

# **A STUDY TO DISCOVER STUDENTS ATTITUDE IN LEARNING ENGLISH**

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**LANGUAGE FACULTY  
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this project paper is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to discover students attitude in learning English. It focuses on motivational strength, attitudes towards the English language and language use anxiety. It also considerably look into differences between genders in terms of their urge to learn the language and their perspective towards the language. The data collection was acquired from the results of the questionnaire and the nominal data was studied quantitatively. It was found that students' motivational strength, attitudes towards the language and anxiety have a special place and significantly determine their efforts and achievements. Where gender difference was concerned, the percentage was interchangeably higher and lower but it was considered as nominal. Hence, students' attitude must be given extra consideration in the classroom.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti sikap dan penerimaan pelajar terhadap bahasa Inggeris. Ia memberi tumpuan kepada faktor motivasi, sikap and rasa ketidaktentuan dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggeris. Ia juga secara ringkasnya melihat akan perbezaan antara jantina berkaitan keinginan dan pandangan mereka terhadap bahasa berkenaan. Data berkaitan telah diperolehi daripada soalselidik yang dijalankan dan data tersebut dikaji secara kuantitatif. Adalah dikenalpasti bahawa faktor motivasi, sikap dan rasa ketidaktentuan dalam penggunaan mempunyai tempat yang istimewa yang menentukan usaha dan pencapaian pelajar. Melihat dari sudut perbezaan jantina pula, keputusan peratusan dari soalan saling berubah antara tinggi dan rendah di antara kedua-dua jantina. Walau bagaimanapun perbezaan tersebut terlalu rendah untuk dibuat keputusan yang signifikan. Berdasarkan ini, faktor sikap pelajar terhadap subjek ini perlu diberi perhatian yang lebih serius dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELTC	English Language Teaching Centre
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETeMS	English for Teaching of Mathematics and Science
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
L2	Second language
PTA	Parents Teacher Association
UPSR	Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Students must embrace the English language and other languages while mastering Bahasa Malaysia to ensure Malaysia does not run out of skilled and efficient civil servants, corporate figures, academics and diplomats. It is a great step taken by the government in bringing back the English language without compromising the status of the mother tongue language. In the past, many people came from the backgrounds with no knowledge of English mastered it through the right attitude.

English as a Second Language (ESL) among students has an intriguing position in this country. It can be argued that its progress in one way or another is affected by factors such as religion, customs and traditional beliefs. Derived from this, sad to say that more and more students are having weak command of

English and poor communication skills. The present scenario has its very own consequences. Thus, there is then an urgent need to identify the factors that have contributed to this decline.

## 1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Language learning problems of students have often been perceived from the point of view of teachers, administrators, and policy makers. Rarely have they been perceived from the students' angle. This study attempts to provide information on the students own self-assessment of the problems.

It is pertinent in this section to discuss the background of the students relating to the language proficiency and their linguistic environment prior to their current attainment.

### 1.1.1 LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

All the students who enrolled in this school had sat for English language at UPSR (UJIAN PENCAPAIAN SEKOLAH RENDAH) level and the results of

the 60 respondents have been collected to gain their standings in the examination. Having completed their primary stage from their respective schools, the students enrolled in the present secondary school. Throughout the six years in the primary school, the medium of instruction was in Bahasa Melayu for the Sekolah Kebangsaan, Tamil and Mandarin for the SJK Tamil and SJK Cina respectively.

And for those students who came from the SJKs schools, with the exception of those who passed the UPSR Bahasa Melayu Paper, (A, B, or C), they are placed in Remove Class. This is to give them more time to strengthen their foundation of Bahasa Melayu. This rule, however does not apply for students from Sekolah Kebangsaan.

Since 1976, the Malaysian Secondary schools have been following the 'communicative syllabus' with the aim of improving the communicative competence of the students. Starting from Form One to Form Five, the time allocated for English Subject is 200 minutes per week, amounting to 40 minutes for each period. Notwithstanding their achievements, once they reached this level (Form One), they are promoted to Form Five.

### 1.1.2 LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOL.

The school is situated approximately 10 km from Ipoh. Generally speaking, Buntong is a Chinese and Indian populated area with small proportion of Malays. Students from this school come from various Sekolah Kebangsaan, Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina and Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil schools. Its main feeder schools are SK Buntong and SJKC Yuh Hua, Ipoh. The population of this school consists of the two main races, namely Indian and Chinese, and relatively a small number of Malay students.

By and large, situated within the 10 km radius of Ipoh, English language is not alien for these students. They are readily exposed to the language in and outside the school. For example, apart from the stipulated English language periods during school hours, they are well-equipped with abundance of English reading materials in the school library. And they are provided with ICT facilities to enhance their learning process. Also, activities pertaining to English language activities such as quiz, story-telling competition, debate etc. are an on-going agenda in this school. They are also widely exposed to English language environment outside the school. For instance, they have the opportunity to communicate using English while doing their daily chores because it can be argued that English is widely used in the urban areas compared to the rural.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Generally, the main problem facing the English language teachers in schools pertaining to students today seems to be the lackadaisical attitude towards the target language. Bearing this in mind, the study intended to obtain feedback from the students that would help provide more information regarding a lack of proficiency in English. It was felt that students would be more motivated if their needs (as they see them) are translated into meaningful instructional materials and this would facilitate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The end result would be a higher level of proficiency on the part of the students.

Having spent six years in primary schools where arguably these students went through the teaching of science and mathematics in English, it is pertinent to assess whether these students possess the desirable attitude which would motivate them to study the English language.

## 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

As English plays such a prominent role in Malaysia's quest to achieve the status of an industrialized nation, it is pertinent that adequate measure is taken to

ensure a high proficiency level among Malaysians is achieved. This is the issue that this study is going to examine - what are the factors that contribute to and influence students' interest and success in learning English as a second language?

#### 1.4 STUDY OBJECTIVES

This study is carried out to meet the following objectives:

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to determine whether students hold either positive or negative attitude in learning English language
- b. to ascertain whether there exist any interrelation between students' attitudes and their language learning; and
- c. to use the findings as a basis for recommendations.

#### 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that will be addressed are:

1. To what extent does affective factor drive and shape students' interest in learning English language?
2. What issues do students encounter in learning English language?
3. Is there any difference between genders in learning English language pertaining to their interests and?

## 1.6 HYPOTHESES

Lackadaisical attitude to explore the target (English) language among students is said to be the main contributive factor that leads to the relatively slow progress with regard to English language acquisition. There is a significant gap between female students and male students in terms of motivation to learn English language.

## 1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study would indicate the general picture of the status of 60 students in one school. However, the study has the following limitations:

- a. The results of the study are based on the information obtained from only 60 Form One students
- b. The results of the study are based on the information obtained from only the questionnaire circulated; and
- c. The study is focusing on students' responses as a group and not as individuals; the data collected is analyzed as a whole.