

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A DIALOGIC READING
INSTRUCTION INVOLVING ESL
UNDERGRADUATES**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education
in Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL)**

Faculty of Education

September 2010

Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the use of Dialogic Reading Instruction (DRI) for teaching academic reading. The study was intended only to introduce the use of DRI and not to assess the impact of DRI on the students' reading performance. It started with one DRI session early in the semester and subsequently another session a month after. DRI was conducted in the academic reading lesson involving 20 student participants. The students were from the Bachelor of Administrative programme, selected based on convenience sampling. At the end of the two separate lessons the students were instructed to fill up a likert-type questionnaire on their perception of the use of DRI. Out of 20, five students were selected at random for semi-structured interviews to find out the views of the students as regards the use of DRI. The study found that the students were very responsive to the use of DRI. Those interviewed also related their experience positively, implying that they were in strong favour of the use of DRI for academic reading.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter provides an overview of the research which includes background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, and scope of the study, its significance, its delimitations and limitations, and finally, the definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background to the study

In the recent years there has been a call to look into the deteriorating standards of English among Malaysians undergraduates in public universities. Malaysia shifted to the Malay tongue, Bahasa Melayu, from English as the language of teaching in 1970. Now, universities are producing graduates who do not make the grade in the work force. In a country with 237,000 job vacancies, about 45,000 college grads are unemployed, mainly because of poor English, according to the Malaysian government. (Stephanie Phang, 2006). When asked about the cause of the underemployment Rafiah Salim, Universiti Malaya's Vice-Chancellor responded by saying: 'I'll give you one reason for it: English,. "The only industry that's really using Bahasa is the government service."

A national study financed by the Ministry of Higher Education and conducted by Isarji, Ainol, Mohamed Sahari and Mohd Azmi (2008) highlighted that 54% of the Malaysian public universities' undergraduates were between limited and very limited users of English Language. The study also revealed the students were limited users of English in respect to the productive skills of writing and speaking and modest users in terms of listening and reading. With regard to reading, the study indicated that that 16% of them possessed very limited reading skills. Another 31.4% had modest

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The chapter provides a comprehensive review of socio-cultural theory, Intersubjectivity within classroom culture/community, Grand Dialogic Zone (GDZ) and teacher and student roles in dialogic classroom discourse.

2.1 Socio-cultural Theory

The socio-cultural approach to learning was originally conceptualised by Vygotsky (1978) who emphasised the importance of social interaction in influencing learning development. Vygotskian theoretical proposition was that each child, in any domain, has two-level zone of developmental possibilities, that is, “actual developmental level,” and “potential development” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). The distance between the two levels is what Vygotsky termed as the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

The ZPD is a key concept in Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory of child cognitive development, which has significant and broad pedagogical implications to encompass not only child learning but also learning involving older learners (Guerrero and Villamil, 2000).

2.1.1 The zone of proximal development (ZPD)

(1) Adult-child / Teacher-child learner interaction

The zone of proximal development is defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).