

THE EFFECTS OF HEUTAGOGY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TOWARDS  
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' CREATIVITY IN ESL PRESENTATION

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## **DEDICATION**

Dedicated to everyone who has helped to push me into completing this task. For my family, friends and colleagues. And especially to my supervisor who never gave up on me.

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Alhamdulillah. Finally I have completed writing this Project Report. In this opportunity I would like to thank those who had helped me through this process until completion. First and foremost, I would like to give my sincerest appreciation to my supervisor, Dr Noor Dayana binti Abd Halim for all the support, motivation and advice during the completion of this research study.

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And last but not least to my family. I am grateful to have everyone in my life.

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to identify the effects of heutagogy learning environment and its effectiveness towards secondary schools students' creativity in designing presentation slides. There are two types of items measured; creativity in implementing multimedia elements in the slides and creativity in content organization and delivery in an ESL lesson. This study uses a quantitative, one group pre-test post-test design to determine whether there is a significant difference in the creativity of the presentation slides after the implementation of the heutagogy learning environment. A total of 10 respondents were chosen from a Form 3 class in secondary school to undergo the treatment. Findings show that there are positive outcomes from both items measured where creativity in implementing multimedia elements shows there is a significant difference between the two tests. Similarly, there is also a significant difference shown in creativity in content organization and delivery. In conclusion, this study could help to assist teachers in designing a heutagogy learning environment that promotes lifelong learning skills in cultivating creativity which aligns with the objectives of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan persekitaran pembelajaran heutagogy dan keberkesanannya terhadap kreativiti murid sekolah menengah dalam merekabentuk slaid persembahan. Terdapat dua item yang diukur; kreativiti dalam menerapkan elemen multimedia dalam slaid dan kreativiti dalam penyusunan dan penyampaian isi kandungan dalam pelajaran Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua (ESL). Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk The One-group Pre Test – Post Test Design dengan menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif untuk menentukan sama ada terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam kreativiti yang ditunjukkan dalam slaid persembahan selepas pelaksanaan persekitaran pembelajaran heutagogi. Seramai 10 orang responden dipilih dari kelas Tingkatan 3 di sebuah sekolah menengah untuk menjalani rawatan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hasil positif dari kedua-dua item yang diukur dimana kreativiti dalam menerapkan elemen multimedia menunjukkan terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan di antara kedua-dua ujian. Begitu juga, terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan yang ditunjukkan dalam kreativiti dalam penyusunan dan penyampaian isi kandungan. Secara kesimpulannya, kajian ini dapat membantu guru dalam merancang persekitaran pembelajaran heutagogi yang mempromosikan kemahiran belajar sepanjang hayat dalam memupuk kreativiti yang bersesuaian dengan objektif pembelajaran abad ke-21.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ESL	-	English as a Second Language
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
KBSM	-	Kemahiran Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah
KPM	-	Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Theories in teaching and learning has evolved tremendously in recent years especially with the introduction of the 21st Century Learning environment which incorporates technology in delivering lessons and facilitating students' learning in a classroom. Learning is no longer restricted to the teacher-student environment since knowledge can now be accessed widely and easily through technology such as Web 2.0. According to Yildiz (2021), the use of Web 2.0 as a tool strongly affects the behaviour of today's generation and this include those involved in the educational sector. Studies worldwide shown that there is an increase of learners' performances when the learning environment incorporates the use of Web 2.0 tools such as mobile applications, social media and others (Kazhan et.al, 2020; Karadağ and Garip, 2021; Hassan et. al, 2021).

Due to its opened access where anyone would be able to utilize it at their own convenience, Web 2.0 has also created a setting where traditional approaches may become irrelevant and educators as well as learners can take on multiple roles when learning online (Wellburn and Eib, 2010). The dependency on the pedagogical method where the teaching and learning relies on interaction and communication between the students and teachers in schools or institutions may lessen as more technological advancement in education appear in the future.

When learning is moving away from the pedagogical norms, a new theory emerges which is an extension of the andragogy theory. This theory is a progression of the self-directed learning where learners have the autonomous control over their own learning in terms of what to learn and how to learn it. Stewart Hase and Chris Kenyon (2001) has coined the term for this theory as heutagogy, which suggests any

type of learning that takes place is determined by the learner themselves. It requires the learners' maturity and autonomy while moving away from teachers' control and course structuring (Canning, 2010). This is in line with the current pandemic issue that has impacted the schooling system worldwide. In order to stop the virus from spreading, classes are conducted through online means where the teacher has less authority in supervising the students' learning. Putri and Handayani (2020) stated that the heutagogy approach may become a necessity that should be further looked into especially in the era of online learning.

Being in control of ones' own learning, heutagogy is a method that can stimulate lifelong learning skills (Blaschke, 2012). This is parallel to the Third Shift of the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2015-2025) for higher education, with reasons indicated that lifelong learning will enable Malaysians to maximise individual potential and cater to the change of skills needed in workforce through reskilling and upskilling opportunities. Thus, there is a need to explore heutagogy and its implications in Malaysia setting as a step to achieve the goal set by the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, in the efforts to achieve lifelong learning skills, creativity plays a significant role. According to Mawas and Muntean (2018), the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment should be able to impart the skills needed by the learners to adapt with the expectations of the workplace. This include the ability to generate ideas, suggest hypotheses, and find alternatives to solve problems (QCDA, 1999). Being creative could stimulate these abilities that are essential in the workplace. According to Lucas and Venckute (2020), individuals that are creative are curious, have a tolerance for risk and uncertainties as well as having the capacity to adapt and be flexible to any situations. When given any task to complete, they are able to find solution to the problem.

Since heutagogy gives freedom to the students to determine their own way of learning, they need to engage creatively on how to execute the lessons so that the learning objectives can be achieved. Su (2009) stated that being creative is in line with being able to design, produce or inventing things which in this case is the syllabus of



the lesson itself. This not only gives the learners authority to direct and select meaningful learning experience but also creates lessons that are individualized to the learner's specific needs especially during this current pandemic where interactions with the teachers are greatly reduced (Putri and Handayani, 2020).

Thus, the relationship between heutagogy and students' creativity is a topic that should be studied further especially in the aims of producing students with lifelong learning skills that is invaluable in the workforce. Though heutagogy mainly focus on more matured learners such as adults and college students, further research can be conducted to see whether it can be implemented effectively with secondary school students and discover its effects on students' creativity.

## **1.2 Problem Background**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century learning has brought about new theories and strategies in conducting the teaching and learning process including approaches such as heutagogy. These approaches cater with the current situation where technology especially the internet plays a huge role in education (Whitby, 2007; Raja and Nagasubramani, 2018). In order to instill 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as lifelong learning, collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination, critical thinking, problem solving and many more, educators need to embrace changes and can no longer rely solely on the traditional teacher-centered approach when conducting the teaching and learning sessions. Even pedagogy in schools need to be modernized and expanded (Mynbayeva, 2017). Teachers are encouraged to be innovative in teaching students who are born in the digital era. Yet are teachers ready to accept this change?

A survey was conducted at an ASEAN level in 2020 to stakeholders of education including teachers and students and results show that many of them are willing and ready to accept change in education as it could prepare students to adapt better in the workforce (Jamaludin, McKay and Ledger, 2020). In Malaysia, a study by Chan, Embi and Hashim (2019) also shows that teachers have positive attitudes towards new approaches since it could help learners learn better in and out of the

classroom. However, the lack of exposure towards something new can create barriers and unwillingness when trying (Singh and Chan, 2014). This is the same if the teachers are asked to adapt with new theories such as heutagogy, cybergogy or peeragogy. Without being sufficiently introduced, teachers as well as students are not aware of a relatively new theories in the educational field (Akyildiz, 2019). Thus there is a need for more research and studies on how to implement new theories such as heutagogy in the classroom environment.

The Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 has issued global lockdown where schools across the world are closed to prevent further spread of the virus. Classes can no longer be conducted in-person and therefore, has to be converted into online methods (Dhawan, 2020). There are issues of online learning where it fails to produce the desired results due to technical problems, lack of face-to-face interactions with teachers, irregular response time and others leads to the need of finding an alternative approach in online learning (Adnan and Anwar, 2020). Using the pedagogy approach for online lessons may limit the learners' opportunities to experience and progress more in their learning (Brennan, 2003). This is agreed by Supriyatno and Kurniawan, (2020), who stated that there is a need to revise the teaching methods when shifting from conventional classrooms to online learning. Maina, Wagacha and Oboko (2017) also stated that students need to take charge on the activities conducted through online learning with limited guidance from the teachers. Thus teachers need to be flexible in changing their teaching approach into one that provides learners more freedom to choose how they can learn effectively online.

With lesser time provided for face-to-face interactions, teachers need to be able to find alternatives with their teaching strategies especially when the lesson focuses on instilling creativity in students. In Malaysia, the rigid focus of the education system on academic performance and examinations creates barriers in teaching skills such as creativity for educational purposes (Rathakrishnan, 2016). This is supported by Moran (2010) where he stated that the traditional pedagogical approach is one of the factors contributing to the decline as the approach limits students' freedom to participate creatively in a teacher-centered classroom since the learning environment is constricted to an inflexible curriculum outline and resources.

As Malaysia's educational system introduces the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, creativity and other essential skills are reinforced by integrating them into the lessons within the current curriculum (KPM, 2012). Studies have shown that teachers are ready to integrate creativity in classrooms (Dolgova et al, 2018; Apak, Taat and Suki, 2021). However, without the proper support, training, as well as exposure to different methods and techniques, teaching creativity in classrooms would not be as effective as it should be (Mussabekov, 2018; Ibrahim et al, 2019). Therefore, there is a need for more studies offering various strategies and approaches that can help teachers in designing lessons which could integrate creativity.

Creativity is not limited to arts but is also important in language teaching and learning (Lee, 2013). In the context of learning a language, creativity can encourage learners to be more curious to explore and observe as well as to use their imagination to brainstorm novel ideas (Liao et al, 2018). A student's creativity in learning a language can be seen through the output skills which are speaking and writing. This include the fluency, flexibility, and originality of the language used in building phrase or sentences for written and spoken language (Huh and Lee, 2020). However, according to Jones and Richards (2015), although teachers see themselves as creative, there is little understanding on how creativity is constructed in language teaching and learning. Various studies has been conducted on how to instill creativity in ESL lessons (Muthusamy, 2010; Lee, 2013; Liao, 2018). Yet the subject of creativity is extensive and could evolve with time thus there is still a lot left that can be explored especially for the benefit of education (Giaccardi and Fischer, 2008).

This includes the teaching of presentation skills to school students. In schools, students are not provided explicit lessons on how to conduct presentations since it is considered an element exposed indirectly during formal lessons depending on the teacher's preference (KPM, 2012). In an English lesson, the teaching and learning of presentation skills focus more on the oral delivery which is the speech given during the presentation (Sucharitrak, 2018; Soomro et. al, 2019). There is not much emphasis given on the teaching of creating creative visual aids even though it is proven that visual aids can affect the delivery of messages in presentations (Ho and Intai, 2017; Pateşan, Balagiu, and Alibec, 2018)

Apart from that, ESL learning for anyone is not limited to school years or college and university's life. Language has the ability to evolve and change due time where the words and vocabulary that are used today may not even exist 10 years ago (Mendivil, 2019). The English language that the student has learned during their school years may no longer be sufficient for use in the future. This factor may affect students' future especially in Malaysia where the ability to communicate in English is an aspect that employers would consider when hiring new workers (Ting et. al., 2019). Thus in order for students to be able to continue learning the second language, they need to be instilled with the ability to learn the language independently. This is where introducing the heutagogy approach in an ESL lesson to the students can help them develop life-long language learning skills.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

In Malaysia, integrating ICT in the classroom has never been the first option due to barriers and constraints that the teachers face which include time, facilities and support (Sailin, 2014). However, the pandemic in 2020 challenges the teachers to change their teaching methods from offline to online abruptly without having the time to make the necessary preparation (Dhawan, 2020). For example, Ling, Effendi and Matore (2020) has compiled research articles on online learning between 2014 until 2020 and found that little focus was given on web conferencing and interaction which is an essential skill for teachers nowadays for conducting online lessons. There is also the lack of training for teachers and teacher trainees especially for teaching skills needed to prepare for the current situation (Mohamed, 2000).

Therefore there is a need for further studies in helping teachers to conduct lessons online effectively. In a survey by Newton (2020), it was found that more than half of the teacher respondents agreed that they are not ready to facilitate online learning. Some of the reasons given were that the teachers were struggling with the applications and how to incorporate their lessons through the medium. According to Fauzi and Khusuma (2020) the inappropriate combination of applications and teaching methods will not create a meaningful learning environment. For online learning to be

as effective as conventional learning, teachers have to change their strategies and methodologies in creating lessons that are engaging to students (Dhawan, 2020). To summarize, there is a need for research advancement especially in creating models to accommodate contemporary changes in online learning especially in helping teachers to design meaningful lessons (Adedoyin and Soykan, 2020).

Since online teaching and learning has become a norm in Malaysia especially during the pandemic, teachers should take advantage of using technology in online lessons for students to produce creative outcomes of a subject. One example is creating visual aids for an ESL presentation. According to Macwan (2015) visual aids help learners to learn language in diversified ways. Not only could it provide support to the speaker and listener, it could also reduce stress and make the presentation more effective (Lambert, 2008). In 2013, Renau Renau conducted a study on peer evaluation of the slides that were used during student's oral presentations. Some of the negative feedbacks given were the way content was arranged, grammatical issues, use of excessive words in one slide and many more. Most of these errors affect negatively on the overall presentation. Therefore, lessons on creating effective visual aids creatively should be exposed to students.

In conclusion, the aim of this research is to find a learning environment that can be conducted effectively on enhancing student's creativity when creating slides for ESL presentation. This include how the students can integrate multimedia into the presentation slides and also arranging ideas with good use of language in an organized manner. It is hoped that this research can help teachers in finding an alternative method to online teaching where students are given authority in the lessons especially in creating visual aids for presentation skills. In addition, students can also benefit by learning how to create effective slides for their presentations.

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To design a heutagogy learning environment for teaching presentation skills in an ESL lesson.
- ii. To study the effects of heutagogy learning environment towards students' creativity in terms of:
  - a. Integrating multimedia elements in presentation slides.
  - b. Content organization and delivery for presentations in an ESL lesson.

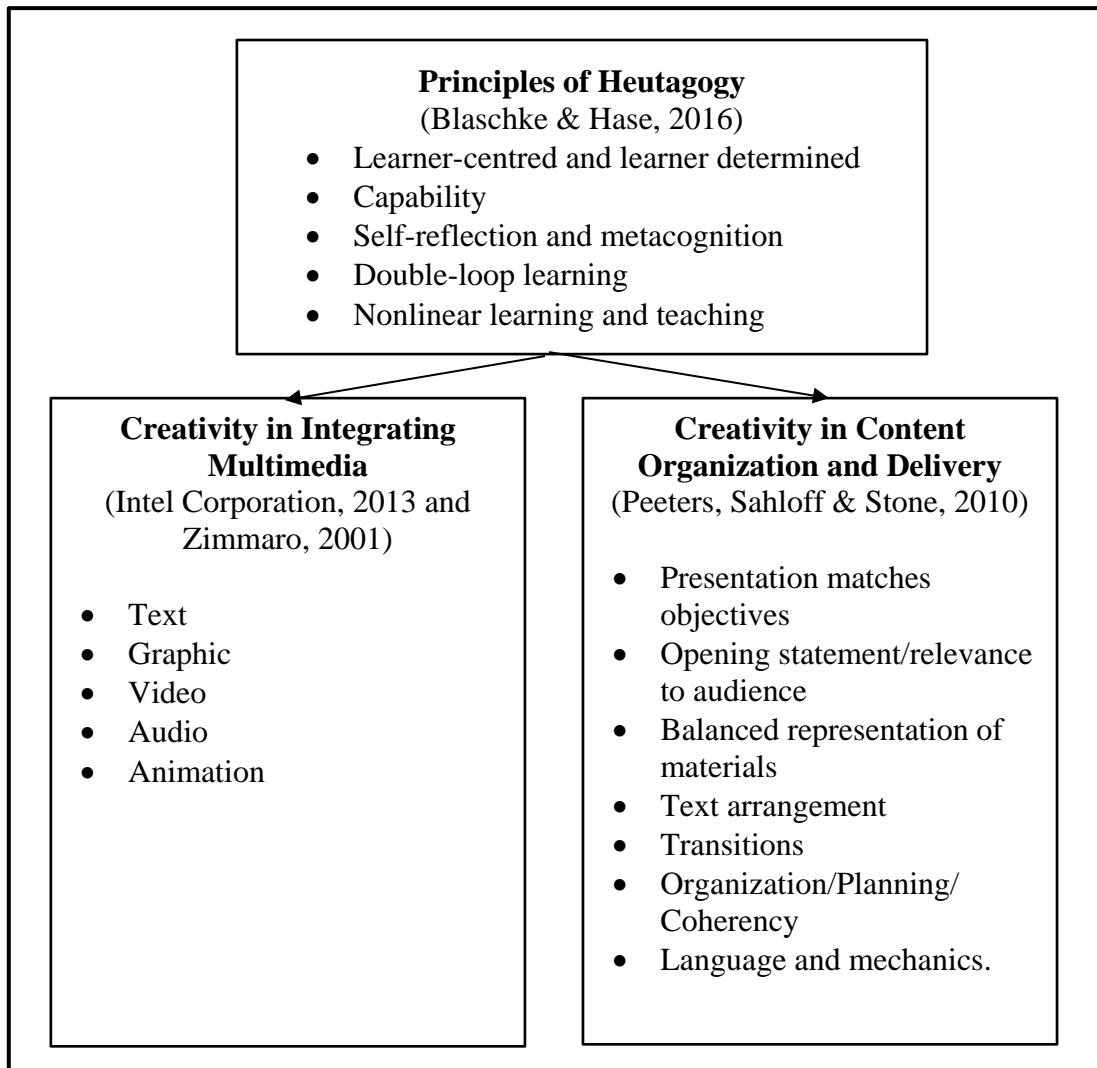
## **1.5 Research Questions**

This study provide the answers to the following questions:

- i. What are the effects of heutagogy learning environment towards students' creativity in terms of:
  - a. integrating multimedia in presentation slides?
  - b. content organization and delivery for presentations in an ESL lesson?

## **1.6 Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework for this research.



**Figure 1.1:** Conceptual Framework

The independent variable for this research is the heutagogy learning environment designed using the principles introduced by Blaschke and Hase (2016). There are five principles adapted into the learning environment of creating presentation slides in an ESL classroom. Two dependent variables which are the creativity in integrating multimedia elements and content organization and delivery in creating presentations slides would answer to the research questions of how effective the heutagogy learning environment is for secondary school students. Further details are explained below.

### 1.6.1 Principles of Heutagogy

The principles of heutagogy are taken from a framework created by Blaschke and Hase in 2016. In this framework, it discusses how a heutagogical lesson can be designed with emphasis on several principles which would differentiate itself from the pedagogy and andragogy approach. These principles are discussed below.

*i. Learner-centered and learner determined*

The heutagogy approach gives autonomy for students in the learning environment. Students are responsible to decide what they are going to learn and how the learning will be conducted and assessed.

*ii. Capability*

Capability determines students' ability and competency in their self-efficacy, communication, creativity, teamwork and positive values.

*iii. Self-reflection and metacognition*

Students can self-reflect on what they have learnt and how they learnt the lesson in a holistic manner.

*iv. Double-loop learning*

In double-loop learning, students should be able to be psychologically and behaviorally engaged. They should be able to determine how the new knowledge influences on their values and belief system.

*v. Nonlinear learning and teaching*

The teaching and learning environment is defined solely by the students. Since learning is self-determined, it will happen in a nonlinear format.



### **1.6.2 Creativity in Integrating Multimedia Elements**

The concept of multimedia is defined as a process of interactive communication using computer technology which incorporates the use of audio and visual media such as texts, graphic, audio, video and animation (Jamalludin Harun and Zaidatun Tasir, 2005). When measuring creativity in integrating multimedia in a PowerPoint presentation slide, several factors are considered for each multimedia elements based on the rubrics by Intel Corporation (2013) and Zimmaro (2001). These are discussed below.

- i. *Text*: ability to manipulate type-face, font size, color and consistency which could reflect the topic, highlight keywords and be readable to the audience.
- ii. *Graphic*: ability to incorporate quality graphics that can reinforce ideas presented.
- iii. *Video*: ability to include quality and relevant videos that helps with explanation of ideas.
- iv. *Audio*: ability to use sound and music that reinforce message
- v. *Animation*: ability to include relevant animation that could help explanation of ideas and flow of the presentation.

### **1.6.3 Creativity in Content Organization and Delivery**

According to Yuan, Begany and Yang (2015) in a study of effective presentation styles, how a content is organized and written in a presentation slide can affect the readers' comprehension of the idea delivered. Thus the components for content/organization from the rubric by Peeters, Sahloff and Stone (2010) is adapted in this research and are discussed below.

- i. *Presentation matches objectives*: determines whether the presentation is relevant to the topic.
- ii. *Opening statement/relevance to audience*: discusses how the presentation could impact the presenter and audience.

- iii. *Balanced representation of materials*: the introduction, background, content and conclusion are given the same focus and emphasis by the presenter.
- iv. *Text arrangement*: the use of headings, paragraphs and bullet points that helps with content delivery.
- v. *Transitions*: discusses the smooth flow of ideas.
- vi. *Organization/Planning/Coherency*: ideas are explained and organized, essential points are obvious and highlighted.
- vii. *Language and mechanics*: focuses on the mechanics of the English language including grammar and spelling.

## **1.7 Operational Definition**

There are several phrases and terminologies used in this research. These phrases and terminologies are defined as below:

### **1.7.1 Heutagogy Learning Environment**

According to Stewart Hase of Southern Cross University (2001), heutagogy is a study of self-determined learning. It is an approach that gives the learners flexibility to negotiate their needs in designing the content of a course with support from the teachers.

In this study, the heutagogy learning environment is an approach used in lessons that gives freedom to students in learning how to use Microsoft PowerPoint to create creative ESL presentation slides. This study uses Blaschke and Hase (2016) principles of heutagogy approach in designing the activities in the lesson.

Skills are learnt independently through books or online resources and the content of what to learn is decided solely by the students. Teachers may assist the students as where to find information needed to learn the skills.

### **1.7.2 Creativity**

Kaufman and Sternberg (2007) defined creativity as the ability to generate new ideas that are different, high in quality and appropriate to the task at hand. There is a type of creativity called the subject creativity which occurs when a person combines things in ways that are individual to him by regrouping stimuli or data regardless of the effects his creation has on others (Lytton, 2012). Creativity can be measured using an open-ended, performance-based measures where tasks were given through topics or stimuli and freedom was given to manipulate certain elements using ones' own judgement (Sternberg, 2006).

In this research, creativity is measured based on the students' ability to create a slide presentation project in an English as a Second Language (ESL) lesson. Topics were given based on the themes taken from the Form 3 textbook 'Close-Up'. This task is parallel to the KBSM Form 3 English Learning Standard 5.3.1 which is to respond imaginatively and intelligibly through creating s, visuals, posters, blogs and webpages (KPM, 2000).

For this research, creativity is measured in two aspects which are the ability to integrate multimedia elements and the ability to organize and deliver content in the presentation. In measuring creativity, the researcher looks into the aspects of change in the presentation slides of the respondents between the pre-test and post-test. Changes can be in terms of delivering new ideas or designs within an individuals' capability.

### **1.7.3 Integrating Multimedia Elements in Presentation Slides**

Using presentation slides in the classroom provides variety and stimulates interest in the learning environment (Clark, 2008). It is one of the most preferred authoring tool for designing visuals for presentations in the educational sector in Malaysia (Saforrudin et al, 2012). When integrating elements of multimedia such as

text, graphics and audio in slides, it could create a powerful tool which is effective to students' learning (Pate and Posey, 2016).

For this research, integrating multimedia elements is one of the creativity aspects measured which is defined as the ability of students to incorporate multimedia elements in designing presentation slides in an ESL classroom. This could include the ability to apply multimedia and hyperlinks in the slides. Assessment for creativity is based on a combination of several multimedia-focused rubrics from Intel Corporation (2013) and Zimmaro (2001). Based on the elements provided, a Creativity in Integrating Multimedia Rubric was designed and used as a measurement tool for this research.

#### **1.7.4 Content Organization and Delivery**

The organization of ideas, grammatically correct sentences and using appropriate language register that adapts to specific audience are important in order to make delivery clear, focused, logical and effective in any presentation (Haber and Lingard 2001).

In this research, another aspect of creativity that is measured is on how heutagogy learning can affect learners' skills in using language devices in an ESL lesson. This includes the use of registers and the organization of content in order to create an effective visual aid for presentations. Assessment for content delivery is based on the rubric adapted from Peeters, Sahloff and Stone (2010) where they provided a standardized rubric to evaluate students' presentations. One of its focused elements which is the content/organization was adapted into a new rubric 'Creativity in Content Organization and Delivery Rubric' that is used to measure students' creativity in the language aspect when creating presentation slides for this research.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study aims to provide the necessary information for those who seek new approaches and methods especially in using the heutagogy approach in the teaching and learning of creating presentation slides. It is hoped that this study can be beneficial to:

### **1.8.1 Teachers**

This study provides the necessary steps that teachers can use to create a learning environment using the heutagogy approach. This approach can be used as an alternative method in teaching creativity skills online focusing on the creation of visual aid to support students' presentation. It is also hoped that through this research, teachers are able to facilitate their students into creating their own learning strategies in ESL lessons.

### **1.8.2 Students**

From this research, it is hoped that students are able to acquire lifelong learning skills through the incorporation of the heutagogy learning environment in ESL lessons. Students would be able to conduct their own learning strategies with limited help from the teacher using the steps provided in this research. This is especially in learning how to create effective and creative slides as visual aid for presentations.

## **1.9 Scope and Limitations**

This study is limited to Form 3 students studying in a secondary school in the area of Johor Bahru. Using the heutagogy learning environment, the subject focus for this study is creativity in designing slides for presentations in ESL lessons which is parallel to a learning standard arranged in Malaysia's KBSM Form 3 English syllabus

and measured using rubrics adapted and designed based from rubrics by Intel Corporation (2013), Zimmaro (2001) and Peeters, Sahloff and Stone (2010). The heutagogy learning environment used in this study is based on the principles introduced by Blaschke and Hase (2016). Therefore, findings for this study can only be applied to these students and cannot be generalized with students from other places.

### **1.10 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the background of the problem and problem statement from where the research objectives and questions were constructed. It has also discussed the conceptual framework which gives the visual representation of the expected relationship between variables of this research. The following chapter discusses the literature review related to heutagogy and creativity as well as past research conducted on these two aspects.

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