

**STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE IN
A MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOM SETTING**

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**SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

2012

**UNIVERSITI MALAYA
ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION**

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Field of Study: **Sociolinguistics**

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ABSTRACT

English language was introduced as the compulsory second language in the secondary schools of Malaysia (Asmah Hj. Omar, 1979, *as quoted in* Solomon, 1988). The central focus of the Secondary School English Language Programme in KBSM is the development of the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking (Hassan and Selamat, 2002). This study aims to investigate Form 4 school students' English language performance in a multicultural classroom setting. Firstly, this study attempts to evaluate students' comprehending performance in reading and listening skills using the Malaysian Education grading system (2010) and Krashen's comprehensible input (1985 *as quoted in* Wu, 2010). Secondly, this study tries to classify the errors in writing and speaking skills by applying the Keshavarz' model (1999 *as cited in* Zarei, 2011) and lastly, analyse the appropriateness of student' speech events to the topic of discussion using S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model proposed by Hymes (1974 *as cited in* Lee, 2007). 18 Form 4 students were selected randomly for this study as respondents. Data was collected by asking the respondents to complete a set of questionnaires that consists 5 sections: biographical background, reading task, writing task, listening task and speaking task. Respondents were asked to read 5 different genres of texts and then to choose and write suitable answers for the reading task. For the writing task, each respondent was asked to write an essay incorporating different aspects of culture with reference to the Malaysian multicultural situation. Respondents listened to an audio CD in order to complete the listening task. Out of the 18 respondents, only 10 respondents participated in the speaking task, the remaining 8 respondents were sitting for the year end examination at the time of recording. The results obtained show that, the comprehending performance of all of the Indian students is higher when compared to the Chinese and Malay respondents. The

frequent occurrence of errors in the writing and speaking are found in the morphological and syntactical levels of the structure. All respondents' speech was analysed using the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model (Hymes, 1974 *as cited in* Lee, 2007) to discover the appropriateness to the topic of discussion. It was found that the speeches of all the respondents from all three ethnic groups are found to be appropriate to the topic of discussion.

ABSTRAK

Bahasa Inggeris telah diperkenalkan sebagai bahasa kedua yang wajib di sekolah-sekolah menengah Malaysia (Asmah Hj. Omar, 1979 *seperti yang dipetik dalam* Solomon, 1988). Tumpuan utama Program Bahasa Inggeris Sekolah Menengah KBSM adalah untuk mencapai pembangunan dalam empat kemahiran bahasa: membaca, menulis, mendengar dan bertutur (Hassan and Selamat, 2002). Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyiasat prestasi bahasa Inggeris di kalangan pelajar sekolah menengah yang sedang belajar di Tingkatan 4 dalam suasana bilik darjah pelbagai budaya. Pertama, kajian ini cuba untuk menilai prestasi pemahaman pelajar dalam kemahiran membaca dan mendengar dengan menggunakan sistem penggredan yang diperkenalkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2010) dan *input hypothesis* yang dicadangkan oleh Krashen (1985 *yang dipetik dalam* Wu, 2010). Kedua, kajian ini cuba untuk mengelaskan kesilapan dalam kemahiran menulis dan bertutur dengan menggunakan model Keshavarz '(1999 *yang dipetik dari* Zarei, 2011) dan akhir sekali, menganalisis kesesuaian pertuturan pelajar kepada topik perbincangan menggunakan model *S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G* yang dicadangkan oleh Hymes (1974 *yang dipetik dari* Lee, 2007). 18 pelajar Tingkatan 4 telah dipilih secara rawak untuk kajian ini sebagai responden. Data telah dikumpulkan dengan meminta responden untuk melengkapkan satu set soal selidik yang terdiri daripada 5 bahagian: maklumat latar belakang, tugas membaca, tugas menulis, tugas mendengar dan tugas bertutur. Responden telah diminta untuk membaca 5 genre teks dan kemudian untuk memilih dan menulis jawapan yang sesuai untuk soalan pemahaman. Untuk tugas bertulis, setiap responden telah diminta untuk menulis satu esei yang menggabungkan aspek-aspek budaya yang berbeza dengan merujuk kepada keadaan pelbagai budaya Malaysia. Responden mendengar CD audio untuk melengkapkan

tugas mendengar. Daripada 18 responden, hanya 10 responden yang telah mengambil bahagian dalam tugas pertuturan. Keputusan yang diperolehi menunjukkan bahawa, prestasi pemahaman semua pelajar India lebih tinggi berbanding dengan responden Cina dan Melayu. Ke kerapannya berlakunya kesilapan dalam penulisan dan pengucapan yang ditemui adalah di peringkat struktur iaitu morfologi dan sintaksis. Pertuturan semua responden telah dianalisis menggunakan model *S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G* (Hymes, 1974 yang dipetik dari Lee, 2007) untuk mengetahui kesesuaian kepada topik perbincangan. Ia telah mendapati bahawa pertuturan semua responden yang terdiri daripada ketiga-tiga kumpulan etnik iaitu Melayu, Cina dan Indian didapati sesuai untuk topik perbincangan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I wish to thank my respectable supervisor, Dr. Krishnamoorthy Karunakaran, for his guidance through my research report journey. His judicious guidance and insightful suggestions to my research report and feedback on questionnaires, data analysis, and all drafts of this research report were crucial to the successful completion of this study. His kind patience in spending many hours of his time discussing the research paper and unfailing encouragement by lending me references have led to the successful completion of this research report. I hope that as a language teacher, I will be able to model the same leadership skills and genuine compassion that Dr. Krishnamoorthy Karunakaran showed me during this research report journey.

Secondly, I also want to thank my loving husband, Tilai Nathan Magalingam, who has accompanied me through every step of my life as a postgraduate student of University of Malaya. He always prays to God for my success in life and gives encouragement and support every single day.

Thirdly, I would like to thank my family in Ipoh, Perak Darul Ridzuan for their understanding of my desire to pursue this master degree. In particular, I wish to thank my parents who offered moral support for long years as well as their endless love to me. I am proud of them and very fortunate to have them as my parents. They are great and I will do my best to make them to be proud of me.

During my years as a postgraduate student in University of Malaya, I was fortunate to have friends who offered countless hours of assistance and encouragement. I would like to thank them for their support and kindness.

Finally, I would also like to thank my research participants for their help and willingness to participate in this study.

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