

ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE TESTING  
AS APPLIED TO MALAY LEARNERS

by

PATRICK H. C. KOAY

B.A. Hons., University of Malaya  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1970

---

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree

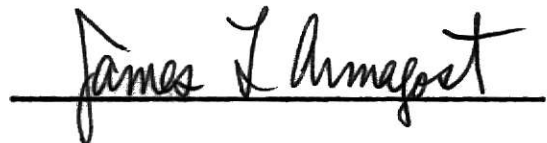
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of English

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

Approved by:

  
James J. Armagost

LD  
2668  
R4  
1976  
K63  
e 2  
Document

122

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all the members of my supervisory committee.- Dr. James L. Armagost, Dr. Robert Grindell and Dr. Mary Frances White, for all their enlightening comments, advice and help, in this work.

I am grateful to my Major Professor, Dr. James L. Armagost for all his help during my course of studies at Kansas State University. My special thanks go to my wife, Theresa, for her encouragement and patience during difficult moments.

I also wish to thank the Mara Institute of Technology for sponsoring my studies in the United States.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### SECTION

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
The students.....	1
The Intensive English Course Curriculum.....	1
Objective of Course.....	2
Teachers and Facilities.....	3
Justification of the Study.....	3
Summary of Approach.....	4
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE (TOWARDS AN IDEAL TEST).....	5
What it means to know a language.....	5
Contrastive Analysis and Language Testing.....	12
Characteristics of a Good Test.....	18
3. PLAN OF THE TEST.....	21
General plan of the Test.....	21
Format of Tests.....	22
4. TEST WRITING AND ANALYSIS OF ITEMS.....	25
Writing and analysis of multiple choice items.....	25
The Contrastive Analysis Approach.....	36
Describing and analyzing other test modes.....	44
5. SCORING.....	53
CONCLUSION.....	56
REFERENCES.....	57
APPENDIX - SAMPLE TESTS.....	59

## SECTION 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1. THE STUDENTS

The one-year intensive course in English as a Second Language at the Mara Institute of Technology prepares post-secondary Malay-medium students who wish to enter professional or semi-professional courses the following year. These courses are conducted through the medium of English.

Malay-medium students are those who have had their primary and secondary schooling through the medium of Malay. English-medium students are those who have had their education through English.

These Malay-medium students have had an average of 3 hours of English a week during their primary and secondary schooling. Their average level in English proficiency at the beginning of the "Intensive English course" is that of a below-average second-year secondary English-medium student.

#### 2. THE INTENSIVE ENGLISH COURSE CURRICULUM

The course is formally organized into the following units:

- A. Sixteen hours a week of (i) Communication Arts, (ii) Writing Course, (iii) Reading - mainly Reading and Comprehension, and (iv) Communication Arts - "Language through Literature."

B. Nine hours a week (depending on pre-choice of professional course) selected from Basic Accounting, Business Mathematics, Rudiments of Business, Additional Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. All these subjects are taught through the medium of English.

In addition to the above, there is the less formal "Extensive Reading Programme" - outside-lecture hours reading of books in English from the Intensive English Course Library or the Class library. Almost every class (a group of about thirty under one teacher) has a mini-library. This is usually the result of a joint effort of that class and the teacher. Feedback - progress in English through this "Extensive Reading Programme" can be obtained through summaries and reviews (oral and written).

### 3. OBJECTIVE OF COURSE

The English proficiency level aimed at is that of a good final-year secondary English-medium student (High School Senior). In practical terms, it means being able to follow lectures and participate actively at par with English-medium students. In the broader Malaysian context, it includes the use of English (1) as a medium of instruction in educational institutions (2) as a language of communication (both oral and written) in the working life of Malaysians, and (3) as a language of society - an alternative to the National Language, Malay.