

# JURNAL AKADEMIK

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Through Performance Appraisal**

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Satu Pendedahan Awal**

BASRI ABD. GHANI

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INSTITUT TEKNOLOGI MARA CAWANGAN SARAWAK

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# TOWARDS ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE THROUGH PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

by  
Muz Muzaidah Perera

## INTRODUCTION

"Performance" and "effectivity" may become another the backbone in research regarding education. The value of the appraisal is enhanced by the use of the concept of "Performance Appraisal" as the main concept in the study. This paper will discuss the concept of "Performance Appraisal" and its role in the study of education. The paper will also discuss the concept of "Performance Appraisal" and its role in the study of education.

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## OBJECTIVES OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The main objective of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee. The purpose of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee. The purpose of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee. The purpose of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee.

Moreover, a study of performance appraisal is a study of the individual employee. The purpose of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee. The purpose of performance appraisal is to provide a regular study evaluation of the performance of the individual employee.

# AN EVALUATION OF THE MATERIALS USED FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN MARA INSTITUT OF TECHNOLOGY, SARAWAK

By

*Razlan Abdullah*

*Mariah Abdullah*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Resource materials for students are the single most important reference source in the life of a student and the most important resource material (in ITM) is the recommended text. Therefore, this article aims to evaluate materials currently used in Institut Teknologi MARA for Foundation English One, Foundation English Two, Intermediate English and the ESPs. There is no intention to make a critical evaluation as this article merely discusses points of views which are both positive and negative. This article also gives the views of just ITM Sarawak lecturers on materials currently used. The writers embarked on this survey as a matter of interest in order to find out lecturers' opinions regarding the topic. From the response of the questionnaire, we have been able to gather some interesting findings.

The questionnaire, circulated among 16 English lecturers has its limitations as it is general in nature and does not make a thorough survey of each code under consideration. The scope of questions does not cover all relevant aspects thoroughly and therefore we have not been able to make a detailed assessment of the materials used. The findings are therefore fairly general in nature.

The lecturers who responded to the questionnaire have taught at least two of the codes discussed in this article. Their years of experience in ITM vary from those who are very experienced (12 years) to comparatively new and very new lecturers (1 year). The average length of service of the 16 lecturers is 5.6 years or 11 semesters.

This article will also attempt to deal with the opinions on the materials used under three broad categories. First, the objectives of the syllabus will be discussed in general and then they will be related to the materials used to assess the suitability of the materials currently used in fulfilling these objectives.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE SYLLABUS

### **Level One English - Foundation 1, 2 & Intermediate**

In general the objectives of the three codes under consideration stress on the development of grammatical accuracy through an awareness of the grammar

rules and their application. It should be noted that English in ITM is taught using the integrated approach and grammar is taught incidentally. However, students are taught to recognise basic grammar errors and should be able to integrate and consolidate the items learnt so that they are able to write grammatically correct sentences, paragraphs and essays according to the codes they are studying.

The objectives for Level One also include the acquisition of skills in reading and comprehension so that students can extract information from a passage, respond to questions using correct grammatical construction and to recognise and write topic sentences, the main idea and supporting details. Intermediate level students should be able to skim, scan and transform information from visual to present form and vice-versa. As mentioned earlier, in all these skills they use the integrated approach.

There is a great emphasis in oral communication in Level One which carries a 30% to 40% weightage, depending on the code. Students acquire general and communication skills in language games, role plays, public speaking, drama etc. All these are aimed at enabling students in ITM to meet personal, social and professional needs in interacting in a second language.

#### **Level Two English - ESPs**

It must be stated here that for this survey, all ESP courses in the Diploma for Science Stenography are excluded. All the remaining codes offered at ITM Sarawak (ENL250, ENL251, ENL252 and ENL268) teach students to use the relevant functional skills to write and present reports, conduct and participate in meetings, prepare minutes, write all types of memos and letters and also to be familiar with interviews and the writing of resumes. Peer evaluation is encouraged for oral presentations. The overall aim of the ESPs is to expose students to business communication and to prepare students for jobs upon graduation.

Very little grammar is taught as the syllabuses preassume that students already have a fairly good foundation. Time constrain is also a factor which prohibits any deviation from the prescribed scheme of work.

### **III. EVALUATION OF MATERIALS**

#### **General Evaluation**

Respondents' general evaluation of the materials currently in use is that the materials are up-to-date with sufficient variety to stimulate students to learn. They feel that the language in the materials are authentic and appropriate for the comprehension level of the students. 81% of the respondents share this opinion. Another interesting finding is that lecturers find that the time allocated for covering the topics is sufficient (81%) with the exception of ENL268.

**Table I** gives a summary of the questions asked and the respective responses. Whilst 9 of the 10 items indicate a positive response, it is surprising to note that 62% of the respondents feel that the materials contain errors and that the facts are somewhat distorted. 31% of the respondents indicate that some of the topics covered are not quite necessary.

**TABLE I**  
**CONTENT OF THE MATERIALS USED**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	CONTENTS OF MANUAL ARE UP-TO-DATE	NIL	11	5	NIL	16
2	HAVE VARIETY	NIL	13	3	NIL	16
3	STIMULATE STUDENTS	NIL	10	6	NIL	16
4	ARE AUTHENTIC	NIL	12	4	NIL	16
5	APPROPRIATE MATERIALS	NIL	14	2	NIL	16
6	TIME ALLOCATED ENOUGH FOR A. TEACHING B. STUDENTS TO ABSORB	NIL	13	3	NIL	16
		NIL	12	4	NIL	16
7	PROVIDE BROAD RANGE OF ABILITY LEVELS	NIL	12	4	NIL	16
8	MATERIALS HELP A STUDENT TO ACHIEVE HIGHER ACADEMIC LEVELS	NIL	5	11	NIL	16
9	PREPARE STUDENTS FOR JOBS	NIL	12	4	NIL	16
10	FREE FROM ERRORS AND DISTORTION	NIL	6	10	NIL	16
11	CONTAIN ALL NECESSARY TOPICS	NIL	11	5	1	16

Furthermore, there are a few limitations. It appears that whilst the materials enable students to pass examinations thereby catering for their immediate needs, they do not prepare students for higher academic levels. As many as 68% of the lecturers feel that students have to look elsewhere for information to prepare them for higher examinations. Thus the materials used will prepare students for jobs up to diploma level without difficulty as knowledge and know-how required for these jobs are adequately covered by the materials used. However, the contents are too shallow for students wishing to go further. Independent self-study will have to be carried out.

### Teaching Methodology

The skills in level one are taught through reading, writing, listening and oral communication by way of presentations and participation in meetings and interviews. Table II indicates that most lecturers are of the opinion that the recommended texts used in both levels train students and enable lecturers to assess the abilities of students for their respective codes. Lecturers generally agree that the texts are self-sufficient (69%) and they provide suitable variation and are easy to use. 88% of the lecturers also feel that the texts provide enough scope to enable them to use their own ingenuity to teach students.

It can therefore be said that the materials generally provide adequate guidelines for lecturers at each level. There are clear and complete instructions to achieve the desired results. However, a fair amount of input is necessary on the part of the lecturers to give the texts the "local Sarawakian" flavour, as most, if not all, the examples are written with the Shah Alam scenario.

**TABLE II**  
**TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

	The Recommended Methodology	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Abstain	Total
1	IS A PART OF THE GOALS OF INSTRUCTION	NIL	9	2	NIL	5	16
2	REQUIRES EXTENSIVE PREPARATION	1	3	10	NIL	2	16
3	PROVIDES VARIATION IN LANGUAGE ABILITY	NIL	10	4	NIL	2	16
4	EASY TO USE	NIL	11	3	NIL	2	16
5	ENABLES LECTURERS TO USE A VARIETY OF MODES IN THE TRANSACTION	NIL	14	NIL	NIL	2	16
6	RELATES WELL TO THE COURSE CONTENT	NIL	12	2	NIL	2	16
7	SUCCESSFUL WITH STUDENTS	NIL	11	3	NIL	2	16
8	ECONOMICAL IN RESPECT OF TIME	NIL	5	8	NIL	3	16
9	ECONOMICAL IN RESPECT OF EFFORT	NIL	9	4	NIL	3	16

Findings indicate that 82% of the lecturers feel that as far as grammar is concerned there is some acquisition of structures. However, students do not know how to apply the structures they are taught. The integrated approach of teaching does not allow detailed explanations within the prescribed hours for each code, particularly for Foundation Two (ENL150). Students are able to understand explanations for levels one and two but find difficulty in expressing

themselves orally and in writing. For oral communication, 63% of the lecturers feel that public presentations do not reflect the linguistic competence of the students because the activities are not graded spontaneously and continuously. Students merely memorise a prescribed text or practise a specified role and are thus assessed. Therefore there should be increased input in terms of suggested activities to improve students' communicative skills. Also on the subject of activities, in Drama and Meetings, evaluation is given on a team basis. This is somewhat unfair as some students are much better and put up a better show while others just participate. Yet they get the same marks on a team basis.

In testing procedures there is a consensus of opinion (82%) that students' overall abilities are not tested. The testing procedures are felt to be general rather than specific, though compatible with the course content. There is special mention about a level two code - ENL268 - by lecturers who teach/ have taught this subject. It is felt that testing procedures for this code are lopsided as there is too much emphasis on the report-writing component. Final examination papers for this code are also very general, unpredictable and difficult. Students doing this code have to rely heavily on the on-going assessment to pass the examination.

**TABLE III**  
**TESTING PROCEDURE**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	<b>PROVIDES INFORMATION ON STUDENTS'</b>					
	(A) Communicative Competence	NIL	5	10	1	16
	(b) Acquisition of structure	NIL	13	3	NIL	16
2	<b>ASSESS STUDENTS' OVERALL ABILITY</b>	NIL	3	12	1	16
3	<b>COMPATIBLE WITH:</b>					
	(a) The course content	NIL	12	3	1	16
	(b) The course objectives	NIL	8	8	NIL	16
4	<b>EFFECTIVE IN MEASURING STUDENT LEARNING</b>	NIL	3	13	NIL	16

