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How lecturers of English perceive hybrid learning at the tertiary level

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Abstract:

Hybrid learning has gained prominence in higher education institutions in Vietnam, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, research on lecturers' perspectives of this educational paradigm remains limited. This study aims at investigating English lecturers' perceptions towards hybrid learning via self-assessment of their Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK). Employing a mixed-methods approach, combining Likert-scale surveys and in-depth interviews aligned with M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1]**'s framework. The research engaged 35 in-service English lecturers across four universities and a college in Ho Chi Minh city and Dong Thap province. The findings indicated that lecturers demonstrated high levels of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge, while self-assessments on technological pedagogical knowledge were comparatively lower. Notably, qualitative data from in-depth interviews highlighted the pivotal role of collaborative support from colleagues in sharing teaching materials and addressing technological challenges, alongside the perceived benefits of time flexibility and the comfort of teaching at home, as crucial factors facilitating the effective implementation of hybrid learning. Nevertheless, lecturers identified obstacles to hybrid learning implementation, including limited technological literacy, deficiencies in suitable professional training programmes, learner hesitancy, and inadequacies in available textbooks. Some recommendations arising from these findings include a call for English lecturers to enhance their proficiency in technological pedagogical content knowledge and for educational institutions to furnish adequate resources to support teaching faculty.**

Keywords: **English as a Foreign Language tertiary level; English lecturers; hybrid learning; perceptions; Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK).**

Classification numbers: **3.1, 3.2**

1. Introduction

The incremental application and facilitation of technology in teaching and learning have exposed higher education to globalisation tendencies with e-learning involving web-based courses, virtual classroom meetings, and digital collaborations. J.W. Foncha, et al. (2022) [2] posit that higher education appears to be in a state of high uncertainty throughout the world, necessitating a deliberate increase in lecturers' technological and methodological readiness for both face-to-face and online teaching and learning. Nevertheless, it is widely believed that the face-to-face (FTF) teaching mode is familiar to learners' target language acquisition because it has been a typical and conventional delivery teaching mode N. Abdelrahman, et al. (2016) [3]. However, a learning process with the lecturer as the primary source of delivering knowledge has seemingly come to its bygone era because of the further requirements of discussion, negotiation of meaning, and reflection. Therefore, combining delivery teaching modalities, such as FTF mode and virtual classrooms, constitutes hybrid learning or blended learning. Hybrid learning, which represents an inextricable connection between traditional and online instructions, appears innovative for the development of education. This delivery teaching mode aids in-class learning to amplify the learning process with distinctive asynchronous opportunities. Despite its increasing employment at the collegiate level several decades ago, hybrid learning is potentially breaking new ground in higher education institutions in Vietnam. Thus, the introduction of hybrid learning is urgent for Vietnamese lecturers as a way to enrich their teaching methods and for students as a tool to obtain high-level professional knowledge.

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The research problem identified in this study operates on both practical and literature levels. Practically, the authors have observed that English lecturers potentially encountered several obstacles, such as employing online teaching applications. Therefore, it is a prerequisite for English lecturers to have a good command of pedagogical knowledge and technological literacy. According to the TPACK framework proposed by M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1], three aspects (technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge) are worth using to reflect how effective the lecturer's teaching knowledge is. It can be elucidated that the complementarity of these three aspects possibly constitutes lecturers' flexible understanding to apply technology-assisted lessons. Thus, evaluating the hybrid learning approach can apply the TPACK framework because this state-of-the-art teaching approach combines both virtual activities and face-to-face classroom meetings. The TPACK framework proposes that lecturers must possess a profound comprehension of each aspect of the knowledge mentioned above. This is essential for effectively integrating and managing the use of technology, pedagogy, and content in their teaching practice M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1].

On the literature level, the research problem addresses a notable gap in existing studies. Hybrid learning is considered relatively innovative for English lecturers in this digital age. In the context of Vietnam's tertiary education, research on hybrid learning primarily focuses on students' academic progress and perceptions. H. Ngo (2010) [4]'s, study on an English for specific purposes (ESP) course using Canvas and virtual training revealed significant improvement despite technical challenges. An additional study, H.Y. Phuong, et al. (2019) [5], has supported the need for increased lecturer involvement to enhance course effectiveness, promoting autonomy among English as a foreign language (EFL) undergraduates. Internationally, T. Vereshchahina, et al. (2018) [6], explored English as a second language (ESL) lecturers' perceptions, noting high content and pedagogical knowledge but lower technological expertise. T.N. Le, et al. (2022) [7], identified barriers for EFL lecturers, emphasising infrastructure and institutional support issues. The researchers have identified knowledge and methodology gaps in existing studies, prompting the current study to explore how English lecturers at Vietnam's tertiary level perceive hybrid learning models, utilising a mixed-methods approach to address these gaps. Hence, the objective of this study was to explore how English lecturers at Vietnam's tertiary level perceive hybrid learning models, achieved by examining how they assess their TPACK in teaching approaches.

To accomplish this aim, the two research questions were formulated:

Research question 1: To what extent do EFL lecturers perceive hybrid learning through their self-assessment of TPACK?

Research question 2: What are the factors that facilitate and hinder the hybrid learning process?

This study significantly contributes to both practical and theoretical realms. Practically, it aims to raise awareness of the need for implementing hybrid learning in the near future. Accordingly, lecturers need to equip themselves with knowledge related to the seven aspects of TPACK. Theoretically, there have been few studies investigating English lecturers at the tertiary level, especially in the Vietnam context. Therefore, this study explores the English lecturers' self-perceived perspectives on the hybrid learning model, focusing on their knowledge of TPACK.

2. Literature review

2.1. Hybrid learning

The term hybrid learning has been interpreted in various ways by numerous authors. C.R. Graham, et al. (2007) [8] described it as a combination of face-to-face teaching modes with technology-driven modes, referring to it as a blended learning approach. Similarly, A. Uzun, et al. (2010) [9] defined courses that integrate the Internet with conventional teaching delivery modes as hybrid, web-assisted, blended, or mixed learning modes. Some authors share the idea that hybrid learning refers to a whole educational programme combining elements of both a face-to-face teaching approach and a virtual or computer-enhanced phase; in this context, traditional classroom meetings can be supplemented by online learning time [10]. Generally, hybrid learning involves a combination of teaching delivery modes (e.g., on-site, web-oriented, and self-paced learning), teaching methods (e.g., FTF and technology-driven phases), synchronous and asynchronous learning forms, and delivery media (e.g., web-based activities or courses, videos, classroom sessions, textbooks).

Most authors (e.g., C.R. Graham, et al. (2007) [8]) agreed that the terms "hybrid" and "blended" can be used interchangeably. Thus, the term hybrid learning used in this article depicts an educational approach that merges in-person and virtual teaching methods. The participants underwent courses involving both online and offline sessions, each accounting for an equal proportion. This division of approaches also defined the study's scope. This innovative strategy seamlessly integrates conventional classroom interactions with online elements, providing students with a flexible and dynamic learning experience.

2.1.1. The application of hybrids in foreign language teaching

Recently, the implementation of hybrid learning into foreign language teaching and learning has gained much attention from researchers.

B.F. Klimova (2012) [11] offered an example in an Academic Writing for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course, emphasising online submission of written assignments and independent online reading. M. Nashir, et al. (2021) [12] highlighted the suitability of hybrid learning in adapting to the "new normal" era, particularly in Intensive English classes. Their study indicated that hybrid learning improved communication practice, leading to enhanced learning outcomes, particularly in speaking skills. Most students (71.7%) reported increased interest and effectiveness with hybrid learning, with 81.8% preferring it over purely online or FTF instruction. Additionally, C.S. Ironsi (2023) [13] investigated the effectiveness of educational materials in a blended learning environment, discovering significant improvements in students' writing abilities. In summary, hybrid learning, developed over a decade, has demonstrated numerous benefits for language education, including improved communication, academic success in EAP courses, and enhanced writing skills. This innovative approach aligns well with teaching second languages.

2.1.2. Hybrid learning in the context of tertiary level

As a part of the incremental application of hybrid learning in the education sector, tertiary institutions have proliferated their courses with this innovative teaching mode.

In tertiary education, hybrid learning is gaining traction as institutions adopt this innovative approach. T. Vereshchahina, et al. (2018) [6]'s pilot study involved 18 ESL university instructors assessing their self-perceived hybrid learning proficiency. The lecturers demonstrated strong subject matter knowledge but had limited expertise in developing multimedia resources and using online collaboration platforms. Nevertheless, they showed a deep understanding of hybrid learning's advantages and disadvantages, signalling their interest and support for its implementation.

In the Vietnamese context, H. Ngo (2010) [4] explored Vietnamese lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning. Sixteen lecturers participated in an interactive PDF module-based hybrid English course. The study revealed increased knowledge and contributions from participants, although some faced challenges. They appreciated the clear objectives and well-organised content, and feedback in embedded tests helped them improve. Overall, the study confirmed the effectiveness of the instructional module for hybrid learning.

2.1.3. Hybrid learning in the Vietnam university teaching context

In Vietnam's tertiary education context, research on hybrid learning focuses on two key aspects. Firstly, limited studies explore the impact of hybrid learning on students' academic progress. H. Ngo (2010) [4] conducted research on students' perspectives in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course using Canvas and virtual training. The study divided participants into pilot, experimental, and control groups, showing a significant improvement in ESP performance. Students faced technical challenges and intermittent internet connectivity but remained enthusiastic about Canvas training.

Previous studies delved into tertiary students' perceptions of this innovative approach (e.g. H.T.T. Nguyen, et al. (2021) [14]). They have suggested that more lecturer involvement may enhance the effectiveness of these courses in Vietnam. Students' reliance on lecturers for motivation and direction may hinder their autonomy in learning. However, this approach can promote autonomy among EFL undergraduates (H.T.T. Nguyen, et al. (2021) [14]).

In summary, previous research studies in this field have predominantly focused on Vietnamese students as participants, with limited attention given to tertiary lecturers. Consequently, there is a justifiable need for this study to be conducted, as it aims to address the existing gap in the literature by investigating the experiences and perspectives of lecturers in the context of hybrid English courses.

2.2. Technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge

L. Shulman (1987) [15] defined the knowledge of educational technology possessed by teachers as pedagogical content knowledge. In light of this, M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1] argued that the TPACK framework comprises three essential components: technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge, which are crucial for effective teaching. These components and their relationships are demonstrated in the following Fig. 1:

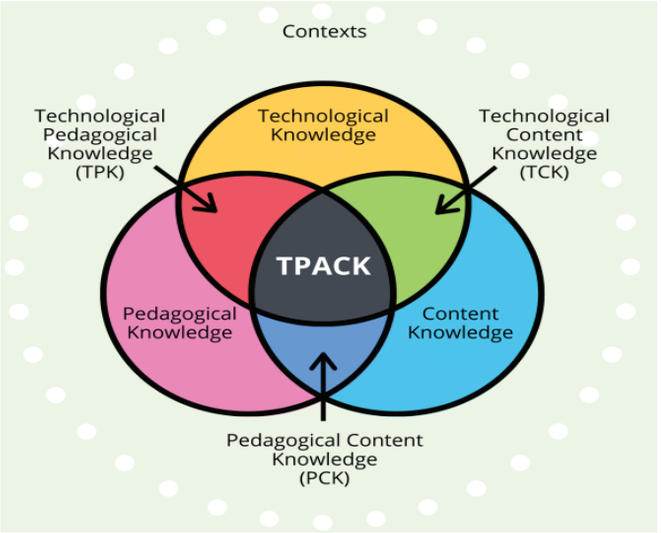

Fig. 1. Diagram of the technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge framework [1].

According to M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1], content knowledge represents the subject matter that teachers are expected to teach based on their training and professional responsibilities. Secondly, pedagogical knowledge encompasses a teacher's understanding of various instructional techniques and pedagogical strategies. Lastly, technological knowledge refers to a teacher's familiarity with both conventional and computer-mediated technologies that can be employed in the classroom.

However, rather than existing in isolation, these three components complement and intersect with each other, giving rise to additional forms of knowledge. Firstly, Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) corresponds to a teacher's understanding of how to effectively utilise technology to convey subject-specific knowledge to their students. Secondly, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) refers to a teacher's knowledge of appropriate and effective pedagogical approaches and strategies for teaching content knowledge, taking into account the learning preferences and abilities of their students. Lastly, Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) encompasses a teacher's understanding of how to integrate technology into their instructional practices to enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, TPACK encompasses the integration and utilisation of these knowledge domains to achieve curriculum-aligned learning objectives. The TPACK framework emphasises that teachers must possess a deep understanding of each of these knowledge components in order to effectively coordinate and integrate technology, pedagogy, and content in their teaching practices M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1].

2.3. Research conceptual framework

This article aims to explore EFL lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning in some universities and colleges in Ho Chi Minh city and Dong Thap province and to identify factors that influence the implementation of this teaching and learning mode.

Generally, individuals interpret new phenomena according to their prior knowledge and experiences. Thus, the key individual factors influencing EFL lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning lie in their knowledge of the hybrid learning mode. This knowledge, according to M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1], is represented through lecturers' understanding of teaching English with three main fundamental knowledge factors: content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge, as categorised into different components illustrated in the TPACK framework. These ideas are illustrated in the conceptual framework of this study as follows in Fig. 2.

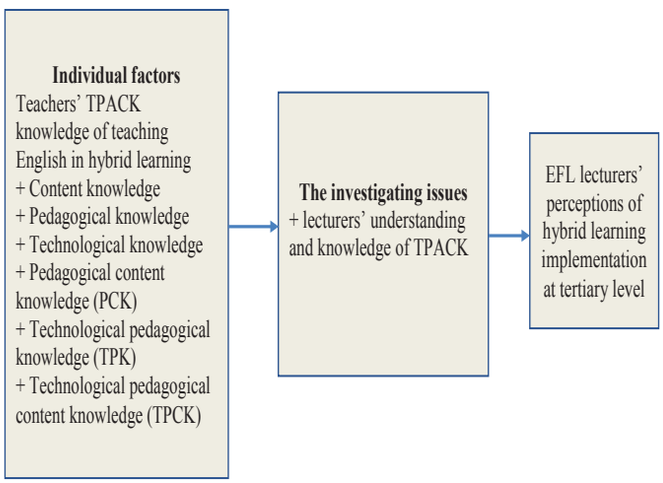

Fig. 2. Conceptual framework for the study.

2.4. Previous studies and research gaps

In the international university teaching context, limited research explores English language lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning, except for T. Vereshchahina, et al. (2018) [6]'s study. They examined lecturers' TPACK and the advantages and disadvantages of hybrid learning. While lecturers generally possessed high content and pedagogical knowledge, their technological knowledge was lower due to a lack of information support and digital equipment. Despite this, lecturers noted benefits such as a student-centred approach, easy access to materials, and a wide range of online tools. Overall, ESL lecturers had

positive perceptions of hybrid learning but recognised the need to enhance their technical knowledge.

In a study by T.N. Le, et al. (2022) [7], 30 EFL lecturers identified barriers and drawbacks to implementing a combination of online and offline periods. Major barriers included a lack of infrastructure, institutional support, knowledge, and time for web-based technologies. Drawbacks involved workload, time consumption, and demotivation. The study provides implications for addressing these challenges through policy and practice changes.

Upon conducting a review of previous studies, the researchers identified knowledge and methodology gaps in existing research. To address these gaps, the current study aims to explore how English lecturers at Vietnam's tertiary level perceive hybrid learning models by examining how they assess their TPACK in teaching approaches. To achieve this aim, a mixed-methods approach incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data was utilised. In-service English lecturers from four universities and colleges in the Southern region of Vietnam participated in the study, responding to Likert-scale surveys and taking part in in-depth interviews following the framework proposed by M.J. Koehler, et al. (2014) [1].

3. Methodology

This article applied a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data collected from questionnaires were analysed with the help of the SPSS 25 statistics programme while the qualitative data coded from interviews were categorised into thematic analysis.

3.1. Study site

The study was conducted with participants teaching at three universities in Ho Chi Minh city and a college in Dong Thap province. The reasons for choosing these research sites include: (1) Hybrid learning implementation, and (2) the authors' familiarity with research sites. Specifically, the most important factor is that all the research sites have implemented hybrid learning in their training programmes. Additionally, the authors have worked at the universities in Ho Chi Minh city both as full-time and visiting lecturers, and they have close connections with participants working at Dong Thap College. Therefore, they have a profound understanding of the hybrid learning implementation process in those contexts. According to C. Marshall, et al. (2011) [16], these advantages facilitate the quality of research data and research findings.

3.2. Study sample

The participants of this study consist of 35 in-service English lecturers working at four universities and colleges in Ho Chi Minh city and Dong Thap province, Vietnam. The subjects were selected using purposeful sampling. The criteria used to invite the participants for the questionnaire is that all of them have experience in applying hybrid learning in their English classes. After one week of receiving survey responses from participants, three of them were randomly selected for the semi-structured interviews. The demographic information of these interviewees is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Lecturers' descriptions.

Name	Gender	Qualification	Years of teaching English
Lecturer C	Female	MA	10-15 years
Lecturer H	Female	PhD Student	5-10 years
Lecturer T	Female	MA	5-10 years

Source: Authors' research results.

3.3. Instruments

The experiences and opinions of lecturers towards the implementation of hybrid learning were assessed using a previously validated and reliable 5-point Likert scale survey instrument, which was first developed by Baser, Kopcha & Ozden (2015), then adapted by T. Vereshchahina, et al. (2018) [6]. The main concept of the questionnaire is to assess lecturers' self-assessment of technological pedagogical content knowledge. The original version contains 39 questions, categorised into seven main sections as follows: technological knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, technological content knowledge, technological pedagogical knowledge, and technological pedagogical content knowledge.

However, in this article, the authors have made some adjustments to make the given questionnaire appropriate to the studied settings. Specifically, two items mentioning "collaboration tools such as Second Life, Wiki, and animation tools such as digital story tools" were excluded from the survey as they are not popular in the research settings. Thus, the survey used in this article contains 37 items.

For the open-ended questions, the authors aimed to investigate the factors that facilitate or hinder the hybrid learning process in their classrooms. The final version of the questionnaire ends with four open-ended questions to gain a deeper understanding of participants' teaching environments and their preferences in using teaching facilities. To ensure comfort in answering the questionnaire, it was translated into Vietnamese, the

participants' native language. The translated version was reviewed by two other researchers to ensure understanding.

Then, a semi-structured interview was employed to gain deeper insights into the participants' perceptions, following up on their answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, which highlighted factors impacting the hybrid learning process. The interviews were recorded with the participant's permission and conducted in Vietnamese.

3.4. Data analysis

In this study, as participants' opinions about the TPACK are ultimately important, the result of each section in the given survey was analysed and explained with a thematic description from interview feedback. After the screening process to get qualified responses, 30 answers were used for data analysis. The other five were not used because they had not been fully completed by the participants. Descriptive statistics presenting the means and standard deviations were used to analyse the survey results. A mean in the range of 1.0-2.4 is deemed a low level, 2.5-3.4 a medium level, and 3.5-5.0 a high level. In this case, descriptive statistics were used to profile the general level of lecturers' attitudes towards TPACK. Then, the authors used thematic analysis with the data from the interview sections. The two authors jointly coded the themes from answers recorded in the interview section with three lecturers who were willing to take part in semi-structured interviews.

3.5. Data collection procedure

Because all the research participants live in different places such as Ho Chi Minh city and Dong Thap province, the authors sent the questionnaire surveys to participants via email. After that, the study subjects who were willing to participate in the interview section were contacted and scheduled for interviews at their preferred time. For convenience sampling, three interviewees were chosen for online interviews with the authors. For the quantitative data, there were 35 responses; however, five of them did not meet the requirements of the questionnaire (these five did not complete the questions in the questionnaire), thus, they were not included in the data analysis process. For the qualitative data, the semi-structured interviews were recorded with the participants' permission. To better facilitate the interview process, Vietnamese - the participants' mother tongue - was used, then the data were transcribed into English to illustrate the respondents' ideas in this article. The interviewees were coded as Lecturer C, Lecturer H, and Lecturer T to maintain their confidentiality.

3.6. Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha was employed to evaluate the reliability of the five-point Likert scale utilised for data collection in pursuit of the study's objectives. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated at 0.845, indicating a satisfactory level of consistency among participant responses across the 35-item list. Individual Cronbach's alpha scores for each section surpass the established threshold of 0.7, which is a standard measure for assessing the reliability of responses. Overall, these Cronbach's alpha values fall within the acceptable range of 0.6 to 1, strongly suggesting the credibility of the questionnaire items for practical research purposes.

Furthermore, the researcher utilised the KMO Test to assess the suitability of the questionnaire data for factor analysis.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	**.762**
Approx. Chi-Square	2,945.987
df	210
Sig.	.001

Source: Author's research results.

The KMO value computed was 0.762, as shown in Table 2, implying a noteworthy partial association among the variables. This signifies the suitability of the variables for conducting factor analysis. Additionally, the researcher employed Bartlett's test on the collected data to assess whether the variables were unrelated and unsuitable for factor analysis. As indicated in Table 2, Bartlett's test yielded Sig=0.001 (0.05), indicating correlation among the variables in the dataset. With the pertinent KMO value and the significance level obtained from Bartlett's Test, it becomes evident that the questionnaire data is highly appropriate for factor analysis.

4. Results

In this study, the perception of lecturers on the use of hybrid learning is investigated through seven specific teaching dimensions illustrated via their technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge. Regarding the detailed description of the technological knowledge dimension (Table 3), it is noticeable that the minimum mean value is M=4.17, and the maximum mean value is M=4.67. It is evident that lecturers showed their preferences towards using the necessities of computer peripherals, such as projectors and cameras, which are crucial parts of their lesson preparation for teaching language skills (M=4.67). Additionally, some basic technological terms such as wireless connection or virtual memory are much more

familiar to them (M=4.63). However, these lecturers indicated their reluctance in figuring out some computer problems or digital issues in class (M=4.13). Moreover, they claimed that they were not able to install multimedia or collaboration tools in accordance with their teaching objectives. Thus, the idea of learning software to create multimedia like pictures or videos received a low level of agreement among the participants (M=4.17).

Table 3. Technological knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can use basic technological terms (e.g., operating system, wireless connection, virtual memory, etc.) appropriately.	4.63	.556
I can adjust computer settings such as installing software and establishing an Internet connection.	4.57	.626
I can use computer peripherals such as projectors, camera.	4.67	.606
I can troubleshoot common computer problems (e.g., projector problems, Internet connection problems, etc.) independently.	4.13	.776
I can use digital classroom equipment such as projectors and smart boards.	4.30	.596
I can use office programs (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, etc.) with a high level of proficiency.	4.43	.679
I can create multimedia (e.g., video, Web pages, etc.) using text, pictures, sound, video, and animation.	4.17	.791
I can use collaboration tools (wiki, GG classroom, etc.) in accordance with my objectives.	4.33	.802
I can learn software that helps me complete a variety of tasks more efficiently.	4.33	.711

Source: Authors' research results.

Table 4. Content knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can express my ideas and feelings by speaking in English clearly.	4.43	.504
I can express my ideas and feelings by writing in English clearly.	4.47	.507
I can read texts written in English with the correct pronunciation.	4.53	.507
I can understand texts written in English.	4.57	.504
I can understand the speech of a native English speaker easily.	4.43	.504

Source: Authors' research results.

Concerning the next dimension of content knowledge (Table 4), it is possible to assume that lecturers perceive their content knowledge relatively highly. Generally, all the survey subjects rated their content knowledge, which covers areas of skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, relatively high, with the highest mean score being M=4.57 for writing skill and the lowest score being M=4.43 for speaking skill. From the collected data, these lecturers were most confident in their ability to understand written text in English (M=4.57), followed by speaking and listening. This can be understood as the subjects are all millennials who experienced a time of national education trends where the English language was trained to be grammatically oriented.

Regarding pedagogical knowledge (Table 5), the majority of participants expressed confidence in their teaching methods. Specifically, they believed in their ability to design learning experiences that match students' levels (M=4.40) and foster self-directed learning. However, when it comes to addressing all areas of students' needs, including physical, mental, emotional, social, and cultural differences, these lecturers were less confident, reflected in the lowest mean score of M=4.03. Interestingly, some survey participants expressed divergent views regarding their ability to apply knowledge gained from professional development programmes to the teaching process.

Table 5. Pedagogical knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can use teaching methods and techniques that are appropriate for a learning environment.	4.40	.498
I can design a learning experience that is appropriate for the level of students.	4.30	.535
I can support students' learning in accordance with their mental, emotional, social, and cultural differences.	4.03	.556
I can collaborate with school stakeholders (students, teachers, IT staff, etc.) to support students' learning.	4.03	.669
I can reflect the experiences that I gain from professional development programs in my teaching process.	4.13	.681
I can support students' out-of-class work to facilitate their self-regulated learning.	4.13	.730

Source: Authors' research results.

Considering pedagogical content knowledge (Table 6), the mean values are relatively high, ranging from M=4.07 to M=4.27. Among the given statements, lecturers felt less confident in preparing curricular activities that develop students' language skills (M=4.07). However, they were confident in their ability to adapt lesson plans according to their students' language skill levels (M=4.27) and manage a classroom learning environment (M=4.23).

Table 6. Pedagogical content knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can manage a classroom learning environment.	4.23	.679
I can evaluate students' learning processes.	4.20	.925
I can use appropriate teaching methods and techniques to support students in developing their language skills.	4.17	.874
I can prepare curricular activities that develop students' language skills.	4.07	.907
I can adapt a lesson plan in accordance with students' language skill levels.	4.27	.640

Source: Authors' research results.

Table 7. Technological pedagogical knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can meet students' individualised needs by using information technologies.	3.90	.712
I can lead students to use information technologies legally, ethically and with respect to copyrights.	3.80	.761
I can support students as they use technology such as virtual discussion platforms to develop their higher-order thinking abilities.	3.83	.791
I can manage the classroom learning environment while using technology in the class.	3.93	.907
I can decide when technology would benefit my teaching of specific curricular standards.	4.07	.785
I can design learning materials by using technology that supports students' learning.	4.10	.845
I can use multimedia such as videos and Web sites to support students' learning.	4.13	.900

Source: Authors' research results.

Table 8. Technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge.

	Mean	Std. deviation
I can use collaboration tools (e.g., wiki, Google classroom, etc) to support students' language learning.	4.27	.521
I can support students as they use technology to support their development of language skills in an independent manner.	3.90	.803
I can support my professional development by using technological tools and resources to continuously improve the language teaching process.	4.20	.610

Source: Authors' research results.

The mean values for TPK range from medium to high, from M=3.80 to M=4.13, which is relatively lower than the other six factors, as shown in Table 7. Noticeably, the lecturers found it challenging to guide their learners to use information technologies legally, ethically, and with respect to copyrights (M=3.80). They were also hesitant to support learners in using technologies such as virtual discussion platforms to develop higher-order thinking abilities (M=3.83).

For the final dimension analysed in Table 8, TPACK, the mean scores are similar to TPK, ranging from medium to relatively high. In line with TPK, these research subjects indicated uncertainty about supporting students in using technology to develop language skills independently (M=3.90). However, they were relatively confident in using collaboration tools such as Google Classroom to support students' learning (M=4.27).

In short, the majority of the participants expressed a positive attitude towards their knowledge related to TPACK as well as the implementation of hybrid learning. Following up with the answers in the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, the collected information from the semi-structured interviews highlights the factors that affect the implementation of hybrid learning.

4.1. The factors that facilitate the implementation of hybrid learning

Qualitative data from interviews revealed two main factors that promote the implementation of hybrid learning.

Firstly, the interviewees agreed that they received significant support from their colleagues while applying hybrid learning. This help came from sharing teaching materials and solving technological problems related to lesson preparation and delivery.

Lecturer H and Lecturer C detailed:

"My colleagues guided me how to use the quizzes app to create quick check questions, which helped me a lot to engage my students".

(Lecturer H)

"*At the beginning, I was confused with using MS Teams with my online class, I didn't know how to create classrooms on MS Team and assign assignments for students, but Ms. Ngoc helped me a lot".*

(Lecturer C)

Secondly, the time flexibility and comfort of teaching at home brought positive aspects to hybrid learning. These lecturers expressed strong support for the convenience of time and the comfort of working from home. They believed these points significantly contributed to their support for the implementation of hybrid learning.

"When teaching hybrid, I have much time at home to prepare for the lessons, learning how to use new teaching apps such as Kahoot, instead of rushing on the street for hours."

(Lecturer H)

In short, all the interviewees strongly believed that support from colleagues, time flexibility, and the comfort of teaching at home are the main factors that facilitate hybrid learning.

4.2. The factors that hinder the implementation of hybrid learning

On the other side, several factors hinder the hybrid learning approach, including poor internet connection, low technology skills, learners' reluctance, and unsuitable textbooks.

Firstly, all the interviewees claimed that the most significant factor influencing the quality of hybrid learning is the internet connection. Without a stable internet connection, hybrid learning is meaningless. Poor connection negatively impacts lesson outcomes and learners' attitudes.

Lecturer T highlighted the main issue affecting the quality of hybrid teaching and learning is technology skills. Lecturers need to be well-prepared to use teaching platforms or apps to increase learners' interest. However, not every lecturer is confident with their digital literacy, especially older generations.

She said:

"*Technology skill is the most concerning. Especially with some older lecturers, they are not comfortable or inexperienced when using so many tech applications."*

(Lecturer T)

Another issue is students' reluctance to adapt to the new teaching and learning mode. According to Lecturer C, even though some students easily accept and follow the guidelines of hybrid learning, others are still unwilling. These students resist turning on cameras while studying or turning on cameras but do other activities.

Lecturer C evidenced:

"*In some of my classes, I have to repeatedly ask students to turn on their cameras. Sometimes, I heard the background noise coming from a place that's not supposed for learning as in the football field."*

(Lecturer C)

Unsuitable textbooks were also considered a significant issue negatively impacting hybrid learning. All the interviewees raised concerns about the textbooks during their hybrid teaching. The designed teaching activities are often for offline rather than online classes. For offline sections, the teaching content is appropriate, but it is challenging for lecturers to prepare lesson plans for online classes.

"*The current teaching material is outdated. The groupwork tasks were designed for offline learning, not for an online environment."*

(Lecturer H)

In summary, the dominant factors negatively influencing hybrid learning implementation include poor internet connection, low technology skills, learners' reluctance, and unsuitable textbooks.

5. Discussion

The study investigated lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning across seven teaching dimensions, covering TPACK. Lecturers showed proficiency in basic technology but struggled with technical issues. They felt confident in content knowledge, particularly in written English. While they were adept at matching learning experiences to students' levels, they expressed hesitation in preparing activities for language skills development. Facilitating factors for hybrid learning included colleague support and teaching flexibility, while challenges encompassed poor internet connectivity, low technology skills among lecturers, student reluctance, and unsuitable textbooks.

The findings of this study highlight several issues needing consideration:

Firstly, the majority of participants expressed strong support for hybrid learning, aligning with T. Vereshchahina, et al. [6]. However, despite their enthusiasm, participants expressed concerns about reluctance to install multimedia tools to create videos, part of technological knowledge. This concern was shared by T. Vereshchahina, et al. (2018) [6], who found creating multimedia resources and collaborating on internet-based platforms to be the least

prevalent skills among lecturers. The study also highlights lecturers' reluctance to troubleshoot computer problems, calling for future research to focus on analysing lecturers' technical knowledge.

Secondly, the study highlighted that some lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning were not positive, especially those familiar with traditional teaching pedagogy. This finding is consistent with Hoang & Thao (2012), cited in N.T. Hoang (2015) [17], claimed lecturers were unprepared professionally and mentally for technology-driven teaching. This article argues that the gap between professional development programmes and teaching practices contributes to this reluctance. As Lecturer T mentioned, even though they were trained to use additional functions on platforms like MS Teams and Zoom, more time is needed to apply this knowledge in teaching practices. This finding underscores the importance of organising appropriate professional training activities to prepare lecturers for new teaching modes.

Thirdly, regarding factors hindering hybrid learning effectiveness, the study highlighted the need for suitable teaching resources, especially textbooks. Lecturer C explained the difficulties in designing teaching activities for hybrid classes using textbooks meant for traditional classes. It is recommended that suitable textbooks with activities for both online and offline learning are necessary for this new teaching mode. This issue warrants further research into the role of teaching materials in facilitating hybrid learning pedagogy.

Lastly, the study mentioned factors positively facilitating hybrid learning, such as teaching flexibility. With flexibility, lecturers can better manage their time and design appropriate teaching activities to increase student engagement. This suggests a future trend towards online education. M. Ioannou, et al. (2020) [18] confirm that much work and education have continued online with technology's help. In such scenarios, hybrid learning, combining face-to-face and online teaching, is a potential solution.

In short, issues related to lecturers' reluctance to adopt new media apps, lack of suitable professional training, and appropriate textbooks are critical areas for further research on hybrid learning.

6. Conclusions

The rapid development of technology has prompted both learners and lecturers to consider suitable teaching modes. While face-to-face learning remains dominant, hybrid learning is gaining importance. Understanding lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning implementation and their readiness for TPACK is crucial. The findings assert that the majority of participants support hybrid teaching with technology. However, concerns remain about digital literacy, reluctance to use updated tech applications, the gap between professional training and teaching practices, and suitably designed textbooks for both learners and lecturers.

Theoretically, this study sheds light on the perspectives of English lecturers at the tertiary level regarding hybrid learning in Vietnam. It contributes to filling the gap in the literature concerning the application of hybrid learning among English educators, emphasising the TPACK framework. By exploring lecturers' self-perceived perspectives, the study provides valuable insights into how educators integrate technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge in hybrid learning. The findings offer theoretical implications for understanding the challenges and facilitators encountered by English lecturers when implementing hybrid learning, informing future research in educational technology and pedagogy.

Practically, fostering collegial support systems for educators to share resources and best practices is indispensable. Teachers are suggested to prioritise professional development in technology skills through workshops and coaching, collaborate to adapt curriculum and develop resources suitable for hybrid learning, employ engaging strategies like multimedia content and interactive activities, and proactively address student resistance with orientation sessions and clear guidelines. At the administration level, stakeholders are suggested to address connectivity issues by investing in infrastructure and providing technical support, and continuously evaluating and improving hybrid learning implementations based on feedback.

In conclusion, understanding lecturers' perceptions of hybrid learning and factors influencing their practice, such as TPACK, is crucial in the current technology-oriented education landscape. This article presents its results with a small sample size; thus, more research with a larger sample size is needed to provide a comprehensive picture of hybrid learning, especially in the EFL context.

CRediT author statement

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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