English Learning Resilience: Strategies and Correlation with Achievement in Writing Course

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Abstract

To handle difficulties in achieving English writing proficiency, resilience is an essential psychological trait for EFL students. This study aims: (1) to investigate English learning resilience, comprising six main factors of planning, self-control, growth mindset, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in university-level English majors of high, average, and low aptitude, (2) to examine the relationship between English learning resilience and students' learning achievement, and (3) to explore resilience strategies that students employ to handle difficulties in learning English writing. The English Learning Resilience Scale (ELRS) was used to assess resilience in 113 participants, and the relationship between their learning achievement and resilience was investigated using the Correlation Coefficient. Then, 23 survey respondents were interviewed to gather data on resilience strategies. The findings showed that the students' resilience across three groups ranged from high to very high, with the planning factor gaining the highest mean score in all three groups. There was a positive, moderate correlation between high-achieving students' learning achievement and planning and perseverance factors, and a positive, weak correlation between average-achieving students' learning achievement and self-control. More resilience strategies were found in the high-achieving and average-achieving groups than in the low-achieving group. Common strategies found across all three groups were seeking help from others and using digital technology. The findings suggested that the common trait of resilience could include factors such as planning, sociability, flexibility, and growth mindset.

Key words: Resilience, English learning, Resilience strategies, learning achievement, English writing

Introduction

It is widely known that learning English writing is a challenging and demanding process, due to the involvement of several skills such as grammar, vocabulary, idea organization, coherence and unity, spelling, and mechanics. Challenges are frequently exacerbated by insufficient resources, low motivation, and time constraints for learning and practicing writing skills (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Nguyen & Suwannabubpha, 2021; Pongsukvajchakul, 2023; Rodsawang, 2017). Moreover, the writing process steps of pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing (Baharudin et al., 2023) consist of a variety of learning activities such as brainstorming, developing an outline, drafting, receiving feedback from peers and/or teachers, self-assessing, and revising and editing. Therefore, producing high-quality writing products can reasonably be considered to be a demanding task that causes stress and setbacks.

To learn successfully, preserve well-being, and recover from stressful circumstances, foreign language learners need to be resilient (Nguyen, 2015). Academic resilience facilitates learners' success in school and improves academic competence. Resilient learners maintain high motivation and positive attitudes toward learning, and show high academic performance even while facing factors resulting in a decline in learning achievement (Cassidy, 2015). Resilience plays an important role in language learning since it facilitates engagement rather than burnout (Liu et al., 2023).

Previous research has shown that resilience significantly enhances L2 learners' writing achievement. Academic resilience is among the mental factors enabling L2 learners to compose higher-quality argumentative essays (Mallahi, 2023). Resilience also nurtures positive emotions towards education, which is an influential factor for L2 learning (Rad & Jafarpour, 2022). Mental resilience could enable learners to better handle academic stress, thereby improving their writing performance (Nurkamto et al., 2024), as resilient learners characteristically set well-defined goals, motivate themselves, and perform effective self-regulation in their learning, especially in the pre-writing phase. They are also more willing to embrace feedback and seek productive peer interactions (Torky & Ahmed, 2024).

Clearly, resilience is among the more positive psychological traits. It is a mental, emotional, and behavioral capability to bounce back from challenges and restore positivity after facing difficult situations. In education, Martin and Marsh (2008) view resilience as academic buoyancy, the quality of being proactive towards academic challenges such as stress or pressures from competition. Related studies (Alrabai & Dewaele, 2023; Guo & Li, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2016; Nguyen et al., 2015; Oxford, 2016) also suggest that the positive psychological constructs constituting resilience for language learning include a positive or growth mindset, self-regulation, persistence, and social competence. The present study develops these established meanings of resilience in general and academic fields, focusing on learners' ability to handle, persevere with, and bounce back from unpleasant situations or difficulties encountered in learning English writing. Factors that were discovered as contributing to resilience include planning, self-control, growth mindset for English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in English learning.

While previous studies explored the relationship between academic resilience and writing performance or abilities, less attention has been paid to investigating strategies employed by resilient learners of different achievement levels to handle adversity, stress, setbacks, and other negative feelings caused by learning English writing, engaging in the writing process, and completing writing tasks. The present study attempts to fill this research gap by investigating (1) the resilience of students with high, average, and low learning achievement, (2) the relationship between resilience-related factors and students' learning achievement in an English writing course, and (3) the resilience strategies that university-level English majors utilize to cope with learning difficulties. Knowing the relationship between students' learning achievement and resilience, as well as what strategies they employ to overcome emotional obstacles and maintain positive thinking, could contribute to the development of effective interventions for fostering English learning resilience and enhancing learning achievement.

Literature Review

Resilience and Language Learning

Psychological research established a foundational understanding of resilience by investigating the causes of mental health and behavioral problems in children growing up under physical, emotional, and psychological hardship (Hiver & Sanchez Solarte, 2021). The American Psychological Association (n.d.) defines resilience as the process and result of successful adjustment to difficulties or challenges in one's life through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adaptation to internal and external needs. Likewise, Clubb (2021) explains that resilience is the capability to adjust to challenging circumstances and confront both good and bad times in life. Individuals with resilience do not allow setbacks to thwart their goals, and they are more willing to try new experiences, possibly due to possessing a greater growth mindset.

The topic of resilience emerged in the academic field during the 1970s (Kim & Kim, 2016) before being studied in the field of language learning. In the academic field,

Martin and Marsh (2008) describe academic resilience as buoyancy in terms of proactiveness towards academic challenges such as stressors or pressures from competition. In the field of education, language learning resilience is viewed as the process, capacity, or production of effective self-adjustment in response to frustrations, adversity, and stress caused by learning a language. Foreign language learners with resilience typically show greater determination and calmness when encountering challenges, and are more likely to increase their effort during difficult situations, while showing an enhanced ability to handle and overcome everyday obstacles in their language learning (Shin & Kim, 2017).

In 2016, Kim and Kim examined the structure of resilience in 1,620 Korean secondary students by use of a resilience questionnaire focused on five factors: perceived happiness, empathy, sociability, persistence, and self-regulation. Their analysis showed that participants held a positive view of their lives (perceived happiness), demonstrated empathy towards others (empathy), and connected their resilience to relationships (sociability). The persistence factor indicated that resilient individuals continued to exercise effort when facing challenges, while the self-regulation factor reflected their ability to manage thoughts and emotions. The researchers also found significant positive correlations between resilience factors, motivated behavior, and L2 proficiency. Among the resilience factors, persistence had the strongest link to both motivation and English proficiency.

In addition, researchers Guo and Li (2022) created and verified the Foreign Language Learning Resilience Scale (FLLRS) to identify key factors affecting resilience among 313 Chinese EFL students, and utilized it to examine three main components: ego resilience, metacognitive resilience, and social resilience. Ego resilience describes how individuals respond to and believe they can recover from challenges. Metacognitive resilience involves using positive strategies like setting goals, making plans, seeking assistance, and employing cognitive approaches such as growth mindset, adaptability, and emotional regulation to handle academic stress. Social resilience refers to building connections with family, schools, and community members to access necessary social resources. The study revealed that all three factors significantly influenced foreign language learning resilience, with the strongest impacts from metacognitive resilience, followed by social resilience, with ego resilience having the least influence.

To summarize, a general definition of resilience is the ability to recover from difficult situations in life, and a resilient individual should possess positive viewpoints, flexibility, and adaptability. In education, resilience is seen as proactiveness in facing challenges such as stressors or pressures related to academic performance. In language learning, resilience is the process and results of reacting to frustrations, setbacks, and stress caused by learning a language.

Resilience and Learning Achievement in Writing

Recent research examines the role of resilience in students' learning achievement in writing. Mallahi (2024) explored the influence of critical thinking, academic resilience, and grit on argumentative writing with 300 Iranian EFL learners, and identified a significant positive relationship between academic resilience and writing performance. Students' capacity for emotional regulation and stability was highlighted, with the ability to control negative emotions and behaviors in challenging situations being important for bringing about better writing performance. Also, with higher levels of resilience, learners tended to engage and persevere in learning, leading to improvement in writing ability.

In addition, Torky & Ahmed (2024) researched resilience in three flipped writing classes at an EFL secondary school in Egypt, aiming to explore the interaction between resilience and two models of flipped classroom learning: the traditional flipped classroom (TFC) and the Explore Flipped Apply (EFA) classroom. Using a writing skills checklist for assessing students' writing skills before the intervention, a writing

pre-test and post-test for investigating their writing abilities before and after the intervention, and a resilience scale, the researchers discovered that students with higher levels of resilience performed better in writing, indicating the impact of individual resilience on learning English writing.

English Learning Resilience in the Present Study

Based on the above-mentioned definitions of resilience in general and in academic fields, English-learning resilience in the present study refers to a learner's ability to handle, persevere with, and bounce back from any unpleasant situations or difficulties caused by learning English writing. This study includes six variables proven in previous studies to foster resilience in education and L2 learning: planning, self-control, growth mindset for English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in English learning. Each factor is defined in detail below.

Planning

The planning factor involves setting goals and creating plans, as well as establishing learning objectives, approaching English learning based on known strengths, weaknesses, and past experiences, and incorporating feedback from teachers and peers to enhance English learning. The study by Guo & Li (2022) discovered that metacognitive resilience, including goal-setting and planning variables, influenced language learning resilience the most. Likewise, Martin and Marsh (2006) found that planning was one predictive factor of learners' academic resilience, and they incorporated this trait into their 5-C model.

Self-Control

Self-control means one's ability to self-regulate emotions or feelings when experiencing difficult situations, as well as adversity in English learning (Guo & Li, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2016; Martin & Marsh, 2006). Wang et al. (2021) defined emotional control as the internal and external process that enables an individual to assess, manage, or adjust their emotions in a way that is productive for reaching their goals or objectives. Martin and Marsh (2006) claimed that self-control is the pathway to promote the ability to plan and manage learning to achieve goals and persevere with learning challenges or difficulties.

Growth Mindset for English Learning

Growth mindset in the present study is defined as a positive way of thinking when encountering changes, challenges, and dissatisfaction in learning English (Guo & Li, 2022; Zarrinabadi et.al, 2022). It is a beneficial characteristic when individuals experience unexpected situations as a result of a changing world. This positive outlook is one construct that brings about resilience (Rad & Jafarpour, 2022). People with a growth mindset may feel uncomfortable when facing changes, but they acknowledge them as opportunities for growth. Also, positive people tend to believe that conquering challenges and obstacles is a productive lesson for their lives (Danes, 2014).

Flexibility

Flexibility refers to the ability to adapt to changes in plans or approaches when learning English, and to endure difficulties with the understanding that situations normally change (Guo & Li, 2022). Flexibility is a key component of resilience because it fosters a positive perception of change as a beneficial challenge, as well as the ability to cope with change effectively. People with flexibility perceive change as a manageable circumstance and do not feel discouraged during periods of change. They are patient and understand change, so they can succeed in unstructured settings because of a high tolerance for uncertainty. Flexibility makes people aware of their strengths and weak

points as they realize internal and external restrictions (Danes, 2014), and reinforces their resilience (Nakhostin-Khayyat et al., 2024).

Sociability

Sociability is defined as the ability to collaboratively work with others and ask for assistance from others such as family, teachers, peers, or the broader community while learning English (Guo & Li, 2022). The process of language learning involves external support from family, schools, and friends that provides scaffolding for learners to manage academic difficulties and setbacks. Therefore, sociability is key to the language learning process. Regarding this concept, emotional and behavioral support from parents, teachers, and peers were included as a sub-element of academic resilience in English learning, as these comprise the factorial structure of academic resilience (Duan et.al, 2024).

Perseverance in English learning

Perseverance in English learning refers to persistence despite confronting frequent stress and difficulties. Perseverance contains several elements such as hard work, persistence, adherence to plans and goals, embracing and using feedback, creative problem-solving, and viewing adversity as an opportunity to face challenges and grow (Cassidy, 2016). Perseverant learners are more likely to set long-term goals, which in turn motivate them to work diligently in studying the language (Feng & Papi, 2020). Also, persistence or the tendency not to give up easily, can foster greater resilience, and persistence plays the most significant role in L2 learners' English learning. It was the strongest predictor of motivated L2 learning behavior and L2 competency (Kim & Kim, 2016).

Research questions

To examine the aforesaid relationship between learning achievement and resilience and its impacts on continued learning, this study proceeded to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent do students with different levels of learning achievement in English writing possess resilience in the form of planning, self-control, growth mindset for English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in English learning?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the abovementioned six factors of English learning resilience and learning achievement in students enrolled in the English writing course who have different levels of learning achievement?
3. What resilience strategies do students employ to handle difficulties in learning English writing?

Research Methodology

Research design

The present study applies a mixed-method research design with a correlational study to explore university-level English majors' resilience in learning English writing, the relationship between students' achievement in learning writing and their resilience, and the resilience strategies students use to deal with problems or difficulties in learning English writing. To achieve the research objectives, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were combined.

Participants

This research employed purposive sampling to involve participants with specific traits, namely, English major students who had previously completed university-level writing courses. This resulted in 113 second-year English majors who had passed both a Paragraph Writing course and an Academic Writing course in academic years 2024 and

2025, respectively. Their average age was 20 years, and they had the same background in English education, i.e., 12 years of compulsory education in primary and secondary school. From these 113 participants, quantitative data were collected by means of a survey and writing achievement, and then 23 survey respondents volunteered to participate in semi-structured interviews. The number of interviewees was deemed adequate for this study in accordance with the standard set by Creswell and Creswell (2018) of between 10 and 50 participants. All participants were categorized into low-achieving, average-achieving, and high-achieving groups based on their demonstrated performance in the Academic Writing course. The criteria for categorization were as follows:

Table 1

The Criteria for Participant Catergorization

Categories	Scores	No. of survey respondents	No. of interviewees
High achievement	80-100	29	6
Average achievement	60-79	48	9
Low achievement	0-59	36	8
	Total	113	23

Research Instruments

English Learning Resilience Scale (Appendix)

The resilience scale used in the present study was the English Learning Resilience Scale (ELRS) by Sriwichai (2025), adapted to suit the study context with its focus on resilience in learning English writing. The scale includes two main parts. The first part simply requests consent to respond to the scale, where participants are asked to select either "I agree to give responses to the scale (continue completing the scale)" or "I do not want to give responses to the scale (stop completing the scale)" to express their willingness to participate in the study. The second part consists of 30 items with seven rating scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) in response to questions regarding six resilience-related constructs: planning (5 items), self-control (6 items), growth mindset for English learning (5 items), flexibility (4 items), sociability (4 items), and perseverance in English learning (6 items).

Students' Learning Achievement

Learning achievement in the Academic Writing course was evaluated by class participation (10%), quizzes (20%), writing assignments (20%), a midterm exam (25%), and a final exam (25%). The students completed four quizzes worth 5% each that reviewed both knowledge of the basics and ethics of academic and essay writing. The midterm exam was an objective test of principles, styles, and features of academic writing, academic language, citation and references, and paraphrasing. The final exam included both objective and subjective tests on writing essay introductions, comparison and contrast essays, a cause-and-effect essay, and an argumentative essay. For writing assignments during the semester, the students were assigned collaborative work with writing partners to write both a cause-and-effect essay and an argumentative essay. The students' essays were rated using a five-scale analytical rubric evaluating the overall writing quality and particulars of their writing such as content and development, organization, coherence and unity, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills, in-text citations and references, and writing process (i.e., brainstorming, outlining, drafting, peer reviewing, self-assessing, and revising). The rubric was adapted and applied from William's (2017) Prism Reading and Writing teacher's manual by the teaching team of the Academic Writing course.

Interview questions

The interview questions were used to elicit qualitative data for resilience strategies. There were two main questions, including "What strategies do you take to solve the problems or cope with stressful situations caused by English learning and completing writing tasks?" and "Who are the people in your support network, and how do they help you when you're feeling stressed or anxious?"

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

To verify the validity of the adapted version of the scale for English learning resilience and the interview questions, the Content Validity Index (CVI) was used by five experts. One expert specializes in statistics in educational assessment and has over five years of experience teaching statistics for educational research. Two experts have more than ten years of experience in teaching the English language, and the remaining two specialists work in educational psychology, with one being the head of the University's Counseling and Health Promotion Center, and the other having taught Educational Psychology for five years. While the statistical expert focused on the appropriateness of statistics, the educational psychologists considered psychological constructs. The two English teachers evaluated the appropriateness of each factor for measuring experience in learning English writing, and the alignment of Thai and English versions of each item.

The CVI criteria were as follows: 1 = irrelevant, 2 = somewhat relevant, 3 = quite relevant, and 4 = highly relevant. According to Shi et al. (2012), content validity of excellent value should have I-CVIs of equal to or greater than 0.78. The item I-CVIs of the ELRS in the present study ranged from 0.80 to 1.00, and the S-CVI was 0.98. Both values indicated excellent content validity for the individual items and the entire scale. Following validation, the scale was tested with 37 second-year English majors enrolled in the Academic Writing course in the second semester of the academic year 2024 to evaluate reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, resulting in a value of 0.93, indicating high reliability.

Data Collection

The data were gathered in the first semester of the academic year 2025 in the Academic Writing course after obtaining ethical approval from the university's human ethics committee. The course was conducted over 16 weeks, and participants' writing learning achievement was collected at the end of the course. The data on participants' English-learning resilience were collected in week 13 after they had completed two writing tasks. Before distributing the ELRS through Microsoft Teams, participants were informed of brief details of the research, including the research title, research objectives, procedure to participate in the research, and the risks associated with participation. They were informed that participation in the research was voluntary and would not affect their scores or grades in the course. Participants who agreed to take part in the study were asked to indicate their consent by checking the box "I agree to give responses to the scale", and then take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the scale. Following the survey, participants willing to be interviewed about resilience strategies were interviewed over weeks 14 and 15, with interviews being face-to-face and lasting 7 to 10 minutes.

Data Analysis

The data on students' resilience from the English Learning Resilience Scale (ELRS) were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). To interpret the mean scores, the equal-interval classification was used, with the following criteria for mean score interpretation:

6.17 – 7.00 = Extremely high

5.31 – 6.16	=	Very high
4.45 – 5.30	=	High
3.59 – 4.44	=	Moderate
2.73 – 3.58	=	Low
1.87 – 2.72	=	Very low
1.00 – 1.86	=	Extremely low

The connection between students' English learning resilience and their writing ability was investigated using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r). The criteria proposed by Plonsky and Oswald (2014) were used as a reference to estimate the correlation strength, with 0.25–0.39 indicating weak correlation, 0.40–0.59 denoting moderate correlation, and >0.60 showing strong correlation.

The interview data on students' resilience strategies were investigated by means of thematic analysis. After transcription and translation into English, the data were analyzed line-by-line to find emerging sub-themes, and each sub-theme was coded. The next step was to categorize emerging features into each sub-theme.

Results

RQ 1. To what extent do students with different levels of learning achievement have English learning resilience consisting of six factors namely planning, self-control, growth mindset for English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in English learning?

Table 2

Resilience of Students with High Learning Achievement (scores 80-100 %)

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
Planning			
X1	5.17	1.23	High
X2	5.48	1.12	Very high
X3	6.14	0.79	Extremely high
X4	5.76	1.02	Very high
X5	6.03	0.94	Very high
	5.72	0.81	Very high
Self-Control			
X6	5.24	1.41	High
X7	5.24	1.21	High
X8	5.55	0.95	Very high
X9	4.86	1.27	High
X10	5.41	1.18	Very high
X11	5.17	1.14	High
	5.25	0.91	High
Growth Mindset for English Learning			
X12	5.93	1.10	Very high
X13	6.10	0.98	Very high
X14	5.55	1.12	Very high
X15	4.38	1.76	Moderate
X16	5.55	1.09	Very high
	5.50	0.85	Very high
Flexibility			
X17	5.24	1.35	High
X18	5.83	0.85	Very high
X19	5.76	1.09	Very high

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
X20	5.45	1.06	Very high
	5.57	0.89	Very high
Sociability			
X21	5.41	1.24	Very high
X22	5.48	1.06	Very high
X23	5.86	1.03	Very high
X24	5.62	1.24	Very high
	5.59	0.89	Very high
Perseverance in English Learning			
X25	5.59	0.95	Very high
X26	4.79	1.57	High
X27	5.72	1.00	High
X28	5.24	1.53	Very high
X29	5.55	1.24	Very high
X30	6.07	0.92	Very high
	5.49	0.82	Very high

N = 29

As shown in Table 1, students with high learning achievement rated their resilience at high and very high levels. The factor with the highest mean was planning ($\bar{x}$ = 5.72, SD = 0.81), and that with the lowest was self-control ($\bar{x}$ = 5.25, SD = 0.91). Among all items, No. 3 of the planning factor had the highest mean (x = 6.14, SD = 0.79), which was extremely high. The item with the lowest mean was No. 15 in the growth mindset for the English learning area ($\bar{x}$ = 4.38, SD = 1.76), which was moderate.

Table 3

Resilience of Students with Average Learning Achievement (scores 60-79 %)

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
Planning			
X1	5.65	1.08	Very high
X2	5.63	1.10	Very high
X3	6.35	0.70	Extremely high
X4	5.94	0.81	Very high
X5	6.21	1.01	Extremely high
	5.95	0.75	Very high
Self-Control			
X6	5.40	1.25	Very high
X7	5.48	1.29	Very high
X8	5.73	0.98	Very high
X9	5.44	1.18	Very high
X10	5.27	1.40	High
X11	5.29	1.32	High
	5.43	0.87	Very high
Growth Mindset for English Learning			
X12	6.06	0.81	Very high
X13	6.13	0.89	Very high
X14	5.56	1.32	Very high
X15	4.40	1.67	Moderate
X16	5.63	1.02	Very high
	5.55	0.71	Very high
Flexibility			

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
X17	5.31	1.17	Very high
X18	5.98	0.86	Very high
X19	5.83	0.83	Very high
X20	5.60	1.09	Very high
	5.68	0.77	Very high
Sociability			
X21	5.42	1.13	Very high
X22	6.04	0.97	Very high
X23	6.23	0.83	Extremely high
X24	5.88	1.28	Very high
	5.89	0.78	Very high
Perseverance in English Learning			
X25	5.79	0.97	Very high
X26	4.92	1.62	High
X27	5.73	0.94	Very high
X28	5.46	1.32	Very high
X29	5.77	0.81	Very high
X30	6.35	0.79	Extremely high
	5.67	0.74	Very high

N = 48

As Table 2 illustrates, the mean scores of the six resilience-related factors of students with average learning achievement were overall very high. The factor with the highest mean was planning ($\bar{x}$ = 5.95, SD = 0.75), whereas self-control had the lowest ($\bar{x}$ = 5.43, SD = 0.87). However, the mean scores for each item ranged from moderate to extremely high, with the highest mean scores found in items No. 3, about planning ($\bar{x}$ = 6.35, SD = 0.70), and No. 30, about perseverance in English learning ($\bar{x}$ = 6.35, SD = 0.79), both of which reached an extremely high scale. The lowest mean score at a moderate level was No. 15, regarding growth mindset for English learning ($\bar{x}$ = 4.40, SD = 1.67).

Table 4

Resilience of Students with Low Learning Achievement (scores 0-59 %)

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
Planning			
X1	5.31	0.82	Very high
X2	5.44	0.81	Very high
X3	6.08	0.77	Very high
X4	5.75	0.84	Very high
X5	5.94	0.75	Very high
	5.70	0.62	Very high
Self-Control			
X6	5.42	1.30	Very high
X7	5.67	0.93	Very high
X8	5.64	0.93	Very high
X9	5.47	0.94	Very high
X10	5.47	1.13	Very high
X11	5.53	0.94	Very high
	5.53	0.83	Very high

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Meaning
Growth Mindset for English Learning			
X12	5.83	1.00	Very high
X13	5.78	1.07	Very high
X14	5.61	0.87	Very high
X15	4.58	1.46	High
X16	5.58	0.84	Very high
	5.48	0.77	Very high
Flexibility			
X17	5.53	0.88	Very high
X18	5.75	0.87	Very high
X19	5.86	0.93	Very high
X20	5.58	1.16	Very high
	5.68	0.82	Very high
Sociability			
X21	5.08	1.23	Very high
X22	5.72	1.21	Very high
X23	5.83	1.13	Very high
X24	5.69	1.19	Very high
	5.58	1.10	Very high
Perseverance in English Learning			
X25	5.69	1.04	Very high
X26	4.75	1.59	High
X27	5.67	0.93	Very high
X28	5.28	1.21	High
X29	5.58	1.16	Very high
X30	5.94	1.09	Very high
	5.48	0.87	Very high

N = 36

Table 3 shows that low-achieving students assessed their resilience at high and very high levels. Regarding the six factors, the highest mean occurred in planning ($\bar{x}$ = 5.70, SD = 0.62), while, in contrast, growth mindset for English learning ($\bar{x}$ = 5.48, SD = 0.77) and perseverance in English learning ($\bar{x}$ = 5.48, SD = 0.87) were each rated the lowest. In terms of item mean scores, the item with the highest mean was No. 3 in the planning variable ($\bar{x}$ = 6.08, SD = 0.77), while No. 15 about growth mindset for English learning ($\bar{x}$ = 4.58, SD = 1.46) had the lowest mean.

RQ 2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the six factors of English learning resilience and learning achievement in the English writing course of English major students with different levels of learning achievement?

Table 5

Correlation Analysis of Resilience-Related Factors and Learning Achievement of Students in the High-Achieving Group

Variables	PL	SC	GM	FL	SO	PE	LA
PL	1.000						
SC	.402*	1.000					
GM	.653**	.825**	1.000				
FL	.598**	.864**	.810**	1.000			

SO	0.320	.631**	.549**	.604**	1.000		
PE	.709**	.726**	.778**	.791**	.575**	1.000	
LA	.468*	0.028	0.257	0.137	-0.046	.403*	1.000

N = 29 *p < 0.05*

According to Table 4, for students of high learning achievement, there was a moderate positive correlation between the planning variable and learning achievement (r = 0.468). Similarly, it was found that perseverance in English learning moderately correlated with learning achievement (r = .403).

Table 6

Correlation Analysis of Resilience-Related Factors and Learning Achievement of Students in the Average-Achieving Group

Variables	PL	SC	GM	FL	SO	PE	LA
PL	1.000						
SC	.337*	1.000					
GM	.478**	.691**	1.000				
FL	.750**	.612**	.622**	1.000			
SO	.459**	.458**	.446**	.453**	1.000		
PE	.510**	.657**	.765**	.693**	.475**	1.000	
LA	-0.010	0.313*	-0.182	-0.172	-0.164	-0.132	1.000

N = 48 *p < 0.05*

Table 5 illustrates that the factor of self-control correlated both weakly and positively to learning achievement in the students of average level. However, this group exhibited no correlation between planning, growth mindset in English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance in English learning factors and learning achievement.

Table 7

Correlation Analysis of Resilience-Related Factors and Learning Achievement of Students in the Low-Achieving Group

Variables	PL	SC	GM	FL	SO	PE	LA
PL	1.000						
SC	.697**	1.000					
GM	.760**	.728**	1.000				
FL	.656**	.550**	.595**	1.000			
SO	0.105	0.082	0.065	.586**	1.000		
PE	.553**	.529**	.617**	.710**	.491**	1.000	
LA	0.125	-0.105	0.297	0.043	-0.026	0.116	1.000

N = 36 *p < 0.05*

As Table 6 shows, there was no significant correlation between the learning achievement of students in the low-achieving group and any of the six resilience-related factors.

RQ 3: What resilience strategies do English major students employ to handle difficulties in the English writing course?

Resilience strategies of high learning achievement students

Major resilience strategies utilized by six interviewees in the high-achieving group included using digital technology, seeking help from others, learning from weaknesses, developing an outline, and managing time to finish the assignment.

For use of technology, students mentioned engaging with ChatGPT and the Google search engine. One student remarked:

"When I have a problem in generating ideas for writing, I use ChatGPT to help brainstorm the topic."

(H 3)

Some students asked for support from friends and teachers when they felt stressed. Two interviewees stated that:

"I asked my friends what and how they do [the assignments]."

(H 6)

"I asked my teacher to explain what I don't understand."

(H 2)

Learning from weaknesses or mistakes was also found, with one student reporting:

"I improve my writing skills from my weaknesses such as trying to study more vocabulary because I have limited vocabulary."

(H 4)

One of the high-achieving students stated that developing an outline before writing helped her deal with difficulties in completing assignments.

"If I have no idea about the writing assignment, I get started with developing an essay outline first."

(H1)

Time management was also mentioned:

"When I feel stressed about writing assignments, I manage my time to finish them. This helps me to complete assignments on time."

(H 5)

Resilience strategies of average learning achievement students

The nine interviewees in the group of average-achieving students reported five resilience strategies, including self-reliance, exploring different ways to learn or complete tasks, asking for assistance and encouragement from others, developing an essay outline, and using technology.

Some students overcame problems in learning English writing and completing assignments through self-reliance. For example, one interviewee mentioned:

"I get through difficulties in learning writing and doing tasks by relying on myself."

(A 1)

Certain students in the average group reported handling difficulties by finding new ways to learn or finish tasks. One of them stated:

"When I run out of ideas while writing, and I can't continue, I will find a new way or new idea to complete assignments."

(A 6)

Furthermore, they sought help and encouragement from friends, teachers, and family:

"I had my friend give me feedback on word use and grammar correctness, and help clarify things I don't understand until they are clear."

(A 3)

"I asked the teacher about the structure of the essay."

(A 6)

Creating an outline before starting to write was another strategy utilized by students:

"I organize my ideas into an outline before I get started writing."

(A 4)

Regarding the use of technology, students reported learning from YouTube and using Google. For example, one remarked:

"When I don't understand the lesson, I learn from YouTube. This helps me to understand the lesson more."

(A 2)

Resilience strategies of low learning achievement students

Based on eight interviews with low learning achievement students, three main strategies were found: self-reliance, asking for support from others, and using technology.

A few students with low learning achievement employed self-reliance strategies to encounter problems and adversity in writing courses and assignments. One remarked that:

"Most of the time, I don't rely on anyone. If I can't handle problems, I just put the work aside and stop doing a writing task for a while. Then I [come back and] do it again."

(L 8)

Some interviewees reported seeking assistance from family members, friends, and teachers:

"I work with a writing partner and ask him to check and edit my work."

(L 5)

"I called my mother and older brother to tell them I'm stressed and not sure whether I can get through it. They usually tell me not to worry too much, because I've always gotten through it before."

(L 2)

Moreover, interviewees reported using generative AI and a search engine website to help deal with adversity in writing courses and writing assignments:

"I asked ChatGPT or Gemini how to use some words, and also used them to find a topic sentence of a paragraph."

(L 2)

"I search for information on Google."

(L 7)

Discussion

Based on the quantitative analysis of ELRS, the resilience of students with high, average, and low learning achievement was determined to be high and very high, with the planning factor obtaining the highest mean score across all groups. Learning achievement of students in the high-achieving group was positively and moderately correlated with planning and perseverance in English learning factors. Furthermore, the learning achievement of students in the average group was positively, although weakly, correlated with the self-control factor. In contrast, there was no correlation between the learning achievement of low-achieving students and resilience-related factors. These findings indicate that students who attained higher learning achievement tended to possess higher resilience, aligning with a meta-analytic review of 14 papers conducted by Chen et al. (2025) that discovered a small and moderate correlation between L2 learning achievement and resilience.

The results of the survey and the correlation analysis in the present study were consistent with the interview findings on resilience strategies. Resilience strategies found in the interviews of high-achieving students were learning from weaknesses and mistakes, and outlining before writing. According to Guo and Li (2022), these strategies are typically involved in planning and are among the vital resilience characteristics frequently identified in previous studies. Planning involves setting a learning goal, making a learning plan, and considering and accepting strengths and weaknesses to achieve the learning goal. Planning also includes using feedback from teachers and peers as well as reflections on past failures and successes to improve language skills (Guo & Li, 2022; Martin & Marsh, 2006; Sriwichai, 2025).

Additionally, qualitative findings from the interviews showed that high-achieving and average-achieving students utilized more resilience strategies than low-achieving students. While interviews with high-achieving and average-achieving students yielded five strategies, only three resilience strategies were reported by students of low learning achievement. Overall, the two resilience strategies identified in interviews with all three groups of students were seeking assistance or support from others and utilizing technology.

Seeking support is a trait of sociability. Duan et al. (2024) described sociability as a practice of seeking help that is crucial for the language learning process, which requires support from family, school, and peers as scaffolding for the learner to handle adversity. Fang et al. (2020) also stated that peer, family, and teacher support is vital for enhancing students' learning outcomes.

The use of technology in learning is related to the factors of flexibility and growth mindset. When students in this study encountered difficulties in learning English writing or finishing assignments, they did not give up. They could instead try to use different ways to learn or complete writing assignments. They, therefore, decided on their own which technologies to use and how to use them to make their learning more interesting and successful, allowing for flexibility in their learning. Moreover, they found that they could improve their skills when they put effort into learning using a new way apart from learning from a teacher in a classroom. This ability to identify successful methods beyond those demonstrated in the classroom reflects a growth mindset. Nakhostin-Khayyat et al. (2024) suggested that learners' cognitive flexibility strongly and positively impacted their resilience. Similarly, Ramadhoha et al. (2024) confirmed the correlation between growth mindset and academic resilience. Learners who believed in their ability to develop their skills tended to have high resilience and could handle learning difficulties and maintain learning motivation well. This was echoed by Sriwichai (2025), who reported that flexibility and growth mindset appeared to predict academic resilience, as these were two factors enabling resilient learners to achieve more positive learning outcomes. In conclusion, the discovery of sociability, flexibility, and growth mindset across all student groups' interviews indicates that, besides the planning factor, these factors are essential for developing resilience.

Limitations of the Study

The present study employed a self-assessment research instrument, i.e., the English Learning Resilience Scale (ELRS), whereby students independently rated resilience-related factors. Hence, biased self-assessment could occur. Also, the participants were categorized into three categories, and the sample sizes of participant groups in each category were somewhat small, so generalizability might be limited.

Conclusion

This study explored the extent of English learning resilience—consisting of the six factors of planning, self-control, growth mindset for English learning, flexibility, sociability, and perseverance—in university-level English majors of high, average, and low learning achievement. The quantitative analysis revealed high and very high levels of resilience in high learning achievement students. The mean scores for six resilience-related factors of average-achieving students were very high, while the resilience mean scores of students with low learning achievement were high and very high. Overall, the factor with the highest mean in the three groups was planning.

Moreover, the correlation between the six resilience-related factors and students' learning achievement was analyzed. In the high learning achievement students, a positive, moderate correlation was found between their learning achievement and the factors of planning and perseverance in English learning. Likewise, there was a positive, weak correlation between the factor of self-control and the learning

achievement of average-achieving students. However, students' learning achievement in the low learning achievement group did not correlate with any of the six factors.
In terms of resilience strategies, the high-achieving students reported learning from weaknesses and mistakes, seeking help from others, using digital technology, outlining before writing, and managing time. For average-achieving students, they utilized self-reliance, seeking help, finding new ways for learning and completing writing assignments, developing an outline, and using digital technology. Low-achieving students supported their learning by means of self-reliance, asking for help, and using technology.

Recommendations

This study found that planning, sociability, flexibility, and a growth mindset are key factors in instilling resilience in English learning. In the pre-writing stage of writing pedagogy, teachers should provide scaffolding to students using specific tools such as writing an outline, a goal-setting template, and a strengths-and-weaknesses analysis form, with an introductory training session for using these tools being essential. Students should be allowed to revise their notes in these tools as they gain new ideas, confront unexpected challenges, or desire to adapt their learning methods or strategies during the while-writing stage. Also, throughout the writing process, students should be provided with teacher support and encouraged to seek peer support. These practices would foster a sense of learning ownership associated with resilience.
Future studies could involve a larger number of participants for both quantitative and qualitative data collection to increase the generalizability of the findings. A longitudinal study could be conducted to observe resilience across life stages. Different types of research instruments, apart from the self-assessment tool used in this study, such as teacher observation and peer assessment, could be used to reduce self-assessment bias.

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Declaration of AI Use

The authors declare that no AI tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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Appendix
English Learning Resilience Scale (ELRS)

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Part One: Informed consent

Please check (✓) in the box corresponding to your answer

☐ I agree to give responses to the scale (continue completing the scale)

☐ I do not want to give responses to the scale (stop completing the scale)

Part Two: Information related to respondent's English learning resilience

Instructions: Please tick (✓) in the column representing the fact.

No.	Items	7 Strongly Agree	6 Agree	5 Somewhat Agree	4 Neutral	3 Somewhat Disagree	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
	Planning							
1.	When I study English language, I will set clear learning goals to achieve.							
2.	I will make an English learning plan to achieve my learning goals that I have set.							
3.	I will think about and accept my strengths and weaknesses in English so that I will be able to improve my English writing skills and achieve my learning goals.							
4.	I will use the feedback from teachers and classmates to improve my English writing skills.							
5.	I will use my past successes or failures in English learning to motivate myself to learn and improve English writing skills.							
	Self-Control							
6.	When I get low scores on English writing assignments or tests, I do not allow them to affect my confidence in using English to communicate with others.							
7.	When I have difficulties in completing English writing assignments such as problems of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, lack of ideas to write, problems of paragraph or essay structures, and allotted time, I can control my emotions.							
8.	When I get negative feedback from my teacher or classmates on my English writing ability, I can control my emotions.							
9.	When I have English writing tests or examinations, I believe I am mentally strong.							
10.	I do not allow stress from English writing classes, writing assignments, and tests to have a negative effect on my English learning.							
11.	I can deal with stress, pressure, or anxiety from completing English writing assignments.							
	Growth mindset for English learning							
12.	I think that overcoming challenges and barriers in writing English learning can be an opportunity to improve my English writing skills.							
13.	I believe I can improve my English writing skills.							
14.	I feel that changing the learning plan to achieve my English learning goals is a challenge.							
15.	I would **NOT** be disappointed when I get low scores in English writing classes.							

No.	Items	7 Strongly Agree	6 Agree	5 Somewhat Agree	4 Neutral	3 Somewhat Disagree	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
16.	I believe that I can overcome difficulties in learning English writing such as problems of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, lack of ideas to write, problems of paragraph or essay structures, and allotted time.							
	Flexibility							
17.	I believe that I can overcome difficulties in learning English writing such as problems of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, lack of ideas to write, problems of paragraph or essay structures, and allotted time.							
18.	I will try various methods to improve my English writing skills and achieve my English learning goals I have set.							
19.	When it is necessary, I will find a new way to complete writing assignments and achieve my English learning goals I have set.							
20.	I am patient and able to understand the situations when I must change my English learning plan to achieve English learning goals I have set.							
	Sociality							
21.	When I face difficulties in learning English writing or completing writing assignments, I will seek help from my teachers.							
22.	When I face difficulties in learning English writing or completing writing assignments, I will seek help from my friends or classmates.							
23.	I think asking for help from others such as teachers, classmates, or friends When I face difficulties in learning English writing or completing writing assignments is an effective way to learn English.							
24.	I want to collaborate with my classmates to complete English writing assignments.							
	Perseverance in English Learning							
25.	I am determined to learn English writing although I face difficulties such as problems of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, lack of ideas to write, problems of paragraph or essay structures, and allotted time.							
26.	I can effectively cope with setbacks in learning English writing such as low scores, and poor or failed grades.							
27.	I can persevere and keep learning English although I am under stress and face difficulties in learning English writing such as problems of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, lack of ideas to write, problems of paragraph or essay structures, and allotted time.							
28.	I am good at bouncing back from setbacks in learning English writing such as poor scores in writing assignments, low or failed grades in English writing.							
29.	When I encounter difficulties in learning English writing, I carefully consider its causes and try my best to solve them.							
30.	I intend to continue learning English in the future, even if it is not required for my job duties or further studies.							