CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The development of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) has also pared the way for the use of multimedia in the field of education. The use of computer technology and multimedia in the teaching field has been frequently discussed as there are many advantages offered by their applications. The integration of different media such as text, graphics, images, audio, video and the digital environment have proven that these elements can increase students' concentration during the teaching and learning processes; hence improving students' performances in their studies.

Nowadays, most students love and prefer to watch animated image combined with sound and interactive learning during class sessions. Thus, this has influenced many educators to implement the interactive multimedia techniques in teaching and learning processes.

With the advancement in computer technology and the rapid development in multimedia, teaching of English in Malaysia has taken a new direction to improving students' learning of the language. English in Malaysia is simply classified as English as a Second Language (ESL) rather than English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and is limited to as a medium of communications with foreign tourists, international trades, business transactions and etc. However in the last decade, English language in Malaysia

is becoming increasingly important by the re-introduction of the language as the medium of instruction for the Mathematics and Science subjects in schools and universities.

In addition to that, as reported by *The Star* (7 February 2006), the previous Higher Education Minister, Datuk Seri Shafie Salleh had announced the implementation of teaching of mathematics and science-based degree programs in English by the year 2007 in all public universities in Malaysia. The decision was made to support and upgrade the level of English proficiency among Malaysian students in higher learning institutions.

"For some readers, the very word literature brings to mind dusty, difficult books stacked in a rarely frequented corner of the library", (Brown, 2004). This is a fact that has been proven because most Malaysian students from the secondary school level to university level have little interest in English literature learning. According to the literature teachers, students are less attentive during the literature class, and become easily bored during the teaching session. Literature learning basically involves the study of the theme, characters, setting, analytical thinking, moral values and the plots.

In the traditional method of learning literature, students need to read the sequence of a single text, which can become dreary. Besides from having to comprehend the piece of literature, they will also have to search for the meaning of some difficult words on their own. For the advantages offer by the multimedia components, it is assumed that matter can be fixed and students may enjoy learning and their interest in learning the literature story will be increased.

Many researchers in English language have confirmed that storytelling is a good approach to enhance students' understanding of a particular topic during English class (Myers 2004). Most people, teenagers and even adults have innate love of listening to stories. However, most of the time, they are more interested in the storytelling since the activity is more enjoyable than reading. What makes a story attractive does not only

depend on how great the author is, but rather it depends on the arrangement, plot and climax of the story.

Even so, throughout history, storytelling has been used as a sharing of knowledge, wisdom and values (The Digital Storytelling Associated, online 2008). This has also been strengthened by the quote, *"Having teachers tell stories is an established method in English education"* (Tendero, 2006). Thus, recently, the storytelling approach is being the most famous approach among the English teachers in the literature field.

The integration between multimedia courseware and English storytelling approach can be a practical method to enhance the learning rate. Students will be more attracted to the colorful images and animation of the story provided by the multimedia courseware. English lesson conducted by the use of the multimedia courseware is anticipated to be more interesting and effective than the traditional teaching method.

For the advantages offered by the multimedia components, it is envisaged that learning English literature can be made more exciting, and students can learn in a fun but effective way. This is anticipated to enhance their interest in literature learning.

Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP) is a higher learning institution that requires students to attend English proficiency classes. Basically, UTP offers Foundation courses to prepare students prior to entering into undergraduate degree programs, and, undergraduate and postgraduate studies in various Engineering programs, Information Technology and Business Information System programs. Before qualifying for acceptance into any undergraduate programs, students are required to complete the Foundation study program, which is equivalent to a pre-university level program. Most of the foundation students are teenagers in the age range of 16 to 19 years old. Since the medium of instruction at UTP is English, it is compulsory for students in the Foundation program to take English language subjects: English I and English II in two consecutive semesters, in which English literature is part of the syllabus.

In the English II course, students need to complete five short stories: 'The Land Lady', 'The Open Window', 'The Story of an Hour', 'The Door in the Wall' and 'The Black Cat'. Students have to read the four A4 pages of The Open Window, five pages of The Story of an Hour, seven pages of The Land Lady, sixteen pages of The Door in the Wall and sixteen pages of The Black Cat stories.

Prior to conducting this research, a preliminary survey on The Black Cat story, involving 95 second semester students in the Foundation program was carried out to ascertain the problem in literature learning among these students. From the survey, three areas of difficulties have been identified and are discussed further in the following section. These problems have motivated the author to develop a multimedia courseware to assist the students during the literature learning. The multimedia courseware will adopt the storytelling approach, and incorporate educational theories to ease the learning of English literature.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problems that have been identified will be discussed as the following:

1.2.1   Difficulty in imagining the story plot

A story map consists of the plots of the beginning, climax, solution and ending of the story. This sort of plot requires the reader to imagine the story flow. This does not matter for movies, but for a story text, readers need to imagine the story by themselves. Sometimes, the reader will have a wrong imagination of the story, leading to misunderstanding of the story. In literature learning, such misunderstanding will have adverse influence the student's performance in examination.

For story of The Black Cat, 11 plots or scenes are involved for the whole narration. Thus, students need to imagine all 11 plots in order to understand the story. A multimedia courseware should be of great assistance to students during the literature learning by guiding the students to imagine that kind of plots.   The preliminary survey (the survey set is as in Appendix A) indicates that about 66.67% of students agree that they cannot understand the story on their own, in other words they need assistance. However, 85.3% of students wish to learn the Black Cat story through a movie presentation, which will simplify the story.

1.2.2   Unfamiliar words

Most of young students at the university level or even higher level adults are still developing a vocabulary base. Hence, they are able to navigate their new language, increase language exposure and build their vocabulary (Brown, 2004). Learning literature means that a student is exposed to words either already known or a new word. However, many unfamiliar English words are found in most English literature texts taught at the pre-university level. The literature narrative that has been chosen by the university is obviously viewed as appropriate, and is deemed to provide a new scope of study, and to expand the students' vocabulary. Therefore, the selected literature will be stories that contain a lot of new and unfamiliar words.

Based on the preliminary study, 86.7% of students admit that they cannot understand the meaning of several words in the Black Cat story. This story has a long text, and in addition the words used are unfamiliar to the students at this level and rather archaic because the Black Cat story was written in the year 1843 by Edgar Allan Poe.

1.2.3 Boredom phenomena in learning literature

The survey results show that more than 55.9% of students spend about 2 hours or more to complete reading the text, and 86.44% of them took more than 1 hour to comprehend the whole story. This shows that the minimum time spent on reading the text and understanding the story is about 3 hours; for some students more time is needed.

Too much time spent on reading tends to make the students lose interest easily, and consequently they will find the learning difficult. Because of this, 91.67% of students from the survey found that the Black Cat story is difficult to understand.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

Based on the stated problems those have been discussed in section 1.2 this study aims to develop a multimedia courseware prototype to assist students at the pre-university level (can this be specific to UTP foundation students) in literature learning. Three specific objectives to be achieved at the completion of the study are:

1. To study and design a simple model for storytelling that can be used as a guide during the multimedia courseware development.

2. To develop a multimedia courseware prototype for English Literature by incorporating the storytelling approach, educational theories and multimedia elements such as text, graphics, animation, audio and interactivity.

3. To evaluate the multimedia courseware prototype for English Literature in terms of usability.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is focused on the Black Cat story as the case study. The Black Cat story is one of the syllabuses in the English literature course at UTP. Therefore, the multimedia courseware for English literature that will be developed will be called as Multimedia Black Cat Courseware (BC-C). There are several research questions that have been created in order to realize the research objectives. The questions can be categorized according to three main questions, each with its own sub research questions as follows:

    i. *How can a simple model of storytelling approach for multimedia courseware development be designed?*

In order to design a simple model of storytelling approach that can be used in the multimedia courseware, the author needs to study and understand the different kinds of approaches. A review of the different storytelling approaches is presented in chapter 2, section 2.6, while in chapter 3, the design for a suitable storytelling approach to be used for the development process will be discussed in section 3.2.2 ii (d).

    ii. *How can the usability of the multimedia courseware for English literature be evaluated?*

The usability will be measured in terms of efficiency, learnability, satisfaction and screen layout of the courseware. The sub research questions are stated as follows:

- Do the interactivity elements in BC-C help students to understand the literature better?
- Do the multimedia elements in BC-C help students to understand the literature better?

- Do the students agree with the usability elements in BC-C?

iii. *How can the usability and effectiveness of storytelling approach in the multimedia courseware be evaluated?*

The effectiveness of the storytelling approach will also be measured. The evaluation on the effectiveness of BC-C requires the answer to several sub research questions as follows:

- Does the Multimedia Black Cat Courseware using the storytelling approach increase the understanding of the Black Cat story among the Foundation students' of UTP compared to the conventional method?
- Is the Multimedia Black Cat Courseware using the storytelling approach an effective aid to the students during the literature learning?

1.5   SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of the thesis is outlined as follows:

- The scope of study is focused on the 'Black Cat' story.
- The story of the Black Cat is presented in the courseware by using the storytelling approach, where a narrator will be created to tell the story. Here, the interactive storytelling is applied where students can get to any page to see a particular scene and easily obtain a clear explanation from the synopsis of each scene.
- The elements covered are vocabulary, literature and grammar.
- For the effective multimedia courseware development, the pedagogical and educational theories have been adapted into the courseware.

1.6   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

An overview of research work is created to give the full description for the multimedia storytelling courseware development. This research work contains the elementary components of the instructional design method, development design and evaluation. Figure 1.1 shows the overview of research work of the multimedia storytelling courseware development. ADDIE has been adapted into the BC-C life cycle as the Instructional Design Method. The development design involved the interactive multimedia, interactive learning, modules and approach designs. The evaluation included the measurement on the effectiveness and usability of the courseware.

1.7   THESIS CONTRIBUTION

The main contribution of this research is the exploitation of storytelling approach used in representing a summative scene from a conservative story book. The approach is applied in the courseware to make the users or students able to appreciate literature learning in a fun way and eventually meet the learning objectives. The storytelling approach in BC-C is incorporated in the multimedia elements so as to create more excitement during the lesson.

Another contribution of this study is the adaptation of ADDIE methodology to the BC-C Life Cycle, where this is the first work involving both. Each flow of the work sequence for the development of a multimedia storytelling courseware is presented in this thesis.

This research study also has produced a model of Instructional Design for the development of a multimedia storytelling courseware as the BC-C, using storytelling as the main approach. In addition, the LEAS Concepts to fulfill the needs of a multimedia storytelling courseware are also proposed.
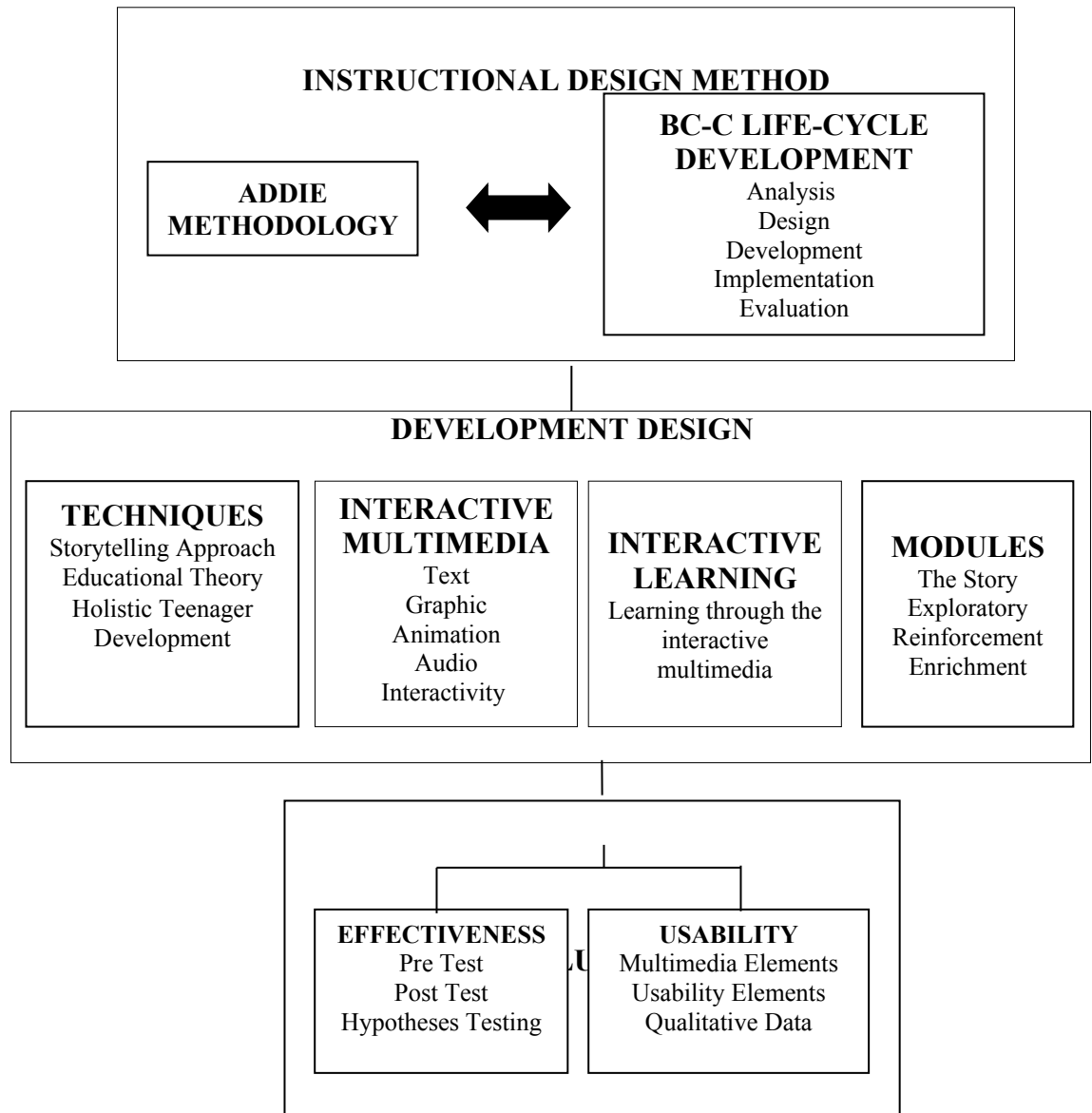
```
                    INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN METHOD

                                      BC-C LIFE-CYCLE
                                       DEVELOPMENT
          ADDIE          ⬌             Analysis
       METHODOLOGY                     Design
                                       Development
                                       Implementation
                                       Evaluation


                         DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

     TECHNIQUES        INTERACTIVE      INTERACTIVE      MODULES
  Storytelling Approach  MULTIMEDIA      LEARNING       The Story
   Educational Theory      Text      Learning through the Exploratory
   Holistic Teenager      Graphic       interactive    Reinforcement
     Development          Animation      multimedia     Enrichment
                          Audio
                        Interactivity


            EFFECTIVENESS            USABILITY
              Pre Test           Multimedia Elements
              Post Test          Usability Elements
           Hypotheses Testing    Qualitative Data
```

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

1.8   ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the background of the study, the context in which the research problems is studied, objectives and the research questions. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature pertinent to the topic

under study. It examines various literatures on the definition of multimedia, storytelling, and some of the learning theories. It also presents some of the previous work done in the storytelling approach. Chapter 3 presents the research design and the methods used in the study. In Chapter 4, the development of the prototype, analysis and results of the experiments and interview derived from the conceptual framework are reported. Chapter 5 concludes this study by summarizing the results of the research question posed in Chapter 1, highlighting the contributions of the study and recommends some areas for future research work.