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THE EFFECT OF CM-PSS TRAINING TOWARDS THE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS AMONG ESL LEARNERS

WONG MEE JUAN



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TESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN
EDUCATION (EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY)
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FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
SULTAN IDRIS UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

2020



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KESAN LATIHAN KEMAHIRAN PENGEJAAN FONETIK BERASASKAN KOMPUTER (CM-PSS) TERHADAP KESEDARAN FONOLOGI DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR ESL TAHUN DUA

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan kesan latihan kemahiran pengejaan fonetik berasaskan komputer (CM-PSS) terhadap kesedaran fonologi dalam kalangan pelajar bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua (ESL) tahun dua. Objektif kajian ini adalah: (1) untuk mengkaji keberkesanan latihan kemahiran pengejaan fonetik berasaskan komputer (CM-PSS) dalam meningkatkan kesedaran fonologi dalam kalangan pelajar Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua (ESL) tahun dua melalui perbandingan dengan pendekatan pembelajaran konvensional; (2) untuk mengkaji bagaimana CM-PSS mempengaruhi motivasi dan sikap untuk mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua terhadap latihan CM-PSS; (3) untuk mengkaji hubungan antara motivasi dan sikap pelajar dalam mempelajari bahasa berkenaan terhadap pendekatan CM-PSS dengan kesedaran fonemik. CM-PSS adalah dibangunkan menggunakan model E-pembelajaran Lebrun sebagai kerangka teras. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kuasi eksperimen melibatkan 30 orang pelajar ESL tahun dua yang dibahagikan secara rawak kepada satu kumpulan eksperimen ($n=15$) dan satu kumpulan kawalan ($n=15$). Soal selidik *Penilaian Kesedaran Fonologi*, *Soal Selidik Sikap*, dan *Strategi Motivasi Pembelajaran* digunakan untuk mengukur pemboleh ubah bersandar dalam kajian ini. Ujian- t sampel bebas digunakan untuk menentukan keberkesanan latihan CM-PSS dalam meningkatkan kesedaran fonologi. Hasil dapatan ujian- t [$t(28) = 9.26, p < 0.05$] menunjukkan kesan CM-PSS positif terhadap kesedaran fonologi pelajar. Dalam aspek motivasi dan sikap pelajar untuk mempelajari bahasa berkenaan, hasil dapatan ujian- t menunjukkan motivasi pelajar [$t(28) = 14.17, p < 0.05$] dan sikap [$t(28) = 27.98; p < 0.05$] meningkat selepas mereka didedahkan kepada latihan CM-PSS. Tambahan pula, data memberi gambaran bahawa hubungan antara motivasi terhadap latihan CM-PSS dengan kesedaran fonemik adalah signifikan ($r = 0.82, p < 0.05$). Sebagai kesimpulan, CM-PSS merupakan satu medium yang berkesan yang dapat diaplikasikan bagi meningkatkan kesedaran fonologi dalam kalangan pelajar ESL. Sebagai implikasi, guru bahasa Inggeris boleh melaksanakan latihan CM-PSS untuk meningkatkan motivasi, sikap dan kesedaran fonologi pelajar ESL.

Kata Kunci: Kemahiran Pengejaan Fonetik Berasaskan Komputer (CM-PSS), Kesedaran Fonologi, Pelajar Bahasa Inggeris Sebagai Bahasa Kedua (ESL)





ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of computer-mediated phonetics spelling skills (CM-PSS) training towards the phonological awareness among year-two English as a second language (ESL) learner. The objectives of the study were: (1) to examine the effectiveness of computer mediated-phonetics spelling skills (CM-PSS) training in promoting phonological awareness among English as a second language (ESL) learners in comparison with the conventional learning approach; (2) to examine how CM-PSS training has affected ESL learners' learning motivation and attitude towards CM-PSS training; and (3) to determine the relationship between such learners' language learning motivation and attitude towards CM-PSS training with their phonological awareness. The CM-PSS training was developed using Lebrun E-learning model as its underpinning framework. This study used a quasi-experimental design involving 30 year-two ESL learners who were randomly assigned to an experimental group ($n=15$) and a control group ($n=15$). *Phonological Awareness Assessment, Attitude, and Motivated Strategies for Learning* questionnaire was used to measure the dependent variable in this study. The independent sample t -test was used to determine the effect of CM-PSS training in promoting phonological awareness. The result of t -test [$t(28) = 9.26, p < 0.05$] showed that the positive effect of the CM-PSS on the learners' phonological awareness. In terms of the learners' language learning motivation and attitude, the results of the t -tests showed that the learners' motivation [$t(28) = 14.17, p < 0.05$] and attitude [$t(28) = 27.98; p < 0.05$] have improved after they were exposed to the CM-PSS. In addition, the data illustrated that the relationship between the learners' language learning motivation towards CM-PSS training with their phonemic awareness was significant ($r = 0.82, p < 0.05$). In conclusion, CM-PSS is an effective medium that can be used by English teachers to enhance phonological awareness among ESL learners. This implicates that English teachers can implement CM-PSS training to improve ESL learners' motivation, attitude, and phonological awareness.

Keywords: Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skill (CM-PSS), Phonological Awareness, English-as-Second-Language (ESL) Learners



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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Language
CM-PSS	Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skills
DSKP	Standard-Based Curriculum and Assessment Document
ELE	English Language Learning
ESL	English as Second Language
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
KSSR	Standard of Curriculum for Primary School
L2	English as Second Language Learner
LINUS	Literacy and Numeracy Screening
LINUS LBI	Literacy and Numeracy Screening for English Literacy
MEB	Malaysia Education Blueprint
MSLQ	Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire
MoE	Ministry of Education
PAA	Phonological Awareness Assessment
SBELC	Standard-Based Curriculum for English Language Education
SK	National School

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1.1 Introduction

The language background of Malaysians is very related to its historical and education background and until now English language is still continually taught as compulsory language in all vernacular national schools from even Standard One to Form Five for a long period of eleven years. Though Malaysian education system had encountered few evolutions, English is standstill in a crucial state to be used as teaching and learning language as well as language of communication as particularly in urban areas. Since





the English language has been used and spoken widely in Malaysia in decades, it has indirectly become the second language of the country.

In parallel to the globalisation and the rapid change of world, there is no limit to connect with the world and it becomes more obvious that the impact of the use of the English Language as dominating international trading language. The significance of the English Language is also started to become a concerned issue of the government and has conformed English as second language status as stated in Article 152 (Nor Hashimah, 2008). There is no denying that nowadays the Internet and Information is dominating the world. In order to be able to compete with others and embarked for this global trend, there is no way to reject the importance of English language as it is the lingua franca of the Internet. Subsequently, the special English language courses and programmes in Malaysia be the highest demand to be equipped and attended by the learners. It is also not surprising the English language is being offered by many of the higher educational institutions, as a programme by itself and even as an advanced subject to enter undergraduate programmes offered by the local institutions as well as institutions abroad.

The very limited use of the English language that eventually English language proficiency among Malaysians had been weakened. As the cause to the only use a single language especially over-dependency on mother tongue, Malaysians is vulnerable to the global changes. The governs also realised that Malaysians may not be able to meet the challenges of globalisation and would be left behind if they are with low proficiency





in English. Hence, a rigorous change in language policy was in certain to equip the English language as basic for the better future Malaysia.

To meet the drastic change, the new blueprint embedded particular aspect to welcome a different from the previous academic blueprint to meet the arising demands and future requirements with a purpose to have an all-encompassing transformation for the education system in Malaysia (Othman & Mohamad, 2014; Grapragasem, Krishnan & Mansor, 2014; Fadzil, Latif & Azzman, 2015). This is to ensure that Malaysians equipped themselves with future success criterion especially in English language improvement to enhance level of competency and keep in pace with today's competitive world. One of the languages of concern in parallel in the transformation for the education system is enhancing the English language proficiency among Malaysians to enable them equip with better communication skills to be competed with others in this globalization.

Every child should acquire this language as well as work well and practice this language in their life when they leave school. As Ma'wa and Nooreiny (2015) stated "the role of English could be categorized into three themes which would be: 1) inevitable, 2) beneficial for both studies, career advancement and many various ways, 3) important but problematic especially for second language learners and those who are of lower proficiency level". Thus, the basic skills in promoting the proficiency level should be possessed among every child to ensure they are able to listen and respond well by using the English language as communicative tool.





The changing in an education system is consuming time in particularly the Malaysian education system is in the midst of an intense period of transformation. The 21st century teaching method especially integrated the teaching with technology and students-centred learning yields a positive gain with better outcomes. Intentionally, it is recommended the utilisation of 21st century teaching method among the teachers has been stressed by the Ministry of Education in the Blueprint 2013.

The implementation of the English Language Roadmap 2015-2025 is one of the subtle aspects in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 to have a reformation especially in English Language education in the country. The main purpose of this reformation is to ensure every child at minimum operationally equipped themselves with proficient in English as the international language of communication (Blueprint of Education 2013-2025). This implies that once the children are leaving school, they operationally should be able to do well in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language environment.

1.2 Background of the Study

The changes are the latest trend in the education system in the global as of the dynamic of education to give way to the innovation. As Thirusanku and Melor (2012) stated English is commonly used as spoken and as second language among ex-colonies





of the United Kingdom or the United States which includes Malaysia. Malaysia is a country with a variety of culture and even multi-language used among Malaysians. Hence, the aim of Malaysia is to reach an equilibrium between national and international necessity and challenges in an adopting bilingual system of education through linguistic educational policies (Gill & Kirkpatrick, 2013).

The implementation of English as second language (ESL) in learning and teaching programmes at the elementary school level has started many years and the English language education (ELE) is passing through three decades and there are some initiatives to reform the ELE to the aim of arising realities (Hazita Azman, 2016). As multi-racial in Malaysia, each ELE reformation has encountered a lot of challenges as it is introduced with reason of the circumstance of the multilingual and plural socio-political in the country (Azman, 2016; Lie, 2010). All the factors and necessity for everyone's beneficial to be examined, as consequence that the new Primary School Standards-Based Curriculum for English Language Education (SBELC) had been introduced in 2011, which involved Year Three pupils to sit for the Literacy and Numeracy Screening for English Literacy (LINUS LBI) focusing on their literacy performance to meet the requirements for present need (Hazita Azman, 2016). On the account to meet the future requirements, the English teachers and the young learners should be ready to involve in the new curriculum.

As nationwide tensions on the issues over the English language performance aforementioned, there are initiatives of Minister of Education and the government to be implemented include as Musa, Khoo and Hazita (2012) stated the Integrated English Syllabus for primary schools introduced in 1982 which employed with the Communicative Language Teaching approach. Musa et al. (2012) also found that the



halo effects of this reform differed from the results there was mismatch between syllabus objectives and Communicative Language Teaching principles with the actual classroom practices and language assessment in teaching of the communicative way.

The onset of globalisation, Selvaraj (2010) emphasised that evolution in ICT and portable information has underpinned the significance of English as “the language of globalisation, internet, trade and science”. To incorporate the advancement in ICT and help advancement in improving the language learning, MoE had adopted SMART School approach (Mirzajani et al. 2016). However, there are few major causes to justify the teachers are not prepared to adopt and integrate ICT in their teaching likes time constraints, inadequacy of computer literacy and hardware, technical malfunctions, lack of instructional design and inefficient ICT infrastructure (Ismail, Bokhare, Azizan & Azman, 2013; Alazzam, Bakar, Hamzah & Asimiran, 2012; Selvaraj, 2010, Mirzajani, Mahmud, Ayuh & Luan, 2015; Ismail, Azizan & Azman, 2013).

As a result, the new Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 was launched in 2012 including English Literacy in the Literacy and Numeracy Screening (LINUS) as an additional impact on English language education at the elementary school level (MEB, 2014). According to GoM (2012), the LINUS programme stressed there is no any exclusion of all the elementary school children is literate in Bahasa Melayu and not less than 90% of the children is literate in English language when they ended year three programme. Extended from the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB), is launching the English Language Education Roadmap for Malaysia 2015-2025 with aligning an international standard, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aims to be a benchmark to improve the level of education in the country to international standards.



As aforementioned, CEFR as reference framework was used as standard curriculum in teaching and learning English language that has been adopted by many countries as an international framework for language teaching, learning and assessment (DSKP, 2018). As stated in DSKP English Year 3 (2018), “the English Language Curriculum for Primary Schools aims to equip pupils with basic language skills to enable them to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts that are appropriate to the pupils’ level of development.” Hence, phonics is a systematic approach to help pupils to learn to identify, distinguish sounds, build the sounds and further learn to read through matching corresponding sounds and letters via the skill of blending and segmenting the sounds. The phonics learning was underpinned in the SBELC to ensure pupils in Year 1 will already be able to read in fundamental to identify and recognise listed letter sounds (DSKP, 2018).



The foreseeable transformation in Malaysia’s English language teaching and learning is broad and complex. Consequently, many initiatives have been developed as part of the reform. In this sub-chapter, there are three domains which are extended to the exploration of this study: (a) English language education in Malaysia; (b) challenges in learning English language; and (c) the language learning environment.

1.2.1 English Language Education in Malaysia

It is important to know how to speak and write English in today’s interconnected world. Education plays the significant role in striving towards economic rapid growth and





national development. Especially today's global economy, the success of nations basically depends on knowledge, skills, and competencies of its people. Language is the bridge to communicate with the world especially the high frequency language used, English. In Malaysia, English language is a mandatory language to be taught in schools to allow them to meet the demands or one of the requirements to be more competency.

In Malaysia, every child in preschool level has started to be in touch with the English language and continues to be taught as a mandatory subject in the national curriculum at the elementary with range of age of 6-12-years-old, secondary school with range of age of 13-17-years-old, and tertiary levels of education with range of age of 18 years and above. Regarding to the Malaysian education system, English is set as second language (L2) (Gill, 2002). In parallel with the education policy, English language is mandatory subject at all levels of education and its existence is indicated as “side by side with strong indigenous languages, wide use in speaking, and intra-national outstanding, sometimes official functions, as the language of politics, the media, jurisdiction, higher education, and other such domains” (Thirusanku & Melor, 2012). In Malaysia with plural society, the learners are commonly bilingual, trilingual or even multilingual, especially the learners in different vernacular school who have their own mother tongue.

English is now commonly used as spoken and written language nationwide. With the rapid growth in the usage of Internet encompassing in all fields of human life, including research and education, marketing and trade as well as entertainment and hobbies (Rghioui & Oumnad, 2017; Wellman & Haythornwaite, 2008). Hence, this also





signify the important to know how to use the Internet services with English language as terminology. The government has also risen their attention on the significance of the English language to implement new curriculum.

English as spoken language and written language used by many people around the world and now, in the parallel usage of Internet grows rapidly in all fields of human life as aforementioned, it becomes more important to acquire as to use the knowledge language in the Internet services in English. As the rising of the significance of the English language, the government has stood up with the implementation of new curriculum to improve the English language learning with the purpose to advocate the younger generation towards being equipped themselves with better competency in the global community.



There are a few points in the MEB including to expand the LINUS programme includes English literacy, develop related skills among English language teachers, and make English language SPM paper a mandatory pass as well as to provide more opportunities for younger generation to expose to the language (Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, Shift 2). These implies the significance of English language to pledge every child is proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English language as well as the young children are also encouraged to learn additional language.

Overview the points, we can summarise the linguistic educational policies are focussing the fundamental of language learning especially they include the English





literacy in the remedial programme to ensure every child is proficient in more than one language. With having a firm linguistic basic, the language will be predominated by the learners in the language learning process. Findings from Darmi and Albion (2013), the degree of proficiency of the students vary immensely even there are English teaching classes both in primary school and in university and its influential factor is “language anxiety”. To overcome the “language anxiety” is to develop their fluency from the fundamental.

In English language learning, every learner should have a well grasp in the skills in the phonological awareness, it's the basic key to develop deeper. Results found that the development in awareness of phonological units of speech especially rhyme and alliteration in early stage of literacy have significant effects for early reading among children (Fielding-Barnsley & Hay, 2012). The findings show that the phonological awareness is the indicator of reading difficulties for early reading. Hence, if a child had been identified as having difficulty in reading, we could search a corresponding way to help them out from the reading difficulty.

Overall, the fundamental of language is important to be attained in early reading level to reduce the reading difficulties among the learners to develop their language in advance. Aforementioned the reformation of education system included the introduction of the SBELC aims to give emphasis on English literacy skills in particularly to advocate the communication skills as core elements in the language curriculum. As stated in Curriculum Development Division (2011), the SBELC stressed on basic reading literacy, phonics, penmanship, language arts and higher order thinking



skills as well as included critical and creative thinking skills as well as reasoning skills. The main shift in this new curriculum especially for the SBELC is in parallel to the standard British English which is the preferred choice to underline the skills in pronunciation, grammar and spelling at the early lower primary level.

With the implementation of LINUS assessment, the problem of the students who have difficulty on reading, writing or speaking in English will be identified and addressed specifically right from the early stage of literacy development level. This screening is important as a diagnostic tool for the students from rural areas and vernacular schools in particularly as most of them are live in an environment with adequacy and even limited exposure to English language either at home or around the schools (Hazita, 2003, Sulaiman et al., 2015). As consequence, promoting especially the most basic phonological awareness for English language learner will ensure the learners to acquire correct spelling and pronunciation from the early year and able to develop further to achieve high proficiency in English language.

1.2.2 Challenges in Learning English Language

After independence of Malaysia in 1957, Malay language was declared as the national language and the importance of English language comes after as second most important language in Malaysia until 1970, the beginning of implementation of National Education Policy gradually converted English medium schools to national schools and



Malays language naturally as the medium of instruction in the schools (Gill, 2004). It can be clearly seen that the significance of Malay language as main subject should be learning in the national primary schools and one-year language transition class attached to Malay medium secondary schools (Darmi & Albion, 2013). English was also taught as second language in schools with the common content syllabi were still enacted but the opportunity of Malaysia learners at schools to the English language exposure is declined after the switch between the languages (Darmi & Albion, 2013).

In 2003, the Ministry of Education had risen their attention again to reintroduce the English as the medium of instruction as to increase the global competency especially English language as instruction language for Science and Mathematics in the beginning Year 1 in primary school and Form 1 in secondary school. The policy had passed through nine years, in 2012 the English as medium instruction had reverted to Bahasa Melayu. This reversal is on account of the multilingual ethnic in particularly the fear of the endangerment of mother language among the Malays and Chinese.

In particular, the vernacular schools even the national school (SK) used mother tongue or Malays as medium of instruction. Students find its difficulty to practice the language within non-English speaking environment and even outside the classroom, as the society communicates in their native local language. In the Broken-English speaking environment also, the learners will have difficulties with the correct pronunciation. When a teacher as the knowledge supplier makes incorrect pronunciation of English words and it will end up with transferring the wrong





phonological rules from their first language into their English speech will bring the problems with pronunciation (Margaret, 2013).

With the process of globalisation, the educational environment in the classroom has drastically changed and it can be clearly seen in the classroom nowadays. The dramatic changes were also one of the positive elements of nature as it brought a huge change in education with the modern teaching paradigms. The modern teaching paradigms focus on learners-centred, cooperative learning, the fluency and understanding and the implementation of technology. The implementation of the modern teaching ways has brought friendlier and more comfortable classroom for learners to make mistakes and learn on it (Shulgina & Sagarin, 2017). In contrary, the condition in our country in particularly with limited computer literacy, inefficient ICT infrastructure, technical malfunctions, lack of instructional design resulting in irrelevant content and insufficient hardware caused the inefficient in adoption and utilisation of teaching with ICT. This is leading the failure of adaptation in the changes of educational trend nowadays.

In recent years, the circumstance and debates have risen surround parents as the Malaysian Education System was under their expectation as well as the employer have also voiced their concerns regarding to the system's ability to sufficiently prepare the young generation to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Hence, since 2013, Malaysia has experienced part of 11 shifts in education reform as providing equality to access to quality education of an international standard, ensuring every child is proficient in dual languages, developing Malaysians who are values-driven,



transforming teaching into the profession of choice, leveraging ICT and empowering state and district education department to customise solutions based on needs. These changes are to believe adequately preparing young Malaysians as stakeholders for well-equipping themselves to meet the challenges of 21st century.

The focus on going parallel with the international standard used nationwide which is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to stress out to consolidate the foundation and structural changes to help improve the standard of English in the country as well as focussing on growing learners can interact in any language, especially in English (Robinson, Galaczi, Docherty, King & Khalifa, 2014). Indeed, CEFR as the framework of reference is an element in MEB aims to advocate the level of education in the country and sets up a series of teaching paradigm tailored the learner-centred approach aligned to the 21st century learning.

Overall, the reform of education is a must to ensure can follow the global step and the stakeholders are competitive on the worldwide platform even there are some challenges or obstacles need to be conquered. The fundamental English language proficiency which is focused on the development of phonological awareness among the second language learner with the aid of technology, it is important to understand the effectiveness in promoting the phonological awareness among the L2 and even their language learning motivation.



1.2.3 Language Learning Environment

In parallel with the process of globalisation, English language has become a dominating international language in this 21st century. In contrary, the competency of proficiency in English among local graduates has been doubting and speculating in controversy with negative comment. Subsequently, as a survey by the EF English Proficiency Index (as cited in NST, 2017) showed Malaysia is ranked high among 70 countries with high English proficiency but the results had surprised many who feel that the level of proficiency of the language is still need to be improved among the students here. In particularly, non-English native speakers or the speaking environment with broken English brought a huge influence in the learning process of English language.



There are a lot of reasons challenge the successful of establishing a conducive environment for learning English language which are including the school resources, class size, quality of teachers, and attendance of learners (John & Ehow, 2011). These factors had brought a certain impact on the learning and teaching process of English. There are also some smaller effect size issues that are seen as subtle such as family background, individual, environmental, aspirations and expectation (Khattab, 2014; Marjoribanks, 2002) besides the general problems lead to English proficiency. Since in the conventional classroom had been utilised in decades and teachers have no initiative to make a change, students are also being demotivated and lack of engagement in the learning process as the way of delivering the knowledge is boring and the teaching approach utilised in the classroom is passive.



As Hazita (2006) mentioned, Malaysia should be intentionally riding on scientific and technological advancements to keep on pace with the wave of globalisation and reach the reality to develop globally competitive citizenry for the new era. The attention on the necessity to improve English language proficiency among Malaysians in the era of advent of technology and the wave of globalisation aims to enable them to be competitively adapt and perform 21st century skills. As interpreted in P21 (2017), the 21st century skills are essentially e-literacy skills equipped and acquired by all the members of the networked society, including a series of “higher order skills, abilities, and learning dispositions” for its success. As aforementioned, English language is the dominant language in the scientific and technological area, and apparently English language is needed to be acquired in prior to be competent especially in understanding English scientific texts.

English language proficiency is vitally important in parallel with the advancement in technology and globalisation especially for the developing countries, likely in Malaysia, as the terminology in technology services or knowledge-based information are in English. However, in the context of pluralism in Malaysia, mother tongue is the potential obstacle in the development of English language. To strike a balance between nationalism sentiments and socio-economic aspirations to encounter the current global competitiveness, the MoE has launched the MEB in 2012 and has a soft landing to implement another new Primary School Standard-Based Curriculum or KSSR beginning in 2013.



As report of Hazita Azman (2016) stated, the consequence from the issue with lacking of developing the English language in the early literacy developmental stage, there are more than 35% of the primary school children are below the minimum competency level after exiting year Six. The worrying situation stimulates the introduction of the LINUS programme in 2010 to have screening and identifying students who encountered difficulties in literacy development will be given remediation in Bahasa Melayu, Maths and English literacies from years One to Three. This modular approach adopted also change the conventional teaching ways to be more learner-centred and allows the teachers to facilitate differential learning need rather than focussed only on the outcomes of academic and cognitive achievement and ensure the equality that every child will not be left behind to receive formal education with acquiring the literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (MoE, 2015).



The students will experience authentic and meaningful learning experiences across a variety of real contexts as there are involving in the education reformation as the reform stressed on the constructivism learning theory perspective on education. In parallel with the shift and orientation of MEB and SBELC to encourage the integration of ICT to facilitate learning help to advocate student-centred learning as well as the reach-out activities and interactions with outside of the learning community to create a meaning learning context to develop knowledge (Hazita Azman, 2016).

In line MEB, the Parent-School engagement programmes is one of the initiatives to socialise the students learning English in a meaningful and real context. The involvement of parents and community in schools help to enrich the English





language learning environment as well as helping them to develop integrative motivation to acquire the language in its non-native context (MoE, 2015). In particular, the students from rural areas and multilingual home environments, where access to the target language may be limited will take advantages under the new curriculum which advocating integration of ICT to facilitate learning and leading them learning language in a social constructivism environment and encouraging self-learning within the relevant and purposeful learning environment.

Motivation is subtle element in acquiring a second language refers to the effort and striving to learn the language with positive attitude (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2016). Most of the study on this topic related to motivation in elevating the level of ESL learners' achievement has been conducted (Johnson, Johnson & Shin, 2014; Ghonsooly & Elahi, 2010; Inal, Evin & Saracoglu, 2005; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). It is believed to be a factor to help move people towards achieving their goals through raising their eagerness, willingness and happiness to do and learn things especially in second language learning process. As reviewing previous studies, motivation is considered to be one of the strong predictors driving language learning success and it could be a key factor of successful language learning (Ahmed, 2015; Rehman, Sheikh & Nawaz, 2014; Wimolmas, 2013; Veronica, 2013; Wang, 2009).

Accordingly, motivated learners would be more eager and enthusiastic to spend more time to language learning. A variety of teaching approach with differentiation strategies was suggested in the Standard-Based Curriculum and Assessment Document (DSKP) and the Scheme of Work as guidance for teachers to plan the lessons by



optimising the reduced contact hours in learning with basically listing out the learning objectives before class. With having a specific goal and desire to learn a language helps students put forth their best effort and persist their motivation (Awad, 2014; Li & Pan, 2009; Smith, 2009). Aforementioned, the Parent-School engagement programmes in lines MEB (MoE, 2015) is an initiative to build a language learning environment as learners who are motivated willing to integrate into the target language community.

1.2.4 Summary

Aforementioned, phonics is a systematic and basic approach to develop early literacy among learners in primary level especially Year One and Two as well as phonics as an approach was underpinned in the DSKP English Year One (2016). English language teachers should teach the phonics in the early stage before starting to learn all the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, as suggested in the scheme of work (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). They recommend teachers to consume a month to teach the phonological awareness skills and recognize the phonics, as pupils will be able to identify the sounds, listen and distinguish the sounds, and blending sounds to build words in order to develop further all the skills effectively. Motivation is an element to arise learners' attention to help learners move towards achieving learning goal especially boring language learning environment (Al-Khairiy, 2013). Hence, the differentiation of strategies in teaching has been advocated in recent

teaching paradigm in particular the new curriculum in English language learning (Bukhari, 2018).

1.3 Problem Statement

The rapid change in country's socio-economy, a bundle of requirements and qualifications to recruit a worker into an organisation are changed from time to time, especially the issues of the minimum requirement to communicate well in English. As seen, English language as a global language is important to be learnt in accurate way especially for the learners to perceive, respond and communicate in English. The first issue is needed to be addressed is to improve learners' proficiency in English.

The different cultural background comes out with different spoken language, especially the vernacular schools in Malaysia. In the vernacular school with Chinese language as mother tongue, the learners are commonly using their familiar language to carry out the daily conversation. Hence, the frequency in using English language in school is very limited and not to mention to use English language at home. The exposure to the English language is rather low. The next issue will be focused on the way to increase learners' opportunity to use English language especially among the learners with English language as second or third language (L2/ L3). The study will put more efforts to improve the English language proficiency among L2 or L3.



Related to the above-mentioned, the second language learners are facing the difficulty to acquire accurate pronunciation skills. Listening, the very basic language skill is consistently interrelated and intervened with the other language skills like speaking, reading and writing. Renukadevi (2014) had mentioned the learners spent too little time to improve their listening skills, the appropriate strategies tested on them in a learning setting and the limited listening material and physical settings are the main reasons of the learners' poor in listening tasks. Due to the fact of unfamiliar and different language context also, the learners are hard to distinguish the resemblance sounds and exacerbate the development of pronunciation accuracy among the L2 learners. When a child who lack phonemic awareness skills often arduously sounds a word correctly but then guesses a word which they memorise the visual aspects of a whole word before and sometimes the word is totally unrelated to the sounds that have



been produced (Tankersley, 2003).

In contrast, interaction between human beings is experiencing the distinct changes, face-to-face interaction became lesser whereas mostly depends on verbal-text to communicate with each other and even the used text is in the abbreviation form or trend to use "Mars text". Consequently, the importance of formal spoken language has been threatened. Humans gradually ignore the significant use of formal spoken language as a communication tool. As a result, the development of systematic phonological processing is limited, and even the no limit repeated process in language acquisition had indicated the boredom of the learning environment.





Over and above to the boring language learning environment, L2's supportive learning environment is limited. Almost L2 spoke in their mother tongue at home and even conversing casually with their familiar language or the first language with their schoolmates. In this way, the opportunity for L2 to practise the second language is restricted. According to Chang (2014), the phonological system of Chinese is very different from that of English. Some English phonemes do not have Chinese counterparts and are hard to learn. As a result, learners who are familiar with the phonological system of Chinese will suffer in acquiring the pronunciation skills of English especially facing difficulty to distinguish resemblance sound pair likes /r/ and /l/; /s/ and /sh/; unable to pronounce the words with /sh/; /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/; consonant cluster; aspiration sounds; the short and long /i/; ending sounds; /w/ </> /v/ </> /b/; the dreaded TH and Schwa sound. Therefore, it is important to acquire phonological awareness skills including identifying initial, media and final sounds, blending and segmenting, phoneme deletion, phoneme manipulation and phoneme substituting in the early literacy developmental phase as underpinned in the latest curriculum standard of English language (DSKP, 2016). Before the study, the researcher had conducted a screening test in the sample selection and found that there was almost all of Year Two learners still encountering difficulties in the phonological awareness skills typically to blend and segment the phonemes into word (Appendix G).

In the flow of rapid development in technology where it continues to advance and provide options to make tasks easier, mass of people makes technology as favour in almost every daily task. There is no exemption for the education from the innovations. As stated by Mustafa (2016), the findings from the Microsoft Asia *EduTech* Survey





polled to almost 200 educators in the Asia Pacific, revealed 96 per cent educators are already influencing technology decisions in their work and 97 per cent of educators wish to do more with technology. The educators unanimously agreed that the technology has a significant role in transforming and improving education systems in the future. Indeed, the Education Blueprint (2013-2015) also seeks to leverage ICT to scale up quality learning across the country. Related to the cultural background, language learning history and supportive learning environment, the issue of the study will be focused on using technology to ameliorate learners' skills on listening discriminating and thereby improve their pronunciation skills which are included in the phonological awareness skills among the L2/ L3 in the early stage of literacy development.



To coordinate with the trend of globalisation, the students should learn English language to enable them to communicate without burden and able to compete with the global. The condition to communicate without burden is achieved when the most basic in language, Phonological Awareness has been ascertained especially the skills of listening discrimination and the correct pronunciation. The trend in using technology in the educational field can promote the language learning motivation of learners as well as improve the effectiveness of instruction to direct learners to the optimal learning condition. Therefore, the using of technology is such significant in the field of education as seen in the Education Blueprint (2013-2025) had enacted the key to leverage technology-enabled models to enable more personalised learning in parallel to develop students' 21st century skills.





Murray and Christenson (2010) had explained that many students feel English as only subject to score in exam and do not view its significance beyond classroom as similar to English language learning in Malaysia, it is focused more on its reading and writing skills aims to get scores for academic achievement. As Hutchinson and Waters (1991); Susanna (2007) stated the academic achievement purpose and the significant impact of English language beyond the classroom had no relationship between theory and practice. The students' learning style and teachers' teaching approach are the main issues in relating to students' conceptual and their proficiency level as the provided English course does not match the students' necessity and interests. As subsequence, Susanna (2007) emphasised that the weak students who are struggling are usually have poor strategies and easily give up. The issue to adopt a teaching paradigm to meet students' needs and interests, and to design a tailored teaching instruction based on different complexity is needed to be concerned.



Here are the identified factors that impacted the L2 learners which will be brought further to the problems that will be emphasised in this study. Foremost, in the conventional teaching and learning context, the students are placed in a safety zone and they are too depending on the English teachers as authorities as there are less of supportive for English language learning in the home environment and the community. The enhancement of language skills is low as the limited exposure to the language outside the classroom. Additionally, the students are demotivated and have an unwillingness to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language as well as the negative attitude towards the target language are the issues has to be concerned in this study. These factors have a certain impact on English learning or





teaching process especially in the early stage of literacy development. To avoid disappointing consequences, this study will be focused on the integration of technology in enhancing the basic phonological awareness skills among the children in the early stage of literacy development as well as to advocate them to learn in a motivation enriched language learning context.

Since the boring language learning environment and ESL learners' learning environment is limited, they are less engaged in the language learning and do have limited opportunity to practise the second language. In struggle to be competitiveness in coordinating with the trend of globalisation, the learners should acquire basic communication skill. To incorporate the condition to communicate without burden, the most basic in language, Phonological Awareness skill should be ascertained. Hence, reading through the previous literature, many studies showed the phonological awareness skill were trained in the early year yielded better result on reading development and gained positive results among children who were identified as at-risk reader (Wise, D' Angelo & Chen, 2016).

With the purpose to boost learners' learning motivation and engagement in the language learning, the integration of technology in the phonological awareness training is a better tool to help children who are in preschool level (Eissa, 2014; Falth, Gustafson & Svensson, 2012; O' Callagham, McIvor, McVeigh & Rushe, 2016; Macaruso & Rodman, 2011; Cannock & Suarez, 2014; Kartal & Terziyan, 2016; Segers & Verhoeven, 2004; Wild, 2009), young English-language learners with disabilities (Musa & Balami, 2016; Chai, Ayres & Vail, 2016; Drigas & Elektra, 2016; Pfenninger,



2015; Johnson & Goswami, 2010; Kazakou, Soulis, Morfidi & Mikropoulus, 2011; Mayer & Motsch, 2015; Smith & Wang, 2010), English-language learners with low emergent literacy skills (Wise, Angelo & Chen, 2016; Fielding-Barnsley & Hay, 2016) and from disadvantaged backgrounds (Hagans & Good III, 2013) to develop literacy through a playful and guided way as well as encouraging self-learning at anytime and anywhere. Additionally, computer-mediated intervention for the development of early literacy skills in young children almost be conducted in urban school (Macaruso & Rodman, 2011) and oversea (Wise, Angelo & Chen, 2016; Musa & Balami, 2016; Callaghan, Mclvor, McVeigh & Rushe, 2016, et al.).

The effectiveness of computer-mediated intervention (CMI) in related to phonological awareness skills gained positive results almost among all the learners in the early literacy development as aforementioned, the group of the elementary school learner especially the English-as-second-language learners, has not yet been clarified, so it is not obvious the effectiveness of CMI is dominant for all the learners in actual microsystems. The question of whether the CMI which are now currently proposed in the literature as a teaching and learning tool to boost learners' phonological awareness skills in all groups of learners as maximising its effectiveness in the field of phonological awareness has to be addressed. Therefore, the goals of this study are to investigate the effectiveness of CMI on enhancing the phonological awareness skills among the Year Two (8-years-old) ESL learners in rural school.



1.4 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skills (CM-PSS) training in promoting phonological awareness skills among Year Two ESL learners in rural school Malaysia.

1.5 Research Objectives

The main objectives in this study is to investigate the effect of the Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skills training on promoting English-as-second-language learner's phonological awareness and their language learning motivation.

Specific Objectives:

1. The objective of research is to determine whether the use of CM-PSS learning approach is more effective than the conventional classroom instruction in the teaching of phonological awareness skills among Year Two ESL learners.
2. The objective of research is to identify the differences in terms of Language Learning Motivation between experimental and control group.





3. The objective of research is to identify the differences in terms of Language Learning Attitude towards CM-PSS between experimental and control group.
4. The objective of research is to identify the relationship between the learners' language learning motivation and phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to CM-PSS intervention.
5. The objective of research is to identify the relationship between the learners' language learning attitude and phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to CM-PSS intervention.

1.6 Research Questions



The following are the research questions for this study.

1. Is there any significant difference in terms of phonological awareness skills achievement between experimental and control group?
2. Is there any significant difference in terms of Language Learning Motivation between experimental and control group?
3. Is there any significant difference in terms of Language Learning Attitude between experimental and control group?
4. Is there any significant relationship between the learners' language learning motivation and their phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to the computer-mediated learning intervention?





5. Is there any significant relationship between the learners' language learning attitude and their phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to the computer-mediated learning intervention?

1.7 Hypothesis

Overall, there are five hypotheses postulated to be tested in this study. The hypotheses are built based on the research questions. There hypotheses ($H_01 - H_05$) derived from the research questions. The following are the hypotheses to be tested in this study:



H_01 : There is no significant difference in terms of their phonological awareness skills achievement between experimental and control group.

H_02 : There is no significant difference in terms of Language Learning Motivation between experimental and control group.

H_03 : There is no significant difference in terms of Language Learning Attitude between experimental and control group.



H₀4: There is no significant relationship between the learners' language learning motivation and phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to the computer-mediated learning intervention.

H₀5: There is no significant relationship between the learners' language learning attitude and phonological awareness skills performance after being exposed to the computer-mediated learning intervention.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

In order to meet the objectives of the study, the researcher implements a research strategy to study the effectiveness of Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skills (CM-PSS) courseware in promoting L2's phonological awareness and language learning motivation. Thus, a pre-test post-test quasi-experimental design will be employed in the research. The research and conceptual frameworks are established to guide and control the review of the literature and the empirical studies.

The present study will be an extend from English-as-second-language-learners' (L2's) levels of phonological sensitivity can be manipulated by a designed four-week phonetics spelling skills learning courseware compared to the control group, a quasi-experimental study is conducted, and research questions are employed to explore the

intervention effects. Logic Model will be adapted in this present study to examine the effectiveness of the intervention in promoting L2's levels of phonological sensitivity as shown in Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2.

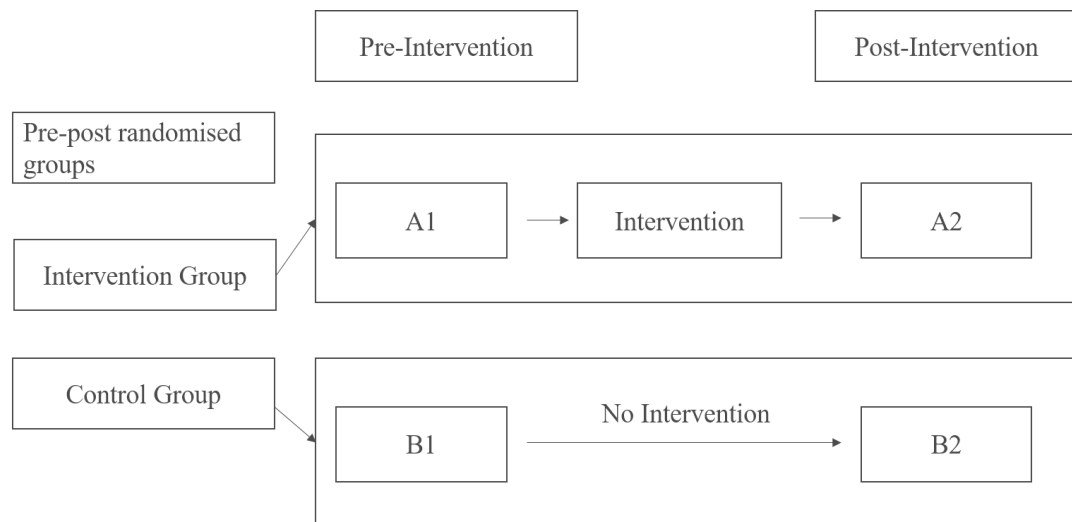


Figure 1.1. Logic Model depicting the quasi-experimental design to ascertain the intervention effects, where A1, B1 = Pre-Intervention data collection on Phonological Sensitivity; A2, B2 = Post-Intervention data collection on Phonological Sensitivity.

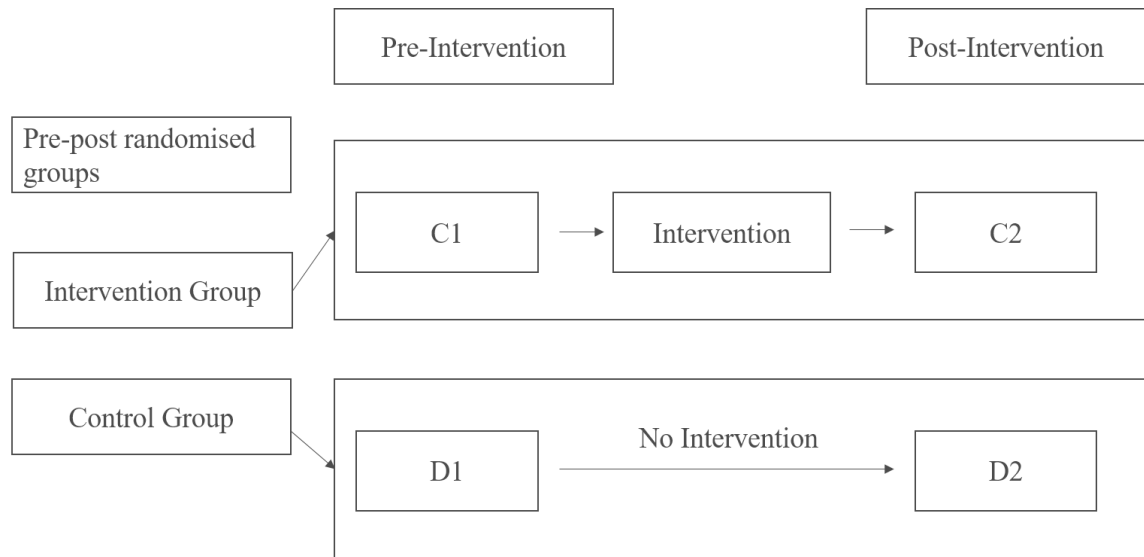


Figure 1.2. Logic Model depicting the quasi-experimental design to ascertain the intervention effects, where C1, D1 = Pre-Intervention data collection on Language Learning Motivation; C2, D2 = Post-Intervention data collection on Language Learning Motivation.

For this study, the CM-PSS will give effects on two major dependent variables: L2's phonological sensitivity and language learning motivation. Figure 1.2 explains the framework of the research with the repeated measure pre-test and post-test design on the effectiveness of CM-PSS in the virtual learning environment to promote L2's phonological sensitivity (skills performance) and their attitudes in learning phonological awareness skills.

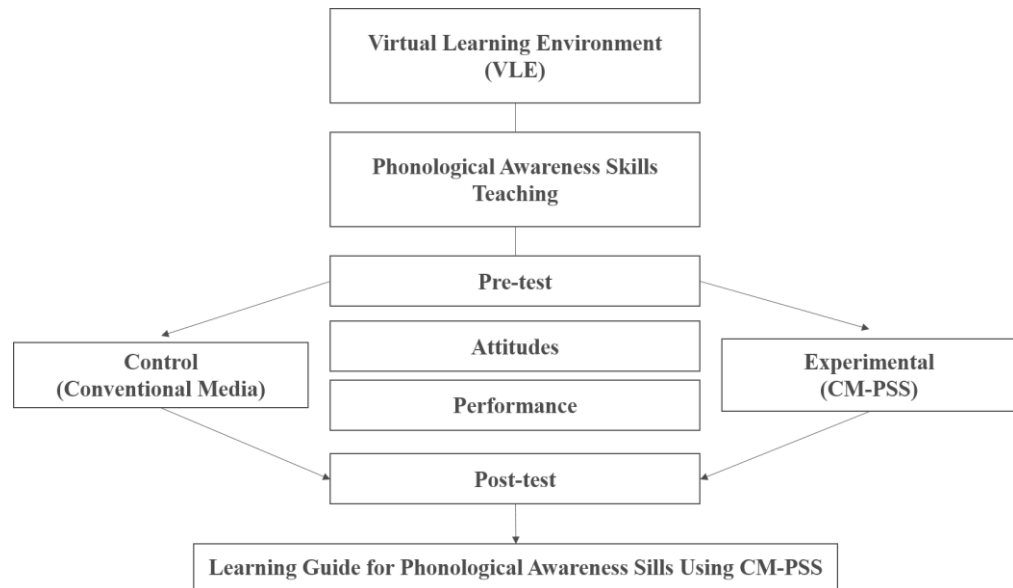


Figure 1.3. Framework of research with the repeated measure pre-test and post-test design on the effectiveness of CM-PSS in the virtual learning environment in promoting L2's phonological sensitivity and attitudes in learning phonological awareness skills.

Overall, this study will be implemented in two ways simultaneously. The researcher will collect the data from the pre- and post-test on analysing the effectiveness of the intervention (CM-PSS) in promoting L2's phonological sensitivity and language learning motivation. Meanwhile, the researcher also will collect the data from the survey to examine the most relevant demographic controls in the study.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study of Computer-Mediated Phonetics Spelling Skill training programme can be a learning paradigm in the primary level to enhance the students' knowledge and phonological awareness skills as well. The study's goal is designed to help students improve their phonological awareness skills as well as their language learning motivation to develop further to achieve the aim of acquisition high proficiency in English language.

The findings of this study will contribute to the benefit of society as advocating the significance of English language especially its important role in science and technologies today as well as the other beneficial areas as mentioned in this study. The greater demand for learners in early year stage enriched with high proficiency in phonological awareness is justified the necessity for more effective and life-changing teaching approaches. Hence, the approach derived from the results of this study can be recommended to train the students in a better way.

The findings of this study will redound to the benefit of society considering that English still in dominant as language to be used commonly in global. The digital explosion of information on the Internet has resulted in a need for a new and up-to-date way for English language learning. Numerous of studies have been reported numerous benefits of using computer-mediated or multimedia in English language learning (Callagham, Mclvor, McVeigh, & Rushe, 2016). The affordable cost of computers has resulted in the increasing number of computers purchased for work and home use. Hence, the present study will benefit the uses of computer in promoting the phonetic spelling skills among the English-as-second-language learners (L2). Undoubtedly, the



learning process via computer is fully-contented with graphics, animation, music and even videos which is able to reinforce L2's motivation to persistent on learning process.

Baron and Maier (2005) pointed out the Net Generation are made up of digital literate, connected, social, goal oriented, experiential, visual and kinaesthetic learners do enjoy working in groups, crave interactivity, have short attention spans and prefer working on things that are related to their life. These characteristics have an impact on the learning styles and how to access information will be comprehended through this study. Short attention spans related to the language learning motivation associated with the intervention in this study will be discussed detailed further. Therefore, this study will present the effectiveness of computer-mediated intervention in promoting certain phonological skills and even L2's learning motivation.



This study also will contribute its extent knowledge on the improvement of education especially in the field of phonological awareness. The findings from this study as to introduce a technology-integrated learning tool aims to advocate the administration and the teachers to be drawn to the new teaching method which is stressed on student-centred approach and the students will also get benefits on it. The outcomes to be considered as a reference to the improvement of students' abilities in all skills in phonological awareness besides developing their positive attitude towards language learning and enhancing students' independent, as well as advocating the level of interaction and cooperation between students and teachers.





This study will contribute to the innovation and improvement of education in integrating the technology to facilitate the learning process especially in the language learning area. I hope that this research will encourage the school administration and the teachers to be drawn it as an effective teaching strategy in enhancing students' phonological awareness that will benefit them to acquire the correct spelling and pronunciation in the context of social constructivism and self-learning.

For the researcher, the study can provide baseline information on the recent status of integration of technology in facilitating the learning process in the classroom and beyond the classroom, especially home-schooling in English language learning. The outcomes to be considered consist of the following: the improvement of students' phonological awareness; development of a positive attitude towards the integrated technology application on their language learning; enhancing students' independence to encourage them to self-learning beyond the classroom.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

All research has limitations and the current study is no exception. There are five major limitations to the current investigation.





Firstly, the study is limited in terms of its generalisability to the total population of 6- or 7-years-old foreign language learners. Like any other student population, this age range of children foreign language learners are a very heterogeneous population. This study will be done with two of the Chinese vernacular schools in district of Hilir Perak. The information comes from the students in Year Two enrolled in this program only. There are many other learners from the vernacular school. Some of them are the students who speaks English often at home, some of them may be encountered the reading difficulties problem, and there are students with individual differences overall. It is quite possible that students from different classrooms might have different perspectives on how best the application to improve students on their phonological awareness skills and to improve their motivation effectively.



This research may also represent one very small area of Malaysia. Different states have different foreign language program and requirements for both students and teachers. While the sample should be quite diverse in terms of student backgrounds, the fact remains that certain segments of the children foreign language learner population will not be included.

Secondly, the fidelity of implementation for the intervention may be a concern. During the program, participants' days of presence in classes may be subject to changes due to school breaks and personal reasons, which will inevitably affect their participation and completion of the assigned tasks. Moreover, although the teachers are trained to monitor directly participants' activities, administer the pre and post-tests, they may have different levels of understanding or interpretation of the nature of the





instructions from the intervention. Further, regarding pedagogy that is intended to be used in the intervention, the implementation of such an intervention program over a span of a month represents an extra burden to their normal workload.

Third, participants will be randomly selected as an entire class to constitute the pre- post- matched groups (experimental vs. control) from a total of four classes enrolled in the intervention group and control group at the point of the study (two classes for each group). However, the two classes at each group do not entail students' exactly equal in English language proficiency.

Fourth, there will be three different instructors for the above mentioned four English classes at the point of study. Instructor A will teach intervention group I, Instructor B for intervention group II, and Instructor C taught both control group (control group I and II). Therefore, it is very possible that individual instructor differences in teaching experiences, teaching styles and preferences, and instructional quality may have unavoidable confounding effects on the participants' pre-post intervention changes in their levels of phonological awareness and language learning motivation, which are very difficult to separate from the intended intervention effects in the current study due to the small sample size.

Lastly, anytime an instrument is employed in data collection, the results are subject to the known reliability and validity of that instrument. The instruments may have limitations to the subsequent research with other audiences though the reliability





and validity is known about the instruments. Hence, for the next research, the other instruments may help further understanding of the concepts being measured in the study.

1.11 Operational Definition

For the purpose of this investigation, the following terms are defined. These concepts are generally consistent with the vocabulary used in the field of Phonological Awareness acquisition among the English-as-second-language learners (L2) and education.



1.11.1 Phonological Awareness Skills

According to Nikos (2015), computer-based training also known as computer-based learning or computer-based instruction is an interactive instructor-less educational process. Computer-based training courses come in different shapes and forms such as multimedia enhanced textbooks, tutorials, practice drills or micro-world simulations (Nikos, 2015). In the study, the computer-based training applied to improve phonological awareness skills among ESL learners, which consisted of three domains, (1) learn the sound; (2) blend the sound; and (3) pronounce the sound. It is a training in boosting learners' phonological awareness skills where they can learn in fun way





through the designed games in the application. There are eight sub skills in the phonological awareness skills including identifying the initial sounds, identifying the final sounds, identifying the medial sounds, blending phonemes into word, segmenting word into phonemes, phoneme manipulation, phoneme deletion and phoneme substituting. In the part of ‘learn the sound’, learners would acquire the skills of identifying initial, final and medial sounds; while in the part of ‘blend the sounds’, learners would gain the skills of blending and segmenting the sounds, phonemes manipulation, phoneme deletion as well as phoneme substituting. After acquiring the phonological awareness skills, learners would proceed to the further and higher level of literacy development in the part of ‘pronounce the sounds’. In the part of ‘pronounce the sounds’, learners could learn the formation of sounds through the animation of airflow via throat, mouth and nasal. Hence, they would learn how to differentiate the formation of each sounds or phonemes by listening and comparing the sound formation through throat, mouth and nasal. The effectiveness of the CM-PSS training in promoting phonological awareness skills among the ESL learners was examined through data collected from Phonological Awareness Assessment before and after they exposed to CM-PSS training.

1.11.2 Second Language Learners

Second language acquisition and learning defined as a non-native speaker to learn a language which is different from own native language or mother tongue. Hence, second





language learners are acquiring the new form of language that is unfamiliar with their mother tongue. According to Wise et al. (2015), ESL learning is specific structures or sets of features within a linguistic sub-system complexify through the accumulation of new features but not so much a process of adding new rules to existing ones. Similar to the other language learning, the scaffolding is needed which the process involves the constant reformation of existing knowledge as new knowledge enters the system to produce a new skill to be performed in a context.

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English as a second or foreign language (ESL) is the use of English by speakers with different native languages. The term “ESL” has been seen by some to indicate that English would be of subordinate importance; for example, where English is used as a lingua franca in a multilingual country. In this study, English as a foreign language, indicates the teaching of English in a non-English speaking region as part of the normal school curriculum among Year Two ESL learners. The teaching of ESL does not





presuppose literacy in mother tongue. Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English (McCarthy & Carter, 2014). Primary education in Malaysia begins at age seven and lasts for six years, referred to as Year (*Tahun*) One to Six.

In this study, Year Two ESL learners refer to learners at age eight who are literate in their mother tongue (*Mandarin/ Chinese language*) or their first language encountering difficulties in the study of English as it differs from their familiar language. They often produce errors of syntax, vocabulary, and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their first language (Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013).



1.11.3 Second Language Motivation

Based on Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), there are different phases in the history of motivation in foreign language teaching and learning included the first phase the social psychological period, the second phase cognitive-situated period, and the third phase social process-oriented period. Motivation is a word frequently used in our daily work and study. It is also an important factor which can influence the achievement of learners and this causal variable to the achievement will be tested in this study in particular the achievement of phonological awareness acquisition. According to Ushioda (2017), the





motivation in general terms refers to the effort the learners put into learning a second or foreign language to meet their necessity or goals or desire to learn it.

In this study, language learning motivation refers to the efforts of ESL learners in the process of learning phonological awareness skills to meet their desire to learn through CM-PSS intervention. The language learning motivation was established in the process of learning phonological awareness skills through CM-PSS enriched with multimedia and interactive quiz and games. The ESL learners will be queried through Motivated Strategies Learning Questionnaire before and after they exposed to a within four months-intervention to identify the relationship between the performance of ESL learners in phonological awareness skills and language learning motivation. The study will show whether elements used in the CM-PSS could increase their language learning motivation and it could lead the enhancement in their phonological awareness skills achievement.



1.11.5 Language Learning Attitude

In psychology, attitude is a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person (Perloff, 2016). As Gordon (1935) stated, attitude can be formed from a person's past and present. A complete explanation by Orouilou and Vahedi (2011), the wide variety in individual attitudes, would presumably include references of family socialisation, peer group influence, specific events in the





individual's past, sources of anxiety, basic strivings, mechanisms of defence, education, income, occupation, mass media, class affiliation, residence, religion, and host of personel variables including intelligence, age, sex, interests and aptitudes. An attitude is a relatively enduring organizing of beliefs around an object or a situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner as it is learned and it can be taught (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). A positive attitude about the language will permit him to have an openness and willingness to perceive and respond which is strongly influenced the efficiency in language learning. Hence, in this study, the attitude in language learning will be discussed as necessity to raise the efficiency of learners' performance in language learning classes.



In this study, the language learning attitude refers to a willingness attitude to learn the phonological awareness skills through the CM-PSS. The ESL learners were queried through Attitude Questionnaire before and after they exposed to a within four-months-intervention to identify the relationship between the performance of ESL learners in phonological awareness skills and language learning attitude. The study showed whether elements used in the CM-PSS could increase their willingness to learn phonological awareness skills and it could lead the enhancement in their phonological awareness skills achievement.

1.12 Summary





With the accelerating pace of international cooperation and exchanges, the ultimate purpose of second or third language education is to be better integrated into and support the general educational system in order to prepare students for global citizenship. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the effectiveness of CM-PSS training in promoting phonological awareness skills among ESL learners. Besides, the linguistic knowledge and competence are treated as the one and only learning objective for ESL learners, and even language learning motivation among them have become the new ideal for second language educators.

Therefore, one way to approach the impact of computer-mediated intervention is to explore its effectiveness on the phonological awareness and language learning motivation among the ESL learners. To that purpose, such an exploratory investigation needs to include three steps (a) the effectiveness of CM-PSS in promoting phonological awareness skills among ESL learners must be located as the training program in a quasi-experimental study; (b) a control group is identified as the necessary comparison to single out the intervention effects (if any); and (c) suitable psychometric instruments are pinpointed to measure the changes in participants' language motivation respectively.

A brief review of the existing literature showed very limited research to explore the effectiveness of computer-mediated training on phonological especially for Year 2 ESL learners. In general, to the author's knowledge, no one has utilized a quasi-experimental design in this regard also. Overall, this quasi-experimental study adapts and implements Computer-Mediated Phonetic Spelling Skills as the training program to examine the effectiveness of CM-PSS in promoting phonological awareness skills





among the ESL learners by comparing participants' pre-post scores on phonological awareness skills. Besides, language learning motivation and attitude among ESL learners were examined within the process of data collection before and after the ESL learners exposed to different learning context to identify whether the CM-PSS.

