

## Research Article

# Opinions on Roles of Teachers in English Teaching in the New Normal Era: A Perspective of Teachers and School Administrators in Thailand

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## Abstract.

This study aimed to investigate, explore, and compare the opinions of English teachers, heads of the foreign language department, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era. The participants consisted of 31 English teachers, heads of the foreign language department, and vice directors of academic affairs who participated in a training program that aimed at improving the quality of English teaching in Kalasin province, Thailand. They were selected using convenience and availability sampling methods. A questionnaire was employed as the research instrument to gather data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the obtained data, while the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized for hypothesis testing. The results revealed that all participants disagreed with teaching English using the same processes as before the pandemic. They strongly agreed that the processes of teaching English need to be changed in the new normal era. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) also showed that there is no significant difference in the opinions among English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era, as well as the needs for desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers in the new normal era. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need to change the English teaching processes and provide training to improve the quality of English teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, new normal, teachers, English, teaching

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant transformations in the global education system leading to the adoption of new teaching and learning practices in the “new normal era.” According to a report by UNESCO (2020), the closures of schools and universities affected over 1.2 billion students worldwide. Educational institutions worldwide were faced with the challenge of finding solutions to provide education to students. This has been an unprecedented time in the history of education, with limited time for governments to prepare and adapt to this situation.

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The closure of schools and universities resulted in the cancellation of traditional face-to-face classes, prompting the development and introduction of new educational platforms worldwide shifting to the unforeseen educational landscape worldwide. This shift has emphasized the importance of fostering digital literacy and technology skills among students, teachers, and administrators, as well as the necessity for increased investment in infrastructure and resources to support online learning [1]. Consequently, governments have invested heavily and promptly in infrastructure to facilitate remote and online learning. A wide range of platforms and applications have been developed and expanded worldwide to cater to the growing demand for online education such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom Meeting, and so on. In Thailand, many online platforms and applications were provided to all educational institutes as well. Moreover, the Distance Learning Television (DLTV) which is an educational television station, providing educational benefits and equal opportunities to Thai students nationwide was provided by the government during the highly spread of COVID-19 to support teaching and learning in the basic education level including kindergarten to secondary school (K1 to Grade 12) to avoid educational loss.

Furthermore, this educational transition has not only entailed a change in teaching and learning platforms, but also a redefinition of the roles of both teachers and students to align with online teaching and learning practices. The challenging shift in education during the spread of COVID-19 especially the adaptation of using new technology in education significantly affected the roles of teachers in every field of study worldwide. English teachers as well, they have played a crucial role in the education system since the beginning until the end of the spread of the pandemic to cope with the situation. With schools closed and education transitioning to online platforms, English teachers have had to modify their instructional and assessments strategies and using of technology to support student learning. English teachers have also been tasked with assessing student progress and providing feedback, which has become more challenging with the shift to virtual learning [2]. To support assessment and feedback in online settings, English teachers have turned to a variety of tools, including online quizzes, writing prompts, and virtual conferencing [3].

With the shift to online and hybrid learning models, English teachers are required to adapt their teaching strategies to effectively meet the evolving needs of their students. A crucial aspect of the English teacher's role in the new normal is the effective utilization of technology to support student learning. Teachers must possess proficiency in utilizing various online tools and platforms to deliver instructional content, provide timely feedback, and assess student progress since it was reported that the hybrid

learning improved students' technology competence, collaboration participation, and engagement, motivation, self-confidence [4].

[5] the courses or workshop is the most helpful in professional development activity in the new normal era. In the new normal, teachers must be required to prepare and support students who may encounter difficulties with technology, possess limited access to resources, or face other challenges associated with online learning. For doing so, teachers are also need the support from schools for the training for teaching in the digital and online environment. Techniques for managing online classroom are also importance since the students cannot attend the real classroom but they have to attend the virtual classroom instead.

Although the change of educational landscape has been changed by the COVID-19 and the digital technology encouraging teachers to change their teaching processes including teaching techniques, assessments, using materials, classroom management, and providing feedback, there is an important consideration, which may be overlooked whilst heavily engaged in the present situation, is how it will be possible to sustain the use of online learning after the pandemic, instead of simply falling back into a traditional face-to-face teaching routine [6].

Consequently, the researchers are eager to explore the perspectives of English teachers and school administrators regarding their roles in English teaching in the new normal era. The findings of this research can provide valuable insights and contribute to the advancement of modern English language teaching. They can serve as a new chapter for teachers, school administrators, course designers, and curriculum developers, offering guidance for developing educational innovations that support English language teaching and various forms of educational administration.

## 1.1. Research Objectives

To investigate the opinions of English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs on roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era.

To investigate the opinions of English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs on needs regarding desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers of teaching in the new normal era.

To compare the opinions among English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs on roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era.

To compare the opinions among English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs on needs regarding desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers of teaching in the new normal era.

## 1.2. Variables

Dependent variables consist of opinions on roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era and opinions on needs regarding desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers of teaching in the new normal era.

Independent variables are three types of participants including English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs.

## 1.3. Hypotheses

H0: There are no significant differences in opinions among English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era and the needs regarding desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers for teaching in the new normal era.

H1: There are significant differences in opinions among English teachers, the heads of the foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era and the needs regarding desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers for teaching in the new normal era.

# 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 2.1. Participants

A total of 31 English teachers, head of foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs participated in the study as part of a training program

aimed at improving the quality of English teaching in Kalasin province, Thailand. They were selected using convenience and availability sampling methods.

## 2.2. Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in this study was an online questionnaire administered through Google Forms consisting of 15 items, comprising both quantitative and qualitative sections. It aimed to gather the opinions of both English teachers, head of foreign language department, and the vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of English teachers in the new normal era and the desired characteristics and qualifications of English teachers for teaching in this era.

The first five questions focused on teaching in the same way as before the pandemic, while the following five questions explored the participants' views on changing the approach to English teaching in the new normal era. The final five questions assessed the participants' perceptions of the necessary aspects for the professional development of English teachers in the new normal era. It was sent to the expert of English language teaching to check the content validity and it was revised according to comments and suggestions.

## 2.3. Data Collection

The participants were invited to complete the questionnaire using Google Forms during the training. The objectives of the study and instructions on how to respond to the questionnaire were provided to the participants. They were allotted a time of 5 minutes to complete the form. After the designated time, they were asked if they encountered any problems or difficulties while filling out the form, to ensure the completion of the questionnaire.

## 2.4. Data Analysis

The data received from the Google Form were analyzed by computer software to find out the mean score and percentage. The results were interpreted according the following criteria:

The interpretation of the result of the analysis of Roles of English Teachers of Teaching in the New Normal Era was explained below:

Mean Score 4.01 - 5.00 was interpreted as strongly agree

Mean Score 3.01 - 4.00 was interpreted as agree

Mean Score 2.01 – 3.00 was interpreted as neutral

Mean Score 1.01 – 2.00 was interpreted as disagree

Mean Score 0 – 1.00 was interpreted as strongly disagree

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are as follows:

TABLE 1: General Information of the Participants.

Job Function of Participants	Number	Percentage
English teacher	12	<b>38.71</b>
Head of Foreign Language Department	10	<b>32.26</b>
Vice Director of Academic Affairs	9	<b>29.03</b>
Total	31	<b>100</b>

Table 1 presents the distribution of selected participants from three key elements involved in teaching English at schools. The participants consisted of 12 teachers, 10 heads of department, and 9 administrators, representing a similar percentage distribution of 38.71%, 32.26%, and 29.03% respectively.

TABLE 2: The Opinion on Roles of English Teachers of Teaching in the New Normal Era of English Teachers for Teaching in the Same Way as Before the Pandemic.

Statement	( $\bar{x}$ ) Teachers	( $\bar{x}$ ) Heads of Department	( $\bar{x}$ ) Vice Directors
Teachers should teach classes as normally as before the pandemic happened.	2	1.9	2.11
Teachers should teach according to the curriculum and teachers' handbook standards.	2.33	2.4	2.44
Teachers should implement the teaching materials and techniques used before the pandemic.	2	2.1	2.11
Teachers should evaluate students by using the methods used before the pandemic.	2.16	2.4	2.22
Teachers should provide feedback to students by using the methods before the pandemic.	2.33	2.6	2.89
Total	<b>2.16</b>	2.36	2.06

Table 2 presents the overall opinions of English teachers, heads of foreign language department, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the decision of not changing the way of teaching. The mean scores indicate a neutral level of agreement, with scores of 2.16, 2.36, and 2.06 respectively.

TABLE 3: The Opinion on Roles of English Teachers of Teaching in the New Normal Era of English Teachers for Changing the Teaching After the Pandemic.

Statement	( $\bar{x}$ ) Teachers	( $\bar{x}$ ) Heads of Department	( $\bar{x}$ ) Vice Directors
Teachers should integrate new teaching methods and technologies into classrooms to improve the quality of teaching and encourage students' participation and class engagement.	4.17	4.3	4.11
Teachers should develop and deliver online or hybrid learning methods to students for flexibility and creativity in teaching such as online discussions, forums, video lectures, and interactive learning activities.	4.08	4.3	4.11
Teachers should create lesson plans that would accommodate the tremendous changes because of new normal education, emphasizing the students' application of knowledge and skills in real-world situations.	4.00	4.3	4.22
Teachers should develop and administer authentic and creative assessments which is like what has been used in the real-world to measure students' progress, along with timely and constructive feedback to students.	4.08	4.3	4.22
Teachers keep up to date on the latest information technology, digital technology, and trends in national and international labor markets to ensure that their instruction is effective and relevant.	4.17	4.2	4.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>4.48</b>

Table 3 displays the overall opinions of English teachers, heads of the foreign language department, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the need to change the approach to teaching English in the new normal era. These opinions indicate a high level of agreement, with mean scores of 4.10, 4.28, and 4.48, respectively, reflecting a strong consensus among the participants.

Table 4 displays the overall needs regarding the desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers for English teaching in the new normal era. The participants, including English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs, strongly agreed with these needs, as indicated by mean scores of 4.40, 4.30, and 4.58 respectively.

TABLE 4: Needs Regarding Desired Characteristics and/or Qualifications of English Teachers of Teaching in the New Normal Era.

Statement	( $\bar{x}$ ) Teachers	( $\bar{x}$ ) Heads of Department	( $\bar{x}$ ) Vice Directors
Knowledge on modern teaching techniques.	4.08	4.11	4.11
Knowledge on new methods of assessment and testing.	4.08	4.33	4.33
Knowledge on classroom management.	4	4.44	4.44
Knowledge on integrating new technology in teaching.	4.08	4.44	4.44
Knowledge on trends of English teaching to prepare for the future.	4.08	4.33	4.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>4.58</b>

TABLE 5: The Results of the Analysis of Variance of Statement 1 – Statement 5.

Statements	N	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
S1	31	2	.039	.086	.918
S2	31	2	.076	.069	.933
S3	31	2	.158	.284	.755
S4	31	2	1.232	1.280	.294
S5	31	2	.594	.358	.702

Table 5 indicates that there is no significant difference in the opinions of English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the decision of not changing the way of teaching English in the new normal era, at a significance level of 0.05. This implies that they agree to change the processes of teaching English in the new normal era.

TABLE 6: The Results of the Analysis of Variance of Statement 6 – Statement 10.

Statements	N	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
S6	31	2	.199	.254	.778
S7	31	2	.348	.420	.661
S8	31	2	.807	1.012	.376
S9	31	2	.574	.692	.509
S10	31	2	.223	.321	.728

Table 6 reveals that there is no significant difference in the opinions of English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the decision to change the way of teaching English in the new normal era,



at a significance level of 0.05. This supports the previous findings that they agree to change the processes of teaching English in the new normal era.

TABLE 7: The Results of the Analysis of Variance of Statement 11 – Statement 15.

Statements	N	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
S11	31	2	.179	.393	.678
S12	31	2	.308	.677	.516
S13	31	2	.305	.654	.528
S14	31	2	.163	.399	.675
S15	31	2	.308	.515	.603

Table 7 indicates that there is no significant difference in the opinions of English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the needs for desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers in teaching in the new normal era, at a significance level of 0.05. This implies that training programs should be provided to English teachers to enhance the quality of English teaching in the new normal era.

For the qualitative data, there is no response in this part. This might be affected by the limited time during the training since they had to finish the questionnaire before they will move to another session of the training.

### 3.1. Hypotheses Testing

Based on the results of the analysis of variance presented in Tables 5-7, it is evident that there is no significant difference in the opinions among English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding the roles of teachers in English teaching in the new normal era, as well as the needs for desired characteristics and/or qualifications of English teachers in the new normal era. As a result, the hypothesis H1 was rejected.

### 3.2. Discussion

The results presented earlier indicated that all groups of participants disagreed with the roles of teachers to teaching English using the same processes as before the pandemic. On the contrary, they strongly agreed to change their roles of teaching English in terms of teaching methods, content, materials, assessment, and feedback based on the challenges and opportunities brought about by the pandemic. Based on the change of

the educational landscape from face-to-face classroom to online one, the roles teachers have to parallelly transform to align with this dynamic. The traditional teaching processes consisting of explaining knowledge, finishing exercises, memorizing the dialogues in the books seems to be not applicable to sever the changing educational environment. Consequently, integrating digital technology, real-world content and assessment, effective teaching methods, authentic teaching and learning materials, and instant feedback needs to be the assimilated in the new roles of teachers in the new normal era. The new roles of teachers are required to be established and implemented to English teachers in all schools for improving the quality of English teaching and learning. This was confirmed by the study of [7] who mentioned that in response to this situation, teachers now are working and attending sets of training through webinars to learn and explore e-learning technologies which is perceived to be an effort of educating and capacitating teachers for the new role they are soon to take – that is to become managers of virtual classes.

The results of the analysis of variance also confirmed the need of changing roles of English teachers since they showed no significant difference in the opinions among English teachers, heads of foreign language departments, and vice directors of academic affairs regarding not changing the way of teaching English in the new normal era, as well as changing the way of teaching English in the new normal era at the level of 0.05. This suggests that they strongly agreed to transform the roles of teachers of English language teaching in the new normal era not teaching in the same way as before the pandemic. The change of the roles of English teachers for teaching in the new normal was supported by the study of [8] who proposed the new responsibilities of English teachers by mentioning that English teachers used a variety of teaching methods in teaching both online teaching and offline teaching during the pandemic and new normal era. Moreover, it is also confirmed the study [9] who sated that the learning innovations and the usage of suitable and diverse media for learning significantly hold up enhancing the educational quality in the new normal era. However, it is important to note that the implementation of these changes in teaching methods, materials, assessment, and feedback strategies may vary depending on the readiness of educational institutions, countries, and individual teachers.

Moreover, the success of educational transformation needs the engagement of all stakeholders in this process not only to force teachers to change their roles. School administrators are also seriously required to change their roles to support this reform. They have to set the clear goals and approaches of this important task to guide and support teachers on this transformation of both policies and activities. This was supported by the study of [10] who proposed that the role of school principals in improving

teacher competence can be done through several activities such as supervision of education, education and training, continuous motivation and changes in work culture. The teacher competencies that are relevant to learning in the New Normal era include developing literacy and science and technology competencies, classroom management competencies and communication and social skills.

The results of this study also revealed that all groups of participants strongly agreed that they need to improve the quality of English language teaching ability in terms of teaching methods, content, materials, assessment, and future trends of teaching English in the new normal era. The analysis of variance among the three groups of participants also indicated that there is no significant difference in their opinions regarding the desired characteristics and qualifications of English teachers in the new normal era at a significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that training programs should be provided to English teachers to prepare them for the readiness to teach English in the new normal era. This was confirmed by the study of [5] who proposed that the courses or workshop is the most helpful in professional development activity in the new normal era. Moreover, the study of [11] also support this finding by stating that the new challenges and opportunities being laid by the new normal mode of teaching tested teachers' resilience and that they too, are lifelong learners implying that teachers themselves have to learn all the time to improve the quality of teaching in the transforming and disrupting educational landscape.

However, lacking of good preparation, might negatively affect the results of the new educational policy execution. Pushing teachers to implement the new educational policies without adequate preparation and support can lead to the failure of new policy implementation as elaborated in the conclusion of the study of [12] who emphasized that the majority of elementary school teachers in several regions of Indonesia's provinces are not ready for the implementation of online learning policies in the new normal era of during COVID-19.

In new educational environment where digital technology and online learning play the important roles of both teaching and learning, the roles of teachers teaching through the use of the face-to-face classroom also need to be reformed as well. From being the knowledge teller in the traditional class, the teachers, therefore, need to transform their roles to be the learning facilitator who supports studying in the new normal era relying on using digital technology and online learning. For doing so, necessary trainings for supporting the mentioned transformation need to be provided to English teachers for reforming their roles.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Since educational landscape has been changed by the COVID-19 as well as the disruption of digital technology facilitating both teaching and learning through many online platforms, the roles of teachers need to be reformed for the adaptation of these dynamics. The traditional roles of teaching, assessing, giving feedback, using material, and managing the classroom need to be changed by adapting the new technology since it has played an important role in facilitating remote learning during the pandemic. This transformation needs the cooperation of stakeholders in schools consisting of teachers, heads of department, and top administrators. They mutually need to be aware of this situation, to set the clear goals, to identify strategies, to implement strategies, to evaluate the project, to adjust for the best performance, and to expand the implementation. However, since technology is very crucial in providing education in the new normal era, but it cannot fully replace the expertise and guidance that teachers provide in the classroom. Online learning tools can supplement classroom instruction, but they cannot replace the personalized attention, feedback, and support that teachers offer to individual students. Teachers are also essential for creating a sense of community and social interaction that is critical for the well-being and academic success of students. School administrators are very important in terms of directing school to the suitable goals and supporting the teachers for the adaptation of any changes in the changing education. Although digital technology can disrupt educational landscape, the roles of teachers in classroom are still important as [13] mentioned in their study that distance learning cannot replace the classroom environment.

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