THE USE OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) COURSEWARE IN LEARNING LITERATURE – A CASE STUDY OF FORM FOUR STUDENTS OF SEKOLAH MENENGAH KEBANGSAAN DATO’ PENGGAWA BARAT, PONTIAN, JOHOR DARUL TAKZIM

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BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS TESIS

JUDUL: THE USE OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) COURSEWARE IN LEARNING LITERATURE – A CASE STUDY OF FORM FOUR STUDENTS OF NIKOLAH MENENGAH KERANGGA, DATUH PENGGIWA BARAT, PONTIAN, JOHOR BARU. TAKZIM


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A report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science and Education (TESL)

Fakulti Pendidikan
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

APRIL 2006
“I admit that this project (Title: THE USE OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) COURSEWARE IN LEARNING LITERATURE – A CASE STUDY OF FORM FOUR STUDENTS OF SEKOLAH MENENGAH KEBANGSAAN DATO’ PENGGAWA BARAT, PONTIAN, JOHOR DARUL TAKZIM ) is my own research except for citations and summaries whereby each and everyone of their sources has been properly acknowledged”.

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Date : 24 MARCH, 2006
Dedicated to:

My most beloved father, MUSTAFAR AHAMAD and mother, KINTAN EVEL, 
Brother HAFIZ and sister AMIRA, 
To the love of my life, WAN MOHD SHUKRY WAN AHMAD, 
Ma, MARINASH SIDIN AHMAD and We, WAN AHMAD WAN HASSAN, 
and 
To all my darling friends 
who inspired and helped me a lot.
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Abstract

The use of computer in education has increased dramatically in recent years due to the rapid growth of computer technology and the large number of software/courseware developed. This causes a major paradigm shift to instructional approach and poses new challenges for educators and students alike. To meet the demands of a knowledge-driven society in this globalized world, educators must implement technology in the teaching and learning environment. Specifically, the aim of this study is to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of using a developed courseware containing poems in the Form Four English language syllabus. The research also aims to obtain the perspectives of the respondents on the suitability of the courseware as a teaching or self-access material. The respondents involved in this study were 15 Form Four students and four English language teachers teaching literature in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Dato’ Penggawa Barat, Pontian. The instrument used in this study is a questionnaire. The findings of this study show that the courseware developed is preferably used as a teaching material rather than for self-access learning. Respondents show preference for using the courseware as a supplementary material for knowledge enhancement. However, the respondents also suggested some improvements of the courseware if it is to be used for self-access learning.
Abstrak

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Knowledge has always been the main ingredient in education, and undoubtedly, every single person in this world has gone through education, be it formal or informal education, and the process of learning and teaching has always been a part of our lives. Anyone would become experienced and skillful in any specific skill just by going through education.

Education also started of at a very early age, an unborn baby will go through an informal education when it is still in the mother’s womb. For example, the mother reads a story or recites the Al-Quran to the unborn child and the act of the mother reading and the baby ‘listening’ in her womb is actually the process of education. Not only that, in Surah Al- ‘Alaq, the first verse of Al-Quran also declared “Bacalah...” which means “Read...in the name of Allah”. Undeniably, it shows that in Islam and other religions in this world believes that education is the most important thing in a human life.
Technology is rather a new phenomenon in our lives. It has become a trend that evolves in our everyday lives. Technology can be defined in many ways, as a household technology, engineering technology, and many more. As recent as 30 years ago, computer technology was introduced to this world and since then, has becoming a phenomenon and obsession especially amongst youngsters. The computer technology has always been considered as a medium to ease our lives and since then, used as a ‘tool’ by many people but the purpose of computers was limited and only used in offices. Many people agreed that computer technology is not only used to ease and creating a comfortable lives for all of us but also as a catalyst for us to increase knowledge. Therefore, we have been upgrading the new standards of computer technology and recently this technology is being introduced and integrated in the education system, where computer technologies are used in classrooms in the teaching and learning process.

In the 21st century, having a computer at home and or even at school is considered as to be a common situation, but in the few years back especially in the 1980s, having computers at homes and in the classrooms were rather considered as to be odd and unusual scenario during that time. The introduction of computers and microcomputers in the 1980s brought about tremendous amount of interest especially amongst technology enthusiast towards the ‘new technology’.

Jonassen (1999) proposes that computer technology can serve as a tool in education and that it can be used “to engage students in important, challenging work, and to cause them to discuss this work with others and to think deeply about it themselves.” Analyzing this claim, Jonassen is asserting that computer technology can be used as a medium to make learning more fun. Computer technology can be improved and varied according to the needs of the students and also depending to the teacher’s creativity. The integration of computer technology can improve the students’ performance in academic and also non-academic. Thus, the introduction of computer technology should be
encouraged as much as possible, although there are people that are sceptical towards the new overture.

English is a language that is widely used around the world, and undoubtedly English is a language that functions as a medium of communication in both formal and informal proceedings. In Malaysia, English language serves as a second language and the status of English in Malaysia is merely considered as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) rather than English as a Second Language (ESL). However, as of 2003, the usage of English language is widened when Mathematics and Science subjects are taught using English as the medium of instruction. This daring action taken by the government was because they feel that a lot of knowledge can be acquired in these subjects, if the students are proficient in the language. Furthermore, with the exposure of the language and the integration of computer technology, specifically the Internet and other software, the students are gaining more and more knowledge every day.

The role of English in Malaysia now is limited to economics purposes, business transactions, international trades and also as a medium of communication with foreign visitors. Exposures of the language is very limited, especially to the younger generations as the above activities are usually restricted to the older generation who is holding a business, or works in an environment that needs or uses English as the medium of instruction. Students or the young generation finds that the language to be difficult and not interesting to be learnt as they fail to recognize the needs and the importance of English language in their lives.

Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, also showed his concerns towards the deterioration of the standards of English among Malaysians students. He stated that in a press statement expressing his worries towards the poor performance of the students in the English language examination in government
examinations. He is concerned that this may resulted in losing its economic competitiveness and progress in the industrial and technical fields if its workforce is not competent in English. (Pillay, 1998).

Aware of this problem, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak, the former Education Minister, has tried to upgrade the level of English proficiency among the Malaysians students in schools. In a statement, he maintains that,

“...as we are approaching the new millennium, we do not want students, whether they are schools-going children or undergraduate, incapable of communicating ideas and messages in English...”(News Straits Times, May 20, 1998).

The statement shows that the importance of English language in the education system in Malaysia is being emphasised and is being taken seriously by the government and the government continuously try to find solutions to solve the problem. The most recent step taken by the government is the use of English language in the teaching of Mathematics and Science subjects for primary and secondary and also the matriculation students. (New Straits Times, 15 August 2002). Of course, the implementation is done in phases as the government need to prepare the teachers and the students for the change of medium of instruction in the teaching of Mathematics and Science subjects. Ever since the plan was introduced, it is always been criticized and even became ‘an item’ in the local newspapers and also in the parliament. This reaction truly shows that although people are becoming a knowledge-driven society, they are still not open and ‘blind’ to see the benefits of using English in the teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science subjects.
Graddol (2002) also stated that English are becoming more and more important especially in the acquisition of knowledge, “because all the academic and scientific journals around the world today are moving towards publishing in English only”. The use of English in Malaysia is expanding and increasing, hence telling us, that Malaysia needs to be in the same pace as the rest of the world in order to be compatible, competitive and knowledgeable with other countries using English.

The integration of computer technology in education has provided more variation in the teaching and learning process, regardless of the subjects, be it English, Mathematics and Science. Language practitioners all around the world are constantly finding ways to teach English in a better and more interesting environment. They try to make the language classes/lessons more interesting yet meaningful with the aid of computer technologies in the classrooms. The introduction of computer in the teaching and learning process in Malaysia started taking roots in the 1980s, where the computers have been a part of the school system but not as a tool to teach and to learn but as a tool especially for the administrative department. However, the role of the computer has been upgraded especially in 1999, where the SMART School system was introduced.

The Smart Schools initiative is one of the seven flagship applications that are part of Malaysia’s Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project. In order to achieve Vision 2020, the Government hopes to transform its educational system, from the traditional approach of wholly depend on chalk and talk to a much robust approach of integrating computer technology in the education system, in line with and in the support of the vision. The vision focuses on the productivity-driven growth, which will only be achievable with a technologically literate, critically thinking work force prepared to participate fully in the global economy of the 21st century. With the technological-supported materials such as the computers, courseware and software available today, the teaching and learning process especially in the learning of English, is improved. It also allows the teachers of English language to be more creative and innovative in their
teaching, and hopefully it will improve the standards of English in Malaysia that seen to be deteriorating as confirmed by Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak, the former Minister of Education who expressed his concerns over the deteriorating standards of English among Malaysian’s student.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The government constantly finding ways to upgrade the standard of English amongst students and one of the ways is by adding the element of literature to the English subject. It incorporates the learning of English through literature, however, students find it as to be difficult to understand. Some may say, it is because of the language, whilst some may say that the hardest part of learning literature is because of the foreign cultures that each literary text represents.

The use of computer technology in Malaysia is increasing rapidly, and as a result from that the Malaysian Government has tried to incorporate the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. The initiative of the government can be seen through the implementation of the SMART School System, one of the seven flagships of Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) in order to meet the demands of having a knowledge-driven society. The ability of using a computer is a must for all, as “it is estimated that more than 60 percent of jobs in the information age will require some level of technical competency and that the demand for IT specialists worldwide is set to grow faster than training institutions can produce people with the requisite skills” (Business Day, 2001, as cited in Mentz & Mentz, 2003)
As a conclusion, the research is basically addressing the students’ problem in learning literature using different teaching approach by using computer technology in the teaching and learning process.

The research consequently centres on gathering of data to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the use of courseware in the learning of literature, as well as looking at the suitability of the usage of the courseware whether as a self access material or as a teaching material by the teachers. In addition to that, the research also focuses on the perspectives of the students on using the courseware in the learning of literature.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

This research was carried out to achieve the following objectives:

i. To investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the usage of the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware.

ii. To obtain the perspective of the respondents on the suitability of using the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware as a teaching or self-access material.

iii. To investigate the views of the respondents on the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware.
1.3 Research Questions

The research is guided by the following three research questions, which are:

i. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using of the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware?

ii. Is the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware suitable to be used as a teaching or self-access material?

iii. What are the views of the respondents on the Form Four Selected Poems Literature Courseware?