

**COMPUTER USE IN ESL CLASSROOMS IN
AREA OF CONFLICT: TEACHERS' SELF-
EFFICACY AND BARRIERS TOWARDS
COMPUTER USE IN THE PALESTINIAN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

by

NASSER DEEB HUSNI TAMIMI

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for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BECTA	British Educational Communications Technology Agency
CPT	Christian Peacemakers' Team
DCI	Defense of Child International
ESL	English as a Second language
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PASSIA	Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
TAM	Technology of Acceptance Model
TESOL	Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

**PENGUNAAN KOMPUTER DALAM BILIK DARJAH ESL DI KAWASAN
KONFLIK: KECEKAPAN KENDIRI GURU DAN HALANGAN TERHADAP
PENGUNAAN KOMPUTER DI SEKOLAH AWAM PALESTIN**

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini direka untuk mengkaji faktor yang berkaitan dengan penggunaan komputer untuk tujuan pengajaran. Matlamatnya adalah untuk mengkaji penggunaan komputer oleh guru di sekolah awam Palestin, efikasi sendiri guru bahasa Inggeris berkenaan dengan penggunaan komputer dalam pengajaran, halangan yang dihadapi guru ketika menggunakan komputer dalam pengajaran dan hubungan antara efikasi sendiri guru dan penggunaan komputer dalam pengajaran. Kerangka teori kajian ini diambil dari Model Penerimaan Teknologi 3 (TAM 3) yang dicadangkan oleh (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 186 guru bahasa Inggeris dari sekolah awam Palestin. Di samping itu, enam guru bahasa Inggeris telah dipilih untuk temubual separa berstruktur. Kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan telah dibina untuk instrumen kajian. Analisis deskriptif dan teknik statistik inferens juga digunakan. Penemuan utama dalam kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa tahap penggunaan komputer untuk tujuan pengajaran di sekolah awam Palestin agak rendah. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa tahap penggunaan komputer adalah tinggi dalam aspek penyediaan seperti membuat persediaan pengajaran dan menyediakan ujian sementara penggunaan agak rendah dalam aspek lain seperti aspek pengajaran, penilaian pengajaran dan komunikasi. Keputusan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa guru bahasa Inggeris berkenaan mempunyai efikasi sendiri yang positif terhadap penggunaan komputer secara umum. Mereka mempunyai sikap positif terhadap keberkesanan penggunaan

komputer untuk tujuan pengajaran tetapi dapatan menunjukkan bahawa mereka belum bersedia untuk menggunakan komputer dalam mengajar mereka kerana berdepan dengan berbagai halangan. Guru-guru bersetuju bahawa penggunaan komputer dalam pengajaran adalah penting dan merupakan alat yang baik untuk menyokong dan mengadaptasi pengajaran mereka. Walaupun analisis deskriptif mendedahkan bahawa guru mempunyai efikasi yang tinggi terhadap penggunaan komputer, temubual separa berstruktur menunjukkan bahawa guru-guru ini menghadapi halangan ketika menggunakan alat tersebut. Halangan utama ini diringkaskan dalam kekurangan masa, kekurangan kursus latihan, takut kepada perubahan, kekurangan kemudahan dan kesan keadaan politik semasa. Hubungan negatif yang signifikan telah ditunjukkan di antara tahap penggunaan komputer untuk tujuan pengajaran dengan kecekapan sendiri guru ($r = -.172$, $P = 0.50$). Statistik ini menunjukkan bahawa guru yang mempunyai kecekapan sendiri yang tinggi terhadap penggunaan komputer untuk tujuan pengajaran kurang menggunakan komputer dalam pengajaran mereka. Untuk meningkatkan penggunaan komputer bagi tujuan pengajaran di sekolah awam Palestin, guru bahasa Inggeris perlu dilatih untuk menggunakan aplikasi komputer. Di samping itu, guru memerlukan visi bersama mengenai keberkesanan penggunaan komputer dalam pengajaran dan sesi kesedaran lebih lanjut tentang nilai alat tersebut dalam pengajaran juga. Selain itu, kementerian pendidikan perlu mempertimbangkan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penggunaan komputer guru dan memberi lebih banyak sokongan dari segi pembiayaan.

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USE IN THE PALESTINIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate factors related to computer use for instructional purposes. The aim was to examine level of computer use in Palestinian public schools, English teachers' computer self-efficacy with respect to computer use in teaching, the barriers such teachers face when using computers in their teaching and the relationships between teachers' computer self-efficacy and their usage of computers in teaching. The study derived its theoretical framework from Technology of acceptance model 3 (TAM 3) which is proposed by (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). The sample of this study consisted of 186 English teachers from Palestinian public schools. In addition, to six English teachers were selected for a semi structured interview. Validity and reliability were established for the survey instrument. Descriptive analysis and inferential statistical techniques were used as well. Findings in this study revealed that level of computer use for instructional purposes is relatively low. Findings indicated that level of computer use is high in preparation areas such preparing quizzes and preparing tests while it is relatively low in other levels such as in areas for delivery of teaching, evaluation of teaching and communication purposes. Findings of the study also showed that English teachers have got positive self-efficacy towards computer use. They possess positive attitudes towards the effectiveness of computer use for instructional purposes but findings indicated that these teachers may be not prepared yet to use computers in their teaching due to many barriers. Teachers agree that using computer in teaching

is significant and it is a good tool to support and adopt in their teaching. Although descriptive analysis revealed that teachers have high self-efficacy towards using computers, semi structured interview indicated that these teachers face barriers when using such tool. These main barriers are summarized in lack of time, lack of training courses, fear of changes, lack of facilities and effect of the current political situation. Statistical significant negative relationships observed between level of computer use for instructional purposes and teachers' self-efficacy ($r = -.172$, $P = 0.50$). These statistics indicated that teachers with high self-efficacy towards the usage of computer for instructional purposes are less likely to use computers in their teaching. To increase the adoption of computer use for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools, English teachers need to be given more training courses on how to use computer applications. In addition, teachers need a shared vision on the effectiveness of computer use in teaching, more awareness sessions about the value of such tool in teaching well. Moreover, Ministry of Education needs to consider and to facilitate such factors which affect teachers' computer use and give more support in terms of fund.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

“Effective instructors need to inform their teaching by collecting information about their students` first language knowledge, knowledge of the world, previous learning experience, learning styles and preferences, personalities and personal circumstances, as well as their existing second language skills and goals” (McKay &Tom, 1999, p. 5).

Teaching and learning English as a second language are always problematic for teachers and students with very limited exposure to the second language, as in the case of teachers and students of English in Palestine. It is even more problematic when these teaching and learning processes take place amidst continuing political conflict that affects almost all aspects of life, including education (Akesson, 2015). Therefore, teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) within such contexts in Palestine is not an easy task.

Theoretically, the role of a learner has changed in the way that he/she no longer receives information but participates in learning, and is responsible for his own learning. A learner at present has access to benefit from the facilities that facilitate learning such as through computers usage (Nunan, 2012). Good learners are those who can find their ways to learn with less guidance by teachers, but find opportunities to learn (Rubin & Thompson, 1994). A good learner has ego involvement, high aspiration, good orientation and perseverance. In learning language, a good learner is the one who constantly looks for patterns, and willing to practice and analyse new techniques and methodology as he/she learns (Nunan, 2012).

On the other hand, the role of a teacher has changed as well, in the way he\she became more democratic rather than autocratic, acts as a facilitator who encourages collaborative learning and learner autonomy through the use of group work, pair-work and using new resources to transmit the knowledge (Marzano, 2009). The teacher's role has also changed from being a controller organizing learning through textbook and workbook drills to become a participant in creating new materials for learning (Wiggins, 2010). The teacher has become an instructional designer who looks for new methods, encouraging their adaptation with the suitable context. These changes in teachers' role are a result of technological advances, which encourages new learning environment out of innovating pedagogical practices (Marzano, 2009). Technological advances have not only made it easier for the teacher and students to communicate, but also to produce knowledge and to share such productions.

In general, teachers of today started thinking of applying approach of teaching with the help of technology. Technology nowadays becomes one of the main factors that have positively been affecting different aspects of learning (Selwyn, 2011). Technology makes various opportunities available for both teachers and learners such as when students use computers in learning, they are searching for information, and communicating with each other to learn. All the technological facilities help teachers in keeping up with teaching approaches, not only in improving their teaching methods but also for learning of learners who are the core of the educational process (Selwyn, 2011; Thota, 2015).

Computer use has played a vital role especially for teachers of English language. Teachers today try to apply and utilize new methods of teaching to suit student different learning approaches. Each teacher has his/her own methods of teaching and

ways to convey the various teaching messages for learners. Some teachers teach through active learning methodologies such as role play and games while others rely on the traditional way of spoon feeding. However, all this depends on the available resources, tools and professional capacities (Bhalla, 2013), that place limitations to teachers' teaching practices.

1.2 Study Context

Palestine is a Middle Eastern country that is divided politically into two areas: West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestine has been occupied by Israel since 1948. It is part of what is known to the Jews, Christians, and Muslims as their Holy Land. Most of the Palestinians live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. However, many Palestinians have migrated to other countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia and other western countries (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006).

The official language in Palestine is Arabic and the population is approximately 4,550,368 (estimate, 2014) with a popular growth about 2.9 (estimate, 2014) as well. East Jerusalem is the intended capital and Ramallah is the administrative capital (The World Bank, 2007b).

The Ministry of Education in Palestine was established in 1994 following the Oslo Accord. The first national curriculum (grades 1-6) was implemented in Palestinian schools in 2000, replacing the Jordanian curriculum in the West Bank and the Egyptian one in Gaza Strip which had been used since the 1967 occupation by Israel. This new curriculum made Palestine the first Arabic-speaking territory to teach English from the first grade and made technology one of the main subjects taught in

schools, from grades 5-10. Environment and health are elective subjects from grades 7-10 (The World Bank, 2007b).

The Palestinian schools are operated by three different sectors: the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) which educates 65% of all school students; the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) which educates 24% of the students; and the private sector which reaches 6% of the students. Table 1.1 shows the number of students, teachers, schools, student-teacher ratio, and the average number of students in the class in the governmental, UNRWA, and private schools based on Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2012/2013).

Table 1-1: The Organizational Structure of Palestinian Education

	Government	UNRWA	Private	Total
Students	761,691	270,791	97,056	1,129,538
Teachers	36,553	9,908	5,872	52,333
Schools	2,005	343	359	2,707
Student-Teacher Ratio	23:1	29:1	17:1	
Student average/class:				
Primary	30.5	35.9	23.4	
Secondary	28.3	None	18.2	

Source: (Barham, 2014)

According to UNESCO (2009), educational development in Palestine have formed a unique, rich, and challenging experience: “unique because it is one of the very few places in the world, if not the only one, where a Ministry of Education is being built from scratch; rich because of the eagerness and motivation of the Palestinians to learn from others; challenging because Palestine is not yet an independent country and is witnessing conflict on a daily basis” (p.1).

Whether English or Arabic were in question, many Palestinians learned under circumstances that affected the ways in which they were subsequently able to teach.

According to Yamchi (2008), the teaching of English did not begin in high schools until the middle of the twentieth century. However, teachers' training was still some years away. According to Yamchi (2008), most Palestinian English teachers had degrees in English literature, rather than English-language teaching, a fact which naturally affected their teaching abilities. Yamchi also described the selection process for English teachers:

“The candidates have to pass an interview in English after being shortlisted on the basis of their resumes and application forms. The new teachers, however, do not participate in pre-service training prior to beginning their jobs. The in-service training is made available during their first year of work”. (p. 861).

The English curriculum in Palestine is generally the new one that began replacing the old Jordanian curriculum in the West Bank and the Egyptian one in the Gaza Strip from 1999. According to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Palestine, the new curriculum will help prepare Palestinian students for life in the modern world and improve their employment opportunities (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2008).

Palestine has a very rich history, dating back to the times before Christ. Its location and importance to many religions have turned it into a target for conflict over the centuries. The most recent conflict is the Palestinian–Israeli one, which has been affecting the Middle East for more than 60 years (Broning, 2011; Di Mauro, 2012). Since 1967, Israeli occupation has led to reduced access to education and other essential services for Palestinians. Israeli occupation for the Palestinian territories is managed by a system of closure. However, the Palestinian education system has succeeded in keeping children active and focused (Sultana, 2006).

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is perceived by some scholars to be a religious conflict, while others perceive it as an ethnic conflict between Arabs and Jews. Hinchcliffe &

Milton-Edwards (2007), believe that the roots of the conflict lie in ethno-political factors rather than purely religious differences (Hinchcliffe & Milton-Edwards, 2007). Authors such as Juergensmeyer (1993) and Ranstorp (1996), take a different perspective, as the roots of conflict are purely religious. Regardless of the precise roots of the conflict, for the “better part of the century the conflict of two peoples over one land has defined the politics of the region and has had a major impact on many aspects of international politics, including political economy, and international and state terrorism” (Hinchcliffe & Milton-Edwards, 2007).

Hebron was chosen as the case study site due to the level of tension, the range of residential social classes, the impact of economic hardship and its citizens’ exposure to different types of harassment and occupation (Sultana, 2006). More importantly, Hebron was selected as the case study area because the researcher is from Hebron, which enables him to access the urban and rural areas in the governorate and to negotiate access at the existing Israeli check points. In addition, the researcher is an insider knowledgeable about the geographic area and its demography, society and culture. The researcher has a good network of contacts in governmental and non-governmental bodies due to his experience in working with different schools in Hebron area. The researcher’s network of relations made it easier to obtain the endorsement of the ministries involved. These factors made Hebron a suitable city to represent problems facing Palestinians in general and young Palestinians in particular. Marginalization is the main characteristic of Palestinian teachers in terms of the treatment they receive from both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli military. The study project was carried out in both urban and rural areas of the Hebron governorate. All of these areas are affected by continuous siege conditions and curfews. In addition, most of the governorate is affected by the ‘segregation wall’ built around the Green

Line – the line that demarcates the Palestinian-Israeli border as a result of the 1967 War.



Figure 1.1: The map of Palestine
Source: (<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Palestine>)

1.3 Educational Technology in Areas of Conflict

Conflicts are becoming more and more widespread globally. They are such humanitarian disasters in the world that affect education in general and mainly schools, teachers, students and academic achievement as well (Pherali, 2013). The problems that the conflict creates to Palestinian people are challenging experience. The frequent closure for the schools, the mobility restrictions, and the schools attack are examples of such problems that the conflict the political conflict in Palestine (Broning, 2011; Di Mauro, 2012; Patten, 2013) which is defined as “the core of the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the claim of two peoples of the same piece of land” (Dowty, 2012) is negatively affecting schooling and education. Education in Palestine is poor (Safty, 2014; Sultana, 2006). It is implicated in the incident of violated conflict as the increase in conflict is always associated with decrease in education (Di Mauro, 2012).

Research points out different techniques used to overcome such problems caused by conflict. Emergency education or education in emergency context (Kagawa, 2005) is represented “in situations where children lack access to their national and community education system due to occurrence of complex emergencies or natural disaster” (Nicolai, 2003). It suggests that participation is a key to sustainable initiative. Resilience approach (The World Bank, 2007a) which occurs through interactions between people and development of competence, skills to address learning and how schools remain effective as well is another concept research needs to consider in the on-going conflicts. Educational technology is not less important to be considered in coping with conflicts’ contexts (Chang et al., 2015; Selwyn, 2011) as it is a good tool to enhance learning under the current conflict.

1.4 Problem Statement

Computer use is an increasingly important area in the field of language learning pedagogy (Bhalla, 2013; Gilakjani, 2013; I. Sahin, 2011; M. Sahin, 2009). Research highlighted the effectiveness of computer use in language learning, in developing linguistic proficiency and communicative competence among L2 learners as well (Warschauer, 2012). It is a supplement to classroom and communicative interaction (Hedge, 2000). It also increases students’ autonomy and encourage learning (Jonassen, 2000). In the classroom, teacher can represent and convey materials in a

comprehensive way, using new teaching strategies to meet students' needs, and choose suitable technology educational tools to support such teaching strategies and integrating the educational activities in the classroom (Chen & Thielemann, 2007).

The Palestinian Ministry of Education had reiterated that integration of computers and computer technology into Palestinian education is aimed toward improving the quality of education and specifically to enhance a student-centred learning process that will provide skills, knowledge and experience to students. It is also aim to prepare the students later for "employment and an entrepreneurial mind-set" (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2008).

However, teachers vary in their uptake of computer use for teaching and learning. Research had highlighted the role of teachers' computer self-efficacy toward the use of computer for successful teaching (Eroglu & Unlu, 2015). Teachers with higher computer self-efficacy often make use of computer for instructional purposes more than those with less computer self-efficacy (Turel, 2014). It is a measure of control over human thoughts and feelings (Bandura, 1977). Teachers' computer self-efficacy refers to their beliefs to perform teaching successfully (Farah, 2012). Teachers' sense of self-efficacy is an aspect that has been highlighted as the belief about one capability to learn or perform behaviour at a certain level.

The barriers facing teachers to computer use stand as an important area for research in this respect. These barriers need to be identified as they hinder teachers from adoption of computers in teaching and learning (Hani, 2014). Research stated that there is a difference between ESL teachers' views of computer use and the real implementation in teaching and learning due the existence of certain barriers (Saidam, 2007). Unless

these barriers are considered, teaching and learning would never be successful (Barham, 2014).

Barriers facing teachers in using computer for instructional purposes which the education system faces in Palestine are similar to those facing teachers in most countries but unique in many ways (Shraim & Khlaif, 2010). The on-going political conflict with increasing poverty and unemployment has negatively impacted upon the system (The World Bank, 2007b). In addition, financial resources which are provided by the Ministry of Education and allocated to support the public education sector are too limited and are challenged based on priorities identified by the Palestinian Ministry of Education (The World Bank, 2007b).

According to (Saidam, 2007) computer use in Palestine is essential tool for the resilience of people. It's a tool for their survival, for facilitating the emergence of more connected societies. In addition, the successful use of computer in the Palestinian schools rely on teachers (The World Bank, 2007b). If teachers use computer efficiently, they are more likely to enable students to achieve the targeted educational goals. Although Palestinian teachers have been using computers in their teaching for about 15 years, it is not known to what extent such teachers have computer self-efficacy and what level of computer use such teachers can achieve so far (The World Bank, 2007a).

Moreover, the Palestinian government has been trying to improve educational facilities at schools. Efforts have been geared towards increasing the utilization of computers at schools as new paths to compete globally and to achieve better learning outcomes (The World Bank, 2007b). Efforts are still on-going to equip school with computers and a lot of money has been spent to provide training to teachers on the

new teaching methods of learning English as well (The World Bank, 2007b). Reports from Ministry of Education showed that computer use in schools is limited despite the efforts to make computers available in schools (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012; The World Bank, 2007b).

Hence, it is timely that a study identifying level of computer use for instructional purposes at Palestinian public schools, teachers' self-efficacy to computer use and barriers facing teachers to computer use be conducted to help the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education maximise the impact of using computer for instructional purposes as well as to minimize the effects of barriers to computer use.

1.5 Aim of the Study

In order to support teaching English as a second language, and for the sake of improving students' academic achievement and enhancing teaching and learning in this regard, education providers need to utilize supportive methodologies that are relevant, attainable and efficient. In addition, these methodologies should not be overly complicated and expensive for educational system (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2008).

Therefore, this study aims at exploring and describing the level of using computer in teaching English as a second language at classrooms in public schools in Palestine. It also aims at investigating barriers that affect the utilizing of computer in improving language learning. In addition, teachers' computer self-efficacy toward the computer use in the classroom is a focus in such study as well. Moreover, teachers' demographic factors and their relation with computer use and other variables such as teachers' computer self-efficacy, teachers' barriers to computer use will be a focus of the study.

1.6 Study Objectives

In light of the problem statement, the following are the study objectives:

1. To identify the level of computer use for instructional purposes in ESL classes in the Palestinian public schools.
2. To identify ESL teachers' computer self-efficacy towards computer use for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools.
3. To determine the correlation between the ESL teachers' computer self-efficacy and their level of computer use for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools.
4. To identify the barriers facing ESL teachers in using computers for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools.

1.7 Study Questions

1. What is the level of computer use for instructional purposes in ESL classes in the Palestinian public schools?
2. What is ESL teachers' computer self-efficacy towards computer use for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools?
3. What is the correlation between the ESL teachers' computer self-efficacy and their level of computer use for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools?
4. What are the barriers facing ESL teachers in using computers for instructional purposes in the Palestinian public schools?

1.8 Study Hypothesis

This study seeks to answer the above questions which are translated into the following null-hypothesis:

Ho1-There is no significant correlation between the level of computer use for instructional purposes by ESL teachers in the Palestinian public schools and their self-efficacy to computer use.

1.9 Significance of the Study

Such study would illuminate issues that are significant to many institutions and target groups who would be influenced by the utilization of technology for instructional purposes in Palestinian public schools. In addition, findings of the study can help the Ministry of Education in Palestine to draw better policies in relation to the application of computer use in Palestinian public schools. The findings would also increase the knowledge about the level of computer usage and would identify factors and barriers to computer use that need to be addressed to facilitate the change to benefit teachers. Findings of such study can also gear training programs on technology integration as a result of reassessing English teachers' and self-efficacy regarding the usage of computers for instructional purposes. Moreover, findings could serve as a foundation for the research community who wish to proceed with further research on the usage of computers. In addition, findings would add to the understanding of technology adoption or acceptance as global phenomena and could also reinforce theories related to SLA (Second Language Acquisition) technology use. Finally, this study would add a general view about technology adoption in Palestinian public schools in a country characterized by on-going conflict.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to the following limitations:

1. This study essentially investigates the teachers' self-efficacy and the barriers which teachers face regarding the integration of computer use in teaching and learning process in Palestinian public schools.
2. The study is limited only to computer use for instructional purposes as defined above.
3. Data is collected in a number of cities from only one of three governorates in Hebron. It will not be collected from the other two governorates due to constraints imposed as a result of Israeli measures.

1.11 Definition of the Terms

Level of computer use for instructional purposes is "the use of computer and its software for lesson preparation, lesson delivery, evaluation, communication and administrative record keeping (i.e., grades, attendance)" (Isleem, 2003). For the purpose of this study, level of computer use is defined as: "the degree of utilization of computer has been attained by teachers in order to attain educational goals" (Park, 2005).

Teachers' computer self-efficacy is defined as "teacher's personal (i.e. self-perceived) belief in ability to plan instruction and accomplish instructional objectives. It is in effect the conviction the teacher has about his/her ability to teach pupils efficiently and effectively" (Gavora, 2010). For the purpose of this study, it refers to the teachers' successful use of computer for instructional purposes in order to enhance teaching and learning (Turel, 2014).

Barriers to computer use are defined as any condition that prevent teachers from using computer for instructional purposes. These conditions are classified into extrinsic barriers (first order barriers) which result from inadequate and/or inappropriate configuration of ICT infrastructures, including access, time, support, resources and training. Intrinsic barriers (second order barriers) that relate to teachers' personal experience and awareness, including attitudes, beliefs, practices and resistance (BECTA, 2004). In this study, barriers refer to internal or external factors that stop teachers from the integration of computer in the classroom (Shraim & Khlaif, 2010).

Conflict is defined as a humanitarian disaster that takes place in the world and affects all aspects of life, mainly education (Pherali, 2013). For the purpose of this study it refers to the political conflict between Israel and Palestine on the same piece of land (Patten, 2013)

1.12 Summary

This chapter discussed the aim of the study which is the identification of level of computer use in the classrooms in Palestinian public schools. It included introduction, study context, study problem, study objectives, study questions, study hypothesis and the definitions as well. Next chapter will be discussing the literature review based on the main study questions. It will also focus on the literature of educational technology and mainly computer use in the Palestinian schools, the barriers that teachers face while teaching in a country characterized by conflict, and teachers' computer self-efficacy which affect teachers' use of computers in classrooms as well.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews educational system in Palestine, English as a second language and teaching English in classroom environment. Educational technology, educational technology in area of conflict and significance of technology in education are discussed as well as computer use and factors towards using computers in classrooms environment. Barriers facing teachers in using computers for instructional purposes and teachers' computer self-efficacy are discussed as well. Study model and related studies are designed as well after reviewing the relevant theories.

2.2 Education in Palestine

The pre-university education in Palestine comprises of three stages: first is the universal 'basic low' stage, covering Grades 1 through 6; second is the "basic high" stage, covering Grades 7 through 10. The third stage is the 'secondary' stage, which covers Grades 11 through 12 (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012). After finishing Grade 12, students will graduate with a General Exam Certificate in one of the six streams: scientific, literature, vocational, commercial, industrial or agricultural (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012). To continue for higher education, there are 11 universities, 13 university colleges, and 19 community colleges, which accommodate more than 150 thousand students (UNESCO, 2009).

Education in Palestine faces many challenges. Schools are generally with overcrowded classrooms and are poorly equipped. The Palestinian Ministry of Education and

Higher Education had to maintain networks with donors to improve the situations at schools and throughout the education system, including in curriculum development (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012).

Education in Palestine also face numerous barriers as a result for the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Al-Ramahi & Davies, 2002). Schools, universities and other educational institutions have been highly impacted upon by the on-going occupation, mainly in terms of decreasing number of school days and suffering from a lack of resources (Al-Ramahi & Davies, 2002).

The uprising in 1987-1989 resulted in the collective closure of almost all educational institutions by the Israeli military, for them to maintain “public order and safety” (Al-Ramahi & Davies, 2002). As a result, 30 - 40% of school time was lost during the years. After the signature of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, beginning in 1994, the responsibility for running the education system in contemporary Palestine was transferred to the Palestinian Authority (MoEHE, 2012). Until today it is the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority to guarantee the quality of education offered to Palestinian students.

Then, during the second uprising, the “Aqsa intifada” in 2000, “hundreds of students and dozens of teachers were killed, many more injured, and over 2,500 others arrested” (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006). In addition, “Israeli shelling destroyed hundreds of schools and damaged dozens more” (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006). The Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU) reported that “9,000 students from 15 damaged schools were accommodated in 73 other schools, 4,000 in two schools alone. Also, 1,200 secondary school students in north Gaza government

schools had no accommodation during the 2009-10 school years” (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006).

Trips to school in certain Palestinian areas can in fact be life threatening. In the Old City of Hebron, in the West Bank, for example, many teachers and students are harassed on their way to school by Israeli settlers or by the Israeli soldiers (Christian Peacemaker Teams, 2011). The Christian Peace Maker Teams are NGOs comprised from those solidarity groups whose members live in the Old City of Hebron for a period of time during the year. These groups are involved in the escorting students of Kortoba and Al Ebrahimiyah schools on their way to and from school (Christian Peacemaker Teams, 2011).

Despite the challenges, education in Palestine has been undergoing various changes. The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education introduced a new Palestinian Curriculum in 2000 as a central element of its education vision (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012). The Palestinian Curriculum Centre was established “as part of the Palestinian national endeavour to upgrade the educational system by developing a Palestinian curriculum which accounts for Palestinian needs, philosophy, values and thoughts” ((PCDC), 2010). The main aim behind introducing the new curriculum was to replace duality in the use of curriculum, the Jordanian curriculum in the West Bank and the Egyptian curriculum in the Gaza Strip, with a single curriculum for Palestine.

The education system in Palestine has been then intensified by the new national curriculum. The new curriculum is considered as a replica of the educational systems in most Arabic countries. The change in the curriculum took place gradually over a 6-year period (2000-2006) to cover all grades from 1-12 in all subjects. The change of

the curricula and to develop and implement a curriculum specific for Palestinians required training of teachers and officials on improved learning-teaching process. Training workshops and programmers were run at district and central levels by teacher-trainers and educational supervisors (Al-Ramahi & Davies, 2002).

However, according to the Palestine MoEHE, still “the educational system in Palestine is not yet directed toward the 21st century competence requirements. At large, teaching and learning methods at schools follow a traditional approach and are hardly effective in promoting high-order thinking and the achievement of learning and social competences” (2012, p. 5). The ministry also indicated that the quality of education was low in Palestinian schools, due to rigid adherence to textbooks and curriculum, and the lack of modern schools' facilities such as libraries and labs, and the lack of ICT equipment in schools (Dowty, 2012).

2.2.1 The Importance of English as a Second Language in Palestine

People in many parts of the world have begun exploring and learning another language in order to better communicate with other nations, especially in an era of globalization. According to McKay & Tom (1999), learning other languages is crucial for students around the world. Scholars have highlighted the need for learning and acquiring a second language. Learning a new language encourage students to live and succeed in their own community and appreciate the culture of communities outside their own. In an increasingly globalized world, it also assists them in such tasks as shopping, banking, working and pursuing further education. Over the years, English has become an important language for students of other languages. Education has been one of the major fields affected by the spread of the English language as a result of colonialism, economic incentives and the mass media (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2017)..

The main language spoken in Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza) is Palestinian Arabic which is a dialect of Standard Modern Arabic (Classical Arabic) (Rogers, 2003) . There is not a huge difference between the dialects of Gaza and the West Bank. Palestinian Arabic is categorized under a subgroup of dialects of Levantine Arabic. Arabs who live in or originate from the Levant countries (the eastern Mediterranean countries), such as Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel speak Levantine Arabic, which is also known as *shaami* Arabic (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012). Palestinians generally do not speak English. There are those who can speak English, depend on their locality in Palestine. In cities such as Ramallah, Jerusalem, or Bethlehem, people speak English, while in other cities people may speak only the basics of English that they have learned during their school days (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012).

English is important for the people of Palestine. In particular, the functional knowledge of English will help school graduates take full advantage of economic and occupational opportunities in Palestine and many other regions of the world (The World Bank, 2007b). By learning English, students will be empowered with the language skills and literacy necessary to become productive workers, and will allow Palestine to capitalize on the experience and linguistic diversity of its graduates in a growing, competitive global market and in the world of global communications.

English, therefore, serves an economic-reproductive function in addition to its ideological function. In its economic-reproductive function, English qualifies people to operate the technology to which it provides access (The World Bank, 2007b). On the other hand, English brings “modern” ideals and serves as a channel for interpersonal, social, and cultural values (ideological function). In conclusion,

developing Palestinian students' competence in English and equipping them with the ability to use accurate and appropriate English serves Palestinian national interests, allowing the country to compete in the global economy (Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), 2012).

2.2.2 Teaching English in Classroom Environment in Palestine

Classroom environment is a crucial element teaching English as a second language. The environment provides opportunities for teachers and learners in the classroom to interact and benefit from the interactions (Harmer, 2015). Egbert (1993) proposed some environmental conditions that promote language learning in classroom, such as: During interaction teachers and students can negotiate meaning, learners interact with authentic materials and authentic tasks, learners are encouraged to produce varied and creative language, learners have time for feedback, learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process through intentional cognition, learning style and motivation, learners work with ideal stress, anxiety level and learner autonomy (Harmer, 2015; Hedge, 2000).

Teaching English as a second language in Palestine has an overt prestige (Sultana, 2006). It is more prestigious when students learn it in a country characterized by conflict. When students learn English they can communicate easily with others (Pherali, 2013). They can get access to internet, telecommunications and other technology devices (Sultana, 2006). Moreover, learning English can help students when they pursue their academic higher education at the university. Not only that but learning English can raise the value of education and culture in the country as well (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006).

Teaching of English in Palestine schools began in the middle of the last century after the 1967 War and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaze Strip (Champagne & Abu-Saad 2006). Teachers of different qualifications were employed and trained by the Ministry of Education in Palestine to teach English in government schools. They are graduate teachers, holding diplomas, bachelor, master or PhD degrees in English language and literature. Ministry of Education's main goal of training was to provide teachers with new methods and new techniques in teaching English as a second language to be used effectively (Yamchi, 2008).

Language teachers must study the language learning in their classes – their ages, their background, their aspirations, their interest, their goals in language learning, their aptitude for language acquisition in a formal setting – and then design activities that meet the needs of specific groups (Palestinian MoEHE, 2012). Language teachers need to prepare students to interact in normal ways by creating or simulating culturally authentic situations that stimulate them to communicate real meaning, thus preparing them to choose confidently and rapidly from the many possibilities within the language for expressing their intentions comprehensibly and acceptably in natural interaction ((Champagne & Abu-Saad 2006).

2.3 Education and Educational Technology

Although education is an essential concept in our daily life and especially in schools, many writers still inconsistent about a basic definition. Education is defined as “conceptual and linguistic construction that is widely used in many societies and cultures, but with very different meaning, which is fiercely contested and partly contradictor. Learning does not have a clear physical or refined in the world” (Hodkinson & Macleod, 2010).

Education is one of the major needs that appeared after the revolution of the languages. This is why scholars started focusing on English communicative skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in the field of education and mainly in the classroom environment, (Baker, 1996). Therefore, computer use is an effective tool in teaching such languages in classroom. It is an effective tool for teaching bilingual education as well. Moreover, computer use which is a crucial element for instructional purposes (Freeman, 1998) became a need for teachers at schools and academic institutions as well.

Rogers et. al also pointed out the two main types of education. These two types are significant in teaching and learning (A. Rogers et al., 2003). These types are: formal education and informal education. As for the formal education it is the learning that is known in academic literature. It is the education that writers assess and credentialed in schools. It is basically the school or university-based learning. As for the informal education, it is seen as learning “which we undertake individually or collectively, on our own without externally imposed criteria or the presence of an institutionally authorized instructor” (Livingstone, 2000). Moreover, Rogers pointed out to the importance of organizational cultures and micro politics in the schools and universities in this area as there is a relation between learning and community. Learners need to consider the macro level of society such as economics, labour markets, political levels and cultural institutions in their learning. Learners need also to consider the relation between educational technology and social, economic and political aspects in life. Learning in real life and interaction with people makes people enthusiastic, more enhanced and encouraged to think to share knowledge with others (Luckin, 2010).

While talking about education, there must be also a need to talk about learning. According to (Illich, 1973), the term learning refers to people's acquisition of a skill. To learn means to acquire a new skill or insight. Writers classify learning as process for building up theories. For example, the behaviourism concept of learning is a change in behaviour as a result of people's experience (Illich, 1973). Learning could also be seen as a quantitative increase in knowledge, memorizing, acquiring facts, skills, making sense of the abstracting meaning and understanding reality in life (Säljö, 1979).

Educational technology has been a focus of research for many years. It is a topic that is often an interest for many scholars (Selwyn, 2011; Somekh, 2007). Scholars highlighted the importance of educational technology in the classroom. Technology connects students with their society and outside (Selwyn, 2011). It also makes sense to teachers when technology is a concern for education.

Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary (2003) defines technology as "the research or use of the mechanical art and applied sciences". According to (Isman, 2012), the concept of technology leads us to think of human artefacts such as machines, electronic devices, scientific hardware or industrial manufacturing systems. College Dictionary (2003) indicates a general meaning of technology as the "practical application of knowledge" or "manner or accomplishing a task" (p. 194). (Ihde, 1998) suggests another definition that technology consists of three aspects: material elements, a set of praxis-uses which human makes and the relationship between technologies and human who use them. (Selwyn, 2011) defines technology as "the process by which human modifies nature to meet their needs and wants". (Wessels, 2009) adds that technology today is not to be only described in the form of tools such

as internet and computers but to be also considered in its social content far from its technical forms. According to (Nye, 2007), technology is not only used as sustained forms of life, but it also enhances learning and improves forms of living.

According to Lievrouw & Livingstone (2002), educational technology is defined as:

- Artifacts and devices: the technologies themselves and how they are designed and made before they reach educational settings;
- Activities and practices: what people then do with the technologies in educational settings and for educational purposes (including issues of human interaction, organizing, identity, cultural practices);
- Context: the social arrangements and organizational forms that surround the use of the technologies in educational settings and for educational purpose (including institutions, social structures and cultures).

All the previous concepts of educational technologies do not only refer to material technology but it also refers to digital technology as well. They are all “part of furniture” in educational settings (Selwyn, 2011).

2.3.1 Education in the Palestinian Area of Conflict

“At a minimum, the violence of conflict interrupts a child’s healthy growth and development” (MacCormack, 1999).

Children and young people are the most affected population group in any armed and political conflict (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; MacCormack, 1999; Machel, 2001). According to the United Nations’ Security Council Report on protecting children during armed conflict (2009), major violations against people during armed conflict