ATTITUDE TOWARDS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ON LEARNING BAHASA MELAYU AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

One of the best platforms that may bring about quality education is information and communication technology (ICT). Many studies have shown that the application of ICT in learning Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) can enhance students’ capacity and understanding of Bahasa Melayu. The central concern of this study is to explore the use ICT in learning with the purpose to improve students’ skills and performance. This qualitative research was conducted in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (The National University of Malaysia). The subjects of the study were given the experience of learning Bahasa Melayu using internet as one of tools. A series of depth interview and non-participant observation were completed to get data from a group of foreign Indonesian students who were studying Bahasa Melayu during the semester II of 2006/2007 academic session. This study shows that students’ learning practices significantly influence language skills. The processes on learning through internet point out that it helps students learn Bahasa Melayu. The use of Internet has helped to improve students’ ability to master Bahasa Melayu. Finally, Internet extends learning processes and knowledge of the subject and at the same time improves their proficiency in the language.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the determining factor for the political, social, cultural and economic development of our world. We undertake to facilitate access of all inhabitants of our society to preschool, primary, secondary and higher education, and we will make learning a lifelong process. We put science and technology at the service of education to assure growing levels of knowledge and so that educators may develop their skills to the highest level.

Progress towards more democratic societies, growing economies and social equity relies on an educated citizenry and a skilled labour force. We have seen to a series of policies to improve access to quality education through teacher training, education in civic values and the use of information technologies both in our classrooms and in measuring progress toward achieving these goals. Improved education policies and increased investment in our education systems will help reduce income disparities and close the digital divide in our world.

The coming generation of community action in the field of education and training should therefore help to create the preconditions for the practice of active citizenship by supporting activities that inform and empower people of all ages and all circumstances to take their lives into their own hands; to contribute, as best they may, to the lives of their communities; and to respect and value the lives and contributions of those around them.

At the present time, much of the discussion about the core mission of higher education seems to be dominated by the language of business and economics. Educators should not be shy about making explicit to the public that one of the important roles of education is to cultivate people—individuals and collectives—with the necessary scope of imagination, critical self-awareness and level of psychological maturity or wisdom required to create sustainable systems in which human beings thrive, can co-exist peaceably and be fulfilled on a fragile planet.

In the past, a call for a “global conversation” might invoke images of top-down commissions populated only by the voices of the global elites. But the rapid spread of information
communications technology (ICT) and the internet offer humanity something it has never had before—an open, horizontally distributed, interconnected hyperlinked global agora, within which matters of human concern can be discussed, debated, negotiated and about which shared understandings can be found.

Nowadays, it's questioned how education and Internet use, one website shows the graph as shown in Figure 1 (Cybercollege, 2007) that while only about 22% of people without a high school education use the internet, almost 90% of people with a college education regularly surf the net.

![Figure 1: Education and Internet Use](image)

Concerned with the exploration of the functions of language as a primary means of human social interaction, linguistic offers many promising, practice oriented linguistic fields of inquiry to engage contemporary scholars. Among them, none currently enjoys more lively debate than the field of language pedagogy. Language teachers have been with us for as long as there have been languages and their engagement with language learners constitutes a fascinating arena for the study of social interaction.

Information and communication technology (ICT) have illustrated how tools for enhancing student skills and used to scaffold students’ understanding of disciplinary language. Therefore, this paper reports on work that offers alternative media of the teaching and learning between language and content. Using ICT to focus on content, the teacher can promote a focus on language in ways that uncover the varied meanings that any technology presents. ICT is a tool in order to help teachers and students about how to teach and learn Bahasa Melayu that teacher introduced them to some ICT practices construct that enable a focus on the language skills.

Therefore, obtaining knowledge about students’ attitude toward information and communication technology can ensure education stakeholder to develop effective process and strategies for enhancing class and gain competitive advantage. The objective of this study is to discover knowledge for students’ attitude toward information and communication technology. The discovered knowledge can be directly used to support education strategic planning and decision making of information and communication technology.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have investigated the use of information and communication technology in language teaching and learning. One of the objectives of learning a language is mainly an attempt to write for academic purpose. Because effective teaching is based on the objective that the course will reach, the goal of teaching a language is exactly the same, namely to develop the ability of students to have skills and interact with people in a new language in real world situations (Brown, 1987; Ommagio, 1986; Oxford, 1990; Widdowson, 1978).

On the other hand, the arrival of the Internet could offer a turning point in language teaching methodology (Ganderton, 1998; Hellebrandt, 1999). Internet technology has a global reach and provides extensive international resources. The Internet enables language learners to access useful language resources. In the first case, learners can practice applying information, while in the second case; they can overcome the decontextualized predicament...
of language learning. Students can learn listening, speaking, reading and writing language integratively. Students can also broaden their international perspectives, learn diverse knowledge forms, and appreciate and accept different cultures.

In the 1980s, there were great expectations that computers would change classroom teaching and facilitate student achievement. Unfortunately, these expectations were not realized and instead, computers in school labs began collecting dust. Although they increased the “volume and speed” of school learning, computers did not fulfill the promise of producing drastic changes in the classroom (Hird, 2000: 13-14).

One of the primary advantages of the Internet is that it can make learning more accessible. It can remove the physical boundaries of classrooms, reduce class scheduling restraints and offer easy access to searchable databases and a vast array of other world-wide resources. The Web is an open technology - it is accessible by any modern computer (Owston, 1997).

Johnson (1996) presents the view that technology is best used for instructional purposes as an information processing tool; The use by students at all grade levels of real-world productivity software like word processors, databases, spreadsheets, presentation programs, multimedia authoring tools, e-mail, video production equipment, digital reference materials, electronic indexes and network search engines to complete complex, authentic projects. Here students will be asked to complete tasks similar to those they will be asked to do in jobs which require using information to solve problems - the kinds of jobs which are both better paying and give greater job satisfaction. The product of such instruction is not a neatly quantifiable score on an objective, nationally normed, quickly scored test. It requires using technology to build personal portfolios of thoughtful, creative work to determine if the use of technology is making our children better citizens, better consumers, better communicators, better thinkers - better people.

Among the countless activities could be design in running educational system, it is important to describe as a manner of illustration two. The first is the running in kindergartens. The Centre, a science and technology centre used by 5-6 years old children is designed as a home, allowing children to experience daily usage of home technology and appliances including ICT. In the Internet-based activities, children from different kindergartens communicate with each other regarding common topics or stories. For this purpose, a special iconic language (“smiles” using all keyboard characters) was developed and continues evolving along as the collaborative learning activity proceeds. A second widespread model based on communication via the Internet is that of the learning communities of students and teachers (Oren et al., 2000). A university is an example of such a community for science and technology teachers. The website offers teachers a forum for professional dialog and mutual enrichment, communication channels with experts regarding both pedagogical and disciplinary issues, exchange channels for ideas, pedagogical resources and teaching materials, and access to virtual courses.

Figure 2 presents another graph that illustrates how Internet is used as a part of educational media.
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper reports on a semester research exploring the learning bahasa Melayu in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia semester II of 2006/2007. The aim of the research to discover how foreign students used ICT as a tool in learning bahasa Melayu, which is compulsory for foreign student is to look of the process and practices practiced in the class consider their using information and communication technology.

The investigation involved a classroom-based qualitative study. Research data were collected via a variety of research instruments. In what follows, more detailed information about each of the research instruments that were used in investigations.

Focus Group
The researcher ran a focus group discussion with 30 students, who volunteered to take part. The meeting was held after the end of semester. The discussion had the duration of one and half hour.

Individual Interviews
The researcher carried out semi-structured interviews with 15 students who volunteered for this role and each interview lasted on average for one hour. They were usually conducted on a one-to-one basis and on one occasion only, students were interviewed in pairs.

FINDINGS
The findings indicate that internet based language learning entrants are likely to be influenced by their perceptions of the expected earnings associated with a course. However, it must be noted that the perception of a positive gained differential in favour will not necessarily lead to a good mark. Several non-education variables have also been linked to acquisition of language skill including psychological and sociological.

The most important concern in home study support is inspiring student interest and motivation. It was helpful in providing ideas about the kind of environment teachers should establish for the students. There are several home study support methods that involve connecting computers. In taking the internet route, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia provides wireless internet and computer facilities in every department and faculty.

Furthermore, another important point that equipment in home study support is providing students adequate communication with others. There is also evidence that the web can promote improved learning, but not just by virtue of using this medium itself. One of the student states:

"No medium in and of itself is likely to improve learning in a significant way when it is used as a tool to deliver instruction. Nor is it realistic to expect the web, when used as a tool, to develop in students any unique skills. The key to promoting
learning with the web appears to lie in how effectively the medium is exploited in the teaching and learning situation”.

Instructional goals and objectives should be determined first and then the technology to support them should be located. i.e. Technological resources must be chosen to fit the curriculum, not vice-versa. Another student stated:

"Technology is the servant, and the message, the idea, the matter". As with any teaching tool, technology should be implemented only where appropriate. There will be a tremendous waste that students all rush to "get everything on the Web".

Another student presents the view that internet systems (such as web-based materials and mailing list) "model human associative memory and thus can serve as powerful cognitive amplifiers". He sees the following advantages in the use of information and communication technology:

- Allow large amounts of information in various media to be stored very compactly and accessed easily;
- Offer high levels of learner control which force students to apply higher order thinking skills;
- Can alter the roles of teachers to more of a guide and create richer interactions among students and teachers.

Therefore, ICT presents many facts on learning. They are: first, is active learning. Until recently, no other type of technology has had the ability to engage students in “active learning.” Past technologies have been capable of disseminating information, but these “one-directional broadcast media” did nothing to encourage student interaction. The Internet, on the other hand, supports active, hands-on learning which can provide students with practical, real-life experience. Many studies have shown that this style of learning results in better retention and understanding of a given topic.

Second is valuable information resource. The sheer volume of information now available to students via the Internet is unprecedented. Large amounts of information can be accessed quite quickly and easily, whereas one could spend hours searching for needed resources in a library. Students are now able to access an “infinite number of resources” and distance is no object. There is no such thing as a book being ‘out’ and expert information is only a click away.

Furthermore, third is important to get that the positive effects of internet on education. Positively, internet bring easy task on students in searching any topics for term papers, thesis papers and other means of school projects. It is also a world of long distance schooling kids to have a cheaper means to connect with their family’s, friends, relatives and even those who cause heart aches on them and also another easy link for their parents to transfer allowances to their kids.

The impact of internet in education is beautiful for it makes things in life easy. But then, because of the wrong usage individual has been applying into, thus, sometimes it brings a big mess to every one specially students. Internet world cannot be block out, for everything in life runs through internet. Being a resident of every community we should play our roles properly in order to attain the world high technology development, which we have been longing for so long. No one, actually wants to go back into the world where in teachers and students carrying tons of books and papers. Walking like a messy library carried on their back. The internet like other forms of media can be a powerful educational tool when used correctly. It is the responsibility of parents and teachers to train students how to use the internet properly. Just as with TV, movies or other media parents need to be aware of how their child is using the internet.

We live in an information age and the internet allows almost instance access to an unlimited wealth of information. It is now easier for students to do research no matter where they. Students who do not have access to a large library are no longer hinder in efforts to do
research. The wealth of information can be come negative when students are not able to
distinguish between good and bad sources of information. Internet plays a very important role
in education nowadays. Nowadays with most popular journals being available on the World
Wide Web, it takes only a few minutes to collect all the articles. There are million of
educational websites which students can search from any search engine. Besides the
websites dealing with bookish knowledge there are numerous websites, which help in
increasing the general knowledge and power of interpretation of school kids. Website like
helium knowledge is example of such website which helps in increasing worldly knowledge as
the knowledge provided by this site is very different from bookish knowledge. The answers
submitted here are very practical and are based on personal experience. Another site will
help students to increase their knowledge.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
The findings of this study suggest that design learning process can benefit from internet
instruments such as the creativity used in this study. Moreover, this process has the potential
to occur within a mass higher educational context. Through the combination of learning and
teaching using internet, students were able to demonstrate how they have transformed
existing knowledge into a usable tool on which to build further learning. The learners' experiences
during the class presented them with opportunities to explore a range of lifelong
learning tools that they can both use and reflect upon later. Students’ accounts demonstrate
how they have been supported to manage their own learning, negotiate access to learning
opportunities, learn to use the language of professionals and make choices about the most
appropriate way to approach a situation based on their previous experience and newly
acquired skills of reflection and evidence based practice (Bourhis et al., 1989).

A high level of motivation is often a prerequisite for success. There is a high probability that
learning will not be successful if there is a lack of motivation. Therefore ICT is one of the
tactics to motivate the students to interact with language skill exercise repeatedly. First, the
ICT environment and the design should help to keep the students interaction. Further, of
course, the content of the learning content and also the implementation of the interactive
should be motivating factors.

Student expectations are a valuable source of information (Paul et al., 2000; Frances M.,
1995). New graduate students may have unrealistic expectations of the university experience
and if higher education organizations have a good understanding of such students' expectations,
they should be in a better position to both manage and bring them to a realistic level.
Universities could for example inform students of what is realistic to expect from
lecturers (Frances M., 1995). The knowledge of student expectations can also help lecturers
in the design of teaching programs (Paul et al., 2000). Frances M. (1995) finds that student
expectations in general and the expectations of academic aspects of higher education
services such as teaching quality, teaching methods and course content in particular, are
quite stable over time. Ronnie and Ron (2005) point out that the perceived quality of the
educational service depends on students’ expectations and values. They cite several studies
that indicate the positive impact of expectations and values on variables such as student
participation (Vincentia et al., 2001).

In a high-technology knowledge society, this kind of teaching-learning relation loses efficacy:
learners must become proactive and more autonomous, prepared to renew their knowledge
continuously and to respond constructively to changing constellations of problems and
contexts. The teacher's role becomes one of accompaniment, facilitation, mentoring, support
and guidance in the service of learners’ own efforts to access, use - and ultimately create -
knowledge. This means that learners become active participants in their own learning
processes, which they learn to negotiate and co-manage together with their teacher-guides
and with their co-learners. Placing learners and learning at the centre of education and
training methods and processes is by no means a new idea, but in practice, the established
framing of pedagogic practices in most formal contexts has privileged teaching rather than
learning.

Teachers traditionally convey the knowledge they possess to learners, who subsequently
must show what they have learned. In this approach, teaching is largely proactive, whereas
learning is largely reactive. The purpose of the process is essentially to convey content and the core problem is to find the most effective teaching methods for doing so. Learners certainly participate in this process, but the extent of self-direction and co-determination they may bring to it is inevitably circumscribed.

Education must be viewed as a way of linking individuals in a global way. Culturally responsive teaching is linking technologies, prior experiences and home-life as the schema for new learning. This makes learning relevant for students. It increases the pride of heritage, empathy for others and academic achievement. Incorporating information and communication technologies and providing it for students will also benefit the learner and allow them to grow in a culturally rich environment. Daily teaching should be cross-cultural and link each student to the technologies. This is apparent not only in text studies, but also the increased interest in students’ response to the technologies literature that they read.

There are two sides to the internet and education conundrum. On the one hand, it makes a lot of information available than in other times. Students can have information almost at their finger tips in a matter of moments. Students have access to teaching programs and games that teach. They are much more proficient at computer language and computer use than their predecessors. However, there is another side to the Internet. The following are some arguments about the bad effects internet on education. First, unless you can monitor it completely, students will have access to sites that are inappropriate and if they can, they will, especially in older grades. Second, students have become lazy. In the days of spending time at the library looking for resources, writing information on cards, you had to work to get information. It may have been tedious, but it certainly caused to information to sink in more deeply. The process of knowing how to find resources was also valuable. Today's student spends very little actual time finding resources, or checking to make sure the resources are good ones.

Education is a decisive factor for human development, because of its impact on the political, social, cultural, economic and democratic life of our societies. The increasing rates of illiteracy in many of the states of our world are a matter that demands our immediate action. We commit to continue promoting access not only to quality basic education for all but also to reach university level, based on the principles of participation, equity, relevance and efficiency that generate the necessary capabilities and skills to foster the development process of our peoples without discrimination or exclusion of any kind and thereby respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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CONCLUSION
This paper discussed the development of a Bahasa Melayu course for foreign students who took a course using the Internet technology. Based on the positive response of the students who have taken the course, we believe that the course is delivered effectively using Internet. Future work includes refining the course with various Internet-based learning and offering a similar course to other foreign students.

We can definitely state that at the beginning of the lectures, the students liked learning with the interactive learning facilities. Learning, whether with or without a tool, is hard and subsequently, decreases the motivation. It was therefore necessary to create a learning setting that can motivate the students with more enjoyable learning experience.
FUTURE DIRECTION

A culturally responsive education includes a mindset, a way of viewing education through the eyes of culture, technologies and seeing the impact they have in our past, present and future. Our differences are the strengths that make our world great. We need to look back at the history of education in order to move forward and change the way we do business with our students. We must recognize the continuous demographic changes taking place in our educational institution and cater to the technological needs of our students. The educator’s responsibility is to help students identify themselves in the realm of education and the world. To do this, teacher must step out of their comfort zone and their ethnocentric understanding of the world to understand different economic, political, social and cultural perspectives. There need to be an acknowledgement of this along with change, culturally relevant teaching doesn’t only include heritage in the month it’s celebrated, nor does it only include holidays. Culturally relevant teaching means being aware and focusing on the culture and learning styles of students to plan every lesson and information and communication technology just a media to teach and learn. A culturally responsive teacher uses a student’s background, knowledge, values and relationships with the students. Teachers can use technologies as a way to link realities and theory to learning and create empathy and understanding for others. This is a key to making the world a better place. Students need to see the faces of themselves in their reading and education in order to develop a healthy self-concept and world-concept making them contributing members of society. In order to move forward into a technology responsive era of education, we must first look to the historical context of culture in education to gain perspective and understanding of its implications in today’s society.

REFERENCES


