

## ***The Influence of Age on Teachers' Attitude and Anxiety towards ICT***

***Boualem BENGHALEM***

Djilali Liabes University, Sidi Bel abbes

Email: benghalemist@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

Teachers' beliefs, views and their attitudes towards information communication technology (ICT) can affect their teaching and behaviour. Hence, the aim of this study was to investigate factors that can affect teachers' attitude and anxiety towards the use of ICT in their language classrooms such as age. The participants of this study were teachers of English at the English department of Djilali Liabes University Sidi Bel Abbes.

In order to find out the effects of using ICT tools on EFL teachers' attitude and anxiety, a questionnaire was prepared and addressed to 32 participants. After the data collected were analysed, the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview revealed that teachers with all different ages had generally positive attitude towards technology due to the social setting where they lived. Moreover, despite the fact that anxiety in foreign language classroom is inevitable, EFL teachers were less anxious when using ICT in their language classrooms.

*Keywords:* ICT, teacher' attitude, computer anxiety, EFL.

## 1. Introduction

In this age of technology, many policy makers see the integration of ICT in education in developing countries as a sign of development. In northern Africa and especially in Algeria, we have witnessed a drastic change in the system of education as the policymakers of the country have recognized the use of ICT as important in improving the quality of education.

Due to the increasing demand to use ICT in education and to teach students the knowledge and skills they need in order to keep up with this trend, the Algerian government has recognized the crucial role of ICT in the development of the quality of education. The ministry of education has spent around 3 billion dinars in June 2002, following the reform of the educational process and insertion of ICT with a set of structure, which was included in the country's formal ICT policy.

Although the use of ICT in classroom has brought enhancement in teaching and learning, we cannot fully assume that this is all resulted from the use of ICT. Many researchers such as Becker (2000), Murphy (2000) and Turnbull and Lawrence (2002) have connected the successful use of ICT by American and European teachers to teachers' attitude. In addition to studies concerning teachers' attitude towards ICT, Ursava and Karal (2009) states that the levels of computer anxiety of teachers are important factor in the success of integrating ICT into language classroom.

Many variables influence teachers' attitude towards ICT. Blankenship (1998) states that age is a factor while Woodrow (1992) states that age is not an important factor in correlation to teachers' attitude towards technology. Moreover, Namlu and Ceyhan (2002) state that there is a connection between age and computer anxiety while Rosen and Maguire (1990) conclude on their study that age has not an important connection with computer anxiety. Yet, age can be a factor in evading the use of computer owing to lack of knowledge about computers, training or computer use.

Based on these facts, a number of research questions are raised:

- What are EFL teachers' attitudes towards the use of ICT in classrooms?
- Is there a relationship between teachers' attitude and their age?
- Do EFL teachers feel anxious when they use ICT in their classrooms?
- Is there a relationship between teachers' anxiety towards computer and their age?

## 2. Methodology

To allow the investigation of teachers' attitude and anxiety towards the use ICT in their language classrooms, a questionnaire was designed for those purposes. The respondents for this study were 32 EFL teachers at the department of English of Djillali Liabes University Sidi Bel Abbes, Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts during the

school year of 2015-2016. Many teachers incorporated ICT in their teaching.

### 3. Results and Discussions

#### 3.1 Participants

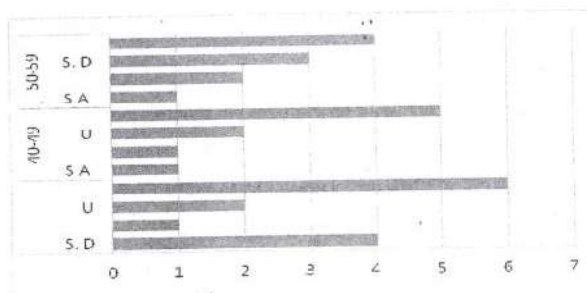
The questionnaire used in this study was distributed to 32 EFL teachers at the department of Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts at Djillali Liabes University Sidi Bel Abbas. 12.5% of the participants were within the 20-29 age range while 28.12% of them were within 30-39 age range, another 28.12% of them were within 40-49 age range and finally; 12.5% of them were 60 years old or over as shown in the following table

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Over 60
Total : 32 participants	4	9	9	6	4
Percentage	12.5%	28.12%	28.12%	18.75%	12.5%

**Table 1 Teachers' attitude towards ICT in terms of age**

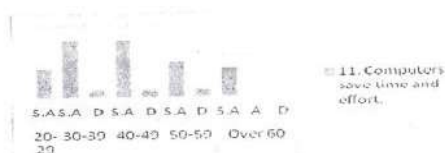
Participants of different ages showed mostly positive attitude towards the use of ICT. The majority participants of all different ages preferred using ICT in teaching .100% within 20-29 range, 66.67% within the 30-39, 55.56% within the 40-49, 50% within the 50-59 range, and 100 % of

participants with over 60 years old range disagreed with the statement 'I dislike using computers in teaching'.



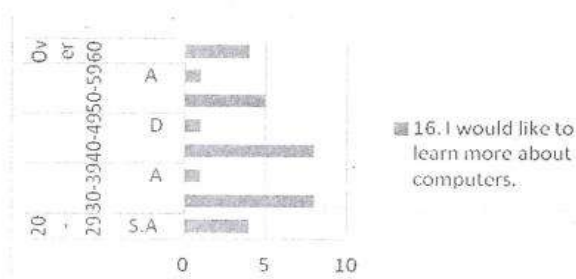
**Graph 1 Teachers' attitude towards the use of ICT in teaching according to their age**

Teachers of different ages showed positive attitude towards the variable tools offered by computers. All participants within the 20-29 age group, 88.89% of the 30-39 age group, 88.89% of the 40-49 age group, 83.33% of the 50-59 age group and 100% of participants with more than 60 years old had positive attitude towards the efficiency of computers in time and efforts.



**Graph 2 teachers' attitude towards computers advantages according to their age**

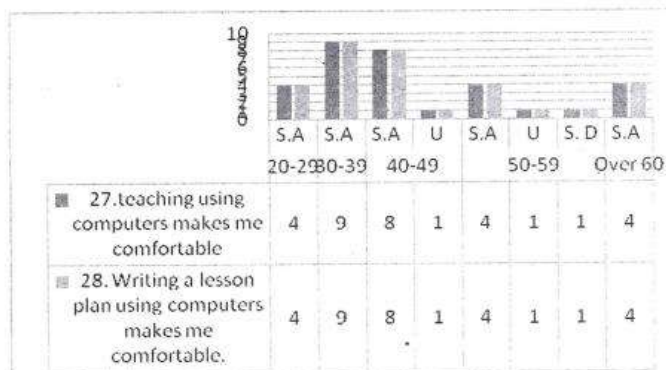
Participant of different ages showed positive attitude towards learning more about computers due to their knowledge of the importance of ICT in all aspects of life. All participants within the 20-29, 30-39, 50-59, over 60 years old and the majority of the 40-49 age group (88.89%) wanted to learn more about computers.



**Graph 3 Teachers' Attitude towards Learning More about Computers in Terms of Age**

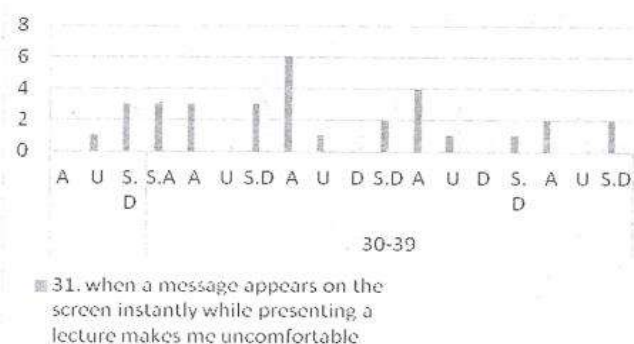
### 3.3 Computer Anxiety Level of Participants According To Their Age

A low level of anxiety was noticed among participants' responses despite of their age. Only 16.67% among the 50-59 age group showed a high level of anxiety when using ICT while the majority of participants within all group age showed a low level of anxiety .



**Graph 4 teachers' anxiety level when using computers in terms of Age**

When participants were asked about their level of anxiety when facing technical difficulty while using computers, the level of anxiety was a bit high. 25% of participants within the 20-29 age group, 22.22% of them within the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups, 33.33% among the 50-59 age group and 25% of participants with more than 60 years old stated that they felt anxious when they faced a technical problem.



**Graph 5 Teachers' anxiety level when facing a technical problem in terms of age**

When participants were asked about the importance of training in reducing anxiety level, many participants of different ages took a neutral stand since they stated that they did not have ICT training. While those who had a formal training stated that computer training was important in reducing computer level as 75% within the 20-29, 55.56% within the 30-39 age group, 22.22% within the 40-49 age group, 33.33% within the 50-59 age group and 25% of participants with 60 years old and more replied positively to this statement.



**Graph 6 The impact of Computer Training on reducing anxiety level according to age.**

#### 4. Summary of the Results

##### 4.1 Teachers' Attitude towards ICT in Terms of Age

Handler (1993) and Massoud (1991) state that age is not an important factor in correlation to teachers' attitude towards technology. On the contrary, Blankenship (1998) have conducted a study in which concludes that age is a crucial factor in correlation with teachers' attitude towards the use of ICT. Moreover, Chio (1992) have concluded in his study that despite the fact that young teachers are more knowledgeable and skilful when it comes to computers, senior teachers had positive attitude towards computer.

Unlike previous studies, this study reveals that age is not a factor that influence teachers' attitude given the results obtained from the questionnaire

Results obtained from the questionnaire indicate that participants of different ages had mostly positive attitude towards the use of ICT. The majority participants of all different ages preferred using ICT in teaching. Moreover, participants showed positive attitude towards the variable tools offered by computers. All participants had positive attitude towards the efficiency of computers in time and efforts. Participant of different ages showed positive attitude towards learning more about computers due to their knowledge of the importance of ICT in all aspects of life.

Based on these results, age is not a determining factor in changing teachers' attitude towards the use of ICT in classrooms.

## 4.2 Teachers' Anxiety towards ICT in Terms of Age

Namlu and Ceyhan (2002) state that there is a connection between age and computer anxiety. Even though it is hard to profile a computer anxious person, Appelbaum (1990) states that the majority of people with computer anxiety are over 30 due to the early introduction of computers that youngsters have had in school. According to a study of Dyck and Smither (1994), senior citizens have more positive attitude towards computer with a low level of anxiety despite the fact of their lack of experience compared to younger adults. Based from these results, Dyck and Smithers (1994) suggest that older people have little experience with computers yet, they enjoy the idea of what computer could do.

The results of this study revealed that young teachers and even older ones had low level of computer anxiety.

A low level of anxiety was noticed among participants' responses despite of their age. Only 16.67% among the 50-59 age group showed a high level of anxiety when using ICT while the majority of participants within all group age showed a low level of anxiety

When participants were asked about their level of anxiety when facing technical difficulty while using computers, the level of anxiety was a bit high. 25% of participants within the 20-29 age group, 22.22% of them within the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups, 33.33% among the 50-59 age group and 25% of participants with more than 60

years old stated that they felt anxious when they faced a technical problem.

When participants were asked about the importance of training in reducing anxiety level, many participants of different ages took a neutral stand since they stated that they did not have ICT training. While those who had a formal training stated that computer training was important in reducing computer level as 75% within the 20-29, 55.56% within the 30-39 age group, 22.22% within the 40-49 age group, 33.33% within the 50-59 age group and 25% of participants with 60 years old and more replied positively to this statement.

Based on these results, age is not affecting EFL teachers' anxiety level of computers.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The data obtained from this study revealed that by the use of ICT in Algeria is acceptable given the circumstances that can hinder its progress. The proper use of ICT by teachers would help to improve the teaching process of English as Foreign language. The success of ICT when implemented in the foreign language classroom depends mostly on the teacher. In addition, it is very important that teachers should know well the different tools of ICT in order to fully take advantage of the benefits that ICT offers a conventional classroom. Computer training is important however, teachers with no computer training still can manage the simple ICT tools. Despite the fact that the use of ICT by teachers is still

not high compared to the developed countries, it is important for universities to provide computer training for their teachers.

## 5. Conclusion

There are many advantages of ICT that can be seen into the educational setting. ICT provide an atmosphere for teachers to be flexible and joyful in their teaching. The implementation of ICT in language classrooms can be beneficial to teachers in terms of understanding their subjects, how to prepare their lesson plan effectively. At the same time, ICT can help teachers to be familiarized with the development of knowledge, improve their proficiency levels and self-confidence.

The use of ICT in EFL classrooms offers significant advantage in language teaching learning; teachers can be more at ease and less anxious. Yet, the use of ICT is not the answer to all foreign language problems. What more is certain is that, when this tool is used considerably, it can increase the quality of education, and therefore backing up the teacher to make his job less stressful and more efficient in order to achieve their objectives.

## 6. References

- Appelbaum, S. H., & Primmer, B. (1990). A HRx for computer anxiety. *Personnel*, 67(9), 8-11.
- Becker, H. J. (2000). Pedagogical motivations for student computer use that lead to student engagement. *Educational Technology*, 40(5), 5-17.

- Blankenship, S. E. (1998). Factors related to computer use by teachers in the classroom instruction. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, AAT 9831651.
- Chio, Y. K. (1992). Attitudes toward and knowledge of microcomputers used for instruction among commercial high school teachers in Korea. Unpublished EDD dissertation. University of Georgia. AAT 9316322.
- Dyck J. L., & Smither, J. A (1994). Age Differences in Computer Anxiety: The Role of Computer Experience, Gender, and Education, J. Educ. Comput. Res. 10:239–248.
- Handler, M.G. (1993). Preparing new teachers to use computer technology: Perceptions and suggestions for teacher educators. Computer Education, 20(2), 147-156.
- Massoud, S. L. (1991). Computer attitudes and computer knowledge of adult students. Journal of Educational Computing Research, 7(3), 269-291.
- Murphy, E. (2000). New Tools in an old Trade: Teachers talk about use of Internet in the teaching of French as a second or foreign language. Canadian Modern Language Review, 59(2), 215-235.
- Namlu, A., & Ceyhan, E. 2002. "Computer anxiety: A study on university students". Eskisehir: Anadolu University Publishing.

- Rosen, L. D., & Maguire, P. (1990). Myths and realities of computerphobia: A meta-analysis. *Anxiety Research*, 3, 175-191.
- Turnbull, M., & Lawrence, G. (2002). FSL teachers and technology: Findings from a national survey. Retrieved 17 December 2014, from <http://www.caslt.prg/print/computersp.htm>.
- Ursavas, O. F., & Karal, H. (2009). Assessing pre-service teachers' computerphobia levels in terms of gender and experience, Turkish sample. *International Journal of Behavioral, Cognitive, Educational and Psychological Sciences*, 1(1), 71-75.
- Woodrow, J. E. (1992). The influence of programming training on the computer literacy and attitudes of pre-service teachers. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 25(2), 200-218.