

Issues in TESL

Ratnawati Mohd Asraf

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. The Implementation of the First Communicative Syllabus in Malaysia
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf 1
2. The Theoretical Bases for Language Teaching and Syllabus Design
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf 11
3. English as a Global Language and the Teaching of Mathematics and Science in English
Wan Aimran Wan Ahmad Kamil 23
4. Learning Science in English: The Plight of Rural Students in Malaysia
Tengku Badariah, Mohd Sahari Nordin, and Abdul Shakour Preece 29
5. ELT and Islam: Recent Developments
Abdul Shakour Preece 51
6. The Need to Develop ELT Materials for Muslim Learners
Abdul Shakour Preece 69
7. The Teaching of Writing: From Theory to Practice
Noor Lide Abu Kassim & Kamal J. Badrasawi 83
8. Responding to Students' Writing: A Critique of Peer Review
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf 97
9. Students' Attitudes Towards Reading and Parental Involvement in their Children's Reading: A case study of three schools
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf 119

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S READING: A CASE STUDY OF THREE SCHOOLS

Ratnawati Mohd Asraf

INTRODUCTION

The inculcation of the love of reading among our citizens should be seen as an issue of primary importance before we can consider ourselves to be a truly literate society. In order for us to be at the forefront of knowledge, we have to develop a reading public who *actively seek* knowledge and who are able to *generate* knowledge. Developing a love of reading is also crucial to creating an informed citizenry, and a thinking society, capable of thinking critically and reflecting upon, as well as making crucial decisions about current problems. This is especially so for Muslim societies, where the importance of seeking knowledge has been repeatedly emphasized in the *Qur'an* and in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, as well as by our scholars, both past and present.

Hence, it becomes important for Muslim societies to develop the reading habit among its members, especially among young children. When children become involved with the written form of any language, they gain important concepts about meaning and use that will facilitate their future academic success. In addition, this love for reading, if carefully nurtured, will be carried on until adulthood. However, we need to ask ourselves: How far have we succeeded in developing the reading habit among our children? To what extent do parents actually encourage their children to read? Do their young children read? What kinds of books do their children read? It is important that these issues be studied