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4.2.1.1 Gender
4.2.1.2 Results
4.2.1.3 Literature Teaching
4.2.2 Literature in ELT
4.2.2.1 Exposure to a Variety of Literary Texts
4.2.2.2 Introduction to Literary Elements
4.2.2.3 Introduction of Approaches
4.2.2.4 Introduction to KBSM
4.2.2.5 Training Grounds
4.2.3 Literature Teaching
4.2.4 Advantages of Literature in ELT to Teacher Trainees
4.2.5 Problems Faced by Teacher Trainees in Teaching Literature
4.2.6 How to Improve the Subject

5 SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Summary of the Findings
5.3 Recommendations
5.3.1 More Training Ground
5.3.2 Vary In-Class Activities
5.3.3 KBSM Focused
5.3.4 Increase Credit Hours
5.3.5 Recommendation for Further Study
5.4 Conclusion

REFERENCES 63-65
APPENDICES 66-81
“I hereby declare that I have read this thesis and in my opinion this thesis is sufficient in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of A report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science in Education (TESL)

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LEARNING AND APPLYING THE SHL 3482 (LITERATURE IN ELT) BY UTM’S TESL TRAINEES

NOOR ASHIKIN BINTI MUZAFFAR SHAH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science and Education (TESL)

Faculty of Education
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

JUNE 2009
I declare that this thesis entitled “Learning and Applying the SHL 3482 (Literature in ELT) by UTM’s TESL Trainees” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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Date : .....................................................
To my loved ones...
ABSTRACT

Teachers of English especially teacher trainees need to be equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to teach literature in school. The subject of Literature in ELT was taught to UTM’s teacher trainees before they go for teaching practice in order to provide them with adequate skills and knowledge of literature teaching. Thus, this study was carried out to investigate the content of Literature in ELT that have been taught to teacher trainees and to identify the benefits of the subject to teacher trainees. Besides that, this study was also conducted to identify the problems faced by teacher trainees in teaching literature during their teaching practice and to suggest the ways to overcome the problems. 31 third year students of Bachelor Science and Education (TESL) were selected as the respondents of this study. A set of questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the respondents. The overall findings of the study indicate that Literature in ELT do benefits the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature as most of the respondents rarely face problems in their literature lesson. In conclusion, some suggestions have been made in order to improve the subject of Literature in ELT and recommendations for future research have also been included in the final part of the report.
ABSTRAK

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENT</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Background of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Objective of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 Research Questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6 Significance of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7 Scope of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 What is Literature?</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 History of Literature in Malaysia 10
2.3 Types of Literature 12
  2.3.1 Poems 12
  2.3.2 Short Stories 13
  2.3.3 Novel 14
2.4 Literature in KBSM 14
2.5 Literature in ELT 16
2.6 Why use Literature in the Language Classroom 17
  2.6.1 Language Development 18
  2.6.2 Social or Moral Development 19
  2.6.3 Aesthetic Development 19
2.7 Different Models of Teaching Literature in ESL Classroom 20
  2.7.1 The Cultural Model 20
  2.7.2 The Language Model 21
  2.7.3 The Personal Growth Model 21
2.8 Teacher’s Role 23

3  RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 24
3.1 Introduction 24
3.2 Sample of Study 24
3.3 Research Instrument 25
  3.3.1 Questionnaire 25
3.4 Research Procedures 25
3.5 Data Analysis 26

4  DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION 27
4.1 Introduction 27
4.2 The Questionnaire 27
  4.2.1 Respondents’ Demographic Data 28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE NO.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Training Ground To Generate Teaching Materials</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Training Ground To Design Classroom Activities</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Training Ground To Conduct a Lesson</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Problems in Designing Classroom Activities</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Problems in Generating Teaching Materials</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Problems in Conducting a Lesson</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE NO.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Gender</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ SPM English Results</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ MUET Results</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Literature in ELT Results</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Teaching Practice Results</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Experience in Teaching Literature</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Exposure to a Variety of Literary Texts</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Awareness of Literary Elements</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Understanding of Literary Elements</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Introduction to Literature in ELT Approaches</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Introduction to KBSM Syllabus</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12 Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Introduction of KBSM’s Literature Materials 41

13 Percentages of Respondents’ Views on Literature Teaching 49
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMR</td>
<td>Penilaian Menengah Rendah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KBSM</td>
<td>Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>English Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTM</td>
<td>Universiti Teknologi Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESL</td>
<td>Teaching English as Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Curriculum Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUET</td>
<td>Malaysian University English Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the discussions focus on the issue of this research including the purpose and significance of the study. This chapter includes several other sub-topics. Firstly, there is a discussion on the background of the study. Secondly, the statement of the problems for this study is discussed. Thirdly, there is the purpose of the study and then this chapter includes the objective of the study and the research questions as well. Next, the elaboration on the significance of conducting this study and the scope of the study are discussed.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, literature has become one important component in Malaysia’s language learning. Literature is also a component tested in major examinations such as Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR). By using literature, teacher can teach students about moral values, themes, culture appreciation and so forth. Literature components in Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (KBSM) comprise of novel, poem and short stories.
The introduction of literature as one of the component in Malaysia’s English Language Syllabus provides many benefits, especially for the students. This is because, literature can enhance English language learning thus, improving the students’ proficiency level. Besides, literature also may teach the students many aesthetic values such as understanding foreign culture and appreciating the literary works written by other people.

“In such an environment, literature has a place in fostering self-awareness and identity in interaction with a new language and culture”.

(Carter & Brumfit, 1986)

However, there are many problems in implementing literature in the classroom. The problems may be due from the teacher, the student or other related factors. Teachers may have problems in teaching literature as they lack of knowledge in the techniques in teaching literature. While students, have problems in understanding and appreciating literature especially the students from a rural area where there are no sufficient exposure of English literature to them. The students’ level of proficiency also may be the contributing factor to this problem. Various studies have been conducted in finding the solutions to overcome the problems, so that a more meaningful learning will take place in the classroom.

Literature has also been introduced as one of the subjects in university, colleges, and teachers’ colleges. For example, the subject of Literature in ELT as one of the core subject in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia’s (UTM) Bachelor in Science and Education (TESL) course. This course is aimed to equip the teacher trainees with sufficient knowledge about literature and how to teach literature in classroom. Teachers or teacher trainees need to know what to teach and how to
teach literature so that, the students can appreciate and understand literature better. In Carter, 1986:

“A natural resolution would be to take an approach in which language and literature teaching are more closely integrated and harmonized than is commonly the case at the present time so that literature would not be isolated, possibly rejected, on account of the “literariness” of its language”.

This study investigated about the content of Literature in ELT that have been taught to the teacher trainees as well as to identify the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature during their teaching practice. Besides that, this study identified the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice and suggests the ways to overcome the problems.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

These days, literature plays a major role in English learning. However, there are many problems encountered by the teachers of English in determining the best approaches to be used in teaching literature. Teachers also lack the skills to make the literature lesson become meaningful for the students. Therefore, there should be enough practice and exposure for the teachers especially the teacher trainees of English before they teach Literature.

The changes made by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) in our local education system where they re-introduced the English literature into our
English language syllabus gives a big impact to all the educators in school throughout Malaysia. These changes had been put into practice by our government in Form One and Form Four in March 2000, in Form Two and Form Five in 2001 and in Form Three in the year of 2002 (Patvinder Singh, 1999). However, as an introduction, English literature will be taught as one of the elements in the English subjects in our Malaysian curriculum.

This introduction of literature in the syllabus creates some difficulties to the students as well as for the teachers. Students have a poor understanding of the literary text. Besides that, they are not familiar with the text as there are no sufficient inputs or exposure to literary text especially the English literature. As for the teachers, they face problems in delivering their lesson because teachers do not know the best way to teach literature. Besides that, they are also not familiar with the literary text, makes them need more time to prepare for the lesson. Teaching literature in ESL contexts can be a daunting task. This is especially so in the context of teaching literature in the Malaysian English language classroom where young students who lack the mastery of the English language struggle to deal with their literary texts or materials. Such situations create problems for English language teachers in the teaching of the literature component in secondary schools. The literary component was introduced to improve students’ competency in the English language.

According to the State Education of China, there are two reasons for the failure. Firstly, the knowledge learned in literature courses in teacher trainees’ colleges does not seem to be relevant to their teaching. Secondly, there is a wide gap between what they learned in literature courses and how they can use the knowledge to enrich their teaching (Shu Wei, 1999:25). Many educators believed that if teaching literature failed to enhance today’s classroom, it is not the fault of
the literature or the learners, but rather of the teachers, the strategies and the approaches they used. As stated by Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:

“Learning what is meaningful and relevant depends partly on what is taught and partly on how it is taught”.

In Malaysian context, we can cite Gilroym-Sccot in Brumfit, 1983 as:

“Students do not know how to approach literature, and teachers do not know how to present it”.

Students in Malaysia do not appreciate literature as an art because they are not able to understand the literary text. Besides that, in my opinion, the exam oriented environment in Malaysia also contributes to this problem as students are pressurized to pass their examinations. This will lead the students to learn literature for the sake of the examinations and they are not able to appreciate literature.

Teachers or teacher trainees have problems in their literature class due to the lack of students’ basic knowledge in literature. Teachers need to spend more time to teach literature because they need to introduce the literary devices first to the students before they can complete the syllabus. In addition to that, teachers also spend a lot of time in preparing their materials and lesson plan as the literature subject is new and they do not have sufficient input to determine the strategies and approaches to be used in the class. Sending teacher trainees to school without equipping them with sufficient amount of knowledge in the teaching of literature will make the situation become worse.
The teachers or teacher trainees of English must be well equipped so that they will display a good image to the students. When the teachers are very prepared and show their interests in the teaching, then the students will slowly become motivated to learn the subject. According to DeBoer and Dallmann (1960), if the teacher shows sincere interest in their problems, gives encouragement and demonstrates genuine enthusiasms for books, they can create an atmosphere that is favourable to voluntary reading. Similarly, in the case of teaching literature, if the teacher shows their interest and motivation when teaching literature, their students can sense their keenness and then sooner or later, they will learn to like the subject.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Today, literature is one of the important components in the English Learning. Therefore, teachers of English need to deliver the lesson effectively to ensure that the students can gain some knowledge from the teaching and learning process.

In response to this issue, teachers of English especially teacher trainees need to be prepared to teach in school. A course offered by the university need to fulfill all the needs of the teacher trainees and to cater the students’ needs as well.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the content of Literature in ELT that have been taught to the teacher trainees and to identify the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature during their teaching practice. Besides that, this study identified the
problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice as well as to suggest ways to overcome the problems.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the content of Literature in ELT that has been taught to the teacher trainees.
2. To identify the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees in preparing themselves to teach literature during their teaching practice.
3. To identify the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice.
4. To suggest a way to overcome the problems faced by the teacher trainees in the teaching of literature during their teaching practice.

1.4 Research Questions

The questions below guided the study:

1. What are the contents of Literature in ELT that have been taught to the teacher trainees?
2. What are the benefits of learning Literature in ELT to the teacher trainees?
3. What are the problems faced by teacher trainees in teaching literature?
4. What are the solutions to the problems?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is to help teacher trainees to prepare themselves to teach Literature in school during their teaching practice. Besides that, this study was also conducted to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the subject of Literature in ELT. In addition to that, this study also proposed suggestions to improve the content of Literature in ELT.

This research is significant for all people who are involved in teaching of literature especially to teacher trainees to prepare themselves to become teachers. This research will be used by them in order to know whether their knowledge and the training provided in their courses are enough and relevant to their real classroom teaching context. While for the colleges and universities, it is hoped that this research can help them in preparing an outline of a more useful and relevant literature teaching course for future teachers.

1.6 Scope of the Study

For the purpose of the study, 31 third year students of Bachelor Science and Education (TESL) of Faculty of Education, UTM were selected and questionnaire were given to them to collect the data.