

Reading difficulties among Malaysian undergraduate ESL learners: A preliminary study

ABSTRACT

Reading deficiency in reading English texts or materials among ESL undergraduate students has been one of the most significant problems in Malaysia. Educators in Malaysia are currently facing the problem as it reflects on their students' academic performance. This study aims to investigate Malaysian ESL undergraduate students' reading difficulties in reading English texts. 25 Malaysian students who are taking advanced English courses in a university, were selected to participate in this study. A quantitative method was employed for this study. The questionnaires were designed to fit the purpose of this study. Data analysis was done using SPSS to analyse the data collected. The result shows that students are weak in grasping the main idea when they are reading, having poor vocabulary, lack of reading habit and interest in reading English texts, and are pressured with the lack of time when reading. It can be concluded that reading deficiency affects their academic performance and their English proficiency. In overcoming their difficulties, students must equip themselves with some reading strategies to help them to comprehend the English texts that they are reading.