

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO MARA UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SAMARAHAN AND MUKAH CAMPUS
PRE-COMMERCE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON SECOND
LANGUAGE LEARNING**



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ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory study which aims to investigate learners' perceptions of language learning in two UiTM campuses in the state of Sarawak. The researchers were guided by the research question — What are the ideas of UiTM students on language learning in terms of the following aspects: the usefulness of various language learning activities; the nature of language learning; the ideal language learning situation; and how they learn English. The study also aimed to find out if there are differences in students' perceptions, in particular between male and female, and those in Mukah and Samarahan campuses respectively.

A total of 155 Pre-Diploma students formed the sample population of this study which was carried out in the form of administered questionnaire survey. The questionnaire consisted items in the form of Likert-type statement. Data gathered was analysed using descriptive and quantitative data analysis methods.

The findings indicate that respondents from both the campuses do possess extremely diverse perspectives of language learning, thus reflecting their different learning styles and orientations. There were some differences between the perceptions of students in UiTM Samarahan and UiTM Mukah in relation to the usefulness of some language learning activities, the nature of

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Findings on the ability of young learners to articulate views on learning and the lack of similar studies in language learning in UiTM see the need of carrying out this study among Pre-Commerce students in Universiti Teknologi MARA Sarawak. This is in order to understand language learning from the young tertiary students' perspective and within the context of MARA University of Technology as a whole.

It is indeed wise to gauge the Pre-Commerce learners of second language beliefs about the nature of language learning and for the lecturers to know what aspects are most important in the language learning process. There is also a need to establish Pre-Commerce learner's beliefs about language learning before the lecturer is able to develop autonomous learning. Beliefs and values influence every human action. In the same way lecturers teaching BEL 040 to the Pre-Commerce students bring into the classroom certain beliefs, assumptions and knowledge that influence the activities they choose to carry out; the same can be said of the Pre-Commerce students who have their own ideas of language learning.

The Intensive English Proficiency course provided by UiTM, BEL 040, for the Pre-Commerce students also see the need of how the lecturer-fronted approach which does not really produce good students can give way to a

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing research related to students' perceptions of language learning, learning styles and strategies in language learning. The chapter is divided into the following sections: Learning Strategies and Learning Styles; The significance of investigating learners' views of language learning; and Past research on Students' Perception of Learning and Language learning.

2.1 Learning Strategies and Learning Styles

Language learning styles and strategies appear to be among the most important variables influencing performance in a second language. Language learning strategies are the often conscious behaviours employed by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information (Rigney, 1978; Oxford, 1990). These strategies can be evaluated in a variety of manner, such as thinking-aloud procedures, observation and survey. The most successful learner is one who uses appropriate strategies in relation to the learning task at hand, to the material and to their own goals, needs, and stage of learning (Sekhan, 1989; Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989). According to Chamot & Kupper (1989), language learners at all levels employ strategies in learning