INVESTIGATING THE ESL TEACHERS’ AND STUDENTS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE USE OF COMPUTER IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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INVESTIGATING THE ESL TEACHERS’ AND STUDENTS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE USE OF COMPUTER IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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A report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Degree (Teaching English as a Second Language)

Faculty of Education
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APRIL 2008
I declare that this thesis entitled "Investigating the Teachers' and Students' Attitude towards the Use of Computer in an English Language Classroom" is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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To my beloved father and mother: 
Eswaran and Malathí;

To my loving sister and brother: 
Kavitha and Sunderalagan

To my ever compassionate friends: 
Ammani, Shamini, Komate, Shamalah, Diana;

To my supportive juniors: 
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My fellow undergraduate students should also be recognized for their support. My sincere appreciation also extends to all my colleagues and others who have provided assistance at various occasions. Their views and tips are useful indeed. Unfortunately, it is not possible to list all of them in this limited space. I am grateful to all my family members.
The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers and students attitude and motivation towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. The respondents in this study are six English language teachers and thirty form two students from one of the rural school in Kota Tinggi district. The methodology used in this study is two sets of questionnaire. The data in this study have been analyzed using SPSS 12.0 software (Statistical Packages for Social Science) and presented in the form of frequency and percentage. The findings of this study illustrate that most of the teachers and students have a positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. Also, this study proves that students have high motivation when computers are used in an ESL classroom. Through this study, it could be concluded that the use of computer in an ESL classroom should be encouraged because it helps to motivate students and generate a positive attitude towards English language learning.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In current years, the computer has established itself as a significant feature of present life. It is no longer, an expensive machine used exclusively by professionals in major industrial corporations, government and military. Many of us use computers daily, sometimes without even being aware of the fact. Banking, traffic control, word-processing, social security applications, accounting and record-keeping, design, office management, computer games and various hobbies are merely a few of the applications where computers are part of our life (Ahmad, 1985).

The rapid spread of computer have stimulated by the intensive development in the field of computer technology. Computers have decreased in price dramatically over the years, and their cost continues to fall. At the same time, they have become much more powerful, yet smaller in size, more adaptable, more flexible, and easier to use.
The flexible information processing capability of computers makes them potentially useful in a wide variety of educational applications. They can facilitate teaching and learning at all levels, from preschool children mastering the alphabets to doctors learning new diagnostic techniques (Kleiman, 1984). They can be used in all subject-language, mathematics, history, science, vocational training, business education, music, art as well as reading and writing.

1.1 Background of Study

The impact of globalization and the rapid growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have brought about an opportunity in teaching sector to implement the use of computers in classroom. In Malaysia, the importance of ICT in the education system has been realized as one way to achieve the 2001-2010 Education Development Plan (Norhayati, 2004). The aim of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to implement ICT in education is to educate students to become computer literate citizens, and to position ICT as a teaching and learning tool, and to increase the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of the management system.

Therefore, the government has facilitated the integration of computers in school education in order to improve the usefulness of the education received by the students on a personal and national level. Another major project implemented by the Ministry of Education is related to computer use in education in the Malaysian Smart School project (Azizah, 2005).
The aim is to give students skills, knowledge and a background technology use and application (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1997). The Smart School curriculum attempts to provide learning and teaching approaches suitable for students’ academic level by integrating different strategies in teaching and learning practices.

The integration of computers in Smart School focused on four selected subjects and English language is one of the four subjects. One of the ways to encourage students to learn English is by using computer as tools in classrooms. The Ministry of Malaysian Education hopes, as it was stated in the curricular guidelines, that by making ESL focus of computer integrated lessons that the level of English proficiency among students will increase as it is an alternative to the traditional way of learning.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The Malaysian government has pumped in millions of money for the Smart School Project. In the project, computers are supplied to schools throughout the country. However, until now the use of computers for teaching English language is very minimal.

A number of benefits for students related to the general use of technology in classrooms have been reported. These include increased motivation, improvement in self-concept and mastery of basic skills, more student-centered learning and engagement in the learning process, and more active processing, resulting in higher-order thinking skills and better recall. Additionally, there seems to be a beneficial multimedia effect, especially for low achieving students, when it is used to illustrate concepts and organize
factual information. Although, teachers are aware of these benefits, the use of computer to teach English language is still very minimal. A study by Jusoh (2000) found that Malaysian teachers were aware of the advantages of using computer in the classroom for teaching and learning process. However, the teachers claim that students’ lacking computer skill exhibited less concentration in their learning and some teachers indicated that the students work using computer was not up to the standard.

Another study done by Kong Siew (1997, cited in Rahman 2000) identified three key factors that hold teachers back from integrating computers into their classes. She surveyed primary school teachers and listed the factors that inhibited teachers’ use of computers in the classroom. The three key factors preventing computer use in the classroom are (Kong Siew ,1997, cited in Rahman 2000:536):

1. There is limited time for the teachers to incorporate computers in the teaching and learning.
2. There are very limited computers in schools.
3. Teachers have limited computer knowledge or skills to integrate the computer in their lesson.

Teachers and students in general may have positive perceptions of integrating computers in the classroom; however the use of this technology is not widely ventured in Malaysia. Therefore in this study, I would like to carry out a study based on teachers’ attitude and students’ motivation towards using computer in the English Language classroom.
1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the usage of computer in ESL classroom, English language teachers’ and students’ attitude towards using computer to learn English. Apart from that, the purpose of this study is to investigate students’ motivation towards learning English through the use of computer in classroom. The result of this study is expected to assist the implementation and growth of successful computer curricula at school levels.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1.4.1 To investigate teachers’ attitude towards the use of computers in ESL classrooms.

1.4.2 To find out students’ attitude on the use of computers in ESL classrooms.

1.4.3 To examine whether the use of the computers in an ESL classroom can motivate students to learn English.
1.5  Research Questions

This research aims to address the following research questions:

1.5.1 What are teachers’ attitudes towards using computers in ESL classrooms?
1.5.2 What are students’ attitudes on the use of computers in ESL classrooms?
1.5.3 Does the use of computers in classroom motivate students to learn English?