

**THESIS**

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT THE COMPREHENSIBILITY OF  
THE ONLINE ENGLISH LEARNING TEACHING MATERIALS OVER  
THE CRISIS OF COVID-19 AT SMAN 19 MAKASSAR**

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**POST GRADUATE PROGRAM**

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**Thesis**

**As a partial fulfillment of the requirements of Magister Degree**

**English Language Studies  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences**

**Written and Proposed by**

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**LEMBAR PENGESAHAN THESIS**

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IRFIANI BAKRI

## ABSTRACT

**IRFIANI BAKRI.** *High School Students' Perception about the Comprehensibility of the English Teaching Material Provided Online Over the Crisis of Covid-19* (Supervised by Abidin Pammu and Nasmilah).

the present study aimed to understand the comprehensibility of teaching material has attracted the attention of teaching practitioners notably as it is related to the merging pandemic covid-19 and also was to elucidate the perception of students regarding the comprehensibility of English teaching material during emerging Covid-19. Another purpose is to generate alternative solution to instructional strategy in how to overcome the problems of comprehensibility during the situation.

In collecting data regarding the perception, close and open-ended questionnaires were distributed to the selected samples representing Secondary High School of SMAN 19 Makassar by using google form format. Sufficient time allocation was prepared to allow the samples to provide reliable and valid responses. Then, comprehensibility scale that has been developed by Rubio (2015) was utilized to measure the student's perception on each of the given topic of online. The scaled data were then analyzed using SPSS EBM V 26 to obtain the mean score of students' perception of comprehensibility.

The results demonstrated that the perceptions of comprehensibility was (Sig 2-Tailed <0.05). The value confirmed that the Cronbach's Alpha for 16 questionnaire items were > 0.60. This finding confirms that the overall items in this table were reliable implying that the level of material comprehensibility was moderate that can be interpreted as less productive. The finding generates pedagogical implication that require teachers during pandemic Covid-19 to constantly aware of provision of other alternative method for teaching as a substitute materials during the pandemic.

**Key words:** Perceptions; comprehensibility; emerging; Covid-19>

## ABSTRAK

**IRFIANI BAKRI.** *Persepsi Siswa SMA tentang Pemahaman Materi Ajar Bahasa Inggris yang Disediakan Secara Online Selama Krisis Covid-19* (Dibimbing oleh **Abidin Pammu dan Nasmilah**).

Studi ini bertujuan sebagai komprehensibilitas materi bahan ajar yang telah menarik perhatian para praktisi pengajar terutama terkait dengan munculnya pandemi covid-19. dan yang paling utama adalah mengetahui persepsi siswa tentang kelengkapan bahan ajar bahasa Inggris selama munculnya Covid-19. Tujuan lain adalah untuk menghasilkan solusi alternatif untuk strategi instruksional tentang bagaimana mengatasi masalah pemahaman selama situasi.

Dalam pengumpulan data mengenai persepsi, kuesioner tertutup dan terbuka dibagikan kepada sampel terpilih yang mewakili Sekolah Menengah Pertama SMAN 19 Makassar dengan menggunakan format google form. Alokasi waktu yang cukup disiapkan untuk memungkinkan sampel memberikan tanggapan yang andal dan valid. Kemudian skala pemahaman yang dikembangkan oleh Rubio (2015) digunakan untuk mengukur persepsi siswa terhadap setiap topik yang diberikan secara online. Data yang diskalakan kemudian dianalisis menggunakan SPSS EBM V 26 untuk mendapatkan skor rata-rata persepsi siswa tentang pemahaman.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persepsi komprehensibilitas (Sig 2-Tailed  $<0,05$ ). Nilai tersebut menegaskan bahwa Cronbach's Alpha untuk 16 item kuesioner adalah  $> 0,60$ . Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa keseluruhan item dalam tabel ini dapat diandalkan yang menyiratkan bahwa tingkat pemahaman materi adalah sedang yang dapat diartikan sebagai kurang produktif. Penemuan tersebut menimbulkan implikasi pedagogis yang mengharuskan para guru selama pandemi Covid-19 untuk terus-menerus mewaspadaai penyediaan metode alternatif lain untuk mengajar sebagai bahan pengganti selama pandemi.

**Kata kunci:** Persepsi; pemahaman; darurat; Covid19.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

There has been a significant challenge in learning English as a second language or foreign language (L2) that emerged since the covid-19 pandemic started. Such situation has brought tremendous changes in the students learning performance from conventional to online classroom. While online education may isolate students at home, it should not negatively impact language learning as long as collaboration both teachers and parents continue to provide rich input (Krashen 1981).

It has recently come to our attention that teachers, especially those in English Foreign Language classroom (henceforth, EFL classroom), are not merely limited to teaching students the language, but also, they play important role for the enhancement of acquisition process. The Ministry of Culture and Education had issued a circular note for schools and other educational institutions including higher education to temporarily stop the conventional teaching and learning activities in the schools and encourage lessons to be conducted from home through e-learning since 17 March 2020 (Mendikbud, 2020). The ministry recommended teachers use various e-learning platforms such as Rumah Belajar, Quipper School, Ruang Guru, and Google Classroom, Zoom, and so on because those e-learning platforms achieve popularity in Indonesia due to widely used and installed.

Furthermore, The Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia has instructed schools to carry out online learning since 17 March 2020 for covid-19 affected areas (Mendikbud, 2020b). Soon after that, the Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia has ordered all education units to run online learning from 24 March 2020 due to the increasing spread of covid-19 and maintaining the health of students, teachers, and all educational staffs (Mendikbud, 2020a). These policies lead students to learn from home and teachers to work from home, too. It fully replaces face-to-face learning in classroom setting into online learning which possibly lasts till the end of semester due to the covid-19 pandemic. It becomes a new challenge for both students and teachers to run online learning.

According to Cao et al. (2020), these actions certainly give impact on education, particularly students' growth. Online learning researches usually explore stand-alone online learning tools, instructional methodologies or techniques, unique environments within a blended learning program, and comparison between classroom-based and fully online learning. The emphasis is commonly on the students' attitude, perception, assessment, evaluation, satisfaction, and performance (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018; Sun, 2014). Although a big number of research has been done quantitatively and qualitatively to investigate the effectiveness of online learning (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018), a research on online language learning carried out during a pandemic is very rarely found, especially in English as Foreign Language (EFL) context in secondary school settings as most online language learning researches have been done in tertiary education level (Chin– *Arief Eko Priyo Atmojo, Arif Nugroho* 52 Hsi Lin &

Warschauer, 2015). This pandemic causes the fully online language learning to occur in a sudden and completely unprepared situation. Whereas, a particular research investigating fully online language learning is very rare (Sun, 2014), especially during a pandemic.

. It is commonly believed that internet access has been considered as an integral part of human tools for empowerment especially learning a language specifically in Indonesia. In such situation, therefore, suitable English material should be available for student for learning at home in the form of assignments that can increase students' receptive and productive skills. Also, the different atmosphere forces students to be aware of cutting-edge technology or gadget to access their learning English subject. Krashen (1982) stated that while the limitation of classroom gives a modification of learning for students to broaden their level L2, informal environment can be modified in two ways: by supplying input progress in language acquisition, and student conversationally competent, that is, despite a less than perfect competence in the second language. In reality, the latest study concludes that most English students are not ready for this rapid shift in terms of teaching and learning style and far more profound, the teachers as facilitator in this online platform have lack experience in utilizing the online learning media (Sulam et al., 2019; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020).

Various reasons were identified, and they can be categorized into three factors consists of the first is availability and sustainability of internet connection, the second is accessibility of teaching media, and the last is compatibility of tools to access the media (Agung, A. S. N., & Surtikanti, M. W. 2020). In this case, the

students also report self-assessment doing the stressful- marathon task. Based on the online learning system, there are many educational platforms available with various additional features of learning materials for teachers and students. As researcher mention above, however, it is still a debatable question whether online-based learning material is able to provide significant positive changes for students or vice versa. E-learning has various advantages for teaching and learning that includes the reduction of long-term costs, time-space independence, increased flexibility and the opportunity to adapt the learning process, increased opportunities for access to various sources of information, increased opportunities for communication and personalization of the teaching processes (Agung, A. S. N., & Surtikanti, M. W. 2020).

Dealing with this issue, students should play important role for expressing their opinions or perspectives in order to successfully achieve the goal of learning English. However, it is essential to have prior analysis whether the material provided is in accordance with the conditions and situations for studying at home. Elliot, S (2004), moreover, adds that perception as the ability to recognize familiar persons, objects, or events with the meaning and expectation. It means that the students' perception

can be described as the developed opinion after having a certain experience that need adjustment (Michotte 2017).

In this research, therefore, the students' perception is focused on the problem has been the main reference for conducting research related to the

comprehensibility of the English learning materials provided online over the crisis of corona pandemic.

### **B. Research Question**

Based on the aforementioned background, the Research Questions are formulated as follows

1. What is the students' perception about the comprehensibility of English learning material provided online over covid-19 pandemic era?
2. To what extent do these students' perceptions affect the success of the learning process?

### **C. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research questions mentioned above, this research aims to fulfil two objectives, as follows:

1. To reveal the students' perceptions about the comprehensibility of English learning materials provided online during Pandemic Covid-19.
2. To explain the extent to which these perceptions affect the success of learning process

### **D. Significance of the Research**

The current research is expected to contribute to the development of the language teaching and learning especially the comprehensibility of English material provided online during pandemic. Teachers can take a part in evaluating their teaching approaches with the result that goal of learning is possible to

achieve. Even more, this research practically may contribute the detail insight in language teaching and learning. The present research may also provide a narrative description based on the goal of the theory of perception which not only perceive or describe the student perception but also reconsider a certain phenomenon of what the student perceives about the situation of learning process during pandemic so that the goal of learning can be obtained.

#### **E. Scope of the Research**

In comparison to other previous studies, this study will focus on the issue of online EFL learning comprehensibility and attempt to correlate the online EFL learning to covid-19 pandemic

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. Previous studies**

There has been an overwhelming of studies already done in relation to the perception of students on the use of online materials. However, not many can be reported regarding the perception of students while learning through online during pandemic covid-19. The present study provides gaps which can be linked to the perception of students during online learning. The following are relevant studies that can be used as important reference for reviewing the literature online learning materials in relation to student's perceptions. It is hoped that the literature review will help in identifying the gaps of the present study.

The first important research about online teaching has been undertaken by Bao (2020) focussing on specific instructional strategies. The research was able to summarize current online teaching experiences for university instructors who might conduct online education in similar circumstances during covid-19 pandemic in particular. The study came up with five high-impact principles for online education which consists of: high relevance between online instructional design and student learning, effective delivery on online instructional information, adequate support teaching assistants to students, high-quality of the breadth and depth of student's learning, and contingency plan with unexpected online education platform.

Another important research has also been conducted by Mishra, Gupta, Shree (2020) that concerned online teaching-learning during lockdown period of

covid-19 pandemic. The result showed that there has been a greater realization of the time-bound relevance and criticalities of online teaching-learning mode during the lockdown period and it is also become a big problem with the result that one troublesome issue was brought in a notice by the teachers that conducting online practical classes during the lockdown period proved difficult because it required systematic demonstration of the whole process in the presence of the students.

Different context provides different research findings in relation to pandemic covid 19. For example, Agung, A. S. N., & Surtikanti, M. W. (2020) reported that there were approximately ten from eleven subjects involved in online learning. There were about 60.6% of the English lecturers conducting the course online. Meanwhile, 39.4% of the English lecturers merely sent the assignments through email and WhatsApp without any further guidance. Giving online courses, it can be identified that most of them used asynchronous interactive session while the rest used synchronous interactive settings. The current study concludes that most English students are not ready for this rapid shift in terms of teaching and learning style. Various reasons were identified, and they can be categorized into three factors: the first is availability and sustainability of internet connection, the second is accessibility of teaching media, and the last is compatibility of tools to access the media.

The roles of parents and their belief towards their children online learning has also been ventured into by the researcher in another context. For example, Dong, Cao and Li (2020) surveyed 3275 Chinese parents' beliefs and attitudes

around young children's online learning. Most parents (92.7%) in the study reported that their children had online learning experiences during the pandemic, and many (84.6%) spent less than a half-hour each time. The result was found that the implementation of online learning during the covid-19 pandemic has been problematic and challenging for Chinese families. Chinese parents generally had negative beliefs and attitudes about the values and benefits of online learning and preferred traditional learning in early childhood educational environments. This is because they were neither trained nor ready to embrace online learning. The hardship caused by the covid-19 pandemic has made them suffer, thus more resistant to online learning at home. And these Chinese parents were more concerned about the shortcomings of online learning, their children's inadequate self-regulation, and their lack of time and professional knowledge in supporting online learning.

The confinement of the students' performance as a result of pandemic covid-19 has also been documented in other context of study. Gonzalez et.al (2020) explores the effects of covid-19 confinement in the students' performance in higher education. There is some evidence to suggest that online learning during the pandemic facilitated benefits analysed students' performance during covid-19 and found that students improved their performance when compared with a cohort from the previous year. Gonzalez et al. (2020) analysed the results of specific tests designed for both, the online and face-to-face modality (this was part of a larger study analysing learning strategies). The authors found significant improvement in the scores of both modalities, online and face-to-face, when

students were confined due to covid-19. Although there may be documented and objective improvements in performance, there is not enough information about how covid-19 measures (stay-at-home) and online learning have affected the learning process from the students' point of view.

Patricia (2020) found motivation, self-efficacy, and cognitive engagement decreased after the transition, and only the use of technology increased. The crisis is not over, and we need to adapt to the students' responses and needs if we want them to continue and have a positive higher education experience. Content is important, but without the proper conditions, students may have a negative experience again and their cognitive engagement can drop. Educators must be mindful of these circumstances and promote a positive attitude, encourage motivation, and invite students to rely on their previous knowledge.

From the related studies mentioned above, it is evident that most of the researches on students' perception in online learning during pandemic, are limited to the categorization of using modes, platforms learning during pandemic. Studies that relate with the comprehensibility of the English material provided online for learners during covid-19 pandemic are scarce. This overlooked research gap provides the researcher with an opportunity to explore the students' perception about English learning material provided during covid-19 pandemic.

## **B. Theoretical Review**

Several theories are used to provide the researcher with a better understanding regarding the issue presented in this research. These theories are the comprehensibility, perception online learning.

### **1. The Comprehensibility of teaching Material**

One of the most important underlying perceptions that has been associated with the evocation of interest are appraisals of comprehensibility Silvia, P. J., & Kashdan, T. B. (2009). In other words, when people perceive a stimulus to be new or novel, as well as potentially comprehensible with a reasonable amount of effort, they are more likely to be interested in the topic. Hardway (2017) examined whether a video illustration of a complex phenomenon promoted learner interest, perceived comprehensibility, and better learning in online- and classroom-based contexts. However, the result showed that video presentation of the material did not improve learning outcomes, in either context. In the classroom-delivered context, the video neither helped nor hurt the learning outcomes, but it also did not significantly boost learners' interest. The roles of teaching materials in language acquisition, Krashen (1985) confirms that adults develop their language competence either through language acquisition or language learning. On the other, language learning is a conscious process that results in knowing about the set of rules or grammar of language. Furthermore, Krashen shows how acquisition and learning are used in the production of output. Learned competence (the result of language learning) acts as monitor or editor of the acquired competence (the result of language acquisition) in

producing spoken or written output. When the output result based on input learning, the role of teachers in order to provide various forms of English material to enhance receptive and productive skill must be into account.

Meanwhile, Richards (2001) identifies two types of materials, such as authentic materials (unprepared teaching resources such as texts, photographs, video clips etc.) and created materials (textbooks and other specially developed instructional resources) where the difference between the two materials is becoming increasingly blurred since many published materials integrate authentic texts and other real-world sources. Richards (2006) further maintains that since classroom activities should in all probability mirror the real world and use real world or “authentic” sources as the basis for classroom learning. Authentic materials are good since they provide cultural information about the target language; they provide exposure to real language; they relate more closely to learners’ needs; they support a more creative approach to teaching. Although many critics of authenticity have opposing view on those positive sides, however, since the arrival of CLT (Computer Language teaching), textbooks and other teaching materials have taken on a much more “authentic” look.

## **2. Perception in online learning Material**

Michotte (2017) develops perception as a phase of the total process of action which allows us to adjust our activities to the world. The students’ perception can be described as the developed opinion after having a certain experience that needs adjustment. Furthermore, it is also added by Kalish (1973) namely set or expectation that the word as means of expect a good thing to

happen in the future. Based on these definitions mean that perception is not only to have an opinion about something, or have a belief about something or think that something is true, correct or real but also hope and demand expect a good thing to happen in the future.

Besides, online teaching mode is providing the feeling of psychological safety to learning community in covid-19 afflicting period. The second step is about *changing* process under which two options are left either to adopt a new online mode in practice in other institutions elsewhere or to innovate. The research is always for a better implementable model. Here, notably, change is not an event but a dynamic process as a break in continuity. For any result-oriented change, we need to have a time suited outlook and a new mindset (Bridges, 1991) for online teaching mode at an individual and organizational level to supplement the transition phase.

The principles of online learning according to Freeman and Anderson (2011) in some areas of language and skills are emphasized during online learning because of pivotal things such as personal statements, sharing of opinion or facts, reporting and reflecting are emphasized. Computer use naturally requires the skills of reading and writing, although speaking and listening may also be worked on depending on the type(s) of technology used. Because of the emphasis on the written medium, class time can be profitably spent in face-to-face interaction.

The widespread use of online learning inevitably brings students into alternative places for online language learning Online language learning (OLL)

may point various learning adjustments, namely a web-facilitated learning, a hybrid or blended learning, and a fully virtual or online learning Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020). Moreover, the online language learning in EFL context in secondary school settings during the covid-19 pandemic takes place in fully online language learning because students and teachers are not possible to gather in a face-to-face context. In this situation, the covid-19 pandemic and government policy carry out online learning which causes students to learn from home and teachers to teach from home too, drawing on written reflections data from high school students' perceptions from various level and it enriches the knowledge of how EFL secondary school teachers in Indonesia carry out online EFL learning in a sudden and completely unprepared situation due to the covid-19 pandemic. Rubio (2014) claimed that the increase popularity Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) since 2011 had been touted by many as a disruptive force in education. Through MOOCs anyone with access to a computer and a fast Internet connection could enjoy the benefits of high-quality education at almost no cost.

It is also supported by Holland,A.A (2019) conducted research related a theory-building meta-synthesis aims to identify what is known about how informal online learning can be effectively designed outside a formal online course structure. 22 articles were investigated learning that happened primarily online, was self-directed in nature, and had a primarily adult audience. The author brought together the findings of these individual studies to identified two effective principles of informal online learning design that research dissemination

organizations can utilize when developing online outreach education programs for adult audiences: (a) interaction opportunities support knowledge construction and learner empowerment; and (b) segmented, titled, and tagged learning objects facilitate personalized learning. The principles identified in this study not only describe what is known about how adults learn informally online, but also provide the common language and goals to frame the interdisciplinary collaboration likely necessary to employ them.

Online learning has seen a fast growth during the past decade because it has greater flexibility in terms of time, place and pace of the study, easier and more effective access to a wider variety and greater quantity of information, and lower financial cost (Chen, 2010; Khurana, 2016). In a globalized digital age, government agencies, educational institutions, corporations worldwide are increasingly promoting online learning, resulting in a shift from traditional face-to-face classes to distance and online learning. With the advancement of new communication technologies, online learning can provide a rich authentic learning ecology that can facilitate collaboration and interdependence between learners (Aldhafeeri & Khan, 2016). However, studies (Chen, 2010; O'Doherty et al., 2018) have expressed their concerns about the quality of online learning and highlighted the main difficulties in creating an online learning community with a high degree of social presence and engagement. In addition, some scholars are also concerned about the major problems of online learning, such as social isolation, lack of interactivity and participation, delayed or insubstantial amount of feedback Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020).

### C. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of this research will be designed by involving at least four dimensions, such as students' participation, accessibility, materials, and assignment delivery provided online learning during pandemic, which is constructed as the following figure.

