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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**English Language Teacher's Perceptions on Instructional Technology Integration in class at Bintulu Sub-District's (Kemena) Schools, Sarawak. Malaysia.**

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**Abstract**

Technology integration in teaching is one of vital medium to provide more engaging and interactive learning process in class. Integration of technology in English class is inevitable to achieve National education goals based on Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2015). Thus, the purpose of the study is to investigate teacher's perception on contribution of technology use in English Language classes. The research was conducted in Kemena District in Bintulu Division, Sarawak. There were 80 English teachers in Kemena District involved as respondents for data collection based on questionnaire methods. The result of the study revealed that English teachers in Kemena District have positive attitude towards the instructional technology integration in their language classroom. However, instead of this positive attitude, the usage of the technologies is below the targeted rates because it was restricted by a few factors: lack of time and lack of technological means in the school. Teachers found that modern technology motivates the learners and improve their English skills. Besides, it also helps the teachers to have good control of their teaching in the classroom. For traditional technology, it is beneficial for teachers because it provides good control of the classroom and it encourages meaningful learning. So, both technologies basically were good for class controls.

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**Introduction:-**

Technology has transforms human lives especially in education tremendously. The transformation is inevitable and technology is one of the medium being used to achieve education goals. Its promising teachers better learning and teaching experience because technology in classroom according to Becker (1991) is a media tools which offer learning model based on discovery, participation, learning partnerships and learning cultures. It is far more interesting than textbooks and workbooks because the material is far more engaging and interactive. Technology not only gives learners the opportunity to control their own learning process, but also provides them with ready access to a vast amount of information over which the teacher has no control (Lam & Lawrence, 2002). The sophistication of the technology applied in the classroom has shown outstanding outcomes and it has become one solution to educational goals.

Technology use in education is becoming a vital part of higher and professional education (Wernet, Olliges, & Delicath, 2000; & Almekhlafi, 2006a, 2006b). Technology not just providing learners with the opportunity to control their own pace learning process, but also offers them with ready access to a vast amount of information over which the teacher has no control (Lam & Lawrence, 2002). This was supported by Isman (2002) by saying that technology fosters faster distribution in information, provides learning situations by promoting permanent learning and offers the opportunity in global education. Other than that, (Williams, 1991) asserted that technology should attracts and direct students' attention to help to maintain their concentration. It is important that the students get their

concentration helps them to follow the lesson and learn whatever concepts are being explained to help pupils acquire listening and observational skills that will assist them to understand more complex concepts.

Trucano (2005) stated that in order to prepare the learners for 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace, education should revolutionize the school environment. He stated that “technology empowers teachers and learners and promotes the growth of skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace”. Similarly, Wright, Stanford and Beedle (2007) ascertained that with ICT integrated in student’s learning, they have the opportunities to explore, discover, communicate, create, complete and receive assignments, giving feedback online and participate in online discussion. This opportunities supports the student’s development in every skills needed by society nowadays. Due to this needs, Malaysia has moved forward by transforming its education policy and intended to utilize its technological facilities under Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2015). Malaysian government started to provide internet access and virtual learning environment via 1BestariNet for all 10,000 schools by 2013.

English subject has been always important in Malaysian Education System due to its status as an international and global language from the early of 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, it has welcomed many rapid changes to transform the society so that they will be able to participate in globalisation. The Malaysia Prime Minister stated that education system needs to keep pace with 21<sup>st</sup> century competitive economy. Its education reforms have prioritized the support of English as one step to achieve the internationalisation which Malaysia will market its university programmes around the world, establish active networks with other universities and involve in publication in high impact journals. Students trying to learn English as a second language need further language support. They need to practice in hearing language, reading language, speaking language, and writing language in order to develop their experience and skills (Ybarra & Green, 2003).

Some of the recent move made by the Education Ministry is inception of SMART Schools (1997), MUET (1999), EST (2003) and the use of English as a language instruction in teaching Science and Mathematics in schools (2003). Under GTP 2.0 (Government Transformation Programme), 2 of 7 education initiatives are related to English which is LINUS 2.0 has been using to ensure basic literacy in English among Year 1-3 and not forgotten another programme to enhance the Quality of English Language Teachers. As an addition, by 2016 a pass in English is to be made compulsory in SPM. As a result of these reformation in language urged the teachers to improve their teaching instructions and added their teaching aids. Technology is the medium to provide the learners with the intended environment. Cakir (2006) stated that technology is one of the important parts in society. Thus, English teachers cannot refuse to use this technology because they have to achieve Malaysian Education Blueprint.

Due to the urge and reformation, teachers need to create different learning environment to maximise student’s participation and interaction with the environment they are live in and their learning activities. Any new teaching methods for example technology need to be exploited effectively to achieve the objectives. Language laboratory to teach language must be technologically equipped.

Owing to this situation, the research is aimed to provide scientific evidence on the implementation of instructional technology in English language class based on following research questions:

1. How do the English teachers implement different forms of instructional technology in their classes?
2. How do the English teachers perceive any existing restrictions regarding the never or seldom use of instructional technology in their classes?
3. How do the English teachers perceive the contribution of instructional technology to their classes?
4. How do the English teachers perceive the necessity of using instructional technology in their classes?

Therefore, this study concentrated on those technologies that are commonly used in English teaching classes.

Limiting the study to these technologies does not rule out the importance and impact that other technologies play in the teaching and learning process. Another limitation is the changes in the situation investigated. Time waits for no man and it changes all the time when the data collected. Researchers did not observed the usage of the technology and as well as the methods in teaching-learning in English classroom. Responses to the questionnaire were self-reported by the respondents. This had caused the researchers to rely on the participant’s teacher’s perceptions of the existing situation.

## **Methodology:-**

### **Population and Sampling Procedures:-**

The population samples were 180 English Language teachers who serve their service in 8 secondary schools in Kemena District, Bintulu. Eight selected schools were based on random cluster sampling method. A convenient sampling method was employed and each school was visited at least twice to reach more teachers. Some of the teachers cannot be reached in the first visit due to their teaching commitment, so the questionnaire was administered to the available teachers. Second visit had opened the opportunity for researchers to reach other teachers. Some of the teachers are not interested to take part in the survey so the number of the English teachers participate was only 80 even though the targeted teachers are 165.

### **Data Collection Instrument:-**

A set of questionnaire was prepared based on relevant literature related to technology that enhanced language teaching environments. The types of technological mean is one of the components that are being investigated. From the gathered data, there are two parts of technology; traditional technologies (one that do not use electrical energy) and modern technologies (those required electrical energy) (Ismanet al., 2007). Restrictions or barriers in preventing teachers from making use of the technology were also explored. Contributions of the technological means also parts of this study. Thus, questionnaire construction was based on the information gathered.

The questionnaire divided into 4 sections. The first section is aimed to find out the frequency of implementation of different forms of technology. A Likert scale with four responses were used (never = 0, seldom = 1, usually = 2, almost always = 3). For second section, researcher inquires teacher's opinion on possible restrictions in technology usage in classroom. If the participants chose never or seldom, they were requested to specify their reasons. The response were 'lack of technological mean', 'lack of time', 'curriculum restrictions', 'lack of interest', 'lack of confidence', 'lack of knowledge' and 'crowded classes'.

The third section needs the participants to specify contributions of technology in English classroom that they usually and almost always use. The response options were "gives good control over teaching", 'motivate the students', 'encourage meaningful learning', 'promotes interactive context', 'improves English', 'widen vocabulary', and 'improves cultural awareness'. The fourth section is to explore the general perceptions of technology use in English Language teaching. A statement provided was: "Technology plays an important role in English Language Teaching and should be used often in English classes". Teachers need to response to this question either 'yes' or 'no'.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The questionnaire validity test was based on pilot study which was executed among twenty-five English teachers. A remedial feedback received from this pilot study was used to amend the final questionnaire. Then, the analysis on the reliability of the questionnaire and the data collected was conducted. The Cronbach Alpha value for this questionnaire is 0.82 which is considered as satisfactory reliability because according to Fraenkel and Wallen, (2006), it is necessary to have coefficient is at least 0.70.

### **Administration of the Instrument:-**

Within a month, researcher needs to administer the questionnaire. The reason why it took a month because researcher had to contact teachers from the eight schools one by one. In the administration process, researcher met the teachers and clarifies any questions from them regarding the questionnaire to avoid misunderstanding. A few visits were made to achieve desired number of participants in the survey.

## **Results and discussion:-**

Mounted pictures and photos were the most preferred technology used by the teachers in this study (Table 1). 81.8% of the English teachers almost always use mounted pictures and photos in their lesson and 9.1% of them usually use it. This contributed 90.9% as a frequent user of mounted pictures and photos among English teachers. However 4.6% said that they never use this technology in their English lesson. Writing board is the second frequent use by the teachers. It contributed 77.3% almost always usage and 22.5% usually usage in English classroom. The next frequently used technology is textbooks (almost always=68.28%, usually=22.8%). After these top three technologies, the ranking was followed by stationeries (almost always=31.8%, usually=36.4), handouts (almost always=18.2, usually=50.0) objects and real materials (almost always=0, usually=40.9), wall charts, posters and

maps (almost always=0, usually=18.2%), flashcards and index cards (almost always=0, usually=13.6%) and pamphlets and brochures (almost always=0, usually=9.1%) were the technologies used moderately. For modern technologies, the top three technologies frequently used by the English teachers in S.M.K Kemena were Smart phones (almost always=9.1%, usually= 40.9%), Internet and downloaded materials (almost always=54.5%, usually=27.3%), and slide projector (almost always=9.0%, usually= 9.0%). Moderately used modern technologies were audiotape player / recorder, 22.7% teachers admitted they usually used this technology and same goes to video player/ recorder which contributed 22.7% teachers using it in their English lesson. However, there were some other technologies that the English teacher did not make significant use of it in their lesson as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Percentages of teachers who used instructional technology at different rates.

Traditional Technologies	Percentages of teachers of different rates of use			
	Almost/always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Textbooks	<b>68.2</b>	22.8	9.1	-
Handouts	18.2	<b>50.0</b>	31.8	-
Writing board	<b>77.3</b>	22.7	-	-
Stationaries	31.8	36.4	31.8	-
Magnet boards	-	-	45.5	<b>54.5</b>
Flashcards, Index Cards	-	13.6	<b>54.5</b>	31.8
Wall charts, posters, maps	-	31.8	<b>63.6</b>	4.5
Mounted Pictures, Photos	<b>81.8</b>	9.1	4.6	4.6
Objects, real materials	-	40.9	<b>50.0</b>	9.1
Pamphlets, brochures	-	9.1	<b>68.2</b>	22.7
Puppets	-	-	40.9	<b>59.1</b>
Newspaper, Magazines	-	18.1	72.7	9.1
Modern Technologies	Percentages of teachers of different rates of use			
	Almost/always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Audiotape player/ recorder	-	22.7	<b>59.1</b>	18.2
CD player / recorder	-	13.6	<b>68.2</b>	18.2
Radio	-	-	<b>63.6</b>	36.4
Television	-	-	40.9	<b>59.1</b>
Video player/ Recorder	-	22.7	45.5	31.8
Smartphone	9.1	40.9	13.6	36.4
Overhead Projector	-	36.4	31.8	31.8
Opaque projector	-	9.1	31.8	<b>59.1</b>
Slide projector	9.1	9.1	36.4	45.5
Internet and downloaded materials	<b>54.5</b>	27.3	18.2	-
Language Lab	<b>63.6</b>	4.5	31.8	-
Computer Lab	-	4.5	13.6	<b>81.8</b>

N = 80; Percentages greater than or equal to 50% were highlighted as bold face.

Teachers had stated a few reasons why they did not fully utilise certain technologies in their English classrooms. 50.0% of the teachers were not keen to pick puppets as one of their major technology because of one reason which is

they are lack of the technology. English teachers said that they did not make use of magnet cards, wall charts, posters and maps, objects and real materials, pamphlets and brochure because of the reasons of lack of time and it shared the same percentage which was 40.9% respectively (Table 2). These two main reasons had played significance choice of technology in English lesson among English teachers.

**Table 2:** Percentage of teachers who never and seldom use traditional technologies for the specified reasons.

Type of Technology	Lack of techno.	Lack of time	Curriculum restriction	Reasons Lack of interest	Lack of confide.	Lack of Knowledge	Crowded classes
Textbooks	-	-	-	9.1	-	-	-
Handouts	-	31.8	-	-	-	-	-
Writing board	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stationaries	<b>4.5</b>	4.5	-	18.2	-	-	4.5
Magnet boards	18.2	<b>40.9</b>	-	27.3	-	4.5	9.1
Flashcards, Index Cards	9.1	<b>36.4</b>	4.5	27.3	-	4.5	4.5
Wall charts, posters, maps	9.1	<b>40.9</b>	-	18.2	-	-	-
Mounted Pictures, Photos	9.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Objects, real materials	9.1	<b>40.9</b>	-	4.5	-	-	4.5
Pamphlets, brochures	9.1	<b>40.9</b>	4.5	18.2	4.5	4.5	9.1
Puppets	<b>50.0</b>	22.7	-	9.1	9.1	9.1	-
Newspaper, magazines	22.7	<b>36.4</b>	-	-	9.1	9.1	4.5

N=80; Percentages greater than or equal to 35% were highlighted as bold face

In Table 3, there were two reasons that strongly prevent English teachers from fully utilising a few technologies (televisions, Language Labs, and Desktop computer) were lack of technology means and lack of time. This result indicates us that schools in Kemena District are still behind in using modern technologies plus the teacher were burdened too much with other duty beyond their teaching responsibility such as disciplinary, cleanliness, documenting, sports, handling student's health, monitoring student's attendance, student's welfare, school program, etc.

**Table 3:** Percentage of teachers who never and seldom use modern technologies for the specified reasons

Type of Technology	Lack of techno.	Lack of time	Curriculum restriction	Reasons Lack of interest	Lack of confide.	Lack of Knowledge	Crowded classes
Audiotape player/ recorder	9.1	31.8	4.5	-	-	4.5	18.2
CD Player /recorder	22.7	<b>40.9</b>	4.5	-	-	-	18.2
Radio	<b>40.9</b>	27.3	-	27.3	-	4.5	-
Television	<b>45.5</b>	27.3	-	22.7	-	4.5	-
Video Player/ Recorder	31.8	27.3	-	-	-	-	18.2
Smartphone	18.2	13.6	-	18.2	-	-	-
Overhead projector	27.3	27.3	-	9.1	-	-	-
Opaque projector	31.8	31.8	-	4.5	-	22.7	-
Slide projector	<b>36.3</b>	31.8	-	-	18.2	-	-
Internet and downloaded materials	13.6	<b>45.5</b>	-	4.5	9.1	-	-
Language Lab	18.2	<b>45.5</b>	-	22.7	-	-	9.1
Computer Lab	22.7	<b>40.9</b>	-	22.7	-	-	9.1

N=80; Percentages greater than or equal to 35% were highlighted as bold face

Table 4 showed majority of the teachers perceived mounted pictures, photos as beneficial in learning because it encourage meaningful learning (63.6%). Meanwhile, 36.3% teachers perceived that writing board is the best medium to provide good control of teaching and promotes interactive context in language class. 31.8% assume

stationaries encourage meaningful learning among students. 27.2% teachers who are using objects and real materials believed that these technologies provide good control in their teaching too. 22.7% English teachers believed that textbooks provides good control and encourage meaningful learning as well.

**Table 4:**Percentage of teachers who use traditional technologies regularly for the specified contributions

Type of Technology	Contributions						
	Provide good control of teaching	Motivates the students	Encourage meaningful learning	Promotes interactive context	Improves English	Widen Vocab.	Improves cultural awareness
Textbooks	22.7	13.6	22.7	18.2	4.5	-	-
Handouts	18.2	18.2	<b>36.3</b>	13.6	4.5	9.1	9.1
Writing board	<b>36.3</b>	9.0	-	<b>36.3</b>	-	-	-
Stationaries	27.3	9.0	<b>31.8</b>	4.5	-	-	-
Magnet boards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flashcards, Index Cards	-	4.5	4.5	4.5	-	-	-
Wall charts, posters, maps	-	22.7	9.1	-	-	-	-
Mounted Pictures, Photos	9.1	18.2	<b>63.6</b>	9.1	-	-	4.5
Objects, real materials	27.3	13.6	-	-	-	-	-
Pamphlets, brochures	-	9.1	-	-	-	-	-
Puppets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newspaper, magazines	4.5	9.1	9.1	9.1	4.5	9.1	9.1

N=80, Highest percentage for each technology was highlighted as bold face.

In Table 5, 45.5% believed that CD player or recorder motivates students in their learning and 36.4% believed that CD player improves the students' English skills. Similarly, Audiotape player or recorder is believed to motivate (40.9%) and improves English acquisition among students (31.8%). Next is Internet and downloaded materials. 45.4% English teachers said that it motivates students and 36.4% teachers believed it helps in improving students' English language learning. Language get the same confidence from teachers when 40.9% of them believed that it motivates and 22.7% of them said that the usage of the lab were beneficial in terms of improving students' English skills. However, the teacher also believed that other modern technology did contribute to the English teaching and learning process as well even though the percentage was little.

**Table 5:** Percentage of teachers who use modern technologies regularly for the specified contributions.

Type of Technology	Provide good control of teaching	Motivates the students	Encourage meaningful learning	Contributions Promotes interactive context	Improves English	Widen Vocab.	Improves cultural awareness
Audiotape player/ recorder	9.1	<b>40.9</b>	-	-	<b>31.8</b>	-	18.2
CD Player /recorder	-	<b>45.5</b>	-	-	<b>36.4</b>	-	4.5
Radio	-	27.3	-	27.2	<b>31.8</b>	4.5	-
Television	<b>36.3</b>	<b>27.3</b>	-	22.7	-	4.5	-
Video Player/ Recorder	<b>31.8</b>	18.2	-	-	-	-	18.2
Smartphone	18.2	18.2	-	18.2	-	-	-
Overhead projector	<b>31.8</b>	<b>31.8</b>	-	4.5	-	22.7	-
Opaque projector	<b>31.8</b>	<b>31.8</b>	-	4.5	-	22.7	-
Slide projector	<b>36.3</b>	<b>31.8</b>	-	-	18.2	-	-
Internet and downloaded materials	4.5	<b>45.4</b>	-	-	<b>36.4</b>	-	-
Language Lab	18.2	<b>40.9</b>	-	-	<b>22.7</b>	-	9.1
Computer Lab	18.2	<b>40.9</b>	-	22.7	-	-	9.1

N=80; Highest percentage for each technology was highlighted as bold face.

### Conclusion:-

This study suggested that English Language teachers in Kemena District were mostly underutilizing technology in their teaching. From the analysis, it is proven that a few reasons play an important part in underutilizing the technology among teachers. Lack of time is the main reason that restricting and limiting these teachers to incorporate instructional technology in their English lesson. This is due to the teacher's commitment to the syllabus itself, co-curriculum, disciplinary matters and students' affair proposed by the Ministry of Education.

Lack of technology mean in schools was also one of the main contributing factors in technologies restrictions among English teachers. The analysis concluded that higher usage was spotted in traditional technologies such as writing board, mounted pictures/photos, and textbooks. For modern technology, teacher mostly prefers to use Internet and downloaded materials and language lab. High rates of integration of these technologies have been found. This indicates that if the Education Ministry would have supply modern technologies in rural schools, teacher would have been tried to incorporate the technology into their English class. However, it was most deficient when it comes to other technologies such as opaque magnet boards, puppets, projectors, slide projectors, overhead projectors, television, and radio.

Teachers who used the modern technology frequently believed that these technologies motivate the students in their language class. Once the students get motivated, automatically they are able to improve their weaknesses in every skills needed in English learning. As a conclusion, teachers found that modern technology motivate the learners and improve their English skills. Besides, it also helps the teachers to have good control of their English teaching in the classroom. For traditional technology, it is beneficial for teachers because it provides good control of the classroom and it encourages meaningful learning. So, both technologies were good for class controls.

When it comes to a statement "Technology plays an important role in English Language Teaching and should be used often in English classes", all English teachers strongly agreed that they have positive attitudes towards technology integration in their language lesson in order to produce better learning especially for the English language learners.

Future study needs to consider the student's response and perception on instructional technology integrated in their school during English language class. Classroom observation suggested to be carried out so that researcher will not depend solely on teacher's perception. So, the correlation on student's achievement and how teacher use the technologies in classroom can be investigated in the future study.

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