



**TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY IN AN ELT CLASSROOM**

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' Perception of the effectiveness of computer technology in an ELT classroom

The aims of this study are to find out the frequency or extent of computer technology use for the teaching and learning of the English Language in the classroom and teachers' perception of its effectiveness in ELT classroom. The Malaysian Government has invested Millions of Ringgit into this mega project with the aim of boosting the computer usage in schools because of the realization of its importance towards enhancing the effectiveness of ELT in schools alongside the teaching of Mathematics and science in English. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations presented in this research would be able to help the teachers to realise the importance of computer technology and their (teachers) vital role in making it successful. This can only be achieved when the teachers who are the key players, have the right attitude and perception regarding the effectiveness of the computer technology in an ELT classroom.

A total of 80 English Language teachers from both the urban and rural as well as the secondary and Primary school teachers were selected to participate as respondents in this survey. The questionnaire, which was the main instrument used in this study consisted of three major sections aimed at finding out the respondents' background, the extent of the use of computer technology in the ELT classroom and their perception of its effectiveness. The data collected from the questionnaires were then, analysed by transforming them into tabulated form using the SPSS programme Version 2.0.

From the analysis of the findings it was shown that majority of the respondents perceived the importance or usefulness of computer technology in teaching and learning of English. However the frequency of its use was rather low. Various problems and shortcomings were highlighted in this study and the recommendations on how to overcome them were also presented with the overall aim of enhancing its effectiveness in the ELT classroom.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vix

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. An Overview	1
1.2. Background to the study	1
1.3. Statement of the problem	3
1.4. Research Objectives	5
1.5. Significance of the study	5
1.6. Limitations of the study	6
Definition of Key Terms	6

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. An Overview

The use of computer technology has become an integral part of the process of learning the English language in the Malaysian schools today. The Government, educators, parents and students believe that technology should be an integral part of education. Robyler (1997) argues that “schools and classrooms cannot deliver high-quality education without the use of technology.” In the past teachers have been exposed to the use of radio, television, tape recorders, overhead projectors, slides, etc. With the advent of computer technology teachers have more choices such as the use of courseware, internet, e-mail, animation and a host of other interesting and beneficial activities using computer.

1.2. Background to the Study

The former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammed, launched the Vision 2020 which would turn Malaysia into an industrialized and developed country by the year 2020. The use of computer based technology is crucial toward realizing this vision. In the July 2001 issue of the Borneo Post – The Prime Minister commented that “teachers should be IT literate and effectively pass on the knowledge to students and make them the literate generation of the future. For this reason the Government has allocated a huge amount of funds for the purpose of purchasing computers and their accessories for educational purposes. With that in mind, all teachers should be well-versed and comfortable with what the technology has to offer.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The first part of the review discussed the types of technology usage, especially computer technology which is the centre of the focus of this survey and the roles and benefits of technologies in education. The second part of this literature review focuses on the problems related to the use of computer technology.

2.1. Technologies Usage in English Language Teaching-Learning Process

In the early 1980's, various types of technology such as audiovisual aids were used in language education. These include the use of overhead projectors with over-head transparencies, which is one of the most versatile, widespread and popular visual aid that can be used to support mass instruction (Heinich et al, 1993; Ellington et al, 1993); tape recorders with audio tapes, which have major impact on the teaching of languages and give students the opportunity to hear English being used for a range of purposes by a variety of people and for introducing sounds and voices which do not usually feature in the classroom" Chitravelu et al (1995). This would further enhance the students' understanding and to enable them to grasp the subject being taught, particularly the English language. Besides these, television and video recording in a cassette played using video player are two other immensely flexible & powerful tools for bringing the outside world into the classroom in the hands of teachers which have shown to have positive effects on students' learning experiences (Maier & Warren, 2000; Aram, 1993 & Tomalin, 1986).

In the more recent time, computer technology usage has been considered as an effective tool to help deliver information in more concrete and effective ways. It is by far, the best approach to improve the quality and efficiency of learning English in