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Reconceptualising Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) for Islamic Education: A Theoretical Framework for Integrating Arabic Linguistic Proficiency and Instructional Design

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Abstract

Islamic Religious Education is a complex phenomenon that bridges the theological, jurisprudential, historical and ethical terrains. Although Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) has been the standard way to connect content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, the concept is often used in Islamic studies without considering Arabic's status as a dynamic cognitive tool and not as a second-language elective. This paper proposes a fresh theoretical model that combines the two theories of Stephen Andrews' Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) and Yves Chevallard's theory of Didactic Transposition in a way that is systematic. The present paper proposes a new theoretical model, designated Islamic Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-PCK), which systematically integrates the two theories, namely Stephen Andrews' Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) and Yves Chevallard's theory of Didactic

Transposition. This model illustrates how the key theological areas of learning in Islamic education are pedagogically deislamicized, de-theologized and depersonalized through mapping of Arabic language skills into teachable curricula in Islamic education, without compromising the theological integrity of the scholarly texts. Moreover, this study explores how the Reference Framework for Teaching Arabic to Speakers of Other Languages (IMTAA) and Total Quality Management (TQM) principles have been implemented in order to overcome the pedagogical dilemma of classical grammatical formalism versus modern communicative competence. The I-PCK model developed as a result of this process offers a framework of action for curriculum designers, teacher educators and policy makers to consider in order to maximise teacher preparation and improve the quality of Islamic education in non-native settings.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Islamic Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-PCK), Arabic Linguistic Proficiency, Teacher Language Awareness (TLA)*

ملخص البحث:

يُعَدُّ التعليم الديني الإسلامي ظاهرة معقدة تجمع بين المجالات العقائدية، والفقهية، والتاريخية، والأخلاقية. وعلى الرغم من أن المعرفة التربوية للمحتوى (PCK) كانت المعيار المعتاد للربط بين المعرفة بالمحتوى والمعرفة التربوية، إلا أن هذا المفاهيم غالباً ما يُستخدم في الدراسات الإسلامية دون اعتبار لمكانة اللغة العربية بوصفها أداة معرفية ديناميكية وليست مجرد مادة اختيارية لغة ثانية. تقترح هذه الورقة نموذجاً نظرياً جديداً يدمج بطريقة منهجية نظريتي "الوعي اللغوي للمعلم" (TLA) لاستيفن أندروز، و"النقل الديدانكتيكي" لإيف شيفلار. ويُسمى هذا النموذج المقترح "المعرفة التربوية للمحتوى الإسلامي" (I-PCK)، وهو يوضح كيف يتم تجريد مجالات التعلم العقائدية الأساسية في التعليم الإسلامي تربوياً من صبغتها الدينية والعقائدية والشخصية من خلال إسقاط مهارات اللغة العربية في مناهج تعليمية قابلة للتدريس، دون المساس بالسلامة العقدية للنصوص العلمية. علاوة على ذلك، تستكشف هذه الدراسة كيف تم تطبيق "الإطار المرجعي لتعليم اللغة العربية لغير الناطقين بها" (IMTAA) ومبادئ "إدارة الجودة الشاملة" (TQM) من أجل التغلب على المعضلة التربوية المتمثلة في الشكليات النحوية الكلاسيكية في مواجهة الكفاءة التواصلية الحديثة. يقدم نموذج (I-PCK) المطور نتيجة لهذه العملية إطار عمل عملياً لمصممي المناهج، ومعلمي المعلمين، وصنّاع القرار

للنظر فيه بغية تعظيم إعداد المعلمين وتحسين جودة التعليم الإسلامي في البيئات غير الناطقة بالعربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم الديني الإسلامي، المعرفة التربوية للمحتوى (PCK)، المعرفة التربوية للمحتوى الإسلامي (I-PCK)، الكفاءة اللغوية العربية، الوعي اللغوي للمعلم (TLA).

Introduction

Historically, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) was known as Pendidikan Islam (PI) in Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia, and its main focus is on the total development of one integrated Muslim personality (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia [KPM] 2018). This educational philosophy is based on the spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social dimensions of the human being to prepare them to play their role in righteousness in this world and the hereafter (KPM, 2018). This extensive perspective takes into account the important philosophical issue of what to teach and how to implement it in a progressive learning structure (Kayode et al., 2016). The modern Islamic curriculum is composed of six content areas of Islamic learning, namely: Al-Quran (scriptural studies), Hadis (Prophetic traditions), Aqidah (theology and creed), Feqah (jurisprudence), Sirah (history and civilization) and Akhlak (ethics and moral conduct) (KPM, 2018).

The main linguistic key of the Islamic tradition, Arabic language, is essential to a deep engagement in these theological domains, which is non-

superficial (Mamat et al., 2017). This Arab language is not only a subject area in Islamic education or a language option in an Islamic school but rather it is the main interpretive machine and bridge to the classical academic sources (Mamat et al., 2017). If there is not a high level of skills in language learning, then understanding the text becomes subject to incomprehension, and another secondary translation must be simplified, and thus the cognitive and spiritual involvement is reduced (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).

More broadly, the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) was introduced by Lee Shulman (1986) in the field of teacher education to rethink the field's specialized knowledge base of teaching. According to Shulman, content and pedagogy are combined in a unique way that is the specialty of teachers; he termed this form of professional understanding PCK. In past years subject matter content knowledge and general pedagogical strategies were taught separately in teacher education programs (Shulman, 1986). PCK filled this void, stating that it is the ability to represent, adapt and transform specific content in ways that make it comprehensible to students, including their preconceptions, misconceptions and learning difficulties (Shulman, 1987).

Although PCK has been applied in various subjects, including mathematics, science, and history, it has yet been applied in Islamic education settings, which is still a fragmented application (Sahrir and

Kabilan, 2012). The critical pedagogical gap is the gap between the content of the theological knowledge and pedagogical execution of the pre-service and in-service Islamic education teachers, which often shows a difference between them in non-native Arabic-speaking context (Azizan et al., 2017). For instance, the level of the pre-service teachers' confidence in applying qualitative Islamic values and ethics (Akhlak) was generally high while integrating complex linguistic parameters into the instructional designs was medium (Azizan et al., 2017).

This educational challenge is magnified by a historical gap in teacher preparation, which sees theological content mastery and Arabic language pedagogy as two distinct academic disciplines (Azizan et al., 2017). As a result, teachers have difficulties in designing the teaching and assessing of classical sources in their linguistic mechanics and theological depth (Nasirudeen & Hamdi, 2026c; Tanjung et al., 2022).

This paper aims to bridge this gap by proposing the following theoretical reconceptualisation of PCK for Islamic Education. This paper builds on Shulman's PCK and Stephen Andrews' model of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) (Andrews, 2007) and Yves Chevallard's theory of Didactic Transposition (Chevallard, 1985) to create a new conceptual model called Islamic Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-PCK). This model is designed to explain how

Arabic competence can be flexible within instructional design work and how it can be systematically incorporated into a curricular environment where instructionally sound classroom experiences can be created from scholarly religious documents.

Literature Review

The Landscape of PCK and TPACK in Islamic Educational Settings

The emergence of PCK in Islamic studies and religious education has increased in recent years, as education institutions aim to improve the quality of their classrooms and educational results (Tanjung et al., 2022). In Islamic Religious Education, PCK needs to be composed of a combination of religious content, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment and evaluation strategies that are both academic and moral-spiritual (Tanjung et al., 2022). Empirical studies have shown that a teacher's PCK has a significant effect on the formative assessment process in the classroom, which includes the design of reflective essays, oral recitation, and authentic situations in learning the lesson on the issues of Tawheed (divine unity) and Fiqh (jurisprudence) (Tanjung et al., 2022).

The findings of this study indicate that there is an increase in the general competence level of pre-service Islamic education teachers regarding the teaching of morals (Akhlak) but there is still quite a large gap in the competence of pre-service teachers in the content areas of basic morals (Azizan et

al., 2017). This inequality hampers their ability to apply more advanced teaching methods, such as scaffolding Usul Fiqh (principles of jurisprudence) or Maqasid Shariah (objectives of Islamic law) (Azizan et al., 2017). Azizan et al. (2017) used the typology of mathematical knowledge for teaching proposed by Ball et al. (2008) to emphasize the significance of "horizon content knowledge" in the field of Islamic studies. Islamic studies is a very progressive field in which more advanced concepts of law and ethics are built on the basis of advanced competencies in the interpretation of the Quran, validation of Hadiths and the classical Arabic grammar (Azizan et al., 2017).

Moreover, educational technology has been integrated into Islamic and Arabic education, resulting in the emergence of models that are Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) in Islamic and Arabic education (Mamat et al., 2017). The national curriculum requires teachers to enhance the quality of learning through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in countries such as Malaysia (Ramli et al., 2022). Although it has been reported that some primary and secondary teachers feel competent in using TPACK, there is still a significant gap in the use of digital tools in a fragmented way without a coherent pedagogical approach to connect digital literacy with the classical Islamic epistemological objectives as reported by Sahrir and Kabilan (2012). To achieve this, a thorough study of the issues and structural opportunities of digital

literacy in supporting target language learning by non-native learners (Nasirudeen & Chtaibi, 2026) and concrete theory-based pedagogical approaches to integrating the digital competencies into the target language curriculum (Nasirudeen & Hamdi, 2026b) are required. Therefore, teacher preparation programs need to be transformed into structured teacher preparation programs whereby content, pedagogy, and technological design are integrated systematically (Tanjung et al., 2022).

Teachers' Language Awareness and L2 Dimensions

Teaching the content of Islam in the educational settings where the native language is not Arabic means facing challenges of second language (L2) acquisition (Mamat et al., 2017). This creates a sense of urgency to adopt practical methods and modern theories exclusively developed for the language learning of second language learners who are not native speakers (Hegazy Aly et al., 2026). Therefore, the concept of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) has a strong relation to it (Andrews, 2007). The term TLA comes from the applied linguistics literature, and is defined as the teachers' knowledge and beliefs about the language system(s) that underlie the language(s) they teach and that are integral to their ability to teach them effectively (Andrews, 2007). TLA involves two fundamental areas of teacher competence, declared knowledge of language (knowledge about language) such as grammatical terminology and

classifications, as well as knowledge of language (functional language skills) (Andrews, 2007).

Andrews (2007) emphasizes that TLA does not represent a static set of rules, but is metacognitive, and refers to the learner's "interlanguage" and to the learner's acute awareness of language. From an L2 perspective, teachers using well-developed TLA can carry out a number of important teaching roles:

- Providing rich, contextualized language input and precise meta-linguistic explanations (Andrews, 2007).
- Selecting and adapting learning materials to ensure they are linguistically accessible yet cognitively challenging (Andrews, 2007).
- Identifying, analyzing, and diagnosing learner errors to provide constructive, formative feedback (Andrews, 2007).

The term TLA as it is used in the field of Islamic studies is seen as the cognitive filter by which an educator evaluates the language requirements of a classical text, usually a Quranic passage or a legal maxim, and the learner's current language abilities (Andrews, 2007). If there is no TLA, teachers tend to give wrong explanations, rely on rote memorisation and don't find out the linguistic causes of students' misconceptions about theology (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).

Didactic Transposition Theory as a Curricular Transformation Engine

Didacticians use Yves Chevallard's theory of Didactic Transposition (transposition

didactique) (Chevallard, 1985) in order to understand the process of the objectification of complex scholarly knowledge into a viable school curriculum. It was initially developed in mathematics education and subsequently extended to language education, to represent the unavoidable and necessary series of transformations that knowledge experiences on its way from its source to the student's internalization (Chevallard, 1989). The way this pathway is structured goes from scholarly knowledge (*savoir savant*) to knowledge to be taught (*savoir à enseigner*), then to taught knowledge (*savoir enseigné*) and lastly to learned knowledge (*savoir appris*) (Chevallard, 1985).

Academic research and classical theologians' discourse (which is highly specialized, contextualized and complex) cannot be directly taught in a standard classroom (Chevallard, 1985). It first requires a "external didactic transposition" which is usually handled by the ministries of education, curriculum designers, and textbook writers (Chevallard, 1989). In this phase, the academic content is chosen, decontextualized, de-syncretized (the separation of a complex content into a series of sequential fields) and depersonalized (the separation of the knowledge from the context of the historical person or specific context of the person's motivation) (Chevallard, 1989). This makes the curriculum "programmable" and "public" so that it can be ordered according to difficulty and be

monitored by external social and legal entities (Chevallard, 1989).

The "knowledge to be taught" is fixed in textbooks and syllabuses and is then "internal didactic transpositioned" by the teacher in the classroom (Chevallard, 1985). The teacher must, in this phase, modify the content of the textbook to suit the students' supposed levels of competence, resources available and his own pedagogical views (Chevallard, 1989). This process closely resembles the notion of "pedagogical reduction" which refers to the purposeful selection and "stripping away" of the learner's educational reality to make it accessible (Lewin, 2020). It is also based on the didactic approach of Wolfgang Klafki, in which the content is not just meaningful to the learner, but is related to the learner's total human development (*Bildung*) by the teacher's structuring of the lessons around basic educational questions. (Klafki, 1995) Didactic transposition is an important consideration in Islamic education, especially when it comes to the presentation of complex doctrinal and jurisprudential concepts, to present them with intellectual rigour and developmental realism, rather than in the dogmatic transmission of reified textbook facts (Klafki, 1995).

Theoretical Framework

To resolve the pedagogical fragmentation observed in Islamic educational environments, this paper introduces the Islamic Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-PCK) framework. This model reconceptualises Shulman's traditional

PCK by integrating Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) and Didactic Transposition. Rather than treating theological knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and Arabic language skills as separate competencies, I-PCK conceptualizes teacher knowledge as an integrated capability:

I-PCK = f(CK_theo × LA_arab × DT_ped)

In this conceptual formula, **I-PCK** represents the functional quality of classroom delivery. This outcome is determined by the interaction of three primary dimensions: Theological Content Knowledge (**CK_theo**), Arabic Linguistic Awareness (**LA_arab**), and Didactic Transposition Capability (**DT_ped**).

Theological Content Knowledge (CK_theo)

This dimension represents the teacher's declarative and horizon knowledge across the primary disciplines of Islamic studies (KPM, 2018). It encompasses a deep understanding of Quranic hermeneutics, Hadith methodology, jurisprudential rules, historical contexts, and ethical structures (KPM, 2018). The teacher must not only master these concepts as isolated facts but

must understand their systemic connections across the curriculum (Azizan et al., 2017).

Arabic Linguistic Awareness (LA_arab)

This dimension corresponds to the teacher's metacognitive TLA specifically applied to Arabic phonology, morphology (*sarf*), syntax (*nahw*), and rhetoric (*balaghah*) (Andrews, 2007). It dictates the teacher's capacity to identify linguistic parameters within theological texts, analyze the grammatical mechanisms that shape theological meaning, and accurately diagnose learner language errors in real-time (Andrews, 2007).

Didactic Transposition Capability (DT_ped)

This dimension represents the teacher's ability to execute pedagogical reduction and contextualisation (Lewin, 2020). It involves transforming scholarly religious discourses and complex linguistic structures into accessible, sequenceable, and instructionally engaging learning units (Chevallard, 1985). It ensures that the teacher can translate theological truths into meaningful real-world applications that promote both intellectual engagement and moral-spiritual development (Tanjung et al., 2022).

The structural differences between traditional PCK and the reconceptualised I-PCK model are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparative Matrix of PCK vs. Reconceptualised I-PCK

Dimension / Feature	Traditional PCK (Shulman, 1986, 1987)	Reconceptualised I-PCK Model
Primary Focus	General integration of subject matter knowledge	Integration of theological content with Arabic linguistic systems and

Dimension / Feature	Traditional PCK (Shulman, 1986, 1987)	Reconceptualised I-PCK Model
	with pedagogical strategies (Shulman, 1986).	pedagogical designs (Andrews, 2007).
Linguistic Integration	Treated as an external communication skill or standard literacy variable.	Positioned as an internal cognitive filter (TLA) essential for extracting and translating text meanings (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).
Knowledge Origin	Academic disciplines (e.g., mathematics, science) converted into school subjects (Shulman, 1986).	Classical Islamic sciences (<i>Ta'lim</i> , <i>Tarbiyah</i> , <i>Ta'dib</i>) transposed into school subjects (Al-Attas, 1979).
Transpositional Agency	Reliance on general curriculum guidelines and pre-packaged textbooks (Shulman, 1987).	Active, continuous pedagogical reduction and surveillance of the didactic contract (Chevallard, 1989).
Learning Outcome	Academic mastery, conceptual change, and targeted problem-solving (Shulman, 1986).	Combined academic achievement, linguistic fluency, and moral-spiritual internalization (Tanjung et al., 2022).

To demonstrate the practical application of this model, Table 2 maps the six primary theological domains of the Islamic education curriculum against their specific Arabic linguistic demands and corresponding didactic transposition strategies.

Table 2: Mapping Theological Domains to Arabic Competencies and Transpositional Strategies

Theological Domain	Key Content Ideas	Essential Arabic Linguistic Demands (TLA Focus)	Didactic Transposition & Pedagogical Reduction Strategy
Al-Quran	Revelation, themes of selected Surahs, recitation with	Phonology (articulation points/makharij),	Use of interactive digital audiobooks and visual root-word

Theological Domain	Key Content Ideas	Essential Arabic Linguistic Demands (TLA Focus)	Didactic Transposition & Pedagogical Reduction Strategy
	Tajwid rules (KPM, 2018).	orthography, semantic implications of vowelling changes (Ibn Khaldun, 1377/1967).	mapping to scaffold vocabulary acquisition (Ibn Khaldun, 1377/1967).
Hadis	Sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad, classification and validation (KPM, 2018).	Morphological patterns (<i>sarf</i>) of verbs, identification of pronouns and grammatical agents.	Narrative simplification, isolating key thematic keywords, and utilizing digital flashcards for vocabulary retention (Ramli et al., 2022).
Aqidah	Articles of faith, Tawheed (divine unity), contemporary theological challenges (KPM, 2018).	Rhetorical devices (<i>balaghah</i>), structural functions of nominal versus verbal sentences.	Conceptual mapping of classical arguments, translating abstract creedal terminology into visual relational diagrams (Wedi et al., 2025).
Feqah	Pillars of Islam, rules of worship (ibadah), transactions (muamalat) (KPM, 2018).	Syntactic structures (<i>nahw</i>), conditional sentences, imperative and prohibitive verb forms.	Simulating jurisprudential scenarios, role-playing, and using step-by-step interactive video scaffolding (Tanjung et al., 2022).
Sirah & Tamadun	Life of the Prophet, historical lessons, rise and development of	Textual cohesion devices, temporal and locative adverbs, past-tense narrative structures.	Digital storytelling, chronological mapping, and extracting ethical themes through

Theological Domain	Key Content Ideas	Essential Arabic Linguistic Demands (TLA Focus)	Didactic Transposition & Pedagogical Reduction Strategy
	Islamic civilization (KPM, 2018).		directed reading (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).
Akhlak Islamiyah	Islamic ethics, personal morals, social responsibilities (KPM, 2018).	Subjunctive and jussive moods in moral exhortations, comparative adjectives in value systems.	Reflective essays, situational moral dilemmas, and collaborative project-based digital tasks (Tanjung et al., 2022).

By implementing this matrix, the teacher's Arabic linguistic proficiency becomes a dynamic pedagogical tool. The educator uses TLA to identify the exact morphological and syntactic elements that carry theological meaning, then applies didactic transposition to reduce text complexity, ensuring the material is linguistically accessible while preserving its theological depth.

Research Design and Analytical Strategy

This section presents a meta-synthesis of the available empirical data, which consists of both quantitative and qualitative data, obtained from educational studies in the Southeast Asian Islamic schools, to test the theoretical framework proposed. This analytical approach examines the fundamental relationships, correlations and developmental effects of content knowledge, pedagogical competence, and language consciousness on teacher readiness.

Empirical Contexts and Quantitative Datasets

The effectiveness of the implementation of the operationalization of PCK, TPACK and language competence can be confirmed on several core empirical studies in Malaysia and Indonesia. These studies document various levels of teacher learning, from pre-service university students to novice teachers and to highly experienced teaching practitioners.

Azizan et al. (2017) conducted a critical study of the readiness that pre-service teachers with major in Arabic language teaching from the final year of a Bachelor of Arabic language teaching (Balt) programme at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) in Malaysia perceive themselves to be. The descriptive survey design study using SPSS showed that the pre-service teachers were in a medium level of readiness for PCK. On the other hand, their interests and motivation in teaching Arabic were still very high, which means there is still a gap in teaching pedagogical

aspects because their motivation is not accompanied by pedagogical-linguistic integration concerning Arabic language learning. This discovery indicates that it is necessary to implement integrated training interventions to be applied in the initial teacher training process (Tanjung et al., 2022).

Ramli et al. (2022) conducted an evaluation of the TPACK competence of Islamic Education teachers in Kangar district at the primary school level based on 30 Islamic Education teachers. In terms of the technology-pedagogy-content framework, the descriptive-inferential analysis showed that the overall value of the technology-pedagogy-content integration was very high, with a mean score of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 0.70. The study found, however, that there was great variation in the technological pedagogical competence among the students in terms of gender, as shown by the independent sample t-test which resulted in a significant difference value of $t = 1.011$ (Ramli et al., 2022). The study results highlight the need to develop digital literacy training for targeted teacher profiles that is not based on general teacher training modules (Ramli et al., 2022).

In the context of in-service secondary school teachers, Tanjung et al. (2022) used a mixed method approach with a total sample size of 249 secondary school Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers. The results of the structural paths using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) showed that pedagogical knowledge and PCK positively and significantly affected formative assessment practices. Interestingly, the results showed that

content knowledge did not have significant direct effect on these classroom assessment practices (Tanjung et al., 2022). This statistical understanding suggests that if a teacher does not possess a PCK for the theological content, then his or her academic knowledge in this area is not at work in the pedagogical realm. The qualitative phase of this study revealed that three selected teachers who had high PCK were able to successfully link real life situations, oral recitations, and reflective writing to gain a deeper understanding of Fiqh and Tawheed (Tanjung et al., 2022).

For the study in higher education, the researcher explored the impact of reflective digital pedagogy in the religious formation of students in the undergraduate level in languages and literature at Singaperbangsa University Karawang with the subjects of 140 students (Wedi et al., 2025). The regression model demonstrated that the innovative, digitally mediated learning can account for a substantial percentage of variance of the religious character of students (Wedi et al., 2025), with a correlation of $r = 0.61$ ($p < 0.01$) and a total variance of $SR^2 = 0.28$. This indicates that the relationship between the application of modern Instructional methods based on constructivism and the internalization of Islamic moral values has been demonstrated, and the pedagogical design has a direct impact on moral development (Wedi et al., 2025).

The integration of these diverse empirical findings is consolidated in Table 3.

Table 3: Synthesis of Core Empirical Datasets

Study & Context	Sample Size & Methodology	Statistical Core Findings	Educational Implication
UPSI Pre-Service Study	N = 30; Final-year Bachelor students; survey design.	Medium level of PCK readiness; exceptionally high interest in teaching (Azizan et al., 2017).	Pre-service programs must explicitly bridge language skills with pedagogical design before classroom entry.
Kangar District Study	N = 30; Primary school Islamic Education teachers; t-test.	High overall TPACK (Mean = 3.70, SD = 0.70); Gender variation ($t = 1.011$) (Ramli et al., 2022).	Technology integration policies must accommodate demographic and skill-based differences among teachers.
Secondary IRE Assessment Study	N = 249; Secondary school teachers; Mixed-methods PLS-SEM.	Pedagogical knowledge and PCK predict formative assessment; Content knowledge has no direct impact (Tanjung et al., 2022).	Subject-matter knowledge must be transformed via PCK to enable meaningful learning and assessment.
Singaperbangsa University Karawang	N = 140; Undergraduate students; mixed-methods regression.	Significant correlation between innovative learning and character ($r = 0.61$, $R^2 = 0.28$) (Wedi et al., 2025).	Reflective digital pedagogy directly enhances both cognitive and moral-spiritual internalization.

Study & Context	Sample Size & Methodology	Statistical Core Findings	Educational Implication
AFL Digital Literacy Study	N = 124; University-level AFL learners; DigComp & ACTFL.	Significant correlations between digital literacy dimensions and language proficiency scores (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2024).	Integrating digital competence within language curricula increases student learning autonomy.

Scaffolding and Linguistic Interlanguage Analysis

The effective implementation of the I-PCK model in non-native environment requires the teachers to be able to carry out systematic linguistic error analysis (2007, Andrews). When learning Arabic as a foreign language, non-native students tend to make certain types of spelling, morphological, and syntactic errors (Andrews, 2007; Chtaibi et al., 2024). So instead of being viewed as failures, these errors can be seen as developmental features of the learners' "interlanguage", the rule-governed language that they are developing to acquire target language proficiency (Andrews, 2007; Nasirudeen, 2025).

The educator analyzes learner errors using Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) to find the source of errors, either cognitive or linguistic (Andrews, 2007). A student, for instance in a Fiqh writing assignment, may not be able to master the concept of gender agreement, for instance, in describing legal

rulings, subject-verb gender agreement may be missing. A teacher with high level I-PCK diagnosis this as a structural transfer from the students' native language, where grammatical gender is not used. The teacher can then provide specific scaffolding, like comparative sentence diagrams and interactive word-building activities that will help the student match his language with the appropriate theological meaning.

Discussion

Resolving the Classical Formalism-Communicative Competence Dichotomy

In Arabic and Islamic education, one of the pedagogical challenges that has been plaguing teachers for a long time is that of balancing the classical approach of grammar formalism and the new approach of communicative competence (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012). In the traditional approach to Arabic teaching in religious schools, the grammar-translation method is largely adopted, with the emphasis on memorizing grammatical theories (nahw) and sarf) and translating texts word by word (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012). Although this method ensures language correctness, it often restricts learners' communicative skills,

active participation, and ability to contextual interpret (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).

The I-PCK model can overcome this dichotomy by combining modern and active learning approaches (Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Content Based Instruction (CBI), Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and traditional study of texts (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012). Empirical studies suggest that the direct teaching of Applied Arabic syntax has a positive impact on reading fluency and comprehension (Lubbad, 2019; Nasirudeen & Chtaibi, 2024). In addition, active instructional techniques have been effective in improving important reading competencies for primary school pupils in urban schools, such as using language games strategically (Binti Husain et al., 2026). In applied syntax, students are not asked to memorize such abstract grammatical labels, but rather the functional relationships within sentences so that students can identify the structure elements of sentences (agent, object, conditional and others) to understand the meaning of the sacred texts (Lubbad, 2019). The synthesis aims at maintaining the academic excellence of classical Arabic while nurturing the communicative skills required for the present day with a communicative approach (Sahrir & Kabilan, 2012).

It also reflects the theory of "Malakah" by Ibn Khaldun, which states that language learning is an internalized skill achieved by the language learners' total immersion in

the language and its usage, not memorizing rules of abstract grammar of the language. (Ibn Khaldun, 1377/1967). Theoretically, this is backed up by the contemporary studies that have demonstrated the wide impact of language immersion on language skills development (Nasirudeen, 2024), and recent case studies that have shown the substantial improvement in students' communicative competence in speaking by using practical learning paradigms (Chtaibi et al., 2026). Despite the importance of the communicative aspects of translation, cross-linguistic applications of cultural competence need to be developed in a manner of nuance so as to achieve text translation accuracy (Nasirudeen & Muhammad-Bashir, 2024).

Quality Management, Reference Frameworks and Curricular Governance

Modern language teaching practice is based on commonly accepted reference frameworks, including the Common European Framework of Reference of Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001), to help maintain the quality of teaching and accountability of language structures. The development of the Arabic Language Education Center for the Gulf States (ALECGS) 2020 "IMTAA" framework (Reference Framework for the Teaching of Arabic to Speakers of Other Languages) is an important achievement in the field of Arabic education that specifies the basic applied linguistic components that are essential in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. The IMTAA framework is

a standardised model for curriculum design, content sequence, teaching methods and assessment systems designed specifically for non-native Arabic learners (ALECGS, 2020).

The combination of IMTAA reference framework and I-PCK enables the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles for systematic quality monitoring and improvement of the programme (Mukhopadhyay, 2020; Nasirudeen & Alawi Ishaq, 2025; Nasirudeen & Ishaq, 2025). The following are some of the fundamental principles underlying TQM:

- **Student Focus:** Designing curricula and assessments that align directly with the cognitive, linguistic, and developmental needs of the learners (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).
- **Process Management and Optimization:** Mapping instructional workflows to ensure smooth transitions between linguistic

training and theological study (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

- **Continuous Improvement:** Operating within a continuous Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, utilizing student performance data and formative feedback to refine instructional delivery (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Using learning analytics to monitor student progression and make timely adjustments to curriculum sequencing (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

The use of standardized reference frameworks and quality management systems in instructional design enable educational institutions to set clear benchmarks, optimize overall instructional processes with the help of strong quality management analysis, and improve student achievement (Mukhopadhyay, 2020; Nasirudeen & Hamdi, 2026a).

These quality elements are integrated in the operation and summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: TQM and Reference Framework Integration Workflow

Quality Component	Strategic Mechanism in I-PCK	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	ISO 21001 / EFQM Alignment
Student Focus	Tailoring Arabic tasks to match students' current language proficiency and cognitive development (ALECGS, 2020).	Learner engagement surveys; task completion rates; student satisfaction metrics (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).	Focuses on meeting learner needs and educational requirements.

Quality Component	Strategic Mechanism in I-PCK	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	ISO 21001 / EFQM Alignment
Process Management	Mapping curriculum sequences to ensure logical progression from basic grammar to text interpretation (Chevallard, 1989).	Time-on-task ratios; alignment index between lesson plans and curriculum benchmarks (Azizan et al., 2017).	Optimizes processes to ensure consistent instructional quality.
Continuous Improvement	Executing a systematic PDCA cycle to adjust teaching methods based on student assessment data (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).	Frequency of curricular updates; teacher participation rates in professional development (Tanjung et al., 2022).	Encourages continuous innovation and refinement of educational delivery.
Data-Driven Decisions	Utilizing learning analytics to identify common linguistic errors and target scaffolding interventions (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).	Diagnostic accuracy of assessments; student learning gain metrics over time.	Relies on evidence-based evaluation to improve learning outcomes.

Reflective Digital Pedagogy and Character Development.

In the process of integrating the implementation of educational technology in I-PCK becomes a crucial factor in the process of moral and spiritual development of students (Tanjung et al., 2022). In contrast to digital tools simply being a means of delivery, the I-PCK model supports the use of digital in a reflective way, “reflective digital pedagogy” (Wedi et

al., 2025). This approach involves using project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and blended learning environments, which are supported by technology, to incorporate moral reflection, empathy, and the internalization of values as functions of moral learning (Nasirudeen & Lawal, 2025; Wedi et al., 2025).

In the hands of teachers, digital platforms can be used to develop dynamic learning

environments, stimulating intellectual and spiritual development:

- **Interactive Media and Gamified Learning:** The use of visual mapping, digital storytelling and interactive quizzes to make theological concepts more understandable and to facilitate vocabulary memorization (Ramli et al., 2022).
- **Collaborative Online Tasks:** These tasks involve giving students group research assignments or structured digital debates to help develop their use of ethical principles (Akhlaq) in a cooperative, real-world context (Wedi et al., 2025).
- **Flipped and Blended Classrooms:** When a teacher moves the foundation of his lectures online, the teacher can use class time to work with students on interactive discussion, deep reading of texts, and moral reflections, serving as a moral facilitator (Wedi et al., 2025).

Incorporating digital tools in line with the central moral and theological objectives of Islamic education, reflective digital pedagogy will help technology to be used for the learner's ultimate spiritual development and character formation, rather than as a means of distraction (Wedi et al., 2025).

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