**ICT TOOLS**

Information and Communication Technology consists of various tools and systems that can be exploited by capable and creative teachers to improve teaching and learning situations. Lim and Tay (2003) classification of ICT tools as :

1) Informative tools - Internet, Network Virtual Drive, Intranet systems, Homepage, etc.

2) resignation devices - CD-ROM, etc.

3) Constructive tools - MS Word, PowerPoint, FrontPage, Adobe Photoshop, Lego Mindstorm, etc.

4) Communicative tools - e-mail, SMS, etc.

5) Collaborative tools - discussion boards, etc. forum

The five categories of ICT tools listed above are discussed in more detail under the following headings.

Informative Tools

Informative tools are applications that provide large amounts of information in various formats such as text, graphics, sound, or video. Informative tools can be regarded as a passive repository of information (Chen & Hsu, 1999). Examples include tools and information resources of the existing multimedia encyclopedia of the Internet. The Internet is a huge electronic database, and researchers consider the Internet as the most significant ICT tools in e-learning environments. Pew Internet & American Life Project did a survey in 2002 showed them three out of five children under the age of 18 and more than 78% of children between the ages of 12 and 17 lines. Key findings from this study are found in Levin & Arafeh (2002) shows that students rely on the internet to help them do their homework. In short, students consider the Internet as a virtual textbook, reference library, virtual tutor, learn to study shortcuts and virtual study groups (McNeely, 2005).

## Situating Tools

Situating tools  is a system that lay the students in the environment where it involve a context and the occurrence of a situation. Examples of such systems include simulation, virtual reality and multi-user domain. Situating tools software tools such as CD-ROM. CD-ROM offers hypermedia application which gives better opportunities for teachers to enhance learning environment. Hypermedia application covers more than one of the following media such as text, audio, graphic images (still images), animation and video clips. Hypermedia applications are well integrated in the learning environment to enhance student autonomy and thinking (Cheung & Lim, 2000). A multimedia presentation topic will help students to conceptualize the ideas of the real world by integrating the theories in the practical application of real-world situations. It is to increase students' ability to use the conceptual tools of the discipline in authentic practice. (Phillips, 2004) Multimedia able to put the amazing array of resources on student and lecturer resources on teaching and student 1control. "Multimedia learning active learning to create a more dynamic, interactive, collaborative, and satisfying" (Supyian, 1996)

## Constructive Tools

constructive tool is a general purpose tool that can be used to manipulate information, construct their own knowledge or visualize students understanding. Construction tools such as Microsoft Word or Powerpoint has a strong impact in the educational environment and is widely used in most organizations in the form of memos, reports, letters, presentations, record routine information, giving businesses the most (McMahon, M. 1997.) In learning a second language , Microsoft Word manage to help students to make correct sentences and texts as well as modern word processors include spell checking and dictionaries and grammar checkers. Therefore, teachers can use the software to promote writing in the curriculum. PowerPoint is a presentation graphics program packaged as part of Microsoft Office for Windows or Macintosh. Although generally used for developing business presentations , it is also very advantageous in the context of increase creativity among students. While word processing program is the most common computer applications used, as a spreadsheet like Excel is just as important in teaching and learning of English. Students will be exposed to learning design and statistical data using the Excel program that can be automated through the formula.

## Communicative Tools

Communicative tools are systems that allow easy communication between teachers and students or between students outside the physical barrier classroom. (Chen, D., Hsu, JJF, and Hung, D. 2000) It is including e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, chat, teleconference and electronic whiteboard. Synchronous communicative tools such as chat or video conference enable real-time communication while using the tools of communicative asynchronous (eg e-mail and electronic whiteboard) is a system in which exchange of messages between people are not 'live' but somehow delayed. Communicative tool most appropriate for activities requiring more time to think before responding. Utilization of electronic mail is increasing day by day. E-mail is the most commonly used on the Internet. It is easy to use as it is a primarily text-based system and simple communication tool for teachers and students that allows students to dominate class beyond physical barrier. (Chen, D., Hsu, JJF, and Hung, D., 2000.)

## Collaborative Tools

Collaboration tools of ICT is currently the focus of much interest and emerging as development of new tools that make online collaborative projects draw a realistic option for a distributed group work. Internet can be used for many collaborative activities such as meetings, discussions are taking place, working in the document, information dissemination, and other tasks. Interactive electronic whiteboard is not just used as tools for meeting and development, but recently became the most popular tool among teachers. whiteboard is an electronic device that interfaces with the computer where the computer image is displayed on the board that can be manipulated interactively (Weiser and Jay, 1996). This tool is increasingly popular with teachers, when used in conjunction with a computer and a video projector that produces interactive learning community. Instead of having to crowd around one or two computers, interactive whiteboard not only display the materials, but also to respond to human interaction with computer commands and orders on a touch screen. In addition, these technologies provide impulsive information sharing, constructing knowledge and stimulate personal growth. (Mona, 2004). Other collaborative tools, such as E-mail messaging, Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) and General Packet Radio Services (GPRS) embedded in micro-browser equipped mobile phones or GPRS enabled handheld computers are other ICT tools that that can link students in different geographic locations exceeding the boundaries of class. In addition, the development of mobile phone and PDA allows learners to exchange information in a short time simultaneously and asynchronously, and provides flexibility for one-one, one-to-many and many-to-many communication, especially for the online discussion forum. (Lim & Lee, 2002). In conclusion, a "learning is no longer seen as a solitary activity, but is described as taking place through social interaction with peers, mentors and experts" (Kings, 1998).