

# Designing Writing Coursebook And Homework Book For The English Writing 3 And English Writing 4 Modules Under The High-Quality Program Of The English Language Major

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## Abstract:

This research project aimed at identifying students' needs for the English writing skills as the solid foundation in order to develop the coursebooks for high-quality programs of the English Language major. The participants of the study consisted of 93 students in the first-year, second-year, and third-year high-quality English majors and 16 teachers teaching high-quality English majors. Questionnaire was employed to capture the students' target and learning needs in the study. The research procedure was adapted from the Masuhara model of materials development. The results showed that the students strongly support the designing of Writing 3 and Writing 4 coursebooks and homework books which are suitable with the need and curriculum of programmes, especially the objectives of the course. The implication of the findings served as the strong base in designing Writing 3 and Writing 4 course books and workbooks for high-quality English major students.

**Keyword:** Writing 3; Writing 4; coursebook; workbook; high-quality English major students

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## I. Introduction

On October 3, 2020, the President of Thai Nguyen University issued Decision No. 2098 concerning the requirement of Language Proficiency upon students' graduation from a university, which serves as significant references for teachers at SFL to develop learning and teaching materials in order to achieve their learners' required level of language proficiency. Considering the problems with time allocation, a lack of supplementary materials and the Decision No. 2098, developing supplementary reading and writing materials for enrichment and remedial purposes for the first-year English major and non-major students at SFL – TNU plays a pivotal role to foster their language skills, and more importantly to help them achieve the required standard level of English proficiency on the CEFR Proficiency scale after graduating from university. Accordingly, this study was conducted with the aim to develop supplementary materials for the first-year English majors' and non-majors' further reading and writing practice at SFL – TNU.

## II. Material And Methods

### Research Questions

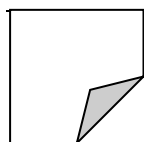
The study aimed at designing Writing textbooks and workbooks 3, 4 for high-quality English major students at SFL-TNU in order to develop their writing skills.

Specifically, this research project aimed to address the following research questions:

1. What are the students' needs for English Writing 3 and 4 textbooks and workbooks?
2. What are the appropriate English Writing textbooks and workbooks for high-quality English major students at SFL-TNU?

### Research Design

The study was conducted to investigate high-quality English major students at SFL-TNU needs. Drawing from their stated needs, appropriate English Writing textbooks and workbooks were designed in order to develop



their writing skills. In relation to its research aims and questions, the quantitative approach in which the need analysis questionnaire was utilized to capture data concerning their learning and target needs.

**Research Setting and Participants**

The target population of this study comprised 101 English high-quality students consisting of K43 - K44 - K45. In the survey, a convenient sampling in which “choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals that are conveniently available and willing to participate in the study” (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, p.286) was utilized for the researchers in this study to intentionally make a decision on excluding a subset or section of the wider population (Bryman, 2008) and more importantly, to maximize representativeness in this study (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The participants who were conveniently selected for the survey must fit the following criteria: (1) those who were the high-quality English majors at SFL – TNU; (2) those who were lecturers of high-quality English major students.

Of 101 students who were invited to attend the survey, 93 consented to take part in the survey and completed their sheets of questionnaire. Drawing on the Krejcie and Mogan’s (1970) determination of the sample, the sample size of 93 would accurately reflect the entire population.

Accordingly, the participants in this study consisted of 93 English high-quality students consisting of K43 - K44 - K45. The age of the students varies from 18 to 20. At the time of the study, they were their first- year, second- year, and third -year students. Most of them had completed a course of Writing 3 and Writing 4. For Writing 3, students focus on describing diagrams consisting of line charts, tables, pie charts, bar charts, mixed charts, processes, and maps. For Writing 4, students learn how to write an essay and steps to write cause and effect essays, comparison and contrast essays, problem/ solution essays.

**Data Collection Instrument**

In this study, the survey questionnaire was chosen as the primary instrument for data collection. There are several reasons to justify this decision. Brown (1995) noted that questionnaires are an effective way of obtaining data from a large number of people, and Dörnyei (2003) identified that they can be used to gain three distinct types of information: biographical information about the participants, information about their current or past behaviours and habits, and information about their values, opinions, beliefs and thoughts. Additionally, Nunan and Bailey (2009) suggested that surveys are frequently used in social research, particularly in education, as they can be used to investigate the respondents’ attitudes, conditions and opinions at a given time.

Furthermore, McDonough and McDonough (1997) stated that questionnaires can be used to collect and compare data from different points in time, and Borg (2006) and Dörnyei (2003) both noted that it is time-efficient and cost-effective for both the researcher and the participants. All these merits make the questionnaire a suitable choice for collecting data in this study.

In the present study, the questionnaire by Triandari (2015) was tailored to fit the research needs. It was divided into two sections, which can be found in the appendix. The first section contained questions about the demographics of the respondents, like their age, gender, expertise in learning English, English skill level and major. The second section contained sixteen inquiries regarding the participants' desired in-class and at-home learning approaches.

**Table 1. The Organization of Needs Analysis Questionnaire**

	Aspects	Figures/ Tables	Number of questions	Purposes of the Questions
<b>Target Needs</b>				
	Lacks	Figures 1, 2	3 (Q1, 2, 3)	To identify the gap(s) between students’ existing knowledge and the required knowledge level.
	Necessities	Figures 3, 4	2 (Q4, Q5)	To work out what students need to perform the courses’ goals

We opted to use Google Forms - an online, cloud-based data management tool - to create a web-based questionnaire for both students and researchers which saved time and allowed respondents to complete the survey from their phones or computers without having to leave their homes.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The procedure of this research followed the system approach model proposed by Dick and Carey (2003) which consists of five steps: conducting a need analysis, planning (writing a syllabus), designing the materials, material evaluation and revising. However, the system approach model had been adapted by the researcher to meet the condition of the research in which only three steps, namely conducting a need analysis, planning (writing a syllabus), and designing the materials were adopted in the current study. The scheme of steps of materials development in this research is shown in the figure below.

The procedure of the research was described as follows:



**Diagram 1. The Organization of the Research Procedure**

**Conducting a needs analysis**

This step was conducted at the early stage of the research. The researchers first held a short meeting of about 15 minutes with all of the participants in order that they briefly introduced the purposes of the study as well as the procedure involved. After that the researchers administered the link of questionnaires to 93 English students of high quality programs, guided them to complete their questionnaires sent online to them. The participants were also notified that the collected data was only used for the purposes of the research and kept confidential.

**Designing the English Writing 3 and 4 coursebook and workbook**

The English Writing 3 and 4 coursebook and workbook were later developed based on the modified syllabus. In English Writing 3 and 4 coursebooks, detailed theories about targeted writing contents are presented with various examples and sample writings. Then, in the practice section, tasks are provided, ranging from easy to more difficult ones, from guided to free one, to assist students to remember the theories and apply them in real writing contexts. In English Writing 3 and 4 workbooks, learning contents are equivalent with those in the course books. In each unit, the authors tried to design various practice exercises to help students revise and broaden their knowledge and improve writing skills about English graphic description and essays.

**Data analysis**

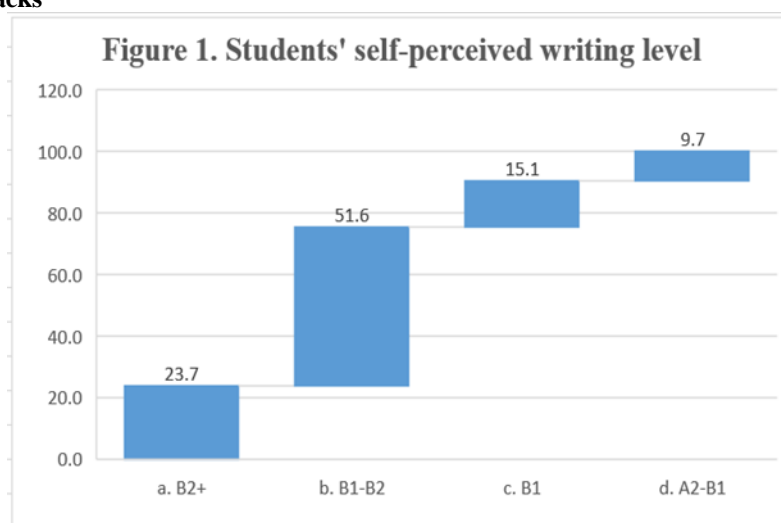
The quantitative data were the results of data collection through a questionnaire ( for students) and interviews ( for teachers). To analyze the questionnaire results, the total data from the participants’ responses was collected online and analyzed statistically to generate descriptive statistics using the google forms application. Statistical analyses carried out on the data included percentages which were presented in the form of tables. The highest percentages of the answers to each question were considered representing the students’ needs.

**III. Discussion**

**The Results of Needs Analysis**

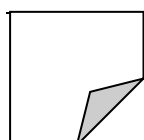
The results of needs analysis embracing the students’ target and learning needs were obtained from 93 students and 16 teachers.

**Target Needs  
Necessities and Lacks**



**Figure 3.1: Students’self-perceived writing level**

As shown in Figure 3.1, over half of the students claimed that their writing level is at B1-B2 range (51.6%), meanwhile the number of students at B2 level of writing and above accounted for almost a quarter of the student



group (23.7%). The percentage of students whose writing levels is below B1 level account another quarter, around 24.8 %.

More specifically, regarding their writing ability in describing charts and essay composition, findings obtained from Figure 2 indicate that the vast majority of students grade themselves at average levels, with some confident to be good writers of such genres (23.7% and 5.4%, respectively for each) and some not having a good command of writing these types of writing.

Therefore, there seems to be a learning gap here as over half of respondents perceived them to be B1 – B2 users of English writing but to be short of confidence in writing the two targeted genres. The authors of this project needs to develop teaching materials, namely course books and workbooks to boost their confidence and skills.

**Wants**

When it comes to the questions of what to be included in the courses, and what to be taught and learnt, the findings can be seen in Figures 3 and 4.

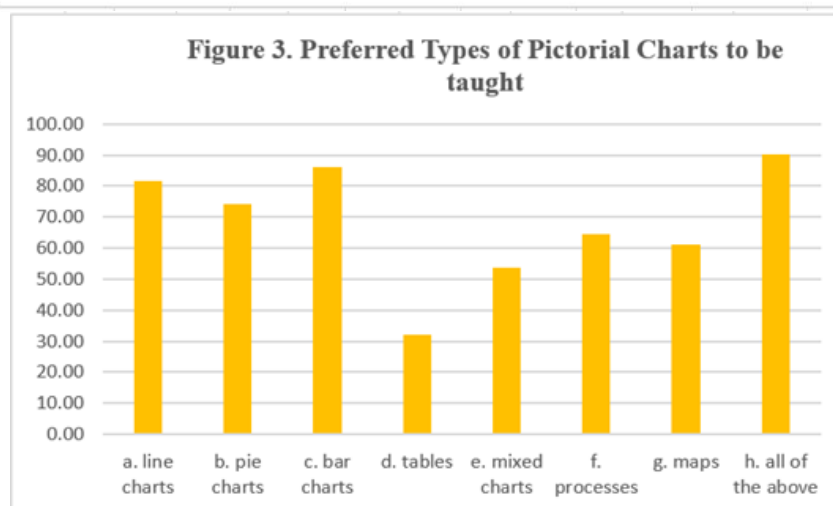
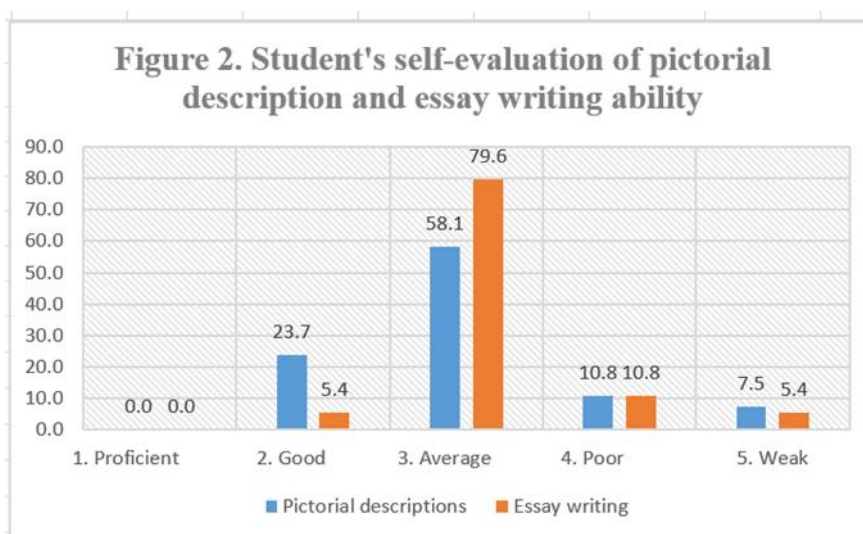
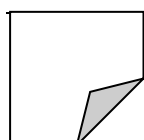


Figure 3 reveals that, generally, the respondents anticipate all types of charts and diagrams for IELTS Task 1 questions, with tables and mixed charts being less desired (approximately 30% wanting to learn how to describe tables and 50% to learn producing mixed charts). Surprisingly, 90% expressed a desire for the Writing 3 course to cover all types of pictorial descriptions. It is evident that the students are highly motivated for this course, likely believing it will be of great assistance for their foreign language proficiency exams. Interviews with teachers in charge of writing courses at SFL show the same findings. They all believe that all types of charts, maps, and diagrams should be covered in Writing 3 for fast-track students at SFL, TNU.

Writing 4, on the same vein, witnesses a similar expectation from students who wish an inclusion of all types of essays, as indicated from Figure 4. However, teacher respondents strongly believe that the distribution of



courses under the training program at SFL should be taken into consideration, hence only the first three types of essay shall be realized in Writing 4 in order that there will be sufficient time for student to practice and master these three types.

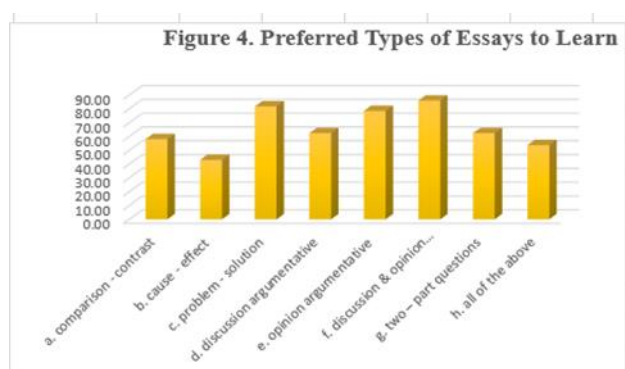


Figure 3.4 revealed that all of the students reached an agreement on their wants in courses in paragraph writing and letter writing. Most students expressed their wants to improve lexical resources, grammar, coherence and cohesion, from 60% to over 80%. Meanwhile, approximately 40% to 50% of students wanted to improve their skills of writing the introduction and the conclusion in letter writing; the figures in paragraph writing are pretty low, from 20% to 30%.

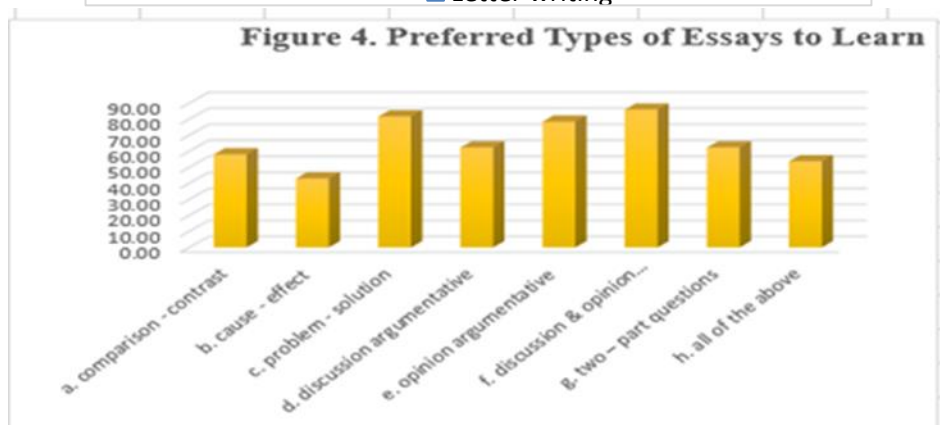
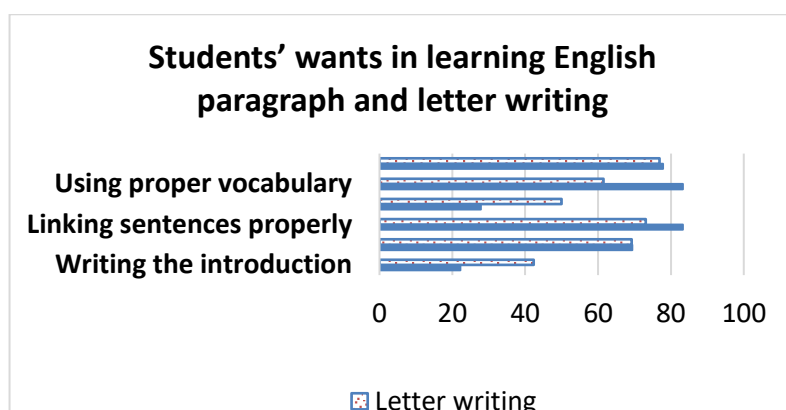
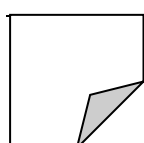


Figure 3.4: Students' wants in learning English paragraph and letter writing

Figure 3.5 and 3.6 show the students' agreement on the types of paragraphs and letters which are proposed. 65.7% of students expressed their wants in learning discussion paragraphs and informative paragraphs, while 57.1% agreed to learn description and narrative paragraphs. Similarly, high percentage of students wanted to learn letters of request, letters of advice, letters of application, letters of giving information, letters of complain. Only 36% of students wants to learn letters of apology.



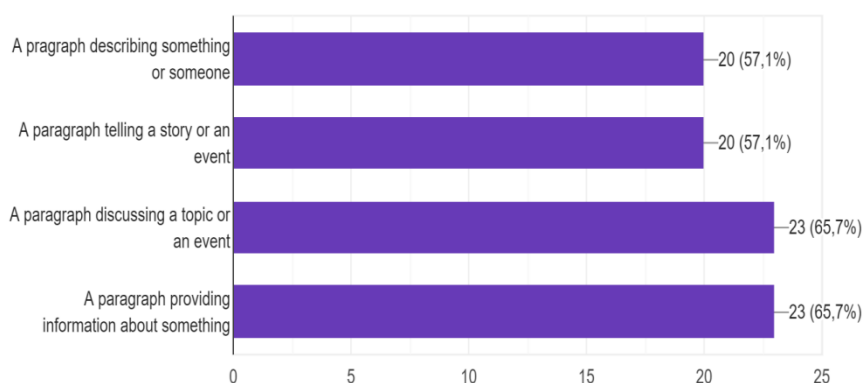


Figure 3.5: Students' wants in learning English paragraph types

Besides, as for Writing 4, the findings have demonstrated that more students prefer to learn comparison and contrast and problem-solution essays to essays that discuss causal relations. This can help to structure the sequencing of the types of essay to be taught, with cause and effect essays first, followed by comparison and contrast, and then problem-solution ones.

Meanwhile, the sequence of units for Writing 3 is based on the following findings from Table 1. All of those who respond to question 6 in the questionnaire express that line charts should be firstly approached, and mixed charts, diagrams and maps should be arranged by the end of the course. Notably, half of student respondents anticipate to access lessons of tables writings before pie and bar charts.

### Learning Needs

#### Teaching approaches

In order to learn about how each lesson should proceed, the authors have included questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 following descriptions and definitions of common approaches to teaching writing. In the questionnaire for student groups, they are given with choices which are descriptions of a writing class in each approach. For teacher interviewees, because of their familiarity with terminology and the nature of each approach, such descriptions were shortened to be stages in each. The findings can be seen in Tables 2 and 3:

As for Writing 3, the procedures following PPP model are the most favored, with more than half of the respondents opting for (53.76 % and 69.89% for the course book and workbook, respectively). Teachers who are interviewed are in agreement with this finding; they believe that as for teaching pictorial writings, PPP teaching model shall be having more advantages.

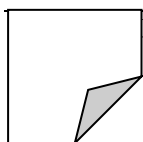
## IV. Conclusion

### Target Needs and Learning Needs

The major goal of this study was to look into the need analysis as a foundation for designing 4 coursebooks and workbooks in total for a high-quality program at Thai Nguyen University's School of Foreign Languages. It is predicted that students in writing 3 will be extremely motivated for the course and likely believe it will be very helpful for their tests to demonstrate their skill in foreign languages. The same results are revealed in interviews with SFL instructors who teach writing courses. They all agree that Writing 3 for fast-track students at SFL, TNU should include all kind of charts, maps, and diagrams. More students learn comparison and contrast and problem- solution essays in writing 4 than they do essays that examine causal relationships. This can help to organize the teaching of different essay kinds, with cause and effect essays coming first, then comparison and contrast essays, and finally problem-solution essays.

Presentation, practice, and production is the teaching strategy that underlies the creation of the Writing 3 course book (lesson structure and sequencing activities) (PPP). PPP is arguably the most widely utilized lesson format in the classroom today for teaching English to foreign students, despite being relatively outdated and receiving a lot of criticism over the years. This lesson structure has three levels, as the name would imply.

A product-based approach to teaching writing 4 concentrates on the construction of a particular written work, like a tale or an essay. With this method, students are encouraged to be creative and to analyze both their own and other writers' writing. Also, this method motivates students to conduct study and investigate novel concepts while also utilizing their past knowledge and experiences. Each unit in the course begins with theoretical content and ends with consolidation exercises. This method of teaching English writing was developed in the context of product-based learning.



### **The course books and workbooks**

The writing 3 coursebook and workbook is designed for B2 level students. A descriptive report using graphic or pictorial input is one of the writing styles. The target writing abilities are presenting, summarizing, interpreting, and comparing given facts; describing a process or how something works; and using suitable and accurate language. Task categories include information transfer activities.

Starting with an introduction to essay writing, the writing 4 coursebook and workbook must cover the essay's material in three distinct formats: cause-and-effect, comparison and contrast, and problem-solution. Both the course book's and the workbook's organizational structure is Unit 1: The introduction to an essay; Unit 2: Cause-and- Effect Essays; Unit 3: Comparison-and-Contrast Essays; and Unit 4: Problem-and- Solution Essays. According to the CEFR framework, this course is intended for students who are B2 or higher English language users.

### **Implications**

The results of this study offer some suggestions for creating teaching and learning resources. Students are advised to use these materials for in-class study and additional practice outside of class in order to improve their writing skills. They should also complete the exercises in the correct order so that students can fully comprehend the concepts connected to paragraph and letter writing.

In order for the learning to go smoothly and the students to reach the highest degree of mastery, the teachers should take on the role that the students expected of them in this study. It is anticipated that other studies concentrating on the creation of materials for different talents will be conducted by other scholars. It should be mentioned, however, that when producing resources, student opinions are given tremendous weight because the products are meant to be used independently by students, with or without a teacher's direction.

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