



UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A STUDY ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LITERATURE
TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS**

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ABSTRACT

This research is to determine the students' perception towards the English language literature taught in school. The incorporation of the English literature into the English language lessons is an effort on the part of the Malaysian Education Ministry to revive literature in schools. This study involved a total of one hundred students of S.M.K Tebakang in Serian District. A questionnaire survey and selective interview were employed in gathering data to determine the students' perception towards the English language literature taught in school. The study also explored the problems faced by students when learning the English language literature. The finding of this study indicated that the majority of the students surveyed view literature as being an important component in language learning but their low level of proficiency of the English language demotivates them.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The component of literature has been in the Malaysian English Syllabus since the 1960s but it was not a compulsory subject for all Malaysian students. According to Lazar (1993, pp.70-120), any literary materials such as poems, short stories and novels need to be fully used to increase students' language awareness, grammatical and lexical knowledge. Teaching and learning activities using such materials also make the lesson interesting and meaningful.

Hence, the inclusion of literature in the English language lessons is regarded as an initial step to expose, motivate and gradually develop an appreciation and basic understanding of not only the English language, but the culture of the native speakers as well.

The English language literature component in the Malaysian English Syllabus was proposed in March 1999 as part of the Ministry of Education's efforts to promote literature after the poor response from students towards the English Literature. The Central Curriculum Board in the Ministry of Education launched teaching of the English literature component in English class nationwide in the Malaysian schools in March 2000.

According to the Curriculum Development Center, Ministry of Education Malaysia 1999, the Literature Component is aimed to help students to be imaginative, creative and further improve their English language proficiency. Literature will also broaden the students' outlook through reading about other culture in the world.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This literature review will cover the discussion on learning of the English language literature in school, the language curriculum in Malaysia, and students roles during the literature lesson in classrooms.

2.1 Literature in Language Classrooms

The last decade has seen an increase interest and awareness in using literature in language learning classroom.

“Initially literature was assigned a special place in language learning classroom, since it was treated as a source of high moral value and a model of excellent language usage” (Durant 1993. pp.84).

The learning of the English language literature in school will enhance students’ language awareness, their grammatical and their lexical knowledge through various activities in the classroom. It is another instrument to instill and to encourage reading habit among students, because only through reading that they will be able to improve schema knowledge on English language.

“Literature holds a potential for meaning making” (Rosenblant 1978. pp.145).

Students are able to create personal meaning through their reading. The students could also create unique interpretations of literary materials given to them.