

**COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) :  
ITS APPLICATION AND RELEVANCE IN  
MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

**Prepared by :**

**Wan Zumusni Wan Mustapha  
Language Department  
UiTM Kelantan Branch**

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### **Abstract**

As Malaysia progresses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Malaysian English Language teachers are yet to face new challenges in their teaching profession as computers are paving their ways into their classrooms. Over the years, CALL, E-learning and Smart School paint a new picture of Malaysian education system. It is undeniable that in the near future learning via computer or Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) will be an indispensable and inevitable part of the language teaching and learning methodology as this technology gains its popularity into English language classrooms in Malaysia and brings about changes in the way teachers think and teach. With the profound impact of globalization and industrialization, teachers are awoken with the challenge in preparing students who are going to survive in the new millennium that demands high level of computer literacy, making learning incomplete without complemented by lessons via computer. Integrating CALL into a Language classroom is not merely setting up the physical infrastructure, but integrating CALL into a lesson in a more meaningful and productive way for both teachers and learners. This small-scale research addresses the issues and challenges in integrating CALL in Malaysian Language classroom at tertiary level. Literature pertaining to studies on lecturers' attitude will supplement the primary data obtained from a study conducted in three local public universities. Using qualitative methods, data consist of in-depth interviews and documentation from lecturers who teach via web-based learning and key figures in CALL to paint a bird-eye view of the current scenario in Malaysian English Language classroom in a public university. Results from this research show that a lot have to be discovered on CALL applications in Malaysian public universities as different universities have different approaches, policies and ways to implement CALL. Other issues that deserve further studies include training and curriculum development.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.0 Introduction

...no longer teachers are limited to the four walls of their classrooms, or even the school library, for teaching and information resources...teachers can now bring the world into their classroom”.

Erickson and Vonk (1994: 3)

Globalisation, which poses a huge impact to many parts of the world and in many aspects of human life, calls for redefining teachers' roles in the classroom as technology is paving its way particularly into Malaysian English language classrooms. This in turn, changes the way teachers think and teach as they are presented with an astonishing array of resource to utilize. The above statement implies that teaching is no longer confined to four walls of a classroom, but has gone beyond textbooks and audiotapes in language laboratories, overhead projectors, video and slides and the usual paraphernalia to enable students to self-access any information with a “click of a mouse”.

Hans-dieter Evers (2002) argues in a debate on the emergence of knowledge society that with knowledge-based economies and the widening knowledge, information and communication technologies (ICT) can be mechanisms enabling developing countries to 'leapfrog' stages of development. Gunter and Murphy (2001) remark that technology as a rapidly developing and changing phenomenon has brought about remarkable challenge and changes for educators and education. Furthermore, aggressive infusion of ICT in schools challenges teachers to pull up their socks in updating themselves with the current development in shaping teaching and learning in the classroom. As a novel concept in language teaching and learning, E-learning and soon E-teaching are becoming the buzzwords in teaching and learning as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) becomes a fast growing trend among education institutions for its face value and effectiveness. This is further accelerated with information explosion in the Internet where the whole library or world can be brought into a classroom as argued by Yip Kai Leong (1997) that in the era