

USING GOOGLE CLASSROOM TO TEACH ENGLISH READING
COMPREHENSION SKILLS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

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requirements for the award of the degree of
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father, Mohd Nor bin Ahmad, who would always inspire me to aim high and get the best things life has to offer.

To my mother, Noor Azizah binti Ibrahim, for her endless prayers, support, love and encouragement.

To my sisters, Nur Atiqah and Nur Syaquirah, I am paving this path so when it is your time to reach this milestone in your life, I could understand, support and provide assistance whenever you need me.

To all those involved, and for those who would find it beneficial,

THIS ONE IS FOR YOU.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of Google Classroom to teach English reading comprehension skills among primary school pupils. This research fills the gap by investigating the effectiveness of Google Classroom in increasing primary school pupils' reading comprehension skills in Malaysian context, exploring the media that these pupils prefer the most in Google Classroom and evaluates their attitude towards the implementation of Google Classroom in their reading comprehension lessons. Participants of this research were seventy upper primary pupils in a primary school in Johor. A quantitative research design was employed. With the aim of collecting the data, experimental research design was adapted by using reading comprehension tests, a set of preferred media questionnaire and a set of attitude questionnaire. The data from the reading comprehension tests were analysed using Wilcoxon Test and Mann-Whitney U Test. Meanwhile, data from both questionnaires were analysed using frequency, percentage and mean. All data were accompanied with descriptive statistical analysis to provide better understanding. The findings showed that both controlled and experimental groups recorded increment in score of their reading comprehension tests. However, pupils in experimental group recorded significantly high increment in their reading comprehension test scores compared to pupils in controlled group. These findings reflected the effectiveness of Google Classroom to teach English reading comprehension skills among primary school pupils in Malaysia. It was comprehensively reported that these pupils showed high preference towards the integration of video in their reading comprehension lessons compared to other media integrated in Google Classroom. Positive attitude in using Google Classroom to improve their reading comprehension skills was also portrayed by the result of the analysis of their attitude questionnaire. These findings are followed by a few recommendations and implications for educational stakeholders and researchers with close reference to the limitation of the study.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dilakukan dengan tujuan untuk mengkaji keberkesanan penggunaan *Google Classroom* bagi meningkatkan kemahiran pemahaman subjek Bahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan murid sekolah rendah. Kajian ini memenuhi keperluan mengkaji keberkesanan penggunaan *Google Classroom* bagi meningkatkan kemahiran pemahaman dalam kalangan murid sekolah rendah di Malaysia, mengkaji jenis media yang paling digemari oleh murid-murid di dalam *Google Classroom* dan menilai sikap mereka semasa menggunakan *Google Classroom* sebagai medium pembelajaran di dalam slot pemahaman subjek Bahasa Inggeris. Sampel kajian adalah tujuh puluh orang murid tahap dua yang sedang menuntut di salah sebuah sekolah rendah di Johor. Reka bentuk penyelidikan secara kuantitatif telah dipilih. Bagi tujuan pengumpulan data, reka bentuk penyelidikan secara eksperimental telah diadaptasi dengan menggunakan ujian pemahaman, satu set soal selidik tentang media yang paling digemari oleh murid di dalam *Google Classroom* dan satu set soal selidik tentang sikap murid semasa menggunakan *Google Classroom* sebagai platform pembelajaran bagi slot pemahaman Bahasa Inggeris. Data dari ujian pemahaman telah dianalisis menggunakan *Wilcoxon Test* dan *Mann-Whitney U Test*. Sementara itu, data dari kedua-dua set soal selidik telah dianalisis menggunakan frekuensi, peratus dan min. Semua data telah disertakan dengan analisis statistik deskriptif untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa terdapat peningkatan dalam skor ujian pemahaman bagi kumpulan kawalan dan kumpulan eksperimental. Namun begitu, peningkatan dalam skor ujian pemahaman bagi kumpulan eksperimental lebih ketara jika dibandingkan dengan kumpulan kawalan. Hasil kajian ini membuktikan keberkesanan *Google Classroom* dalam meningkatkan penguasaan kemahiran pemahaman Bahasa Inggeris murid-murid sekolah rendah di Malaysia. Kajian ini juga melaporkan bahawa media yang paling digemari oleh murid-murid di dalam *Google Classroom* adalah video dan murid-murid juga menunjukkan sikap positif terhadap penggunaan *Google Classroom* sebagai medium pembelajaran slot pemahaman Bahasa Inggeris mereka. Dapatan kajian diikuti dengan beberapa cadangan dan implikasi untuk rujukan para pendidik dan pengkaji dengan mengambil kira limitasi kajian ini.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL	-	English as Second Language
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technologies
L2	-	Second Language
OER	-	Open Educational Resources
VLE	-	Virtual Learning Environment
LMS	-	Learning Management System
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
CoI	-	Community of Inquiry
MCO	-	Movement Control Order
UTAUT	-	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology
SBA	-	School-Based Assessment

LIST OF SYMBOLS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

2020 marks another new milestone for Malaysia as it enters another year as developing country. As a developing nation, Malaysian government has placed great importance of English proficiency among its' citizens as it is the language of trade and diplomacy. The status of English language in Malaysia is eminent as it has been established as second language in the Education Ordinance (1957) and has been reasserted in Educational Act 1961 and 1996 (Government of Malaysia 1961 & 1996) as well as the National Education Policy in 1970. However, based on the examination of education reforms studied by Azman (2016), despite efforts to nourish English language proficiency among Malaysian students, attempts to educate Malaysian children to be proficient in English still could not be considered as successful despite the average of 14-15 years of English education from primary school to tertiary level education. The main reason that renders this concern according to Nunan (2003), Bauldauf et al. (2011), Kaplan et al. (2011) and Hayes (2014) in their studies is the limited sources of rich language content in English teaching and learning sessions. Viewing the issue in Malaysian context, it is admittable that resources in Malaysian classrooms are still insufficient to support Malaysian pupils to achieve reasonable level of English language competency.

As an effort to resolve the hiccup in English language proficiency among Malaysian pupils, educators and researchers need to start tackling the foundation of skills taught in Malaysian English curriculum which is reading skills. Reading skills is categorised as the foundation to facilitate ones' second language acquisition as it gives the pupils access to reading materials which allow them to study and acquire the language independently (Chung, 2012). According to Balakrishnan (2013), most of the English as Second Language (ESL) pupils are reluctant to read English text as they

could not understand the passage. This inclination will make it harder for Malaysian ESL pupils to comprehend English written piece, thus impeding their English language proficiency. In the pursuance to help pupils to master their English reading skills, teachers must put emphasize on the reading comprehension skills as the understanding of text is the essence that allow students to process the language that they learn. In constructing reading comprehension, variety of attempts have been carried out in ESL classrooms in the effort to increase the reading comprehension competency among Malaysian pupils.

One of the methods to increase Malaysian pupils' reading comprehension skills is through the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in their language classrooms. As mentioned by Garret (2009), the use of ICT in language classrooms create opportunities for pupils to approach language learning more holistically. Yunus and Suliman (2014) state that 89.6% pupils in their study agree that the usage of ICT has improved their language skills. ICT provides medium for pupils who have different learning styles to be attended by their teachers as it allows the teachers to deliver their teaching content dynamically. Furthermore, Soliman (2014) claims that the face-to-face teaching hours are too few and inadequate to develop pupils' language skills. Through the integration of ICT, pupils will be aided in their reading comprehension lessons as ICT is capable to turn the abstract ideas and difficult concept in English texts into graphics and sounds. This view is supported by Islam (2017) as she states that texts could be easily understood if it is accompanied with or transformed into pictures, graphics, illustrations, audio and video.

Since the approach to learn English in 21st century has been shifted from teacher-centred learning into student-centred learning, ICT tools are viewed as one of the most preferred tools to ease English language acquisition. Altimer (2011) states in his study that the integration of ICT in learning could boost pupils' motivation due to its' multimedia capabilities including visual aids, audios and videos. Thus, this motivational drive among pupils upon the integration of ICT in their English lessons is viewed as an opportunity to nourish the mastery of this second language (L2) reading comprehension skills among ESL learners. The multimedia elements in ICT have the

potential to bridge the gap of difficult vocabularies and complex idea in text by explaining them in more graphic and authentic ways.

Google Classroom is an online learning platform that has been launched as part of Google Apps for Education (GAFE) in 2014. This online learning platform is designed with features that could integrate other educational applications such as Youtube, Actively Learn, BrainPOP, Dreamscape, and Edpuzzle in it. This unique feature enables pupils to upgrade their text reading experience to be more animated and interesting. Through this approach, the reading task and eventually the understanding of text are not just based on words and sentences anymore; instead, the text is now a lively piece of information that tells story as it is equipped with interactive media. The interactivity element that is highlighted in Google Classroom will grab the pupils' attention, increase their attention span and deliver information for the pupils to process in an attractive and fun way. Yang and Wu (2012) claimed that interactive media incorporated in comprehension text are proven to have positive impact on pupils' attitude and motivate them to become self-efficacy.

Another study conducted by Subandi et al. (2018) shows that Google Classroom also promotes interactive communication between pupils and teachers as well as pupils and pupils through collaborative learning tasks. This meaningful interaction in Google Classroom will compensate for the lack of interactions in traditional classroom, lessen pupils' anxiety or inferiority from face-to-face interaction and allow information transfer to occur effectively. Through Google Classroom, pupils can send private comments to the teacher and discuss as a group with other participants who register the course to increase their understanding of a text or weigh up their peers' point of view in order to comprehend a text effectively. Therefore, after considering various media resources enabled by Google Classroom that could enhance ESL pupils' understanding of English texts, active communication aspects that allow information sharing, fast feedback and dynamic interactions between users that could elicit beneficial and productive debates that could sharpen the pupils' reading comprehension skill, the researcher has decided to evaluate the potential of Google Classroom as a learning tool that could increase primary ESL pupils' reading comprehension skills.

Furthermore, Selvanathan, Mohamed Hussin and Nor Azazi (2020) firmly state in their research that Malaysia should urgently consider online learning platforms, such as Google Classroom as an active teaching and learning method. Covid-19 pandemic that has stroked the world should be taken as a lesson-learned that triggers progressive shifts to urge our educational system to be more prepared when large gathering such as face-to-face classes are prohibited. Malaysian educational system has clearly shown that it is not ready for large scale implementation of online learning system as most of research that are carried out and published during Covid-19 period focus more on the challenges that policy makers, educators and pupils face during their isolated online learning period at home. These challenges could be prevented if Malaysia had been actively encouraging and integrating online learning in our syllabus like any other developed countries had been few years back. Sufficient improvement methods need to be planned and studied carefully in order to increase our educational system's capability to deal with emergency and isolation measure like this again in the future. Pupils should not suffer due to the inefficiency of the responsible parties in delivering optimal assistance in ensuring the continuation of educational process in time of need.

1.2 Background of Study

Grabe and Stoller (2002) define reading comprehension as the ability to digest information in a text and the ability understand the message conveyed by the writer in a text. In another words, in order to fully grasp the reading comprehension skills, pupils need to read, process, comprehend and interpret a text. Nevertheless, a study conducted by Setyawati (2019) shows that most pupils are not able to acquire the reading comprehension skills at a satisfactory level because they have difficulties in determining main ideas, have limited exposure to reading comprehension strategies and unable to concentrate during their reading comprehension lessons. In addition to that, based on the research conducted by Yorio (1971), reading comprehension problems among ESL pupils are also the result of barrier and differences between first and second language, inadequate second language vocabulary acquisition and pupils' unfamiliarity with topics highlighted in the text.

In Malaysia, classroom observation has been conducted by Danga (1999) regarding Malaysian pupils' reading comprehension skills. According to her study, some of these ESL pupils are only able to understand separate ideas in the text while the others are only able to understand the text superficially. These pupils have not yet reached the level where they can make inferences and apply the information that they get from the text into answering questions that are at the top four level in Bloom's Taxonomy pyramid. Therefore, more research needs to be conducted and more methods and approaches need to be tested on ESL reading comprehension scene. Pupils need to be encouraged to master their reading comprehension skills as more advance technology and applications have been invented in order to compensate for L2 pupils' reading comprehension inadequacy.

One of the most recent advancements in educational field is Google Classroom. Google Classroom is an educational online platform that is available on the web or by mobile app. Google Classroom is also connected to other Google applications such as Gmail, Google Docs and Google Calendar (Google, 2020). The application has recently received its' rightful acknowledgement as an effective distance learning tool as many of the educational institutions around the world have been instructed to shut down due to Covid-19. Education sector has been hugely impacted by the Coronavirus disease as policymakers make it compulsory for all Malaysian citizens to adhere to the new norms such as social distancing, quarantines, border closures and travel restrictions in order to prevent the spread of the deadly pandemic (QS, 2020).

As the result of the pandemic, teachers and pupils around the world have begun to recognise Google Classroom as an effective learning alternative. This viewpoint is greatly influenced by the ease of use of Google Classroom as well as its' availability through all gadgets. Most of the teachers and pupils around the globe prefer to use Google Classroom instead of its other competitors because this platform provides medium for pupils to learn without the pressure from others at any time and any place, has interactive interferences, guarantees users' privacy and protect users' information besides permitting parents to track their children's progress and performance (Desmond and Mafa, 2017). Besides, the synchronous and asynchronous learning environment offered by the platform also allow pupils to have the freedom in learning

and give them the opportunity to adjust their learning schedule to suit their daily commitments in order to survive during this tough time (Dhawan, 2020).

Study conducted by Kasuma (2018) has resulted in the finding that shows Malaysian pupils favor online learning platform that resemble their social media platforms in term of interference and interactivity. Google Classroom consists of functions that allow users to post, comment and stream their educational resources like these Generation Z's social media platforms. Thus, this factor will attract more pupils to feel motivated to use this application as an alternative learning platform especially during situation where face-to-face interaction is not permissible. Kasuma's finding agrees with the result of a research conducted by Jordan and Duckett (2018) that states that Google Classroom has similar interference and interactivity level with currently available social media.

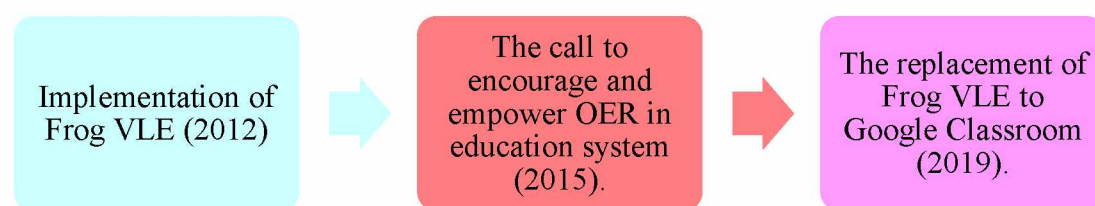


Figure 1.1 Timeline of the implementation of Google Classroom in Malaysian schools

The chronicle of the implementation of Google Classroom in Malaysia went way back in September 2015 when world leaders around the globe were summoned to attend UN Sustainable Development Summit. During this conference, leaders had agreed to endorse and support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Mohd Jamal et al., 2017). Through this agenda, 17 Sustainable Development Goals were presented. Among the highlight of the goals were the Goal #4 which was to ensure inclusive and quality education for all in order to promote lifelong learning. 10 targets were listed below this goal and countries across the globe were encouraged to achieve these targets before 2030. In relation to this progression, every nation in the world was

encouraged to implement Open Educational Resources (OER) in their educational system. OER is the idea of democratisation of education for everyone. This idea includes the open access teaching, learning and research resources for all without the constraint of time, place, financial, physical or mental disability (Embi, 2013). OER is considered as a brilliant advancement in education as it proposes learning, teaching and research activity to be accessible for all with little to none cost required. In another words, this idea allows flexibility in sharing, redistributing and modifying of educational resources around the globe with minimal to no cost at all. This development supports Smith and Casserly (2006) and Wiley, Bliss and McEwen (2013) proposals that proclaim that open educational movement is a powerful idea as the World Wide Web provides a medium for each individual to share, use and reuse knowledge.

In accordance with the call to increase the accessibility of education for all, regardless of their demography or special educational needs, in July 2016, a total amount of 7772 primary schools and 2408 secondary schools with a total of 4873982 pupils and 421828 teachers were enrolled in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) education to ensure the progression of OER was pursued to achieve its target before 2030 (MOE, 2019). VLE or sometimes being referred to as Learning Management System (LMS) is an e-learning system that is implemented in various educational levels around the world to assist educators to manage their educational resources, support classroom pedagogy and facilitate distance education (Al-Busaidi & Al-Shihi, 2012). Frog VLE was a major starting point of multi-directional or asynchronous teaching and learning activities in Malaysia which attracted the attention of all educational investors at that point of time as it involved massive investment from MOE.

Nonetheless, despite the huge investment, hype and the attention that it had managed to gather, in June 2019, MOE had announced the termination of the execution of Frog VLE in Malaysian schools due to its low level of usage especially among teachers and students. A study carried out by Cheok and Wong (2016) had resulted in the finding that stated that poor service and quality of the application as factors that prevented pupils and teachers from adopting this LMS in their teaching and learning

sessions. In accordance to compensate this issue, Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia had announced the synchronous implementation of Google Classroom in Malaysian schools to replace Frog VLE as the main e-learning platform in Malaysian education. As an another VLE platform, Google Classroom is viewed as a more interactive and informational-rich educational environment as it integrates familiar Google applications such as Google Drive, Gmail and Youtube that are more convenient to users. However, knowing the benefits and familiarity with the technology would not guarantee the success of its implementation (Awang, Zahudin, Wan Rozaini and Ishak, 2018). Therefore, this study has been initiated in order to explore the performance and effectiveness of Google Classroom in improving Malaysian primary school students' English reading comprehension skills.

1.3 Problem Statement

Several controversies had arisen following the MOE's decision to switch Malaysian main e-learning platform from Frog VLE to Google Classroom. YTL Communications Sdn Bhd owned by YTL Power International Bhd, the company which was responsible for the management and supply of Frog VLE to Malaysian educational institutions had released their statement to the media expressing their surprise regarding the project termination. The company argued that there was a miscommunication issues between the supplier and MOE as they had announced in their FrogAsia website that their contract will be continued prior to the expiration of their agreement of the first phase (Murugiah, 2019). Half of the stakeholders in Malaysian educational field were also bewildered as they will be required to relearn new system through Google Classroom. Even so, the Minister of Education at that point of time, Dr Maszlee Malik had reassured the educators that the temporary inconvenience will be justifiable as this decision will allow the sector to overcome the issue of complex online learning methods offered by Frog VLE as well as the user-unfriendly interferences provided by the platform. The minister also stated that the decision was made after the company had failed to deliver the promise of delivering high speed broadband to schools as well as at raising e-learning participations among the pupils and teachers.

In their study, Shaharane, Jamil and Rodzi (2016) has reported that Google Classroom had the potential to be an effective learning tool that could lead to major transformation in Malaysian educational advancement. This study has demonstrated that Google Classroom is able to provide opportunities to transform our classroom from teacher-centred classroom into student-centred classroom. The factors that have contributed to this statement are because they have recognised in their research that Google Classroom is capable of promoting Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) among pupils, aids in developing pupils' problem-solving skills and support pupils' comprehension as this medium allows the user-friendly integration of variety interactive learning materials.

Despite the encouragement to apply Google Classroom in teaching and learning sessions in relation to concur to the 21st century learning styles, studies that show the effectiveness of this e-learning platform have not been widely empirically proven. Abdul Razak, et al. (2018) mentioned that Malaysian English teachers are not ready yet to implement technology in their lessons. However, as the educator, it is the teacher's responsibility to expose pupils as often and as much as possible with various English materials. In addition to that Mohamed & Rashid (2017) state that the only way pupils, especially L2 or foreign language pupils to master their reading skills is through constant interactions with reading materials. In spite of the variety of proven studies, most ESL pupils still describe reading as a hassle as they have lack interest in reading books written in target language, have limited vocabulary to help them understand the reading materials and are exposed to inconsistent emphasis about the importance of learning English.

Even though numerous studies have been conducted with regard to the effectiveness of Google Classroom in improving English language skills among students, there are only a handful of studies that are conducted to investigate the impact of Google Classroom to primary school pupils. Studies that are conducted by Nanthini (2020), Setiadi (2020), Englishtina (2019) and Mualim (2019) that are conducted to study the effect of the use of Google Classroom on ESL learners in recent years are all including college students as the participants of the study. Hence, this study is conducted to investigate the effect of Google Classroom in teaching reading

comprehension skills among primary school pupils. Kabilan (2007) mentions in the study regarding research conducted among primary school pupils in Malaysia that initial education in Malaysia is receiving serious attention from various stakeholders including politicians. The main reason behind this attention is because it is important that these young pupils have solid English language foundation as it will help them meet the knowledge-based society demands in the future.

Thus, actions must be taken to increase the pupils' interest in reading as reading is the most basic skill among the four English language skills. Pupils need to undergo and explore new learning approaches to change their mindset and attitude towards reading and learning generally. In introducing and familiarising the pupils with e-learning platforms such as Google Classrooms, pupils will get the chance to have the first-hand experience with a huge variety of reading materials that could ease their journey in learning English. This experience will help them analyse the structure of English and motivate them to have self-confidence in reading. Through Google Classroom, reading materials are upgraded with the aim to deliver information in a fun and attractive ways. Therefore, it is the researcher's aim to investigate the use of Google Classroom to teach English reading comprehension skills among primary school pupils.

1.4 Research Objectives

The aims of the study are as follows:

- (a) to investigate the effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching primary school pupils' reading comprehension skills
- (b) to explore the primary school pupils' most preferred media integrated in Google Classroom
- (c) to evaluate the pupils' attitude towards the usage of Google Classroom in their reading comprehension lessons

1.5 Research Questions

This research study attempts to answer the following questions:

- (a) Is there any significance difference between pre-test and post-test in control group and experimental group?
- (b) What is the most preferred media integrated in Google Classroom among primary school pupils?
- (c) What is the pupils' attitude towards Google Classroom?

1.6 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

1.6.1 Theoretical Framework

21st century educators are indulged with variety of technological advancements that could aid the effectiveness of their teaching practices. Thus, educators, especially teachers, need to utilise these advancements and adapt them to make their pedagogy more interactive and accessible for pupils. Google Classroom, the leading technological advancement for online learning is chosen as an online learning platform that has the potential to improve primary school pupils' reading comprehension skills in this research because according to Medlin (2014), Google Classroom allows active interactions between teachers and pupils as well as pupils and pupils. Based on Community of Inquiry (CoI) model for online learning environment developed by Garrison, Anderson & Archer (2000), Google Classroom is viewed as an online learning platform that supports active learning environment and community that promotes sharing of ideas and information exchange. These criteria suit perfectly with the concept of three distinct presences proposed in CoI model for online learning that allow effective online learning to occur which are cognitive, social and teaching presence.

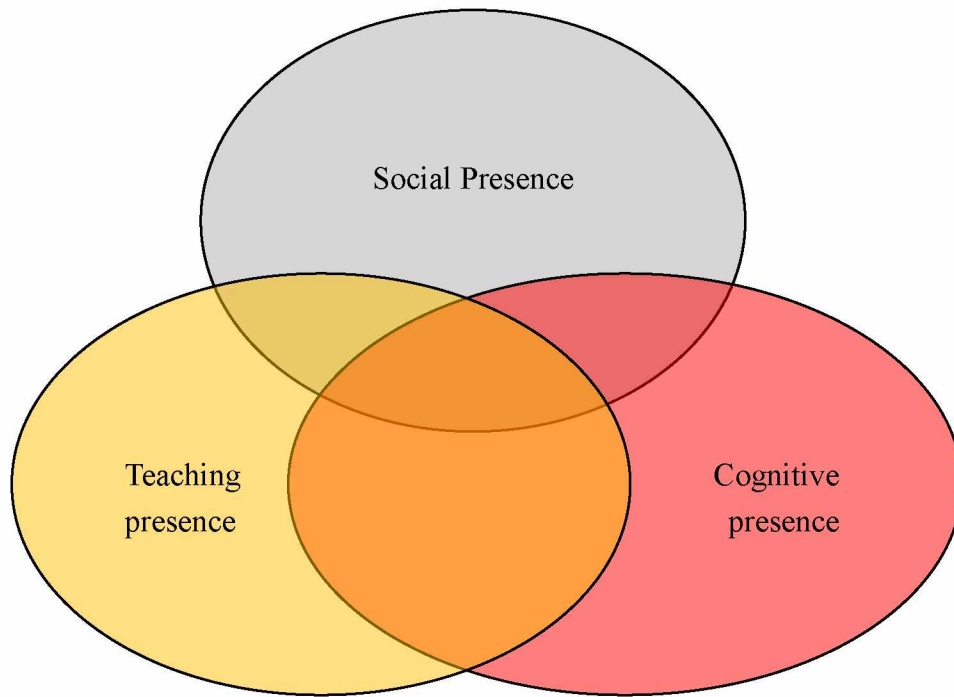


Figure 1.2 Community of Inquiry Model

Initial assumption that learning experience will achieve the learning outcome effectively through community learning experience is proposed by Lipman (1991). His assumption is consistent with Dewey's (1950) philosophy that proposes that education is a collaborative reconstruction of experience. In his philosophy, he claims that educational community of inquiry is capable of creating conditions for students to achieve higher order cognitive processing. This model also reaffirms Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory. As cited in Annamalai (2021), Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory asserts that learning takes place in an interactive and collaborative nature. Thus, though the comment and discussion sections in Google Classroom, pupils are free to exchange their opinion, debate and share their experience in order to enhance their comprehension of a text. These conditions create a rich and meaningful collaborative learning environment for the pupils to increase their reading comprehension skills.

Besides, this research also adopts Anderson's (2011) Online Learning Model. This model is developed based on Anderson's observation that online learning does not only evolve on text-based environment these days but also various forms of media.

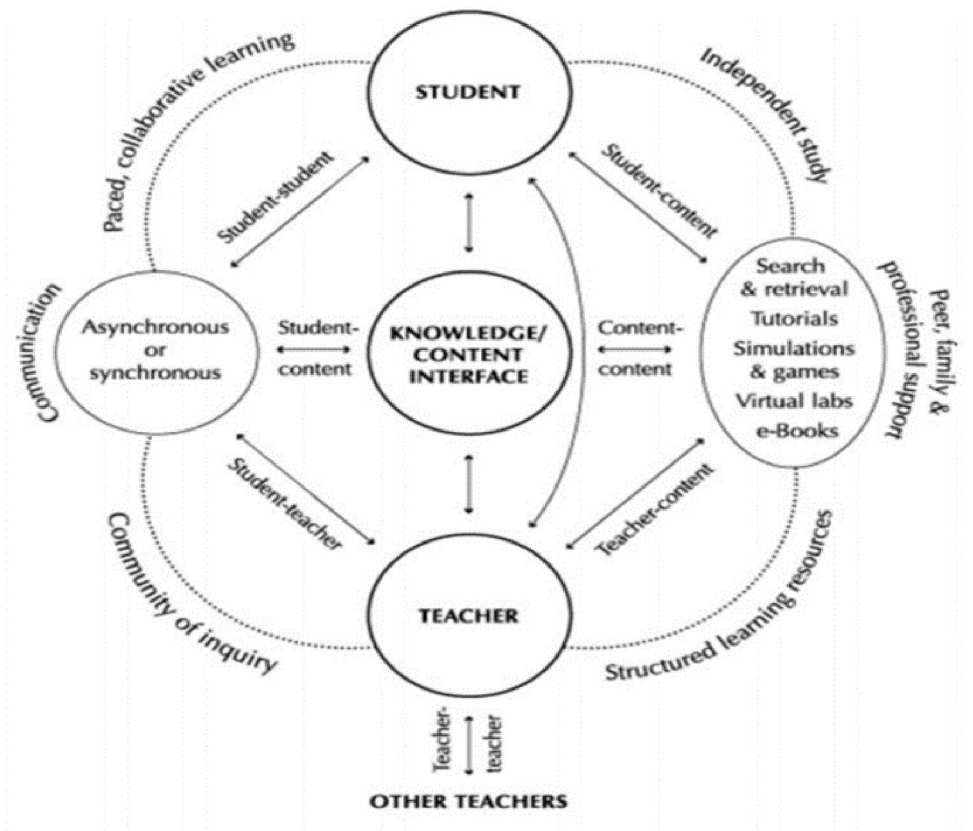


Figure 1.3 Online Learning Model

The figure above illustrates the instructional flow of Anderson's Online Learning Model. Similar to Garrison, Anderson & Archer's CoI model, this model recognizes the interactions that take place in the online platforms during synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. However, this model also highlights the function of independent learning that is permissible through the advancement of learning platforms these days. Moreover, through the figure, Anderson demonstrates online learning, through platform such as Google Classroom that authorizes interactions of the users (teachers and pupils) with their learning content (knowledge). The learning content included here comes in multiple formats that allow the pupils the freedom to choose the format that suits their learning styles.

The decision to accommodate Anderson's Online Learning Model in this study had been determined as this model discussed and highlighted the integration and important roles played by various media in empowering the effective learning to occur. Moreover, a recent study conducted in Malaysian educational environment by Abd

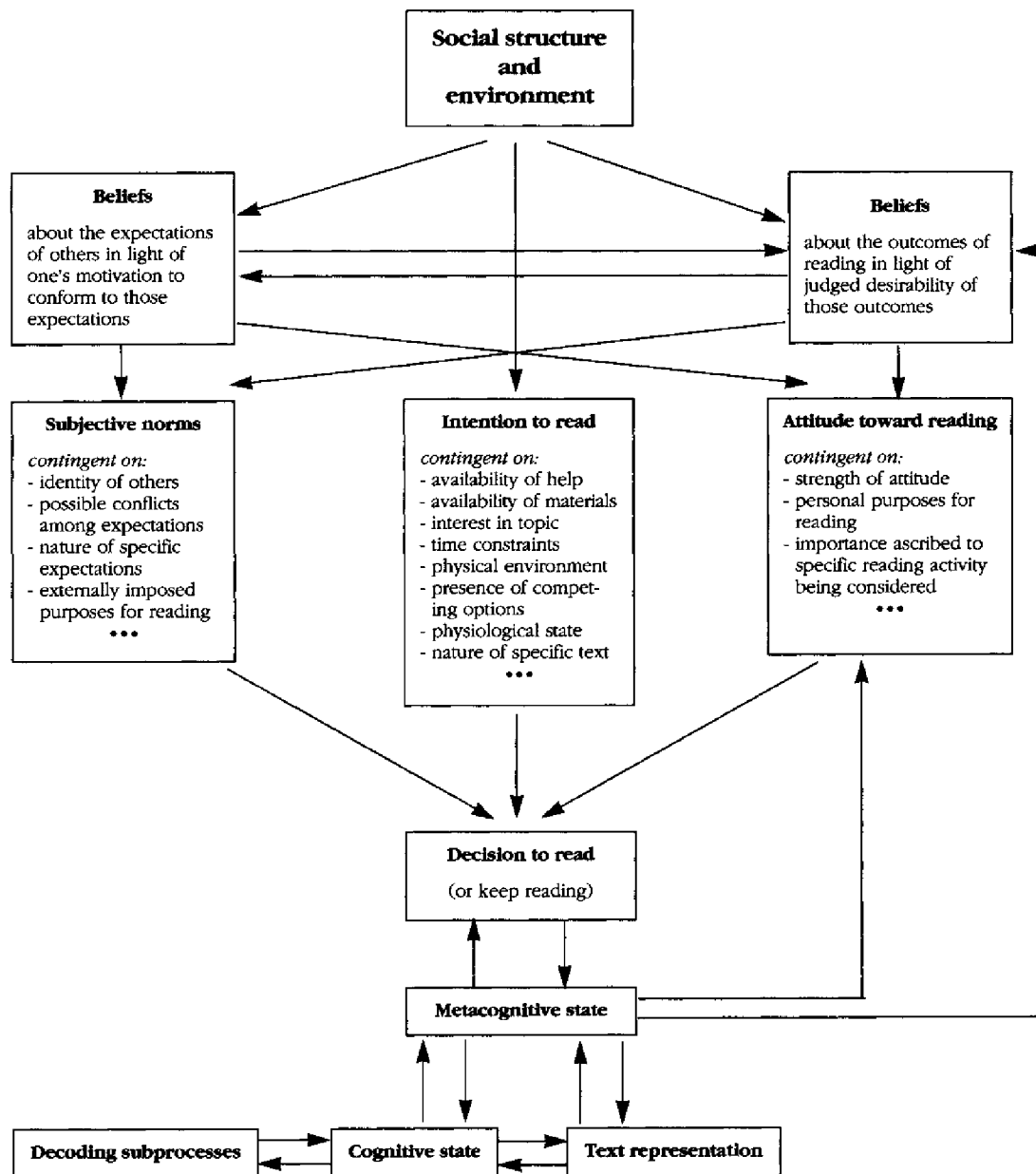
Majid and Abu Bakar (2020) has proven that the use of video has been efficiently capable to increase the effectiveness of reading lessons in Malaysian classroom. The result of this study shows that the integration of versatile media, such as video, audio and pictures give pupils an almost realistic experience and facilitated the process of linking the experience that they have faced through the media aid with main ideas and messages of their reading text. Based on the study mentioned before, the integration of media in reading comprehension lessons have proved their potential to enrich the pupils' background knowledge, progressively activated pupils' schemata and has helped Malaysian L2 pupils to contextualize the text better. Therefore, this research will also investigate pupils' most preferred media to be integrated in their online reading comprehension lessons.

Besides enabling pupils to work collaboratively and have variety of authentic and rich learning resources, Google Classroom is also easily accessible and available for gadgets such as laptops, tablets and handphones. Therefore, it is very unfortunate if teachers could not demonstrate and apply Google Classroom as the main learning platform in 21st century learning. Users could easily benefit from this application with just a click on their handphones or tablets. The application of Google Classroom has been proven by numerous research and one of the most recent ones is by Kaviza (2021). In the research, Kaviza has been able to demonstrate Malaysian pupils' positive attitude towards Google Classroom as the result of users' satisfaction and convenience upon using the application during their History lesson. Moreover, the participants' scores in their History subject have also increased as the result of their positive attitude towards this learning platform.

Hence, it is also one of the main aims of the study to illustrate the pupils' attitude towards the use of Google Classroom in improving Malaysian primary school pupils' reading comprehension skills. Findings of this study are hoped to contribute to the Malaysian education literature as proof that the use of Google Classroom should be promoted in Malaysian education system. In order to study the pupils' attitude towards Google Classroom, this research has adapted Model of Reading Attitude Acquisition proposed by McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth (1996). This model suggests that pupils' reading attitude evolves over time depending on the three factors that they emphasized

in their model which are normative belief (the way the pupil's peer view reading), belief about outcome of reading and specific reading experience.

This research uses the definition of attitude from Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) which describe attitude as a learned disposition on how to positively or negatively react to show an individual nature about reading. Positive reading comprehension performance could only be harvested from positive reading experience. This view is supported by Walberg and Tsai (1985) who state that pupils' attitude towards reading is one of the strongest motivations for impressive reading comprehension achievement. They also bring to the attention that one of the factors that contribute to pupils' positive attitude towards reading is that pupils must enjoy their reading comprehension lessons. Therefore, through the use of Google Classroom that integrates elements such as pictures, videos and sounds to aid the understanding of text for pupils, it is believed that pupils' reading comprehension experience will undoubtedly improve. Through the various authentic, meaningful and fun media that are integrated in the pupils' reading comprehension lessons, the pupils are hoped to enjoy their lesson more and develop positive attitude towards reading that could boost their reading comprehension performance.



From McKenna (1994). Reprinted by permission.

Figure 1.4 Model of Reading Attitude Acquisition

1.6.2 Conceptual Framework

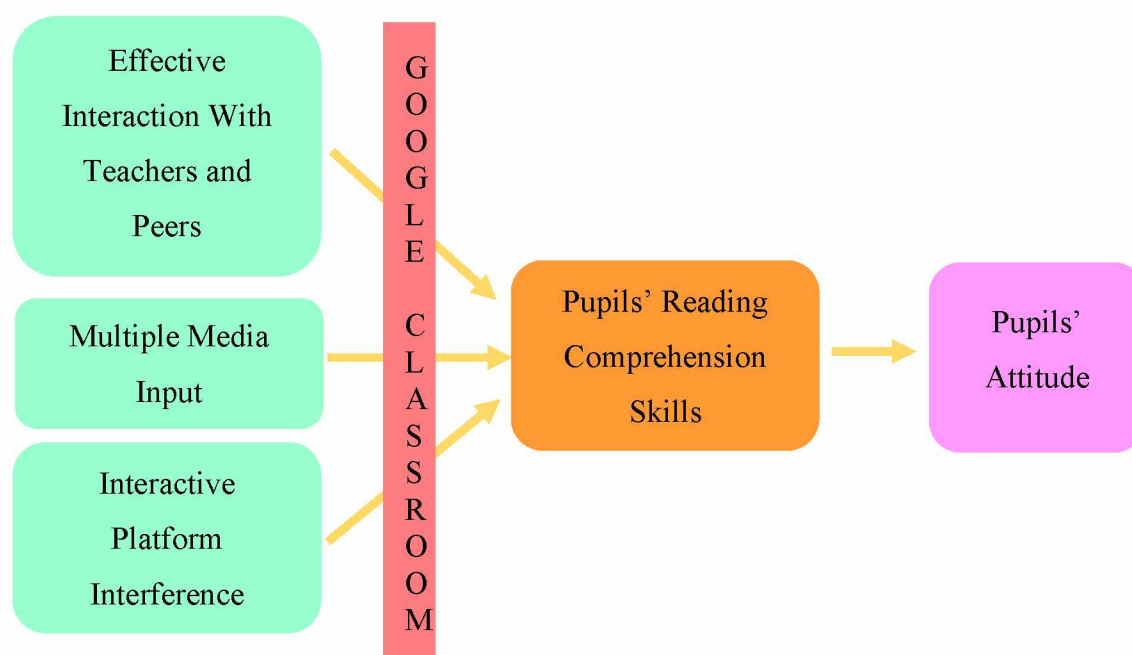


Figure 1.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.5 demonstrates the vision and concept of this study. The study was initially started due to the reading comprehension issues among the primary school pupils that the researcher encountered in the workplace. Hence, a huge diversity of approaches and methods were being tested to overcome this issue. A collection of research was analysed in order to seek for a method to improve the pupils' reading comprehension skills. In the pursue of the articles' analysis and collection, the researcher had seen a trend of the same method investigated in studies in the recent years in order to improve pupils' learning interest. The method was through the use of ICT. Due to the pandemic, the researcher had started to heavily involved in online learning using Google Classroom in order to obey the government's Movement Control Order (MCO).

Therefore, after a period of serious consideration, the researcher had decided to conduct this research due to the overwhelmingly positive work submission rate from the pupils throughout the MCO period. The main objective had been selected for this study which was to investigate the effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching primary school pupils' English reading comprehension skills. This objective had been selected due to the positive findings of Royer and Richards (2007), Slikhord, Gorihan

and Pazhakh (2013), Choi (2012), Bakar and Zubir (2014) and Muhammad Fajri Hamdy (2017) studies that showed the positive relations between ICT tools and pupils' reading comprehension skills.

The study was conducted due to the belief that the three main advantages of Google Classroom which were effective interactions between pupils and teachers and pupils and pupils, multiple media input to accompany the text and interactive Google Classroom interference were constructive enough to improve English reading comprehension skills among primary school pupils. The high interactivity and the easy accessibility of the learning method that were scarce in traditional face-to-face classroom were viewed as one of the solid reasons to develop pupils' positive attitude in technology and paved the way for more technological advancement in Malaysian education.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Qarqez and Ab Rashid (2017) declared in the findings of their study about reading comprehension difficulties among ESL pupils that the major reasons ESL pupils were facing problems in mastering English reading comprehension skills were because of the ambiguous words, unfamiliar vocabulary and limited time available in the classroom to cognitively process the text. Nevertheless, most vocabulary and abstract definitions could now be presented in many interesting ways that could assist pupils in modern technology-enabled classrooms. The advancement in technology has allowed the pupils of varied pace and needs to understand their reading text better. Moreover, as the world has been struck with the life-threatening pandemic, Covid-19, e-learning has been viewed as one of the alternatives which enable the pupils to learn and equip themselves with technological competency to meet the job industry standards and requirements for their future.

As the world revolves, the standard and requirements needed to enable pupils to compete and fulfil the demand of the career that they will choose in the future evolve too. Thus, Malaysian educational system needs to be vigilant and make the changes

necessary to emphasize and implement the use of ICT tools and ICT-friendly approaches in the curriculum. For a start, if there is any good possibility that this pandemic brings, it will be the increase in the implementation of e-learning as a platform to ensure Malaysian pupils do not fall behind in their education. These e-learning platforms allow pupils to pursue their lessons with the freedom to adjust the time and place according to their preference. Moreover, these e-learning platforms also enable pupils to ensure their own safety by isolating themselves and minimise contacts with people outside their houses.

However, there are vast choice of e-learning platforms in the market these days. One that has been recognised as the main e-learning platform in Malaysia is Google Classroom. This platform offers tools like Drive, Gmail, Docs, Forms, Sheets and Slides. These multiple tools have the potential to contribute for better understanding process of pupils as they fulfil the pupils' individual learning styles. Railean (2012) supported this statement by stating that Google Classroom provides the platform for pupils to gain and explore unlimited amount of learning resources online in a safe way as it is connected to multiple websites and are supervised by parents and teachers. In accordance with benefits listed above, stake holders in the education field need to grab this opportunity to increase Malaysian pupils' reading comprehension skills. Google Classroom is viewed as the most suitable platform to increase the primary school pupils' comprehension skills as teachers could supply variety types of educational resources in the form of versatile media that could ease their understanding of text.

Therefore, the main target of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching English reading comprehension skills of primary school pupils. This study also examines the most preferred media in Google Classroom from pupils' point of view. In addition to that, this study also provided detailed information about the pupils' attitude towards their reading comprehension lessons using Google Classroom. As the result, findings of the study could be used to reflect the suitability of Google Classroom to be used in Malaysian classroom especially to teach and learn English reading comprehension lessons.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

1.8.1 Google Classroom

Google Classroom is an online learning platform that provides users the freedom to use. Teachers can employ Google Classroom as one of the methods in their lessons as well as assigning pupils to attempt the task online through synchronous or asynchronous online lessons. According to Ocampo (2017), Google Classroom is an effective approach for learning. Through the research, Ocampo has proven that Google Classroom could provide materials from various sources and formats for variety of learning topics and make the task completion easy. The implementation of Google Classroom in lessons allow pupils to discuss, attempt and upload the task all in one platform. Due to the ease of use, multiple media formats that are included in the platform and the interactive collaborative work that it promotes, this platform is seen as the future of online education. Moreover, according to Mokhtar and Abu Karim (2021), Google Classroom also has managed to gather multiple proven literature that significantly prove pupils' acceptance upon the integration of this platform in their lessons. In their research, Mokhtar and Abu Karim has investigated the pupils' behaviour towards Google Classroom through the Movement Control Order (MCO) period. The research adopts Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model that was proposed by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis and Davis in 2003. The result of the study strengthens the findings of previous studies and proves that based on UTAUT model, pupils accept and welcome the use of Google Classroom to increase the efficiency of their lessons. Thus, in order to provide more reliable data to support the advancement of education, especially one that focuses on Malaysian primary education, this study has chosen Google Classroom among many e-learning platforms available due to the same reasons mentioned before. ESL primary school pupils are envisioned to have high acceptance to use this platform to improve their English reading comprehension skills as it would provide fun and meaningful learning experience for them.

1.8.2 Reading Comprehension Skills

According to Maasum and Maarof (2012), reading is the process that allows pupils to acquire new knowledge meanwhile comprehension is the essence of reading (Kirby 1988). In simpler terms, comprehension can also be defined as the understanding of the text by constructing the meaning and understanding the message conveyed. Thus, it is crucial that pupils master the meaning-driven reading skills or reading comprehension skills. Therefore, pupils need to be provided with materials and support that they need to spark their interest in reading and facilitate their reading comprehension process. Moreover, as ESL learners, these pupils need to be exposed to English reading materials as much as possible to increase their familiarity with the language and lessen their anxiety with this L2. As suggested by Marashi and Rahmati (2017), teachers could adapt the Super Six Comprehension Strategies (making connections, predicting, questioning, monitoring, visualizing and summarizing) which are included in Google Classroom platform to tackle pupils reading comprehension problems.

1.9 Scope of Research

This research had gathered 70 Year 4 participants from a primary school in Gelang Patah, Johor. Purposive sampling method had been employed in choosing participants of the study. Purposive sampling method is chosen in this research as the researcher choose the respondents for specific purpose (Cogen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). The participants will then be divided into two groups of 35 students. Both groups were consisted of students with similar reading ability. The respondents' reading ability was assessed based on their School Based Assessment and all the participants of this study are at Band 4. In another words, these participants had decent grasp of linear and non-linear phrases and sentences as well as able to sequence and make predictions about texts.

The data for this research on the other hand had been attained from reading comprehension tests, preferred media questionnaire and attitude questionnaire. These

data were collected to determine the effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching the primary pupils' reading comprehension skills and illustrate the pupils' attitude towards the usage of Google Classroom in their reading comprehension lessons. All of the information and data gathered were recorded for future use for analysis and further understanding. This study was also a short-term study that will take less than a year. This is due to limited resources considering multiple issues such as time, funds, and hassles. In the meantime, the accuracy of the information depends on the understanding, cooperation and honesty of the participants that will answer the test and questionnaire.

1.10 Summary of Chapter

This chapter presents the background information of the study that covers the background of study, problem statements, purposes of study, research and objectives of the study, study scope and significance of study. Overall, this study had reviewed the implementation of e-learning platform namely Google Classroom in Malaysian ESL classrooms.

In the next chapter, related studies will be discussed to associate with this study involving: i) Reading in L2 (L2) ii) L2 reading and difficulties iii) reading comprehension in L2 and iv) Google Classroom.

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