

Teaching and Learning Adaptation: Lecturers-Students During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i3/14702>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i3/14702

Published Online: 11 August 2022

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic is an unexpected phenomenon that must be faced by the world. Apart from economy and social, the world of education is also affected. The implementation of education had to be adapted to these unforeseen circumstances when educational institutions had to be closed. Students had to attend lectures online from their respective residences, as did lecturers when face to face lectures were taken over by online lectures. Although, students and lecturers have difficulty adjusting to these new norms in the early stages, both parties need to adapt to these changes. Whether we like it or not, the implementation of virtual teaching and learning must be used as well. Accordingly, this paper was conducted to obtain student feedback on the implementation of virtual lectures conducted by course lecturers. Students who attended the lectures were asked to comment on the implementation during the 14 weeks of the lecture in PutraBLAST UPM. Overall, the findings of the study found that lecturers can adapt to these changes by using several teaching platforms that are appropriate to the situation of students and students are also able to follow lectures smoothly.

Keywords: E-Learning, Teaching and Learning, Pandemic, New Norms, Student Lecturers, Institutions of Higher Learning

Introduction

The Covid-19 outbreak, which is about to enter its fourth year, has had a drastic impact on the world, including Malaysia. This unforeseen situation has changed the scenario and structure of various aspects including the national education system. To prevent the spread of this virus in Malaysia, the Ministry of Education together with various other parties have decided to implement teaching and learning sessions online (Daud et al., 2021). As result, the face-to-face teaching and learning process that has been practiced since ancient times had to be stopped during the Movement Control Order (MCO) (Ngadi, 2022). National educational institutions had to be closed and school children and students in institutions of higher learning had to study at home. The same goes for educators who must prepare themselves with the convenience of gadgets and teaching preparation from face to face to online. This challenge must be passed by both parties when this situation occurs suddenly and unexpectedly without any time to prepare.

Covid-19 hit the world around the end of 2019 during an era of rapid digital development. The world is in the 21st century and students in institutions of higher learning also belong to the information technology-friendly Net Generation category. However, when the pandemic hit, it is evident that the country is not ready to change from face to face to fully online learning. This is because the main purpose of online teaching and learning is to facilitate and provide flexibility to teachers and students (Rahman et al., 2021). It is acknowledged that the use of information technology in education facilitates more effective learning despite some constraints (Hairia'an & Dzainudin, 2020). However, if this is not being overcome, these constraints will affect the effectiveness of online teaching and learning.

Some of the constraints are the lack of gadgets or computers, internet access, as well as students' commitment to attend online classes on time (Mutiar, 2021). Ngadi (2022) listed three main factors that are seen as big challenges for educators to conduct online learning, namely internet accessibility and the stability of teaching platforms, emotional management, and holistic assessment. Challenges for students are poor internet access, un conducive learning environment and willingness to implement online learning and teaching, while the challenges for educators are the selection of appropriate platforms and preparation of materials for online learning and teaching for students (Hamden, 2021). Online learning is interdependent with internet facilities to access lesson materials (Hamzah & Mahamod, 2021). This is because the selection of an appropriate platform is very important in the teaching and learning process (Ngadi, 2022).

Online learning and teaching provide opportunities to the new generation with better learning and communication activities regardless of time and place factors (Hassan, Abidin & Hassan, 2021). This virtual learning can be done anywhere and anytime. Of course, these changes can provide a positive impact if the obstacles and constraints in the implementation of online teaching and learning can be overcome, especially the problem of internet access. In fact, due to the current situation, educators try their best to be creative in diversifying their teaching methods and this extraordinary effort requires the undivided commitment from students (Hashim et al., 2020).

To ensure that online teaching and learning can be carried out effectively, some suggestions for improvement are necessary. One of them is providing training and exposure to various digital platforms to lecturers to increase the level of mastery of technological skills (Wei et al., 2021). In addition to that are, the need to identify the level of internet accessibility, wise use of appropriate teaching techniques and methods by teachers, and the role and commitment of parents in ensuring online learning runs smoothly by providing appropriate gadgets and internet facilities (Mahad et al., 2020).

Methodology

This study was conducted to survey students' views on the implementation of lectures that had to be conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of 70 students were involved in this study and the selection of the study sample was made purposefully. All students who registered for the BBM3413 Research Methodology in Malay Language course in the second semester of the 2020/2021 session were involved in this research. This course is a core course that must be taken by students of the Bachelor of Arts Malay Language and Linguistics with Honors in the fourth semester of their studies.

In the 14th week of the lecture, which is the last week of the lecture, students were asked to comment on this lecture. Students are given space and opportunity to provide any written comments regarding the implementation of lectures and course lecturers. This

comment was made in PutraBLAST which is the official platform for information structure management and learning content delivery medium, teaching, and learning assessment, progress tracking and learning process monitoring at Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Because these reviews were voluntary, only 50 of the total 70 people who signed up for the course gave their responses. In this number, 4 of them are male students and 46 are female students. Study respondents were labelled as P1 to P50 according to the response date in PutraBLAST. To get the true meaning of this student review, the researcher did not correct any errors in the review written by the student.

Discussion

The BBM3413 Research Methodology in Malay Language course is a preparatory course and it act as a condition to enable students of the Bachelor of Arts Malay Language and Linguistics with Honors to produce their Bachelor Dissertation in the fifth and sixth semesters of study. In the first to third semester, students are exposed to theory and knowledge regarding the field of Malay language and in the fourth semester students are exposed to conducting research in the field of Malay language through this course. Therefore, this course is a new knowledge for students. They were not exposed to previous methods of conducting research. Of course, this course is difficult for students to master, especially when online lectures must be conducted to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission. However, with the adaptation of teaching and learning between lecturers and students, this problem can be reduced based on the findings of this study.

Student Comments on Lectures

Although this course is a new course to the students and they are not exposed to the knowledge of conducting research, the students acknowledged that the course has been conducted very well in accordance with the pandemic situation that struck. Although the classes were conducted online, students acknowledged the lectures were interesting and they were comfortable attending the lectures. Lectures were also conducted smoothly although some students faced internet problems due to weather factors, local geography, internet speed subscribed and so on. This can be proven based on the following responses:

During the 14 weeks of attending this lecture, I had the opportunity to add knowledge on ways to produce good proposals. Previously, my understanding of this research method was so shallow, but through this course, it has to some extent helped me to understand a study clearer (P10).

In my opinion, a lot of new information I gained throughout following this course for 14 weeks. has given a lot of disclosure of information related to the bachelor's dissertation such as what should be in the proposal paper and research paper, important format, and so on. also gives a clear and detailed explanation of a topic studied. Thank you for all the knowledge that has been poured. Overall, this class has provided adequate guidance for taking the bachelor's dissertation in the next semester (P37).

In my opinion, during the lecture week 1 to week 14 a lot of new knowledge can be learned and can be understood well and clearly (P39).

Students acknowledged that this course allows them to deepen their knowledge of conducting research in the field of Malay language that they have never studied before. Before attending this lecture, they were not exposed enough and only had superficial knowledge, but after attending the lecture for 14 weeks in the fourth semester of study, they began to understand it. Not only that, but students also acknowledged that through this course they got an overview and made preparations to produce their own research in the next semester. This is because this lecture not only explains about research methods, but also guide students in producing a final assignment in the form of a research proposal paper that can be used as a preliminary draft to be submitted to the supervisor of their dissertation next semester.

Overall, this course is an excellent course and each student will certainly gain new knowledge and ways to produce a correct proposal paper in line with the guidelines of the bachelor's dissertation (P31).

Overall, this course is an excellent course (P4).

The lectures given during these 14 weeks really helped me in producing a bachelor's dissertation proposal. This lecture gave me exposure on how to produce a qualitative and quantitative study (P45).

During the 14 weeks I took this course, I was able to learn how to produce a good proposal. Previously, my understanding of this research method was less but now I feel I can do better than before. This course helped me a lot (P36).

In this regard, the students think that this course is suitable to follow and helps them a lot in conducting research well. The travel and execution of the lectures was also smooth despite having to be conducted online. Students also acknowledged that the lectures were conducted in an interesting way. This situation makes students feel comfortable and ready to attend lectures on time.

The lectures conducted over the past 14 weeks were conducted very well (P8).

The learning method used in this lecture is also very effective and suitable for the online learning situation (P11).

The 14 week lecture went very smoothly (P28).

The teaching and learning of this course lecture went very smoothly and interestingly (P42).

I feel very comfortable in attending the lectures of this course even in a virtual situation, because Dr always gives students the opportunity to ask any questions and answer as well as give very clear detailed explanations on the questions asked by students. I am of the view that the course is very beneficial to students because the Research Methodology in Malay

Language course is closely related to techniques, the process of producing a thesis or dissertation for diploma, PhD and Master levels for all fields in the future (P18).

The medium used by the lecturers is also suitable for the students. This is because before the lecture is conducted, the lecturer will ask questions and get the consent of the students in the WhatsApp group one the type of medium that suits them. Some of the mediums of choice were Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, BigBlueButton function in PutraBLAST and so on. For this lecture, students are more comfortable using the Google Meet app.

The 14 week lecture went smoothly. The approach used by the lecturers is appropriate to the current situation. All information presented by the lecturer is easy to accept and understand. Indirectly, this helps students to produce well assigned assignments. The explanations given by the lecturers to the students also help the students to be better prepared to produce a bachelor's dissertation for the next semester (P33).

In my opinion, the lecture conducted by is simple and appropriate to the current situation. All the information conveyed is relaxed and easy to understand. Dr's explanation regarding the dissertation is very concise. Dr also helped us a lot in completing task 3 (P35).

First of all, I would like to thank Dr Zuraini for teaching me and my colleagues the important things in doing proposals, methodologies and so on. Sometimes, there are things that are difficult to understand but with the space provided, which is the WhatsApp group, it can be used to ask questions and Dr responds well. During the 14 weeks of lectures, everything went well even though I sometimes had internet problems. Thank you Dr for the guidance given (P38).

Student Comments on Lecturers' Teaching

Students are satisfied with the way the lectures are conducted and the lectures delivered by the course lecturers. They indicated that the lecturers' presentation was good, clear, and easy to understand, the training given also helped to increase their understanding. The assigned task is not burdensome, nor is the delivery period. This can be proven based on the following findings:

During the 14 weeks of learning and teaching sessions, I was very satisfied in terms of the way the lecture was delivered by Dr. In addition, I also get a lot of information and guidance for me to do my Bachelor Dissertation next semester. I gained various important inputs and information during this lecture as it took place. They, how to determine the title of the dissertation, determination of research methods, disclosure of data analysis, and further guide for me in preparing my research proposal paper. Overall, I was satisfied with the teaching that D gave and the time management of the assignment delivery that Dr set. Thank you (P1).

Before commenting, I would like to thank Dr. Zuraini Jusoh for teaching the BBM3413 course, Research Methodology in Malay Language, for 14 weeks

of lectures. Lectures are well conducted by providing descriptions for each topic in the course. Question and answer sessions and exercises provided are also suitable to increase students' understanding and create interaction between lecturers and students. Once again Thank you Dr (P48).

Assalamualaikum. The lectures given during these 14 weeks really helped me in producing a bachelor's dissertation proposal. These lectures gave me exposure on how to produce a qualitative and quantitative study. Furthermore, the teaching methods used were very effective and have helped me to understand each topic easily. This is because, in addition to the notes supplied, also explained about the topic not once but many times so that we could understand it. Dr was also open-minded in answering questions posed in the class group even though Dr was busy. The teaching method that Dr uses will definitely help me and other colleagues in producing a bachelor's dissertation later. Thank for the guidance during these 14 weeks (P45).

The teaching methods used by the lecturers were not only making them better understand this difficult course, but also helped them to produce their bachelor's dissertation in the next semester. Although lectures were conducted online, question and answer sessions and interactions between lecturers and students were still conducted. Questions that did not have time to be answered or were still arising were discussed in the WhatsApp group. This situation allows students to have enough time and space to ask questions and ensure they do not fall behind in the topics being taught.

Assalamualaikum. During these 14 weeks, I have learned a lot from Dr. about Malay language research methods. With all the knowledge that has been given to me, I can make a good proposal and be able to prepare in the end. I am able to understand and know in a good and clear way. This Research Methodology in Malay Language class, has helped me a lot. Thank you for all the knowledge you have poured and given (P2).

The lecturers also helped us a lot to understand and to be proficient with each topic through the activities carried out. We were given the opportunity to ask questions either in class or outside of class time. On this occasion as well, I would like to thank the lecturer, Dr Zuraini who is always patient in educating us until the end of the semester (P5).

Throughout the lecture, I am very grateful to Dr for always giving guidance and reprimanding us if we have made a mistake or have a distorted view of what is being taught. The assignments given are also appropriate to our level of thinking (P7).

Dr has also prepared and provided learning slides for each week in full and ahead of the date of the lecture. This can help students obtain initial information for learning for the next week. Dr is also very helpful in explaining about tasks and problems that needed to be improved by

students based on examples from the results of student activities. Thank you Dr. Zuraini for all the knowledge presented during these 14 weeks (P8).

Dr also always helped the students by giving explanations related to all the topics studied clearly. Thank.

I would also like to thank Dr because all the questions posed are answered clearly and in detail to facilitate the process of students' understanding. She also always gives space and opportunity to students to ask questions and submit our ideas. Thank.

Lecturers are very understanding and considerate towards students by not giving too much workload to students. Thank.

The willingness of lecturers to spend time outside of lecture time and patiently serve students' questions is highly appreciated and is one of the main factors in understanding the topics taught. In addition, the lecturer also reprimanded the mistakes made by students, especially during the presentation session or in producing assignments. This is to ensure that students have a clear understanding of the topics and the overall teaching of the course. The actions of lecturers who share teaching slides in advance can also help students prepare before lectures. To increase comprehension, students will read the lecture first and any questions or ambiguities of information will be asked in the lecture.

The workload given is also appropriate. Students stated that the assignments for this course were not so much of a burden to them. The execution of assignments is also tailored to the situation of the students when the lecturer obtains feedback at the comfort of the students to submit the assignments. For assignments involving presentations, students need to record and submit their recordings into PutraBLAST. If, the recording size is large and cannot be uploaded into PutraBLAST, students can upload the recording link only. Meanwhile, for written assignments, students need to upload documents in the link provided in PutraBLAST.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of the study indicate that students and lecturers adapt to each other in the teaching and learning conducted online. There is a need for a positive attitude among students to ensure that learning runs smoothly. In addition, the commitment of students is also very important to ensure that the content of the lesson can be delivered effectively. The attitude of the lecturer who is tolerant and understands the situation faced is also a key element to the adaptation of this teaching and learning. Therefore, the positive attitude shown by both parties managed to overcome the constraints faced in ensuring that teaching and learning runs smoothly during this pandemic period.

Acknowledgement

This article was written based on comments and reviews given by students of the Bachelor of Arts in Malay Language and Linguistics, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia who took the BBM3413 Research Methodology in Malay Language course in the second semester of 2020/2021.

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