

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher aims to conclude the findings of this study. The various insights that have emerged in the course of this study will be dealt with, in the light of the research questions of this study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The findings of this study attempts to answer these research questions:

- (i) What are the reading problems among secondary school students in an urban setting?
- (ii) What are ESL teachers' attitudes towards students with reading problems?
- (iii) What are the measures taken by ESL teachers in handling students with reading problems?
- (iv) How can reading problems among secondary school students be remedied?

Based on the findings, the researcher has found that three main groups comprising the students, teachers and parents play a crucial role in addressing

reading problems. The interaction among these three parties create the learning environment for the students and particularly where the academic environment is concerned, the area of reading in ESL was probed to seek an understanding of the prevailing reading problems among urban secondary school students. Thus, the summary proceeds within these categories:

- (i) Students with reading problems in urban secondary schools
- (ii) Teacher's role in handling students with reading problems
- (iii) Parents' role in handling their children with reading problems

5.1.1 Students with Reading Problems in Urban Secondary Schools

This section summarises the answer to the first research question which involves the students and nature of the reading problems. Students in an urban environment are usually considered the more advantaged group as compared to their counterpart, rural students. However, this is not a true picture since it has been found in this study that students from an urban environment do exhibit reading problems. A language-rich environment does not ensure the relevant exposure to acquisition of reading ability. Literacy problems do emerge among urban secondary school students.

5.1.1.1 Description of Students with Reading Problems

Students with reading problems are sometimes conveniently referred to as slow learners with intelligence problems beyond an ordinary language teacher's

control. These students may not have the disability in reading but rather have lagged in their reading development as a result of numerous social and environmental factors. Perfetti (1985) considers these problem readers as having some deficiencies in reading ability but are not deficient enough to be labelled “dyslexic” and to undergo remedial strategies. Hence these students continue to be neglected throughout the years in school without a systematic intervention programme from the policy makers or the teachers.

This study shows that teachers find these problem readers in need of individualised reading instruction and teachers are unable to attend to them during the usual language lessons. This shows that the majority of teachers are aware that the reading problems are preventing the problem readers from participating effectively during the lessons. However, the teachers lament their inadequate knowledge in the remedial reading area and that the school environment is created to suit the majority's needs while the needs of the problem readers seldom take precedence. It was found that the usual excuse was the problem readers form the minority. Nevertheless, it is evident from this research that problem readers need individualised reading instruction. They need to be approached differently from the other students. Mainstreaming these students with other able students may not meet their needs. What may result from mainstreaming is the failures are accumulated until the student leaves school.

The teachers also find that a negative attitude towards reading is a potential for causing disciplinary problems. They stated those students with reading problems pose disciplinary problems during a lesson. The students' inability to recognise words and comprehend the text results in failure to have a meaningful lesson. The

“alien” language is strange to their ears and they vent their frustration by indulging in other undesirable activities. Some disrupt the lesson in order to attract the teacher’s attention. In other words, they are sending a message that they need help.

The study of the teachers’ responses shows that students with reading problems come from deprived homes. A language-rich environment is crucial in achieving successful reading and so these students depend very much on the school environment for any success in reading. Therefore, if efforts are not made to meet their needs, they will eventually develop a negative attitude towards reading and the language. It was also noted by the teachers that repeated failure seems to have no effect on the problem readers since the reading skill does not affect their coping skills at home. In fact, the students probably question the need for reading skills with regard to their daily routine. Reading in English is something they can live without and for some it has no significance in their future.

This study shows that teachers perceive that problem readers gradually dislike the English language subject. They develop a block for this language and it is also evident that their lack of interest does not encourage them to participate in the class activities. They tend to become restless and thus cause disciplinary problems during the lesson. The teachers reveal that the majority of these problem readers encounter failure in other academic areas and that they can easily head towards becoming future dropouts. In spite of this gloomy outlook, the teachers think a positive outcome is still possible. They feel these problem readers have the potential to improve through relevant remedial reading programmes and succeed in reading if they are taught adequate strategies.

In this study it is clear from the teachers' responses that problems caused by students with reading problems are a direct result of their frustration of being unable to perform with the mainstream. Their inability to compete with their peer group hinders any initiative to attempt their own remediation. These problem readers are embarrassed about their inability and avoid activities that can reveal this. The problem is worsened by the fact that problem readers are not given modified tests. Instead they are made to sit for examinations with other students even though the reading is much below par level. They fail the test and the problem does not stop there. In the teachers' opinion, failures affect the students' self-esteem and confidence, resulting in them falling further behind. Their inadequacies influence their interest and attitude towards learning the language. They learn to reject the subject before it rejects them. Thus, it creates another problem for the teachers i.e. how to motivate them.

The teachers also reported that problem readers' writing skills are lacking due to their reading problems. Students with reading problems generally also exhibit problems in writing. They lack in general knowledge too and with these deficiencies, their problems become greater. With all these difficulties, it is inevitable that they would frequently fail their language tests as this study discovered.

5.1.1.2 Nature of the Reading Problems

This study sought to gain an insight into the reading problems among urban secondary school students. The study sought to describe the nature of these

problems and the researcher has divided the problems into two main categories i.e. word-recognition and comprehension skills.

5.1.1.2.1 Word-Recognition Skills

Readers need basic sight words knowledge in order to be identified as skilled readers. However, based on the teachers' observation, it shows in this study that these problem readers have not had the opportunity for repeated contact with these words through reading. These words are known to appear frequently in children's reading material and it shows that these students have had such limited exposure or access to the reading material that it now affects their reading fluency. The social context plays a part in causing this deficiency. The students learn English as a second language and they are more comfortable with their first language reading material. When the relevant emphasis is not provided at the primary level, they are bound to have less contact with the sight words.

The teachers also indicated that the problem readers lack phonetic analysis skills. They lack exposure to the irregularities in sound-symbol correspondence in English. This essential decoding tool was not drilled into these students at the primary level when they were beginning readers. Hence, the foundation in this area leaves much to be desired. Probably not much emphasis was given to phonics instruction at the lower primary level. The teaching of phonics could have been taken lightly since many children enter Year One with at least one year of kindergarten education, and some with even three years. Thus, problem readers lack the knowledge in sounding and blending to decode the words. Some may have learned

the basic sound-symbol correspondence in isolation but not the appropriate application to the reading of connected text.

It is also evident to the teachers that the majority of problem readers lack skills in structural analysis that deals with units of meaning. This is an essential tool to determine meanings of unfamiliar words. Inadequate knowledge of morphemes prevents the problem readers from identifying the pronunciation or meaning of words they are unfamiliar with. They may not have been familiarised with the various strategies to figure out a word by breaking it into morphemes. Skills in structural analysis can aid readers in word recognition and they can aim for automaticity. However, the problem readers lack the exposure to these variations in forming words and probably the direct teaching of this may have been neglected. Then again the teachers point out that they can only satisfy the majority considering the present classroom environment in Malaysia i.e. mixed ability and large numbers of students in one class. Besides, the teachers add that it is common to find students from diverse backgrounds ranging from those with English as a first language to those with no exposure to English at all.

Another deficiency in word recognition skill found by the teachers to be prevalent among problem readers is the inability to use contextual clues to identify the pronunciation and meaning of a word. The teachers reported that problem readers' inability to use context effectively could produce erroneous substitutions that change the meaning of words in word recognition. Hence, the meaning of the text is also altered and this leads to comprehension difficulties. The poor readers struggle to decode unfamiliar words to provide meaningful reading but they lack the skill to self-correct by using context to give the appropriate pronunciation. Therefore,

when they read with errors that distort the meaning, they find it frustrating and this affects their motivation to read further.

The teachers reported that some of these problem readers did not use the dictionary to locate the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Despite the English Language syllabus emphasizing that students need to learn to use the dictionary, there are students who cannot use this tool. They fail to realise that a dictionary can help them to understand a text. They have failed to learn how to locate a word and select the appropriate definition for the word. However, this in itself is not always an answer to the problem. Some students can locate a word but cannot understand the meaning. For them a dictionary is practically useless. Some students may not even own a dictionary or use one during a lesson since it may be viewed as an extra burden to carry in their bags.

This study also shows that the teachers attribute the problem readers' poor spelling skills to their deficient phonetic awareness. The students are unable to use the sound-symbol correspondence to aid spelling. The ability to sound and blend the phonemes in words assists in the spelling of words. Besides that, they also possess limited vocabulary knowledge. This leads to a vicious circle. Their inability to handle reading materials does not help in building their vocabulary knowledge. Some of these students experience very limited exposure to the language. In fact, the school is the only place where they are exposed to English. A language-rich environment is not available to all students and as such, their vocabulary knowledge hardly increases.

5.1.1.2.2 Comprehension Skills

These students with reading problems also seem to show comprehension problems as observed by the teachers. It has been found in this study that these problem readers have problems at both literal and inferential comprehension levels. Their inferential comprehension level, however, shows greater deficiency. These students may not be actively reading for meaning but placing more emphasis on the decoding process. Their inability at monitoring their own comprehension is observed by the teachers. The problem readers are also noted to be unskilled at using comprehension strategies resulting in less control over their comprehension.

In addition, the data from the teachers' responses shows that these students with reading problems encounter more comprehension difficulties when they read silently than when they read aloud. In fact, they show least difficulties when someone reads to them. Silent reading is normally encouraged to enhance reading speed and the rate of comprehension. However, it seems that students with reading problems have such basic problems with word-recognition that silent reading does not help them where comprehension is concerned. For them the issue is not speed, but the identification of the written symbols. When someone reads to them, their attention can be focused on comprehension because another carries out the task of decoding.

These students with reading problems have also been noticed by the teachers to display various oral- reading errors (miscues). Some of the most common are ignoring punctuation marks, substitution of words, hesitation while reading and omission of certain words. It has been found that these miscues distort the meaning

of the text for the problem readers. These miscues reflect the “underlying competence and the psycho-linguistics processes” that are responsible for the distortion of meaning (Goodman & Goodman, 1994: 107). The problem readers’ basic incompetence with word-recognition skills interrupts their oral-reading proficiency and their comprehension of the meaning of the text.

5.1.2 Teachers’ Role in Handling Students with Reading Problems

Teachers are constantly facing pressure at work as to what is necessary and beneficial for their students since they are described as the “one who puts the right book in the right hands at the right time” (Clark, 1970: 11). Teachers’ attitudes towards students with reading problems and remedial reading are vital in determining the relevant measures that will be undertaken. This section summarises the answer to the research question on the teachers’ attitudes towards students with reading problems and the practices in the ESL classroom to help the problem readers.

5.1.2.1 Teachers’ Attitudes

It is indeed evident in this study that the majority of the teachers have not undergone any formal training in remedial reading to handle these students with reading problems. As has been noted earlier, 93% of the respondents rate their knowledge in remedial reading as moderate or lower. It is obvious that they seem to have very little background knowledge to understand the problem. In fact, they are of the opinion that remedial reading should be made compulsory during teacher training

programmes. This is supported by 80% of the respondents who feel that teachers should conduct remedial reading sessions with their problem readers. It is clear that teachers are aware of the plight of these problem readers and their need for special attention. This indicates a positive attitude towards remedial reading.

This study also shows that these teachers disagree with mainstreaming problem readers. They do realise that individual reading instruction is crucial and that the problem readers may not benefit much through regular reading instruction. They realise that problem readers' needs cannot be met in a mainstreamed classroom environment. Apart from that, they also support a compulsory diagnosis of the reading problems at the beginning of the academic year for all students. It is evident that the teachers are serious in helping problem readers and recognise the significance of identifying the reading problems early to make intervention possible.

As noted earlier, the majority of the teachers are in favour of conducting remedial reading sessions as part of a teacher's task. However, it is clear in this study that various obstacles have to be overcome before embarking on a remedial reading programme. Among these constraints, it was identified that time factor is the major constraint (93% of the respondents) followed by additional responsibilities, class size, disciplinary problems, reluctance of students, lack of motivation among the problem readers and others. These constraints prevent 80% of the respondents from conducting a remedial reading programme with their students who have reading problems.

5.1.2.2 Measures Adopted to Handle Students with Reading Problems

This study shows that the teachers try their best to help their problem readers during their lessons. The teachers feel the need for individual instruction for students with reading problems. But this study found that 76% of the respondents only occasionally work with their students with reading problems. This is because they do not have the time, as mentioned earlier, and not because they are ignorant of this need. Adaptation of the materials to suit the problem readers' need is one of the practices of these teachers in the classroom. However, very few teachers seem to use supplementary instructional techniques to aid problem readers. Again, time and class size factors, identified as major constraints earlier, influence their decision. It is also found that the majority of the teachers did not adopt cooperative learning.

This study shows from the teachers' responses that teachers seldom discuss students' reading problems with their parents (97% of the respondents). If parents are not made aware of their child's reading problems, they cannot be expected to play an important role in remediation. It is also noted that this matter of reading problems is seldom discussed at language teachers' meetings. Emphasis is probably given to the majority's academic problems and not the problem readers who form the minority. Teachers have also been found to avoid separating students according to proficiency levels. This may be time-consuming in terms of class arrangement and task preparation for the various levels. These teachers also hardly provide remedial tasks as homework for the problem readers.

5.1.3 Parents' Role in Handling Students with Reading Problems

Even though it was noted earlier that teachers seldom discuss the students' academic problems with parents, the majority of the teachers support the idea of having the parents play a more significant role in handling problem readers. This seems contradictory because some of the respondents did mention that they face problems trying to meet the students' parents. Nevertheless, it is obvious that teachers want parents to be actively involved in helping students with reading problems.

5.2 Recommendations

The primary purpose of these recommendations is to give some guidelines to help teachers and other related groups to build a positive intervention approach to help students with reading problems.

5.2.1 Recommendations for Remedial Reading

Successful reading growth can be achieved through organised remedial reading instruction by focusing on effective and meaningful learning of the students in a favourable teaching-learning environment. Based on these considerations, McCormick (1995) has asserted certain principles that need to be included in any remedial reading programme. Some of these principles may be implemented by teachers in the Malaysian context.

One of these is individual attention. A student not progressing adequately in his level should be involved in corrective instruction. Early intervention can avoid accumulated and interrelated deficiencies. If it is possible, the teacher can consider individual instruction to gauge the student's strengths, weaknesses and interests. Total attention on one student at a time allows increased opportunities for the student to respond and gives room for meeting the student's needs appropriately. The students who have undergone individual instruction can later be paired or grouped according to their reading level to allow efficient use of teacher time.

The ESL teachers' committee in a school can intervene and organise a remedial programme after or before school hours. The administrators can be made aware of this programme and necessary adjustments done to the teachers' workload and timetable. Students with reading problems can be pooled into an "adoption" programme and each ESL teacher takes charge of a few. It is important that the respective teachers be relieved of their co-curriculum duties, so that they have time to concentrate on the reading programme.

Another suggestion is group work. Grouping can be adopted for instruction to allow the efficient use of teacher time. Groups can comprise 4 to 6 students depending on the students' ability. This involves the students working in groups while the teacher emphasises individual instruction on the ones who need help in the groups. The problem readers are encouraged to learn from their peers. The students work independently as the teacher moves from student to student to provide individual instruction. This takes place only after a careful planning of the task and the group members on the part of the teacher.

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Engaging poor readers in actual reading tasks to motivate them is another recommendation. Focusing on deficiencies should not monopolise the instruction time. The students need opportunities to apply their skills in meaningful reading. They should be given constant encouragement to read materials besides books such as simple articles from the newspapers as proposed in the “Star-Newspaper in Education” (see Appendix G) programme, magazines of their interest or notices found around them in the classroom and in school. Teachers could lead the way by highlighting some interesting articles of interest to their students. These materials can be compiled into a reading file for the students.

Problem readers need constant feedback to assess their own progress. They should be involved in their own evaluation to create a sense of awareness. Problem students can be given a self-assessment checklist for each reading task. The teacher prepares simple questions related to the student’s comprehension and opinion of the reading task. The feedback from this checklist should be considered as diagnostic information for subsequent reading instructions. It is essential for the problem reader to monitor his own strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment should be designed to chart out the reader’s progress in the reading activities.

The teacher should be sensitive to the needs of problem readers, and care for them and want them to succeed. These problem readers have the potential to increase their reading ability. Their reading failures should not be compounded such that it becomes an attitude of “fear of failure”. They need constant stimulation to recognise their strengths and assurance that success is possible. Teachers should build on their self-esteem and confidence levels whenever a task is assigned.

Praise or positive reinforcement should be given where it is due and even when they fail. Teachers should introduce rewards for achievements to encourage success in reading and provide reading tasks at the problem reader's level. The remedial reading activities should begin from the existing reading level and should be of interest to them. Even if the reading text is of a low proficiency level, the content should be related to their age group.

5.2.2 Recommendations for the Teaching of Reading

The pedagogical clock for problem readers is ticking mercilessly and these students need quick intervention to catch up with time (Kameenui, 1993). The teaching of reading should focus on word-recognition skills and comprehension skills.

5.2.2.1 Word-Recognition Skills

This basic skill for reading should focus on meaning besides breaking the code. A student who reads a word and understands the meaning will experience an impact on his reading development. Meaningless utterances will not assist comprehension of a connected text. Problem readers should be taught to use contextual clues, which is to use the surrounding words to deduce the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Besides this, they can also be given ample guidance to use structural information to decode a word. This involves knowledge of word formation such as the use of affixes. Emphasis on meaning should always be stressed. The

recognition of words can be taught in isolation first before using them in connected texts. Once decoded, the teacher should provide the opportunity for the students to experiment their skill.

Vocabulary knowledge should be expanded through listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabularies. These four aspects should be linked to teach the accurate use and understanding of words. Dictionary skills should not be ignored since it helps the reader to be independent. This skill should involve location skills i.e. how to find the word, pronunciation skills and meaning skills.

Dictionary skills should be taught as early as in Year Two at the beginning of the year. Students may acquire these skills at various paces. Worksheets can be prepared for the sub-skills in using a dictionary for reading tasks. The use of a dictionary should be emphasised in all reading activities and continued at the secondary level. Every school can make an effort to get copies of dictionaries in their libraries and students can be allowed to use them during a reading lesson.

5.2.2.2 Comprehension Skills

Reading comprehension involves the construction of meaning. It should be sequenced systematically from easier skills to more complex skills. A student should acquire one skill before proceeding to another. This means they progress from literal skills to inferential skills. In addition, there should be a variety of diverse activities taking into consideration the reader's comprehension level. Questioning techniques are also of importance when dealing with problem readers. They should be clear,

precise and framed appropriately. The questions should be in concrete terms and aimed at simple recognition and recall.

The problem readers should be guided to understand the main idea of a text. Their prior knowledge can be invoked to relate to the text. This is where a teacher's knowledge of her student's background would be of help. Teachers should select texts which coincide with the reader's level, interest, age, social background and prior knowledge. These aspects can motivate the reader to attempt reading. In order to identify this information about the students, the teacher should engage in conversation with them besides teaching language to them. Teachers can show interest in their favourite topics and then get materials that closely match these. A brief discussion with the form teacher will help towards understanding the student's social background.

5.2.3 Recommendations on Teachers' Attitudes

As Stevick (1996: 183) so aptly puts it, a "teacher is a door that is either closed or open". Teachers can provide the bridge to reading achievement. They should be more concerned with what is to be learned than what to teach. They should consider using instructional time effectively and prepare their lessons to suit the students' levels. A variety of approaches are essential to provide meaningful learning besides effective classroom management.

If only a few students are remedial readers in a classroom, the teacher can simplify the material and tasks to encourage them to attempt. Teachers can encourage effective peer conferencing by arranging the seats such that a poor reader

sits next to a good reader. They should allow simple answers from the problem readers and not surprise them with difficult oral questions. Teachers should guide them when completing comprehension tasks by providing clues to lead them to the answer.

A teacher's manner and speech during a class can convey negative or positive messages to the student's reading problem. The teacher's response to the problem reader's answer also plays an important role. It either encourages reading growth or demotivates the reader. Therefore, a good rapport with these problem readers is crucial for creating a non-threatening and informal environment. The teacher should become aware of the student's behaviour and social background. A failure in a reading task should not be criticised but given constructive ideas to improve. Just as the problem readers need patience to succeed, teachers do too.

5.2.4 Recommendations for Education Planners

Trainee teachers should be given the relevant pedagogical training to handle problem readers. Since remedial education is scarce in Malaysian secondary schools, all ESL teachers should be equipped with some knowledge of remedial reading. They may not be trained as reading specialists but at least to a certain extent they can provide some help for the mainstreamed problem readers.

Based on this suggestion, emphasis should be greater on psychology and sociology and there should be extensive training in pedagogy. Psychology will serve its purpose in helping teachers to understand the diverse learners. Sociology will help the teachers to use the appropriate schemata for the culture of the language being

learned in order to understand the communication and response. Extensive pedagogy will help the teacher to select an appropriate method to suit diverse learners.

Remedial reading should be made compulsory for all teacher-training courses either in colleges or universities. During their practicum (teaching practice), the supervisors should stress remedial reading tasks for problem readers. Guidance can be provided for selecting a text and preparing the task. Modified testing techniques should also be taught. During the two-and-a-half year teacher training course, one of the subjects taught should be remedial reading approaches and a reading specialist should conduct the subject.

Diploma in Education trainees usually undergo a one-year course which is not sufficient to cover all areas. Hence, where remedial reading is concerned, an additional one month can be included to equip graduate trainees with some knowledge of remedial reading. They too can be made to practice the approaches taught with the problem readers in schools.

Journals on remedial reading, pedagogy and psychology should be made available to teachers in schools for them to keep abreast with current developments in this area. Reading specialists should be invited by the ESL language teachers committee to schools to enhance awareness and encourage remedial reading activities in schools.

Teachers who are already in schools can be given an opportunity to attend short in-service courses in remedial reading. It can be made compulsory for all ESL teachers. The in-service courses in remedial reading should also include the principals and other administrators because they too need to be made aware of this problem to help implement remedial reading activities in school. Reading specialists

should be posted at each school by selecting language teachers to undergo specialist training or by providing scholarships for them to further their studies specialising in this area.

The burden of educating the problem readers does not solely fall on the teachers alone, but the policy makers also share the responsibility. In fact, they have the authority to implement changes in the school administration. With their timely interference, a favourable approach to remedial reading education can materialise. Some of the measures that can be adopted are to maintain an adequate ratio as suggested in the KBSM (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah) i.e. 25 students to a teacher in every school.

The English Language textbooks used in schools are outdated and do not coincide with the students' interests of this new millennium. Therefore, they need to be revised to accommodate all learners and their current interests. A separate textbook for reading should be introduced in the Loan Book Scheme at schools. This book should have a variety of exercises on reading skills of different reading levels and the teacher can select the appropriate text for different students in a mixed ability language class.

5.2.5 Recommendations for Parental Support

Parents can either help or hinder a successful reading process. They can play a vital role in developing their children's language ability. Teachers should discuss with parents ways to help their problem reader with the help of a school counsellor. During the discussion, parents should be made aware of their child's reading

problems and suggest ways to help. If the parents are illiterate, they should get a family member who can fill in as a guardian to help the child read.

Teachers can advise the parents to read to their child when they are very young as one way of promoting the desire to read and expanding their interests in reading. They can guide the parents to create a home library to encourage the reading habit at home. Their children could contribute materials of their own interest and it also serves as an opportunity for the parents to be involved with their children's interests. A warm and supportive home environment will assist a problem reader to go through remediation positively. Parents should also be taught to reinforce the idea that success in school can affect one's ultimate occupation attainment.

In order to motivate their children to read at home, parents should consider providing a loving and caring environment at home. Parents can be taught to refrain from comparing the problem reader with other able siblings in the family. Apart from that, the parents should be told not to pressure the problem reader over his speed of reading and constantly instill confidence in aiming for success. Otherwise, damage could be observed in the problem reader's self-esteem. A supportive environment will create an easier passage through the remedial reading programme.

All the parents of problem readers should form a body in school to support a remedial reading programme through the help of the school counsellor. Educated parents can guide the others to monitor their child's progress and share their common problem. Regular meetings should be encouraged to update the parents and teachers on the problem readers' progress. Where possible, parents can be utilised to tutor problem readers. Educated parents can be trained and guided to carry out the necessary remedial help for their child at home. The teachers should always maintain

close contact with these volunteer tutors since the problem readers are still under the care of the teacher.

Teachers can also guide parents to keep records of the problem reader's reading activities at home. These records should be discussed at the end of each month with the teacher. Suggestions can be made for the following month. In this way, both parties can play their respective roles to help the problem reader.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The research conducted relied totally on teachers' perspective to gauge students' reading problems as well as to gain an insight into the teachers' attitudes and practices when faced with these problem readers. There is another group of respondents who can provide data on students' reading problems i.e. the students themselves. Data can be obtained through reading tasks assigned to the problem readers and analysis done on their responses to identify the various reading problems.

Based on a similar research tool i.e. questionnaire and interview, a larger sample can be used to give a more generalistic view of the problem. Apart from that, another tool can also be used to gather data i.e. classroom observation or case studies. The researcher can record a teacher's attitude and practices during a reading lesson.

One other particular area that can be studied further is the impact of cultural, social and language differences of problem readers on their reading problems since students in Malaysian schools come from a multi-racial community. The causal

factors of these reading problems can also be studied further through various research tools.