# Investigating The Esl Teachers' And Students' Attitude Towards The Use Of Computer In English Language Classroom

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers and students attitude and motivation towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. The respondents in this study are six English language teachers and thirty form two students from one of the rural school in Kota Tinggi district. The methodology used in this study is two sets of questionnaire. The data in this study have been analyzed using SPSS 12.0 software (Statistical Packages for Social Science) and presented in the form of frequency and percentage. The findings of this study illustrate that most of the teachers and students have a positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. Also, this study proves that students have high motivation when computers are used in an ESL classroom. Through this study, it could be concluded that the use of computer in an ESL classroom should be encouraged because it helps to motivate students and generate a positive attitude towards English language learning.

**Abstrak:** Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji sikap dan motivasi guru serta pelajar terhadap penggunaan komputer dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Dalam kajian ini, sample responden adalah enam guru Bahasa Inggeris dan tiga puluh pelajar tingkatan dua dari salah sebuah sekolah luar bandar di daerah Kota Tinggi. Metodologi yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah dua set borang soal selidik. Data yang diperolehi telah dikaji dan dianalisis menggunakan SPSS 12.0 (Statistical Packages for Social Science) dan ianya dipersembahkan dalam bentuk kekerapan dan peratusan. Keputusan kajian ini membuktikan bahawa guru dan pelajar menunjukkan sikap yang positif terhadap penggunaan komputer di dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Selain itu, kajian ini membuktikan bahawa pelajar menunjukkan tahap motivasi yang tinggi apabila komputer digunakan di dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Kesimpulannya, penggunaan komputer di dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran perlu digalakkan kerana ia membantu menyuntik motivasi kepada pelajar dan mewujudkan sikap yang positif terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris

*Keywords*: computer, ESL classroom, teachers and students attitude

## Introduction

The flexible information processing capability of computers makes them potentially useful in a wide variety of educational applications. They can facilitate teaching and learning at all levels, from preschool children mastering the alphabets to doctors learning new diagnostic techniques (Kleiman, 1984). They can be used in all subject-language, mathematics, history, science, vocational training, business education, music, art as well as reading and writing.

## Statement of Problem

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

A number of benefits for students related to the general use of technology in classrooms have been reported. These include increased motivation, improvement in self-concept and mastery of basic skills,

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

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

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

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

**Objective of the Study**

The study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1 To investigate teachers' attitude towards the use of computers in ESL classrooms.
2 To find out students' attitude on the use of computers in ESL classrooms.
3 To examine whether the use of the computers in an ESL classroom can motivate students to learn English.

**Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on the attitude of the English language teachers and students, and students' motivation to learn English through the use of computers in classroom. In order to conduct this study, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Penawar which is situated in the district of Kota Tinggi with 887 students' population was chosen. There are 6 English language teachers in the school. For this study, data will be collected via questionnaire from all 6 English teachers and 30 selected students.

**Significance of the Study**

Good computer facilities in a school may not promise good use of computers in an ESL classroom unless the objective of having computers in school is studied and implemented. This study intends to investigate the ESL teachers' and students' attitude towards using computer in ESL classroom. Apart from that, by conducting this study, students' motivation towards the use of computer in ESL classroom can be obtained. The findings of this study will reveal whether the use of computer in an ESL classroom can actually motivate learners and develop a positive attitude towards learning. English. If it contributes to a certain degree, the success of students in learning English, the money invested by the government in preparing the technology for schools is invaluable. Technology can be used to solve problems and shortcomings of the conventional method of teaching and learning.

This study could be shared by the Ministry of Education, schools and teachers. Gaining an insight into what motivates the students to learn English is invaluable in assisting the teachers and to provide the correct incentives to further promote the use of computers in an ESL classroom.

## Methodology

### Research Instrument

This research utilizes qualitative research methodology. The instrument that was used to collect the data is questionnaire. In order to collect data for this study, two different sets of questionnaire were prepared.

### Questionnaire

The qualitative method of data collection was through the use of a survey questionnaire. Lightbrown and Spada (1999:51) explain that "when researchers are interested in finding out whether an individual factor such as motivation affects second language learning, they will usually select a group of learners and give them a questionnaire to measure the type and degree of their motivation."

As far as this study is concerned, there are two sets of questionnaire. The first set of questionnaire is designed to investigate students' attitude and motivation towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. This set of questionnaire contains 44 items and they are divided into 4 sections. It was distributed to students in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Penawar. The questionnaire was based on a five point Likert Scale. The different sections of the questionnaire are: i) demographic information, ii) students' knowledge on their computer skills, iii) students' attitude towards the use of computer in English language classroom. iv) students' motivation towards the use of computer in ESL classroom.

The second set of questionnaire consists of 39 items. It was distributed to teachers in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Penawar. The questionnaire is divided into 5 sections and they are designed based on a five point Likert Scale. The different sections of the questionnaire are: i) demographic information, ii) teachers' knowledge on their computer skills, iii) computer facilities and courses provided by the school, iv) reasons for using computer and iv) attitude of teachers towards using computer in English language classroom.

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study are six teachers and thirty students from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Penawar. The students are selected randomly based on their English examination result. Students who are 14 years old with a grade of B were chosen. In March 2008, a total of 36 questionnaires were distributed to them. The same amount of questionnaires was returned on the same day.

### Research Procedure

Before the actual data collection period, a pilot study was conducted to assess the validity of the research instrument. A total of 10 students and 5 teachers from Sekolah Menengah kebangsaan MutiaraRini were involved in the pilot study.

### Administration of Questionnaire

For the actual study, the questionnaires were first distributed to thirty Form two students from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Penawar. They were provided with questionnaires during one session and

were guided with brief explanation on how to complete the questionnaires. After the respondents had completed the questionnaire, they returned them to the researchers for analysis.

As for the teachers, the questionnaires were distributed in the staff room. They were provided with a brief explanation on how to complete the questionnaires. Soon as respondents had completed the questionnaire, they returned them to the researchers

## Result

### Students' attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom

Table 1:        Students' attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom

| No | Statement | SA ∫ % | A ∫ % | U ∫ % | D ∫ % | SD ∫ % |
|----|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. | I like the use of computer in my English classes. | 13 43.3 | 17 56.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 2. | The use of computer to learn English in class is useful. | 4 13.3 | 26 86.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 3. | The use of computer to learn English in class is interesting. | 17 56.7 | 13 43.3 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 4. | The use of computer to learn English in class is enjoyable. | 18 60 | 12 40 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 5. | The use of computer to learn English in class is exciting. | 16 53.3 | 14 46.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 6. | The use of computer to learn English in class is effective. | 16 53.3 | 14 46.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 7. | The computer assisted exercises provided by the English teacher are related to the lesson. | 0 0.0 | 24 80 | 6 20 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 8. | I like the use of computers in learning English because of varieties of exercises provided. | 15 50 | 15 50 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 9. | I like the use of computers in learning English because of the huge amount of exercises. | 7 76.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 23 3.3 | 0 0.0 |
| 10. | I like the use of computer in English class because of the speed in getting feedback for the exercise. | 1 3.3 | 23 76.7 | 0 0.0 | 6 20 | 0 0.0 |
| 11. | I like the use of computers in learning English because of the colour, graphic, animation and layout of the courseware. | 24 80 | 6 20 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 12. | I gain more knowledge about the lesson through the use of computer in class. | 5 16.7 | 25 83.3 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. | I don't like the use of computer in my English classroom. | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 30 100 |
| 14 | The use of computer in the English classroom is a waste of time | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 30 100 |
| 15 | The use of computer does not improve my understanding on the lessons taught. | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 30 100 |
| 16 | I expect to learn well in computer assisted language class | 13 43.3 | 17 56.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 17. | I prefer to learn English through the use of the computer instead of the conventional whiteboard and marker. | 30 100 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 18. | Learning English using computer will definitely improve my English. | 1 3.3 | 29 96.7 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 |
| 19. | I do not expect to learn English well in a computer assisted classroom. | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 0 0.0 | 30 100 |

## Discussion

**Students' attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom**

In this study, there are 19 items in Section C that investigate students' attitude towards the use of computer in ESL classroom. A rating system is used to determine positive and negative attitude in the respondents. In positive statement, a positive attitude is depicted in the Strong Agree (SA) and Agree (A) responses from the respondent. A negative attitude is depicted in the Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) responses from the respondent. An U response depicts a neutral stand.

In general, the majority of respondents had a positive attitude towards the use computer in an ESL classroom. In response to the statement "I like the use of computer in my English classes", 13 of the respondents expressed their strong agreement, 17 of the respondents expressed their agreement. This shows that the majority (100%) of the respondents had a positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom.

In response to the statement "The use of computer to learn English in class is useful", 4 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 26 of the respondents expressed their agreement. It can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) believe that the use of computer to learn English in class is useful.

In response to the statement "The use of computer to learn English in class is interesting," 17 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 13 of the respondents expressed their agreement. This shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because majority of them (100%) believe that the use of computer to learn English in class is interesting.

In response to the statement "The use of computer to learn English in class is enjoyable," 18 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 12 of the respondents expressed their agreement. It can

be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) believe that the use of computer to learn English in class is enjoyable.

In response to the statement "The use of computer to learn English in class is exciting." 16 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 14 of the respondents expressed their agreement. It can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because majority of them (100%) believe that the use of computer to learn English in class is exciting.

In response to the statement "The use of computer to learn English in class is effective," 16 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 14 of the respondents expressed their agreement. It can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because majority of them (100%) believe that the use of computer to learn English in class is effective.

In response to the statement "The computer assisted exercises provided by the English teacher are related to the lesson," 24 of the respondent expressed their agreement and 6 of the respondents were undecided. It can be seen that majority of respondents them (80%) believe that the exercises provided by the English teacher are related to the lesson.

In response to the statement "I like the use of computers in learning English because of varieties of exercises provided," 15 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 15 of the respondents expressed their agreement. This shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) like the use of computers in learning English because of varieties of exercises provided

In response to the statement "I like the use of computers in learning English because of the huge amount of exercises," 7 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement meanwhile 23 of the respondents expressed their disagreement. It can be seen that respondents have negative attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because majority of them (76.7%) dislike the use of computers in learning English because of huge amount of exercises provided

In response to the statement "I like the use of computer in English class because of the speed in getting feedback for the exercise." A respondent expressed their strong agreement, 23 of the respondents expressed their agreement and 6 of the respondent expressed their disagreement. However, this shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because majority of them (80%) like the use of computers in learning English because of the speed in getting feedback for the exercise.

In response to the statement "I like the use of computers in learning English because of the colour, graphic, animation and layout of the courseware," 24 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 6 of the respondents expressed their agreement. This shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) like the use of computers in learning English because of the colour, graphic, animation and layout of the courseware.

In response to the statement "I don't like the use of computer in my English classroom." the entire respondents (30) expressed their strong disagreement. Again, it can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) disagreed with the statement "I don't like the use of computer in my English classroom."

In response to the statement "The use of computer in the English classroom is a waste of time." again the entire respondents (30) expressed their strong disagreement. This shows that respondents have positive

attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) do not feel that the use of computer in the English classroom is a waste of time.

In response to the statement "The use of computer does not improve my understanding on the lessons taught." the entire respondents (30) expressed their strong disagreement. It can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) believe that computer does improve their understanding on the lessons taught.

In response to the statement "I expect to learn well in computer assisted language class," 13 of the respondent expressed their strong agreement and 17 of the respondents expressed their agreement. This shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) expect to learn well in computer assisted language class

In response to the statement "learning English using computer will definitely improve my English." A respondent strong agreed and 29 of the respondents expressed their agreement. It can be seen that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) believe that learning English using computer will definitely improve my English.

In response to the statement "I do not expect to learn English well in a computer assisted classroom." again the entire respondents (30) expressed their strong disagreement. This shows that respondents have positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom because all of them (100%) expect to learn English well in a computer assisted classroom.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' and students' attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom. This study was conducted in one of the rural schools in Kota Tinggi. A total of 30 students and 6 teachers were involved in the survey.

The finding of this study proves that both students and teachers have a positive attitude towards learning English through the use of computer in classrooms. They believe that the use of computer in an ESL classroom makes the lesson interesting, exciting and effective. Besides that, it can be seen that students are highly motivated when computers are used to teach English language. Among the reasons are the features of the computer and courseware itself. Both teachers and students feel that using computers made their English lesson interesting and at the same time students could improve their computer and language skills.

It also can be concluded that most of the teachers and students have basic knowledge on computer skills. Most of them know how to handle fundamental computer operation skill, transfer information, use the word processor packages and handle a courseware.

Although teachers and students have a positive attitude towards the use of computer in an ESL classroom, computers could not be used effectively because there are very limited computer access and equipments in schools. Apart from that, teachers agree that limited computer knowledge or skills discourage the frequent use of computers in an ESL classroom.

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