



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLUBS (ELCs) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS:  
A STUDY OF THEIR CURRENT STATUS IN SIBU, SARAWAK**

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## Abstract

English language Clubs (ELCs) are a feature of the co-curricular activities in all secondary schools in our country. They function to carry out language activities that will help students enhance their language learning. To what extent they are effective in doing this is unclear. This study aims to shed some light on the status quo of the ELCs. The study looked at the secondary schools in the Sibü Division of Sarawak. The study looked at five factors through the lens of the teacher-advisors. They were: The students, the activities, the teacher-advisors' role, internal and external support. The methodology used both qualitative and quantitative data in a mixed methodology approach. The quantitative data was obtained from a survey of all the schools in Sibü, while qualitative data was collected through interviews. The results revealed that while the schools carried out the ELC activities, the way they were managed and the way they were carried out were not effective enough to meet the needs of the student members. A lot more could be done to improve the situation. The study provides recommendations that need to be taken into consideration in order to improve the efficacy of ELCS in the schools.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0. Introduction

In Malaysia, the English Language is a compulsory subject in the academic curriculum of all academic institutions, from primary through secondary schools to institutions of higher learning. Foo and Richards (2004) state that, the use and importance of the language has undergone many phases. They note that in addition to commercial and business sectors, there is a tremendous growing importance in the educational sector.

The English language has been recognized as the second language in our education system. It is compulsory for all schools, regardless of their ethnic orientation, to include it as a subject. It is not only in the individual's interest but also in the nation's interest that our students be proficient in the language. As Rajadurai (2004) puts it, English is important for educational endeavours of the people and the technological, economic and political aspirations of the nation. However, since the Ministry of Education is not prepared to make a pass in all major examinations in the English Language, compulsory (Rajaretnam & Nalliah, 1999) all ways and means need to be explored in providing the students the opportunities to love the language and in doing so, learn the language.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter looks at a general overview of how the ELCs feature within the Malaysian school co-curriculum. Some pertinent issues of co-curriculum will be conceptualized. In addition, a general overview, role of ELC (English Language Club) and its importance within the co-curricular school structure will be presented.

#### **2.1 Malaysian National Education System**

The country's educational goals are manifested in the Malaysian National Education Philosophy (NEP) which aims at producing citizens who are balanced, well-trained, skilled and who cherish the national aspiration for progress, development and unity. To achieve this aim, students are encouraged to excel in both academic curriculum and co-curricular activities.

In fact, since 1985, all Malaysian students are required to participate in co-curricular activities, as stated in the Circular 1/1985, dated 2 January 1985 (Othman, 2006). It states that it is obligatory for students to attend extra-curricular activities outside school hours: before or after school (depending on the school sessions), weekends and at times, during school holidays. In 2006, it was further announced that students' marks for the co-curricular activities would be accumulated and taken into account as a basis for student selection for entrance into local