SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

This study is done to investigate the effectiveness of CALL for teaching English in an EFL setting. This chapter is divided into three major sections. The first part will give the readers a summary of this study. Then we will arrive at the conclusions made based on the findings presented in chapter four. Finally, in the third section, the researcher will give some recommendations on how to use CALL effectively in EFL classroom.

5.1   Summary of the study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of CALL for English language teaching in a language school based in Kuala Lumpur. The study attempts to discuss these three main research questions:

1. How effective is the CALL software (NETPLUS) for the learning of English as a foreign language?

2. Does the CALL software used in this language centre motivate students to learn English?

3. What types of attitude (positive or negative) are shown by the learners when put under the CALL software (NETPLUS)?

To gather the data for this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data were used. The researcher used the following instruments to accomplish

the objectives of the study. The sample for this study included 60 students and 2 teachers from ELS Language Centre, Kuala Lumpur.

To answer Research Question 1, quantitative data was collected through the language tests given shortly after students' session in both CALL and Non CALL environment. The scores of the tests were tabulated and presented in charts for better understanding. For each lesson, the average scores of each student in both CALL and non CALL environments were compared analysed and conclusions were made based on their performance after each test.

To answer Research Questions 2 and 3, qualitative data was collected. Questionnaires and interviews that provided the qualitative data for this research were used as the researcher wanted to get feedback from the students. Such feedback provided rich data that gave the researcher insights into students' motivation and attitude when working in CALL vs. Non CALL environment. The researcher felt that quantitative data would not have captured the actual reasons for e.g., individual preferences why NETPLUS worked better for them.

2 sets of questionnaires and they were given to students who are the subjects of this study. The first questionnaire was given before the students work on NETPLUS. It attempted to seek students' background information and students' initial response to CALL. The second questionnaire was given at the end of the study after the students had completed their sessions on NETPLUS. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed and tabulated. The significance of the response was then discussed after the data were tabulated.

The researcher then carried out interviews with both teachers and students to further strengthen and support the data collected through tests and questionnaires. . The teachers' views would be very helpful because they have been working with the students in the lab and they are aware of the students' attitude towards CALL. 10

students were interviewed to further investigate the effectiveness of CALL. The students were asked questions on feelings towards CALL, advantages and disadvantages of CALL and some suggestions to improve CALL. The data obtained from the interviews were used to augment the findings from the questionnaires and tests.

The opinions and comments given by the teachers during the interview sessions were presented and their responses to the questions were discussed. The findings from the interviews would be used to triangulate the data obtained from the questionnaires.

5. 2   Conclusions

This section will present the conclusions for this study based on the three research questions for this study.

5.2.1   Effectiveness of CALL

The students performed better in tests conducted after CALL sessions than tests after Non CALL sessions. This tells us that NETPLUS has helped in some way to enhance students' understanding. Thus, they were able to obtain good marks in the tests given. Computer lessons appeared to be more interesting for the students because of the graphics and visual effects. Not only that, students got quick feedback to the questions they attempted in CALL lessons, therefore, this expedited the learning process. This is not present in a typical classroom because a teacher may not have the time to attend to all the questions posted by students. Thus, NETPLUS was effective in correcting students' mistakes instantly and giving them the correct answers.

The students in this study show that they are in favor of the CALL approach to learning English because it is interesting unlike the traditional method. Thus, they are able to comprehend what it presented because they are interested. Quite a large number of students indicate that the use of computers to learn English is an effective way of learning a language. Computers give them the flexibility of working at their own pace and time and it is a very good mechanical tutor.

This study also reveals that the majority of the students agree that CALL is a step by step approach where they get a chance to enhance their knowledge through drill and practice activities available in the software.

With regards to whether NETPLUS is a more interesting way to learn English in this study, most of the students find CALL to be more interesting approach due to the manner in which the lessons are presented on this particular software. NETPLUS lessons appear to be more attractive, well designed coupled with animations and simulations to capture students' attention. It also seems to be creating variety and reducing monotony.

The lessons on NETPLUS also help the students to be more prepared to face the lessons that are held in the traditional classroom. A large number of students claim through the interview conducted, that after doing the activities in the NETPLUS program, they are able to participate better in traditional classroom lessons because they are prepared. The practice given by NETPLUS helped to boost the confidence level of students when they were in the classroom.

The students also point out that CALL approach gives them immediate feedback for their answers which allows the students to reflect upon their errors immediately.

5.2.2 Effectiveness of the CALL approach as compared to the traditional approach.

The traditional approach or also known as pencil and paper method seemed to be not as popular as computers according to the subjects of this study. The students preferred to do lessons in CALL environment than in a non CALL environment. When the students worked in a non CALL environment, they were not as motivated as they were in a CALL environment. Thus, their attention spans are shorter and to some extent this affects comprehension as they seem to be bored working on paper and pencil.

This was proven by the marks they have obtained in tests after non CALL sessions which are lower than the marks achieved in CALL setting. Students paid more attention in lesson presented on computer screen than lessons printed on paper. This is mainly due to their motivation level. According to the information gathered during the interview with students, using paper and pencil is not an interesting way to learn in this era of technology. While everything these days are related to mouse and keyboard, students are getting less and less interested in the traditional method of doing language exercises.

However, the students also believe that the presence of a teacher in a traditional classroom is very important. They also oppose the suggestion to replace teachers with computers. The students believe that a teacher's presentation is invaluable still regardless of the era we are in but a better way to practice is through computers. The students would like to have a teacher present a lesson but they prefer to practice the lesson on computers rather than prints.

5.2.3 Motivation in CALL

Needless to say, motivation plays an important factor in order for learning to take place. Feedback collected via the questionnaires revealed that the students are motivated to learn when they are in a CALL environment. NETPLUS arouses students' interest through the usage of colourful visual and audio effects which are absent in paper and pencil method. Because their senses are tapped, they are motivated to learn.

A good presentation by teacher is not sufficient to make student grasp the lesson taught. Thus, students need ample practice on the particular topic to further strengthen his understanding of the lesson. However, when they are given exercises on paper, they get de-motivated due to the uninteresting way of doing the exercises. They constantly use the word 'boring' when it comes to activities on prints. Not only that, their facial expression and body language also suggest the idea that they are not motivated to do the activities given on worksheet. All these suggest a lack of motivation when it comes to working in a non CALL environment. Thus, in this research, technology plays a role by keeping up the motivation level of the students. When the students perform tasks in a CALL environment, they do not get bored easily. Through the interview, students revealed that they always want more time to work on CALL because it is very interesting and they do not get fed up trying. In fact, some students even suggested being in a classroom for presentation by teacher and returning to the lab for practice on the lesson taught. (See Student Interview, Question 7)

Not only that, CALL is also motivating for students because of the quick feedback given to them as soon as they key in the answer. This is like having an 'invisible teacher' who corrects a student's mistake instantly and hence help them learn from their mistakes. Unlike CALL, a teacher in a classroom may not be able to attend to all the students' needs at one time. A teacher may correct the student's mistakes later in the lesson or probably the next day. Time in between making a mistake and learning the

correct answer is definitely longer in a non-CALL environment. When the students know that their mistakes will be corrected within seconds, they will be more motivated to perform their tasks. Therefore, CALL has been successful in motivating students in this study to learn a language.

5.2.4   Attitude shown by learners

This study also aims to investigate the attitude shown by the learners while learning in a CALL environment. Attitude here can be defined as the type of emotions shown by the subjects. It could be positive or negative. Based on the questionnaire and interview results, students in this research always portray a good, positive emotion when they are working in a CALL environment. This is once again related to the motivation and effectiveness of the software used in this study. Students generally will show positive emotions only when they are satisfied with the learning process. Based on the previous conclusions, we can see that students learning experience with CALL in this research is satisfactory. Thus, the emotion shown by them is also positive. However, based on the interview with teachers, it is revealed that not all students portray a positive attitude and emotion while working on NETPLUS. According to the teachers, some students who are uninterested in studying will be the trouble makers by complaining and not doing the tasks given to them. Therefore, whether or not students have positive attitude towards NETPLUS depends on the type of learners. Generally, in this study, most students have stated that they are keen in learning with NETPLUS and through the interview and questionnaires; it is evident students show a positive emotion while learning with NETPLUS.

5.3 Recommendations and suggestions

Although CALL, in the form of the software NETPLUS has proven its effectiveness in this particular study, there are still loop holes that need to be paid attention to in order to achieve better results and to optimize learning. Therefore, the researcher has a few suggestions on how to use CALL successfully in the classroom. The researcher will discuss how the teacher can make use of CALL in the classroom effectively and how students can utilize CALL in achieving their objectives.

Teachers can make full use of CALL in their classroom to make the lessons interesting and to enhance learning. Teachers can teach a particular aspect of grammar in the classroom before students work on CALL. After teaching, students can be given interactive exercises or practice on CALL to evaluate their understanding of the lesson. By doing this, students get a chance to ask teachers questions if they do not understand anything and perform the tasks given on CALL. A good explanation is crucial for students to understand the form and function. Therefore, after the teacher's presentation, students can work independently on CALL and will get benefits from it.

Teachers also can do CALL lessons together as a class activity to further motivate the students. For instance, a teacher can assign language games or online quizzes, where students compete with each other to finish the task given. Not only can a teacher monitor their progress, the students also will feel excited about learning and enjoy the process.

Besides that, teachers can use a LCD projector in a classroom to conduct a CALL lesson together with all the students. This will not only increase students' participation but also motivate students to learn. By doing this, students will not be bored working alone for too long on a computer. This will also make a classroom livelier and enhance learning. Hence, teachers play an important role in CALL. Although many of the studies claim advantages for learning and teaching with

computers, the successful use of computers is highly dependent on teachers' skills, creativity and teaching approaches.

Another method that can be used to enhance CALL is making Internet available to the students even in the classroom. When Internet is readily available, students are likely to be keener in performing a task given because they are confident in getting necessary information within the time given. They do not have to go to a library and search for books as they can depend on the 'virtual library' for any information. Not only that, they will also be more independent. Thus, the main aim of CALL which is to encourage self learning will be achieved easily. Students will not wait for teachers to spoon feed them with answers anymore because they can obtain the answers needed from Internet.

Students also can benefit a lot from CALL if they use it effectively. First of all, students should have an open mind towards learning on CALL. Only if they have an open mind, can they be receptive towards learning with computer. Based on the interviews with teachers, it is revealed that students who are willing to learn are happier to work in a CALL environment than students who are being forced to attend classes. Therefore, a right attitude towards learning is very important in order to get the full benefits of CALL.

With all these recommendations, the researcher hopes that CALL will be used widely by students of all ages and all levels in future that will help them to achieve optimum experience and benefits. The researcher also hopes that further research is done to investigate in depth the components learned easily by students and factors that contribute to their lack of interest in CALL.

5.4   Conclusion

In a nutshell, the CALL software used, NETPLUS, has proven its effectiveness in this study. It has helped the students to pick up new words to further enhance their vocabulary. When it comes to overall performance of the students, the data gathered shows that students have obtained better marks after doing lessons in CALL environment. Not only that, as discussed earlier, NETPLUS has also boosted students' motivation to learn English. In terms of attitude, most students in this study generally possess a positive attitude while learning in CALL environment. Hence, the software in this study has been very useful to the students as a tool to learn English as a foreign language.