree with the notion that traditional paper-based assessment methods are no longer valid. They maintain the belief that a paper-based assessment remains relevant and should continue to be used for evaluating students.

Table 1

##### *Prominent Views of Teachers towards Online Assessment*

Views towards Online Assessment	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Though prohibited, students tended to seek help from external resources such as textbooks, lecture notes, or websites/Google etc. during online examinations.	3.70	0.51	Strongly Agree
Variations in students' home environments can result in unfair consequences for their performance in online quizzes and exams.	3.57	0.71	Strongly Agree
Differences in access to students' learning devices, such as smartphones or tablets, had an impact on their performance in online assessment.	3.35	0.62	Strongly Agree
Students asked someone else to take their online quiz and/or examination.	3.20	0.93	Strongly Agree
Students preferred online examinations to the paper-based ones.	3.00	0.81	Agree
You preferred online assessments to paper-based assessments.	2.3	1.00	Disagree
Students did online quizzes and/or examinations with honesty and integrity.	2.25	0.63	Disagree
Lack of digital competency was your problem that may affect the administration of online assessments.	2.175	0.98	Disagree
Online assessments provided as reliable and accurate information of students' performance as the traditional ones.	2.05	0.74	Disagree
Paper-based exams should be replaced by online exams from now on.	2.00	0.96	Disagree
Traditional, paper-based assessment methods are not valid in today's digital world.	1.45	0.63	Strongly Disagree

Furthermore, data from the checklist items in the questionnaire reveal that the majority of teachers (87.5%) believe that academic malpractice among students, such as collusion, cheating, and plagiarism, is the primary factor undermining the reliability and validity of online assessments. Additionally, random technical problems are considered the second most significant factor, with 77.5% of teachers acknowledging their impact.

#### 4.3 Retrospective Views of Students towards Online Assessment

The data from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews indicate that students hold positive views towards online assessment. The findings suggest that students see themselves as individuals with integrity and honesty in this context. Despite potential technical issues that may affect their performance, they still take pride in their exam scores because they have a perception that these scores are reliable and accurately reflect their true abilities.

Table 2 elaborates key findings from the questionnaire. The statements with significant values in terms of the top 5 highest and the top 5 lowest mean scores are regarded as interesting since they imply absolute views from students.

Table 2

##### *Prominent Views of Students towards Online Assessment*

Views towards Online Assessment	Mean	SD	Interpretation
You do online exams by yourself.	3.80	0.37	Strongly Agree
You prefer doing and submitting an assignment online rather than in a hard copy format.	3.78	0.48	Strongly Agree
Even though you can secretly copy answers from your friends without the teacher knowing it, you still prefer to do online exams by yourself.	3.56	0.52	Strongly Agree
Slow and/or unreliable internet is one of the problems you face during your online exams.	3.5	0.73	Strongly Agree
You are proud of your online exam scores.	3.125	0.60	Agree
Online exams are reliable to assess your learning outcomes.	2.24	0.46	Disagree
Online assessment should persist fully, even when returning to onsite learning.	2.20	0.98	Disagree
You secretly open Google and/or books to find answers during online exams.	1.93	0.59	Disagree
You do not take online exams seriously.	1.78	0.64	Disagree
You let others take online exams on your behalf.	1.03	0.33	Strongly Disagree

The findings from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview show students' views towards online assessment in the following aspects.

#### 4.3.1 Students' Honesty and Integrity

The students strongly agree with the statements that they complete online exams independently without cheating ( $\bar{X} = 3.80$  and  $3.56$ ). They also strongly disagree with the statement that they let other students do online exams on their behalf ( $\bar{X} = 1.03$ ).

The semi-structured interview further supports the idea that students hold strong anti-cheating views. They would feel a deep sense of shame if they were to cheat and achieve good scores. Students have respect for themselves and also value the rights of others. They believe it would be unfair to their friends if they cheated while their peers acted honestly. Furthermore, the students understand that teachers suspect them of cheating and understand that teachers are simply doing their job. They have no negative feelings toward teachers.

#### 4.3.2 Favorable Aspects of Online Assessment

Data from the questionnaire reveal that students prefer completing and submitting assignments and exams online rather than in hard copy ( $\bar{X} = 3.78$ ). However, they do not support the idea that assessments should be entirely online, even when returning to onsite learning ( $\bar{X} = 2.20$ ).

In interviews, students highlighted several benefits of online assessment, including convenience, authenticity, flexibility, and alignment with the current global context. They appreciated the interactive nature of online assessments, which allows them to engage with peers, reducing stress and enhancing enjoyment. Additionally, they perceived that online assessments offer valuable skills and familiarity with tools and technologies relevant to their future careers.

#### 4.3.3 Challenges of Online Assessment

Despite the advantages, students also faced challenges with online assessments. In the semi-structured interviews, they noted that online assessments, particularly oral presentations, felt less challenging. Many admitted to hardly practicing and often resorting to reading from a script displayed on the screen. Additionally, they tended to dress inappropriately and overlook other important aspects that contribute to the success of an oral presentation.

#### 4.3.4 Students' Suggestions for Online Assessment

Students recommend a blended approach to assessment. That is to say, they suggest low-stakes assessments, like quizzes, be conducted online, while high-stakes assessments, such as midterm and final exams, should occur on-site. They believe this allows for better control of potential confounding factors and ensures fairness for all students. They also feel that oral presentations should be conducted in person because they value the opportunity for direct interaction with the audience, including making eye contact and engaging in question-and-answer sessions. They believe that presenting in person allows for a more



accurate assessment of their true presentation skills. However, writing assignments such as writing a paragraph or an essay can remain online. This preference stems from the fact that they find typing more convenient, faster, and easier for teachers to read compared to handwriting.

#### **4.4 Mismatches between Teachers and Students**

The findings reveal a noticeable discrepancy between the retrospective views of teachers and students towards online assessment in the following aspects.

##### **4.4.1 Trust Discrepancy**

The major differences center around issues of cheating, honesty, and integrity. Students emphasize their honesty and self-respect. They view themselves as trustworthy test-takers who respect both their own rights and those of others. In contrast, teachers often exhibit distrust toward their students. They often suspect about potential dishonesty during online examinations, even when not evident on camera. This mismatch reflects a disconnect between teachers' trust levels and the behavior students report.

##### **4.4.2 Preferences and Future Prospects**

Another significant difference lies in their preferences for online assessment. Teachers generally view online assessments as unreliable for both assignments and exams. However, students tend to favor doing the task online, citing increased intrinsic motivation and collaboration opportunities. They enjoy group work and collaborative writing on platforms like Google Docs as they prefer typing assignments because it aligns with the authentic process of career-related tasks.

Conversely, teachers express mixed feelings about online assessments. They voice concerns over fairness and the uncontrolled assessment environment, which raises doubts about the reliability of online assessments.

### **5. Discussion**

In exploring the landscape of online assessment, this study reveals notable discrepancies between teachers' and students' perspectives. Teachers primarily express concerns about the reliability of online assessments, often linked to the remote nature of these evaluations and the perceived ease of cheating. This distrust aligns with findings by Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021), who highlight similar apprehensions among educators. Conversely, students demonstrate academic integrity, which may stem from a strong sense of responsibility and awareness of the consequences of cheating.

To bridge the trust gap, addressing these concerns at the university administrative level is essential. Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2021) suggested Implementing Learning Management System (LMS) features, such as timed exams and restricted access, can enhance assessment security. Teachers may develop essay-type items to reduce cheating opportunities.

Moreover, attitudes toward online assessment differ significantly. While teachers exhibit a mix of skepticism and acceptance, students generally favor online assessments, especially online tasks and assignments. As noted by Fitriyah & Jannah (2021), the flexibility and reduced supervision of online formats may lead to lower anxiety levels for students that positively impacts their performance. In contrast, teachers' anxiety often stems from their concerns about maintaining academic integrity during assessments. Addressing these contrasting perceptions is crucial for developing effective online assessment practices.

## 6. Implications of the Study

This study encourages teachers to reconsider their assessment approaches. Online assessment has persisted beyond the initial online learning phase. The findings yield key implications and guidelines for effectively navigating online assessments in language classrooms.

Firstly, teachers should utilize online assessments for formative purposes. The results indicate that online quizzes, such as end-of-unit or self-study quizzes, can effectively gauge student understanding and provide valuable feedback. These assessments support autonomous learning because they allow students to take ownership of their educational journey through multiple attempts and flexible access.

While the flexibility, accessibility, and scalability of online assessments are significant advantages, teachers must ensure these do not compromise assessment principles. Establishing clear assessment objectives is crucial for ensuring fairness, validity, and reliability in online evaluations.

Diversity in assessment methods is also essential. Teachers should leverage various online assessment features beyond multiple-choice questions. Incorporating collaborative responses, essays, and discussion boards can enhance engagement and facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of language skills.

Given that technical issues may arise with digital tools and platforms, providing a supportive environment is vital. Teachers should offer clear instructions for accessing and submitting assessments, along with channels for technical assistance, to alleviate student concerns and frustrations.

Finally, addressing the risks of cheating and plagiarism is paramount. Teachers should implement strategies such as setting time limits, randomizing questions, or plagiarism detection tools to safeguard the integrity of the assessment process. Balancing convenience with security is complex, yet necessary undertaking in maintaining the trustworthiness of online assessments.

## 7. Limitations and Recommendations

This study focuses exclusively on the EFL teachers and Thai EFL students in one university in Thailand. The findings of this research are confined to this specific context. However, the practical implications and concerns addressed in this research have a potential for generalization in other universities across Thailand and in various EFL countries.

The complex interplay of teacher and student attitudes towards online assessment highlights the necessity for further research into the factors shaping these views. Future studies could provide valuable insights that inform educational practices to align with the preferences and needs of both parties in the evolving landscape of digital education.

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