



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EFFECTS OF LITERATURE CIRCLES ON TERTIARY ESL STUDENTS'
PERCEPTION AND LEARNING OF LITERATURE**

I.SATKUNAVATHI S.ISWARAPATHAM

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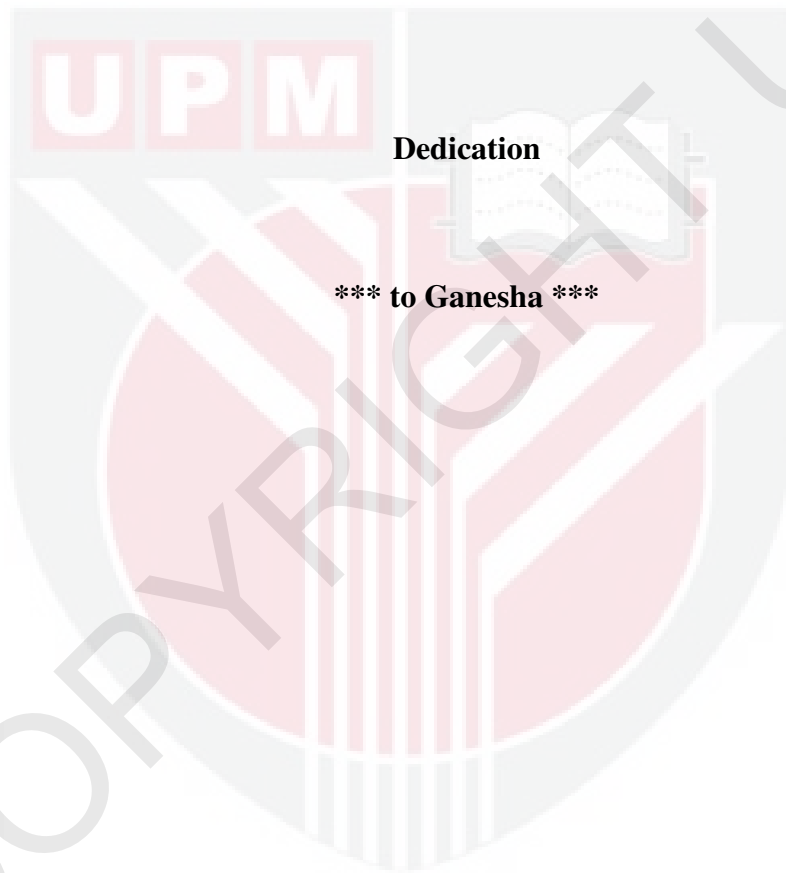
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By

I.SATKUNAVATHI S.ISWARAPATHAM

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Art**

November 2009



Dedication

***** to Ganesha *****

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art

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Chairman : Dr Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, PhD

Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

This study seeks to investigate the perception of tertiary ESL literature learners towards literature both before and after their experiences with literature circles. Literature circles are student centered discussion groups that can offer learners an opportunity to develop personal responses to literary texts and to articulate these interpretations in their groups (Kim, 2004). Related studies show that when learners perceive literature in a positive light, they will pick up a literary text and be productively engaged in reading the text for self-fulfillment and not for the sake of finishing an assignment or passing examinations. The main goal of the study is to investigate if learners' participation in literature circles can help nurture them into thoughtful and probing readers who are able to expand upon their individual interpretations of a literary text and elevate their responses to the text.

50 third year undergraduates majoring in English Literature at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia participated in this study which employed both the quantitative and qualitative techniques of research. Data

sources included pre and post experimental questionnaires, observation notes, pre and post tests, audio taped group discussions and interviews, and journals.

Findings of this study show that literature circles are able to generate interest among the learners to read and appreciate their literary texts, as well as perceive literature in a more positive light. The results of the study also indicate that learners valued the opportunity to participate in a democratic endeavor that allowed them to voice their own views, as well as listen to other participants' views. The transactions that occur during literature circles provide opportunities for learners to read, react, express their feelings, and have a sense of control over their learning. The focus is not on extracting information from a text, figuring out the interpretation the teacher wants to hear, or learning about literary elements (Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995: x), but on taking ownership of one's reading by making predictions, constructing visual images, creating connections to personal experiences and other texts, arguing with the author and evaluating content and writing style (Brabham & Villaume, 2000).

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sastera

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PERCEPTION AND LEARNING OF LITERATURE**

Oleh

I.SATKUNAVATHI S.ISWARAPATHAM

November 2009

Pengerusi : Dr Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, PhD

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Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti persepsi mahasiswa ESL yang mengikuti jurusan Kesusasteraan Bahasa Inggeris di pusat pengajian tinggi terhadap Kesusasteraan Bahasa Inggeris sebelum dan selepas mengikuti “literature circles”. Literature Circles merupakan perbincangan dalam kumpulan yang bertumpukan pelajar demi memberi peluang kepada mereka untuk memberi respon peribadi terhadap buku sastera yang dibaca dan menyuarakan intepretasi tersebut di dalam kumpulan masing-masing (Kim, 2004). Penyelidik kajian ini berpendapat bahawa apabila pelajar bertanggungjawab positif terhadap kesusasteraan Bahasa Inggeris maka mereka akan dapat membaca dan berinteraksi secara produktif untuk memenuhi kepuasan sendiri dan bukan semata-mata untuk memenuhi kehendak kerja kursus atau untuk lulus dalam peperiksaan. Tujuan utama kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk menyiasat samada penglibatan pelajar dalam literature circles akan membolehkan pelajar terus menghayati dunia kesusasteraan selepas menamatkan pengajian.

Dalam kajian ini, subjek terdiri daripada 50 mahasiswa jurusan Kesusasteraan Bahasa Inggeris dari Fakulti Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Untuk menjayakan kajian ini, penyelidik telah menggunakan gabungan dua kaedah iaitu kaedah kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Sumber data pula termasuk kaedah pra-soalselidik dan pasca soalselidik, nota pemerhatian, pra-ujian dan pasca-ujian, rakaman perbincangan/diskusi dalam kumpulan, serta temubual dan jurnal.

Keputusan eksperimen menunjuk bahawa “literature circles” menimbulkan minat dan penghayatan terhadap teks kesusasteraan. Keputusan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa mahasiswa menghargai peluang untuk menyertai perbincangan secara demokratik; yang membolehkan pendapat diutarakan mengikut persepsi masing-masing di samping mendengar persepsi mahasiswa lain. Transaksi yang berlaku semasa “literature circles” memberi peluang kepada subjek untuk membaca, mengimbas, meluahkan perasaan dan berkuasa di atas pembelajaran sendiri. Fokus kajian ini bukan untuk pelajar membaca untuk mendapatkan maklumat daripada teks, berfikir mengenai interpretasi yang ingin didengari oleh guru atau belajar elemen sastera (Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995:x), tetapi untuk membina keupayaan subjek dalam membuat ramalan, membentuk imej visual, menghubungkan bahan yang dibaca dengan pengalaman yang pernah dilalui serta teks-teks lain yang telah dibaca, berdebat dengan penulis serta menaksir kandungan dan stail penulisan (Brabham & Villaume, 2000).

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I certify that an Examination Committee has met2009 to conduct the final examination of I.Satkunavathi a/p S.Iswarapatham on her Master Degree thesis entitled “The Perception of Tertiary ESL Literature Learners Towards Literature” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Regulations) 1981. The Committee recommended that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. The Committee Members for the candidate are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.

The logo of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) is a shield-shaped emblem. It features a red and white design with a central book and a stylized 'U' shape. The letters 'UPM' are prominently displayed in a red box at the top left of the shield.

I.SATKUNAVATHI A/P S.ISWARAPATHAM

Date: 18 November 2009

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