

**ASSESSING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
TOWARDS ACADEMICS' ONLINE
INSTRUCTION DURING AL-GHAZALI'S
DIALOGUE: ENGLISH COMMUNICATION AT
UPNM**

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE
(EDUCATION)**

**UNIVERSITI PERTAHANAN NASIONAL
MALAYSIA**

2024

**ASSESSING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ACADEMICS'
ONLINE INSTRUCTION DURING AL-GHAZALI'S DIALOGUE: ENGLISH
COMMUNICATION AT UPNM**

NUR AISYAH AQILAH BINTI MOHD FAUZI

Thesis submitted to the Centre for Graduate Studies, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional
Malaysia, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science
(Education)

2024

ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have switched from traditional or blended learning to entirely online learning to keep providing learning opportunities for students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although online learning is not a new teaching mode in most HEIs, this study aims to explore the technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) practices of lecturers in online teaching and identify lecturer-related factors affecting students' learning outcomes, specifically in the context of enhancing students' English language oral communication skills, in the midst of the pandemic. In doing so, it indirectly examines the readiness of lecturers to transition to online teaching in response to the abrupt emergence of COVID-19 in Malaysia. This study assesses students' perceptions of lecturers applying the TPACK framework in teaching Al-Ghazali's Dialogue: English Communication in their online teaching. A quantitative research approach and a correlational research design are used, gathering data from 445 UPM undergraduate students through both online and paper-based questionnaires. The collected data underwent analysis using SPSS and summative content analysis. The finding revealed that lecturers have a high level of content knowledge (CK) among the main components of the TPACK framework by providing relevant issues in selected case studies for students to evaluate critically, which aligns with the course learning outcomes (CLO). However, lecturers should be proficient in promptly resolving technological concerns when confronted with technology compatibility challenges. The finding also revealed that lecturer competence is most mentioned by students as the highest factor in improving oral communication through this online course. Furthermore, students' achievements

served as the indicator in determining the effectiveness of online learning. This study suggests that a strong TPACK proficiency positively influences students' educational achievements, thus reinforcing the utility of the TPACK framework in characterising lecturers' technology integration.

ABSTRAK

Institusi pengajian tinggi (IPT) telah beralih daripada pembelajaran tradisional atau teradun kepada pembelajaran dalam talian sepenuhnya untuk terus menyediakan peluang pembelajaran kepada pelajar semasa pandemik COVID-19. Walaupun pembelajaran dalam talian bukan kaedah pengajaran baharu di kebanyakan IPT, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka amalan pengetahuan teknologi pedagogi kandungan (TPACK) pensyarah dalam pengajaran dalam talian dan mengenal pasti faktor berkaitan pensyarah yang mempengaruhi hasil pembelajaran pelajar, khususnya dalam konteks peningkatan kemahiran komunikasi lisan bahasa Inggeris pelajar. Dengan berbuat demikian, ia secara tidak langsung mengkaji kesediaan pensyarah untuk beralih kepada pengajaran dalam talian sebagai tindak balas kepada kemunculan mendadak COVID-19 di Malaysia. Kajian ini menilai persepsi pelajar terhadap pensyarah yang mengaplikasikan rangka kerja TPACK dalam pengajaran Dialog Al-Ghazali: Komunikasi Bahasa Inggeris dalam pengajaran dalam talian mereka. Pendekatan kajian kaedah kuantitatif dan reka bentuk kajian korelasi telah digunakan, mengumpul data daripada 445 pelajar sarjana muda UPNM melalui soal selidik dalam talian dan berasaskan kertas. Data yang dikumpul telah dianalisis menggunakan SPSS dan analisis kandungan sumatif. Dapatan kajian mendedahkan bahawa pensyarah mempunyai tahap pengetahuan kandungan yang tinggi antara komponen utama rangka kerja TPACK dengan menyediakan isu-isu yang relevan dalam kajian kes terpilih untuk dinilai secara kritis oleh pelajar, yang sejajar dengan hasil pembelajaran kursus. Walau bagaimanapun, pensyarah harus mahir dalam menyelesaikan masalah teknologi dengan segera apabila berhadapan dengan cabaran

keserasian teknologi. Dapatan juga mendapati kompetensi pensyarah paling banyak disebut oleh pelajar sebagai faktor tertinggi dalam meningkatkan komunikasi lisan melalui kursus dalam talian ini. Tambahan pula, pencapaian pelajar menjadi petunjuk dalam menentukan keberkesanan pembelajaran dalam talian. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa penguasaan TPACK yang kukuh mempengaruhi pencapaian pendidikan pelajar secara positif, dengan itu mengukuhkan kegunaan rangka kerja TPACK dalam mencirikan integrasi teknologi pensyarah.

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APPROVAL

The Examination Committee has met on **26 April 2024** to conduct the final examination of **Nur Aisyah Aqilah binti Mohd Fauzi** on his degree thesis entitled **‘Assessing Students’ Perceptions Towards Academics’ Online Instruction During Al-Ghazali’s Dialogue: English Communication at UPNM’**.

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Academic session : 2024/2025

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABCC	-	Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control
AKP	-	<i>Akademi Ketangkasan Pertahanan</i>
CK	-	Content knowledge
CLO	-	Course Learning Outcomes
COVID-19	-	Coronavirus disease 2019
EDA	-	Exploratory data analysis
EFL	-	English as a Foreign Language
FKJ	-	<i>Fakulti Kejuruteraan</i>
FPKP	-	<i>Fakulti Perubatan dan Kesihatan Pertahanan</i>
FPPP	-	<i>Fakulti Pengajian dan Pengurusan Pertahanan</i>
FSTP	-	<i>Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi Pertahanan</i>
HEIs	-	Higher education institutions
IWBs	-	Interactive whiteboards
LMS	-	Learning Management System
MCO	-	Movement control order
MOOCs	-	Massive Open Online Courses
PB	-	<i>Pusat Bahasa</i>
PCK	-	Pedagogical content knowledge
PK	-	Pedagogical knowledge
SDT	-	Self-determination theory
SMEs	-	Subject matter experts
SMS	-	Short Message Service
SNS	-	Social networking service
SPPS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TK	-	Technological knowledge
TPACK	-	Technological pedagogical content knowledge
UIAM	-	<i>Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia</i>
UiTM	-	<i>Universiti Teknologi MARA</i>
UKM	-	<i>Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia</i>

UPNM - *Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia*
WHO - World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This chapter explains an overview of the thesis by briefly introducing the background and specifying the problems of this study. Following, it presents the research objectives, research questions, and research hypotheses. It then discusses the definition of terms, the scope of research, the significance, and the limitation of research, and finally the conclusion.

1.2 Research Background

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease that first broke out in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China, in December 2019 and has spread rapidly from the People's Republic of China to all over the world (Zhu et al., 2020). In the beginning, the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared that this outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in January 2020 (World Health Organisation, 2020a). Subsequently, COVID-19 was characterised as a pandemic in March 2020 based on the assessment made by the WHO (World Health Organisation, 2020b). Globally, there have been

772,386,069 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 6,987,222 reported to WHO as of 13 December 2023 (World Health Organisation, 2023). These cases showed that COVID-19 was identified as a severe disease outbreak (Cennimo et al., 2023), because it has led to a dramatic loss of human lives worldwide and inflicted an unprecedented challenge for everyone (Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development, 2020).

In light of the world being profoundly affected by the pandemic, prevention and control strategies were implemented to limit the transmission. Public health measures were taken to reduce the transmission risk, such as quarantine, hand hygiene, and social distancing, which Güner et al. (2020) concluded as the main points in preventing the spread in the community. Plus, these measures engendered the closure of workplaces and educational institutions, the suspension of public markets, and the cancellation of gatherings to prevent the further spread of the virus. Additionally, according to Belitski et al. (2022), it exacerbated social inequality and political unrest, with the poorest residents of the city suffering the most from the outbreak while the richer residents utilised their savings to sustain their living. For that reason, not only were health services sectors required to play their roles in responding to prevent COVID-19, other sectors, and industries, such as education, transport, travel, trade, finance, and security, are among the mainstay to fight shoulder to shoulder despite being impacted by the COVID-19.

Undeniably, education was hard hit due to the spread and severity of COVID-19 and became one of the high-risk sectors for COVID-19 transmission. Across the globe, COVID-19 has been disrupting education systems that affected all levels of the

education system, from preschool to tertiary education (Dhawan, 2020). On that account, all educational institutions in most countries were closed following the lockdown and social distancing measures to contain the global pandemic, as those disruptions have affected nearly 1.6 billion students in more than 160 countries (United Nations Sustainable Development Group, 2020). Additionally, it was one of the immediate changes introduced to slow the transmission of COVID-19 (Chaturvedi et al., 2021). Hammerstein et al. (2021) argued that, in some cases, the shutdown of the educational institutions had a detrimental effect on student motivation and psychological health. Therefore, most of the education systems in the world reformed their traditional educational practices to keep providing learning opportunities for students despite the challenging situation.

Globally, online learning has become an immediate solution for teaching and learning sessions to continue with the new norm of social distancing. Online learning is commonly conducted in two modes, synchronous or asynchronous learning, by applying options for the timing of interaction (Algahtani, 2011). Plus, both modes differ regarding teaching place and learning activities (Fabrizz et al., 2021). For instance, synchronous learning provides real-time interpersonal interaction between instructors and students (Blau et al., 2017), which allows instant feedback and immediate response through live lectures such as video conferencing. In contrast, asynchronous learning allows for interaction through discussions and emails before or after the online class (Selvanathan et al., 2020) and is available at any time and place. Hence, educational institutions have switched from traditional learning to online learning on the strength of the online learning modes offered and ensuring that educational institutions continuously operate.