

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A CASE STUDY: READING POETRY AMONG
FORM ONE STUDENTS IN A SECONDARY
SCHOOL IN SARAWAK**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Education (TESL)**

Faculty of Education

September 2011

ABSTRACT

Reading poetry for Form One students

This study aims at identifying how Form One students feel about reading poetry; whether they like to read poetry and also if they find it easy or difficult to read poetry. It also identifies the factors of the difficulties as well as the strategies employed by these students. Data for this study were collected through the administration of group interviews over a period of two weeks by using both questionnaire interview and open-ended interview questions. The interview sessions are audio- taped, transcribed, analyzed and reported in percentages and described qualitatively. There were one hundred and thirty five Form One students in one of the school in Sarawak involved in this study.

The findings indicate that a majority of the students dislike reading poetry. Besides that, a majority of them also have difficulties in understanding some archaic, unfamiliar words, to interpret the message of the poems as well as the meaning of the poems as they claimed that the poems were linguistically difficult. Most students prefer consulting the dictionary, teacher, family members or friends when they faced difficulties in understanding the poems in order to address the difficulties faced in reading poetry.

Candidate's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

In the event that my thesis be found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of University Teknologi MARA.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank God for His mercy, grace and the way He provides my daily needs.

Firstly, my appreciation goes to my family for their love, support, patience, understanding and sacrifices.

Next, I would like to dedicate my hertiest acknowledgement for my supervisor, Dr. Caesar De Alwis for his contribution, advices and guidance for me to complete this dissertation.

My thanks also goes the principal, teachers and especially to the fone hundred and thirty five Form One students of SMK Jalan Arang, Kuching for their full co-operation in providing me with the data needed for this research.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to whoever involved in this project for their assistances and encouragement which has made this project a success.

Thank you everyone. May God bless you all.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Over the last two decades, the use of literature materials as a major feature in English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum especially in the second and foreign language context has become more apparent and significant. Literature plays an important role in the study of language because in literature, language is manipulated and used creatively in order to convey meaning (Lazar, 1993). Therefore, it suggests a rich resource for language learning. Being aware of the benefits that literature has to offer, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia has added the literature component to the curriculum which aims to engage learners in wider reading good works for enjoyment and for self-development besides developing their understanding of other societies, cultures, values and traditions that will contribute to their emotional and spiritual growth.

Literature is a compulsory part in the Malaysian secondary schools' English Language Teaching (ELT) syllabus. The dependence on the use of literary materials has become more obvious in the 1980s and 1990s with the emergence of literature-based reading programmes. The use of literature in schools as early as 1976 was through English Language Reading Programmes (ELRP). This programme emerged when the English Language Reading Programme was piloted in 1979 in residential schools and by 1983, it was extended to all Malaysian secondary schools. Its main aim was to encourage learners to read extensively and independently by providing them as much reading materials as possible. This programme also targeted that all learners would read a total of 100 books in three years (Ganakumaran, 2003). However, after few years, it was felt that the ELRP lacked the structure to improve English language among students. Therefore, in 1990, the Ministry of Education developed the Class Reader Programme (CRP) as a replacement of the ELRP. The