



**A STUDY ON STUDENTS' LACKADAISICAL ATTITUDE IN  
LEARNING LITERATURE IN AN ESL CLASSROOM**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to identify the students' lackadaisical attitude in learning literature in an ESL classroom. It also looks into how literary books or activities help improve students' English proficiency and to investigate whether the environment around them, be it, in school or at home, are conducive towards the study of literature.

Forty (40) students of Year Five and Year Six were randomly selected as respondents for the purpose of this study. The data was obtained through questionnaires and interviews with the students.

The findings of the study indicated that a significant group of students are reluctant readers because reading is, for them, a passive, boring activity, performed constantly in isolation and perhaps associated with skills which they feel they do not possess. The findings do revealed that there is a lackadaisical attitude in students who are learning literature in an ESL classroom.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 An Overview

This chapter discusses the main purpose of the study, statement of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research objectives, limitations and definitions of terms.

### 1.1 Background of the study

Learning literature can be fulfilling. If you open your heart, mind and soul you will find that Literature:

- teaches you who you are and how you can relate to those around you
- shows you how to accept and appreciate different values and cultures
- improves your grammar and widens your vocabulary
- encourages you to reflect on the meaning of life

(quoted from Cheah, H. (2004) '*Baby Steps in Understanding Literature Component' Introduction To Short Stories* )

Literature was thought of as embodying a static, convoluted kind of language, far removed from the utterances of daily communication. Because of this it was sometimes considered less comprehensible and reserved for the most advanced level of study. Even at that level, the need for a barrage of critical terms, the 'metalanguage' of literary studies, convinced many teachers and students alike, that it could not be studied satisfactorily. Therefore it is not surprising that students lack enthusiasm when it comes to literature, Moreover, in some cases

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

English is a compulsory subject in the Malaysian curriculum. The English language is taught as a second language in primary and secondary schools. However, a high percentage of students fail to achieve an acceptable level of competence in the language (Nesamalar, Saratha & Teh; 1997).

In 1999 the Ministry of Education announced a significant change in ELT policy (KPN/JPNS 2000). The change in policy was directed at the teaching of literature to all students in Malaysian schools as literature is now to be incorporated as part of the Malaysian English language syllabus. (Gunakumaran Subramaniam, 2002).

Rajagopal (1976), in a survey among Malay-medium students in selected schools in Selangor, observed that pupils who were less competent in English were those handicapped by their environment. They received less opportunity and encouragement to practice speaking English at home. Even their contacts outside the home did not provide them with situations in which they could practice speaking the language. Rajagopal's finding strengthens the assumption that Malay-medium learners of ESL are insufficiently exposed to English; hence their poor performance in the language (Balaetham 1982; Omar Mohd Hashim 1982).