

## BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

1. NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. FACULTY: \_\_\_\_\_
1. AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. GENDER: \_\_\_\_\_
5. HOMETOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ 6. STATE: \_\_\_\_\_
7. SPM ENGLISH RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_
8. FOUNDATION ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Language/s you speak at home: \_\_\_\_\_
10. How long have you been studying the English Language? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How do you rate your overall proficiency in the language? (Circle one)
- Excellent      Good      Fair      Poor
12. How do you rate your overall performance in the language as compared with the proficiency of other students in your class? (Circle one)
- Excellent      Good      Fair      Poor
13. How important is it for you to become proficient in the English Language? (Circle one)
- Very important      Important      Not so important
14. Why do you want to learn the English language ? (Tick all that apply)
- \_\_\_\_\_ interested in the language
- \_\_\_\_\_ interested in the culture
- \_\_\_\_\_ have friends who speak the language
- \_\_\_\_\_ required to pass the language to graduate
- \_\_\_\_\_ need it for my future career
- \_\_\_\_\_ need it for travel
- \_\_\_\_\_ other reasons (list): \_\_\_\_\_
15. Do you enjoy learning the language? (Circle one)      Yes      No
16. What other language have you studied? \_\_\_\_\_
17. What has been your favourite experience in learning the language? \_\_\_\_\_

## PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Native Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Native Language: \_\_\_\_\_

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you studied English? \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: People learn many ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and/or by "hands-on" task (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some learn better when they work alone, while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best the way(s) you prefer to learn.

Read each statement on the following page. Please respond to the statements **AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH**. Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree mark as follows:

√	STRONGLY AGREE
	AGREE
	UNDECIDED
	DISAGREE
	STRONGLY DISAGREE

(continued)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FACULTY: \_\_\_\_\_

SA	STRONGLY AGREE
A	AGREE
U	UNDECIDED
D	DISAGREE
SD	STRONGLY DISAGREE

SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD
SA	A	U	D	SD

- When the teacher tells me the instructions, I understand.
- I prefer to learn by doing something in class.
- I get more work done when I work with others.
- I learn more when I study with others.
- In class, I learn best when I work with others.
- I learn better by reading what that the teacher writes or chalkboard.
- When someone tells me how to do something in class, it better.
- When I do things in class, I learn better.
- I remember things I have heard in class better than thir have read.
- When I read instructions, I remember them better.
- I learn more when I can make a model of something.
- I understand better when I read instructions.
- When I study alone, I remember things better.
- I learn more when I make something for class project.
- I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.
- I learn better when I make drawings as I study.
- I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.
- When I work alone, I learn better.
- I understand things better in class when I participate in playing.
- I learn better when I listen to someone.
- I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three cla
- When I build something, I remember what I have learn better.
- I prefer to study with others.
- I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.
- I enjoy making something for a class project.
- I learn best in class, when I participate in related activi
- In class, I work better when I work alone.
- I prefer working on projects myself.
- I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to
- I prefer to work by myself.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FACULTY \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS**

There are 5 questions for each learning style category in this questionnaire. The questions are grouped below according to each learning style. Each question you answer has a numerical value.

SA	A	U	D	SD
5	4	3	2	1

Fill in the blanks with the numerical value for each answer. For example, if you answered Strongly Agree (SA) for question 6 (a visual question), write a number 5 (SA) on the blank next to question below.

Visual  
6 - 5

When you have completed all the numerical values for visual, add the numbers. Multiply the answer by 2, and put the total in the appropriate blank. Follow this process for each of the learning style categories. When you are finished, look at the scale at the bottom of the pages. It will help you determine your major learning style preference(s), and those learning style(s) that are negligible. If you need help please ask your teacher.

**VISUAL**

6 - \_\_\_\_  
10 - \_\_\_\_  
12 - \_\_\_\_  
24 - \_\_\_\_  
29 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_ x 2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

**AUDITORY**

1 - \_\_\_\_  
7 - \_\_\_\_  
9 - \_\_\_\_  
17 - \_\_\_\_  
20 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_ x 2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

**TACTILE**

11 - \_\_\_\_  
14 - \_\_\_\_  
16 - \_\_\_\_  
22 - \_\_\_\_  
25 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_ X2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

**GROUP**

3 - \_\_\_\_  
4 - \_\_\_\_  
5 - \_\_\_\_  
21 - \_\_\_\_  
23 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_ X2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

**KINESTHETIC**

2 - \_\_\_\_  
8 - \_\_\_\_  
15 - \_\_\_\_  
19 - \_\_\_\_  
26 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_x 2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

**INDIVIDUAL**

13 - \_\_\_\_  
18 - \_\_\_\_  
27 - \_\_\_\_  
28 - \_\_\_\_  
30 - \_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_X2 \_\_\_\_ (score)

SCALE:	Major Learning Style Preference	38-50
	Minor Learning Style Preference	25-37
	Negligible	0-24

## STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL)

### DIRECTIONS

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING(SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read each statement. On the separate Worksheet given, **write the response (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) that tells HOW TRUE of you the statement is.**

**1 = Never or almost never true of me**

**2 = Usually not true of me**

**3 = Somewhat true of me**

**4 = Usually true of me**

**5 = Always or almost always true of me**

**NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME** means that the statement is very rarely true of you

**NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME** means that the statement is true less than half the time

**SOMEWHAT TRUE OF ME** means that the statement is true of you about half the time

**USUALLY TRUE OF ME** means that the statement is true more than half the time

**ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE OF ME** means that the statement is true of you almost always.

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Put your answers on the separate Worksheet. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. **Remember, answer 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 (as described above).**

**PART A**

1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
5. I use rhyme to remember new English words.
6. I use flash cards to remember new English word
7. I physically act out new words
8. I often review English lessons
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page on the board or on a street sign

**PART B**

10. I say or write new English words several times
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
12. I practice the sounds of English
13. I use the English words in different ways
14. I start conversation in English
15. I watch English Language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English
16. I read for pleasure in English
17. I write notes, messages, letters or reports in English
18. I first skim an English passage(read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English

- 20. I try to find patterns in English
- 21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts in English
- 22. I try not to translate word for word
- 23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English

### **PART C**

- 24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.
- 25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
- 26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English
- 27. I read English without looking up every new word
- 28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English
- 29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing

### **PART D**

- 30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
- 31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.
- 32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.
- 33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English
- 34. I plan my schedules so that I will have enough time to study English
- 35. I look for people I can talk to in English
- 36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English
- 37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills
- 38. I think about my progress in learning English

### **PART E**

- 39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
- 40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid



- 41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English
- 42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English
- 43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
- 44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English

#### **PART F**

- 45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
- 46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk
- 47. I practice English with other students
- 48. I ask for help from English speakers
- 49. I ask questions in English
- 50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_

### WORKSHEET FOR ANSWERING AND SCORING

1. The blanks are numbered for each item on the SILL.
2. Write your response to each item (that is 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) in each of the blanks.
3. Add up each column. Put the result on the line marked SUM.
4. Divide the number under SUM to get the average for each column. Round the average off to the nearest tenth.
5. Figure out an overall average. To do this, add up all the Profile of Results. Copy your averages (for each part and for the whole SILL) from the worksheet to the PROFILE.

PART A	PART B	PART C	PART D	PART E	PART F
1. _____	10. _____	24. _____	30. _____	39. _____	45. _____
2. _____	11. _____	25. _____	31. _____	40. _____	46. _____
3. _____	12. _____	26. _____	32. _____	41. _____	47. _____
4. _____	13. _____	27. _____	33. _____	42. _____	48. _____
5. _____	14. _____	28. _____	34. _____	43. _____	49. _____
6. _____	15. _____	29. _____	35. _____	44. _____	50. _____
7. _____	16. _____		36. _____		
8. _____	17. _____		37. _____		
9. _____	18. _____		38. _____		
	19. _____				
	20. _____				
	21. _____				
	22. _____				
	23. _____				

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_

### PROFILE OF RESULTS ON THE SILL

#### AVERAGE OF EACH SECTION

SUM OF PART A (Remembering effectively) \_\_\_\_\_ + 9 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUM OF PART B (Using all your mental processes) \_\_\_\_\_ + 14 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUM OF PART C (Compensating for missing knowledge) \_\_\_\_\_ + 6 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUM OF PART D (Organising and evaluating your knowledge) \_\_\_\_\_ + 9 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUM OF PART E (Managing your emotions) \_\_\_\_\_ + 6 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUM OF PART F (Learning with others) \_\_\_\_\_ + 6 = \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR OVERALL AVERAGE \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR AVERAGES

HIGH	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
LOW	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

The questions listed below were used as a guide during the interview sessions. The questions asked pertained to the strategies used by the students while reading two passages. **There was no definite order and questions could be changed according to the needs of the situation.**

## Ice-breaking session

This session was held to establish a rapport between the researcher and the student. General questions were asked during this session. The examples were as follows:

How are you?  
How did you spend your holidays?  
What are your hobbies?  
Have you read any interesting book lately?

## Interview Sessions

Questions were asked in relation to the reading comprehension passages

The students were asked questions on the strategies they used to help them understand the passages. The SILL was used as a guide to develop the questions asked during the interviews. The questions were changed according to the needs of the situation. Examples of the questions were as follows:

## (Memory strategies)

Were there many words whose meanings you did not know?  
What did you do when you came across a word/phrase which you did not understand?  
How did you try to understand those words?  
Did you guess the meanings of any of the unfamiliar words?  
Give examples, if possible.  
Did you recollect or remember the meanings of any of the unfamiliar words in the passage from your previous readings? Give examples, if possible.  
Did you try to establish any relationships between the words which you already know with the unfamiliar words which you encountered in the passage to help you understand the meanings of the unfamiliar words?  
Did you relate the unfamiliar words in the passage with any image or mental picture?

## (Cognitive strategies)

Did you try to translate words or phrases in the passage to help you understand the passage?

Did you attempt to translate the passage word for word into your mother tongue to help you understand the passage?

## (Compensation strategies)

Did the unfamiliar words prevent you from understanding the overall meaning of the passage?

Did you make guesses to understand any of the unfamiliar words in the passage?

## (Metacognitive strategies)

Did you make a list of the unfamiliar words in the passage?

Did you arrange the unfamiliar words in the passage in any fashion or way to help you understand them?

Did you organise yourself in any way before or while reading the passage?

Did you organise your time in any way while reading the passage?

## (Affective strategies)

Were you tensed or nervous when you came across unfamiliar words in the passage?

Were you afraid of making a mistake trying to understand the passage?

Did your tension or fear affect your understanding of the passage?

## (Social strategies)

When you do not understand any word, would you ask your friends?

Do you enjoy working with your friends?

## (Other possible questions)

Can you name some ways how you can improve your English language?  
In your opinion what is the most effective way to learn the English language?

Which of the above mentioned ways do you find useful to improve your English?

Can you tell me other ways/techniques you used to help you understand

the passage?

Elaborate.

Can you remember any tips or guidelines your teachers in your primary or secondary school taught you to improve your reading?

## PASSAGE I

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow, using information from the passage.

- I Mobile phones the ultimate business tool or the homing device which manages to track you down no matter where or when. Whatever it may be, the fact remains that the mobile phone is handy and highly versatile, something which an increasing number of people find they cannot do without. From tycoons to pensioners and now even students, the number of mobile phone users is constantly on the rise, not only in Malaysia but also all over the world. 5
- II The mobile phone is attractive to its users as they can be contacted anywhere they are at any time of the day. For instance a student living in a hostel where there is no telephone facilities after a certain hour can still get in touch with his parents; a family on a camping trip in some remote region can summon help if needed and a motorist with a breakdown in the middle of the night can call for a tow truck. If you are late for an appointment with a client due to the city's phenomenal traffic snarls, you can use the mobile phone to inform the person. 10 15
- III The telephone has come a long way since it was first invented. Today, there are few households in Malaysia without a fixed line telephone. As for mobile phones, it appears like almost everyone and anyone owns a handset. This could be because prices are crashing as the various service operators are competing with each other in offering discounts and value-added features. 20
- IV Cellular communication is a relative newcomer in the world of telecommunications, having been around for less than two decades. Initially viewed with apprehension and even fear, the mobile phone has become a part of everyday life. In this short time, the mobile phone has managed to overtake all other wireless services like pagers, cordless telephones and specialised mobile radio services. In fact many of these services and facilities have been integrated into the cellular network. 25
- V However, things have not always been as good as they are presently. The mobile phone first made its appearance in Malaysia in 1985 in the form of ATUR 450, the country's first mobile cellular service. The event made Malaysia the first country in the region and the 13th in the world to embark on cellular communications. In those early days the phones were huge and bulky contraptions which were expensive and not easy to carry around. 30 35
- VI A few years later in 1989, Celcom came on the scene with its nationwide ART 900 system. It was followed by Mobikom's nationwide Mobifon 8000 dual-mode system in 1994. Today including Celcom and Mobikom there are eight companies licensed to offer cellular services in the country.

- VII The increase in the number of companies in the industry has been to the advantage of the subscriber. The many types of phones in the market are constantly being replaced by newer and sophisticated models. They have become light and compact enough to be slipped into the pocket. Prices are lower with the increase in competition and new facilities are being added all the time. At one point, mobile phones were merely used for making and receiving calls. This is not so now as users can screen calls, divert calls, identify the caller and the number as well as have an answering service. 40 45
- VIII The ultimate dream in the world of cellular communication is of a world where earth-based and satellite-based systems will allow subscribers to make and receive calls from any point on this planet, using the same mobile phone. Perhaps the first indication of this becoming a reality is the Japanese Personal Handy Phone which operates as a cordless phone at home and a cellular phone outdoors. The scope is growing all the time and the number of companies competing to set up a satellite-based system for personal communication is clearly indicative of this. 50 55
- IX Currently there are about one million cellular phone users in Malaysia. The number of Phone users is likely to continue to increase at a phenomenal rate and in future getting through to somebody on the other side of the world will be easier than saying 'mobile communications.' 60

(Adapted from Business Times,  
14th. February 1996.



## APPENDIX F

## PASSAGE 2

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions that follow.

- I Malaysians, especially children, are consuming food additives at almost every meal. These additives - including colouring, flavours, thickeners, emulsifiers and food conditioners-can cause adverse reactions in certain people who are sensitive to them. For example, studies have shown that hyperactivity and behaviour changes could be caused by food additives. They are also known to be responsible for such health complaints as asthma, itches and skin rashes. 5
- II Manufacturers feel that additives, however, are absolutely necessary because of modern manufacturing processes and the need for products that have a longer shelf-life. They say that the disadvantages of using additives have to be weighed against the benefits. For example, if not adding a flavour or colour would put children off a particular food and deny them certain nutrients, then the addition of such a flavour becomes vital. It is, however, not acceptable to use food additives to disguise food that has gone bad or that is of inferior quality. Manufacturers also argue that consumers are so accustomed to accepting artificial colours such as 'orange' in cordials and juices that using natural colours may result in poor sales. 10 15
- III Malaysia is said to have stringent food regulations. For example, several additives allowed in Western countries are not allowed here. However, consumerists feel that there is still a lack of awareness of the dangers of additives and that not enough is being done to curb their widespread use. Controls are necessary because we are still not sure of the effects of long-term exposure to certain additives. Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is an example of an additive that is commonly found in most restaurant food. This additive is strongly believed to trigger off asthma, yet there is still no control over its use. 20 25
- IV Consumerists recommend that a law be introduced to make it compulsory for manufacturers to specify the preservatives or additives used in their food. At present, manufacturers get away by using the words 'permitted flavours' or 'permitted preservatives' on the labels of their products. Specific labelling would make it easier to monitor the use of additives and preservatives. Consumers would also be able to check what additives are used so that they can avoid chemicals that they are allergic to. 30
- V Consumerists feel that it is important to educate consumers about food additives. When consumers become aware of the dangers of using a certain additive, they have the power to influence manufacturers to stop using it. For example, 'belacan' manufacturers had to stop using the artificial colour Rhodomine B when consumers became more aware of the dangers of using it. Soybean cake manufacturers were similarly 35 40

## TRANSCRIPTS

Excerpts of the transcripts from the first student, Hashim.

## FIRST INTERVIEW (Ice breaking)

(General information)

Q: How are you?

A: Fine, thank you.

Q: Did you enjoy your holidays?

A: It was quite fun.

Q: Did you go out-station?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did you go?

A: I went to Port Dickson with my family. The sea was beautiful, but some places were dirty with litter.

Q: Have you been enjoying your English classes?

A: Yes, I enjoy my English class. I always.

Q: Can you suggest some ways of how you can improve your English language?

A: Read a lot, always talk in English, see English movies and others.

Q: In your opinion what is the most effective way for you to learn the English language?

A: Same as the above.

Q: Which of the above mentioned ways do you most often use to learn the English language?

A: I try to talk a lot in English with my friends, teachers and everyone I talk to in English because English is very important.

Q: Did you enjoy learning English in school?

A: Yes, I enjoy myself. My teachers are very good. But I did not have many friends to talk in English.

Q: In your opinion were your English teachers good and how did they teach you the language?

- A: They teach us from the book some were good but some were boring. They do a lot of excercises, o lot of grammar work and I can understand the grammar, example, Past tense, present perfect tense and it help me in my writing. Then we read a lot of passages and answer questions and that is help me a lot.
- Q: Are there any English teachers whom you can remember as 'good' and from whom you felt that you benefited while learning the language?
- A: Oh, yes, my form three teacher and my tutor they help me a lot. And my parents too help me a lot.
- Q: How did he/she/they teach you?
- A: My teacher and tutor always teach me properly the English way and I can understand them. They make me do a lot of work and always tell me to read in English. I read a lot of storybooks and try to speak in English. My parents always advice me to study English and I follow their advice.
- Q: Can you remember anything about the way or method of her teaching, which you found very useful and which you can remember up to now?
- A: For reading, she advice me to read the questions first before reading the passage.

## **SECOND INTERVIEW**

### **PASSAGE ONE (ON MOBILE PHONES)**

- Q: While reading the passage, were you thinking about anything?
- A: Yes, I think I have a picture of what I read.
- Q: Can you give an example of the picture in you mind?
- A: Yes, for example, nature, to forest.
- Phenomena (line 16) I relate to when I saw the movie

## TRANSCRIPTS

Excerpts of the transcripts from the first student, Hashim.

FIRST INTERVIEW (Ice breaking)

(General information)

Q: How are you?

A: Fine, thank you.

Q: Did you enjoy your holidays?

A: It was quite fun.

Q: Did you go out-station?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did you go?

A: I went to Port Dickson with my family. The sea was beautiful, but some places were dirty with litter.

Q: Have you been enjoying your English classes?

A: Yes, I enjoy my English class. I always.

O: Can you suggest some ways of how you can improve your English language?

A: Read a lot, always talk in English, see English movies and others.

Q: In your opinion what is the most effective way for you to learn the English language?

A: Same as the above.

Q: Which of the above mentioned ways do you most often use to learn the English language?

A: I try to talk a lot in English with my friends, teachers and everyone I talk to in English because English is very important.

Q: Did you enjoy learning English in school?

A: Yes, I enjoy myself. My teachers are very good. But I did not have many friends to talk in English.

Q: In your opinion were your English teachers good and how did they teach you the language?

"Phenomena", that was something out of control.

Q: Did you face any problems when reading the passage?

A: I think I don't know the meanings of some of the words I read.

Q: Did you come across many such words?

A: Not many, a few only.

Q: Can you give examples of some of the words?

A: For example, 'apprehension'. At first I don't know the meaning. Then I read the sentence and I think how I managed to guess the meaning, is the next word that comes after apprehension and that is 'and even fear', then I try to relate the word 'apprehension' and 'and even fear', and read through the sentence again. I make sure it is 'apprehension and even fear', 'orang anggap' – I try to imagine that the people take the hand phone everywhere, something that is taken everywhere.

Q: Did you come across any word in the passage that you connected to Bahasa Malaysia to help you understand the word?

A: None. Maybe 'phenomena', I think of the movie.

Q: What did you do when you first got the passage?

A: I think I first look at the passage. I see how long it is.

Q: Can you remember who and where you learnt to skim through before you actually read the passage?

A: It is a habit. I don't know.

Q: Can you remember when you started practicing this habit?

A: Actually, I think I learn it when I was very young. I think I was in primary school ... my English teacher tell me to see what the passage is talking about and then read the passage.

Q: Can you try to remember what else your English teacher taught you?

A: I think, a lot. But I can't remember ... But I read a lot. I am good in English so I can understand.

Q: What did you do next?

- A: I read the passage.
- Q: Then what did you do?
- A: I read and understand the passage. I try to understand and connect the idea in the passage. I read the passage three times. I do this so I can understand the passage better.
- Q: You said that you read the passage three times. Do you think you can explain to me what you did each time you read the passage?
- A: Oh! (pause) ... I think first I just see what the passage is telling about. Second, I read slowly, word by word. Third, I think I read to understand even better.
- Q: While you were reading can you describe what you were feeling?
- A: Yes, I try to pronounce every word properly as I am a good reader. So, I enjoyed it because it was something new I was reading. The topic was something new for me to learn.
- Q: While reading, was there anything else that you did?
- A: Yes, I make the short notes. These notes are regarding what the passage is all about. The short note at the side is about what the paragraph is telling about. For example, paragraph one, I write 'h.p.', because the first paragraph all the sentences are actually basically telling us about hand phones, like there is no other thing that they mention besides hand phones. So, that is how I read and I make the summary that the first paragraph is telling us about the hand phones. Without reading the title, I can guess what is the passage about.
- Q: Did you see or form any patterns to help you understand the reading passage?
- A: Yes, for example, when I read the first paragraph, the paragraph talks about hand phones only and the second paragraph talks about the importance of hand phones.
- Q: When did you make these short notes?
- A: When I read the third time. When I can understand the passage.

- Q: I see that you have done some underlining on the question paper. Do you think you can explain to me why you did this?
- A: Yes, for example, 'embark on'(line 36). I wanted to make sure I know the meaning of the word 'embark on', so I underlined it. Read the sentence again. So, I read through the sentence and from the sentence try to guess the meaning of 'embark on'. (He then reads the sentence found in the passage) - 'The event made Malaysia the first country in the region and the 13th in the world to embark on cellular communication.' – So, it could be that Malaysia is trying to move on, to try something new.
- 'Snarl' (line 6), I didn't know the meaning of the word 'snarl', but then I read the sentence and from the sentence the meaning could be 'traffic jams'.
- Q: Do you think that you could explain in more depth on how you decided that the meaning of the word "snarl" was "traffic jam"?
- A: From the sentence, I read that if you are late for an appointment is because of a traffic jam and then you can use a hand phone. So the word "snarl" is next to the word traffic so it mean "traffic jam".
- Q: Let's say for example while you were reading the passage and you came across a word/phrase/ sentence which you did not understand, besides guessing like you earlier explained, what else did you do to help you.
- A: I think I can guess, because I am good.
- Q: Would you try and translate that part of the passage into Bahasa Malaysia to help you understand the passage?
- A: No.
- Q: While you were reading the passage, did you at any time have to stop reading and refer to an earlier part of the passage to help you understand better?
- A: Yes, for example, after reading paragraph 4, I skim again to paragraph 3 to see whether the topic is changing or is still the

same.

Q: Besides attending English classes, can you suggest how you try to improve your English?

A: The only way for me to improve my English is basically reading in English and trying to converse in English with friends. And when people correct me, it means that I learn something from them. That's how I improve my English.

In fact when I was small, my parents told me to talk in English. They taught me when I was three years old. My parents tell my tutor to don't let me go out if I don't finish my work. My mother is a principal in a kindergarten and my father is an engineer.

Q: While you were reading the passage did you experience any feelings that affected your understanding of the passage?

A: Nervous, Because some time I read there is a tendency for me to not understand the passage. I find sentences that I cannot understand or words I am unfamiliar with. There are certain words I really can't understand.

Q: How do you try to overcome this feeling?

A: By just go through the sentence and trying to understand and try again till I understand.

Q: Let's say that sometimes you feel that you did well in an English task or test, how have you rewarded yourself?

A: I think the best reward for myself is self-satisfaction.

Q: When you do not understand some words, phrases, homework or tasks, in the English language do you discuss it with your friends?

A: Yes, two heads are better than one.

Q: Did you have to discuss the reading tasks completed just now with your friends?

A: No, because I can understand everything.

Q: Do you enjoy working in groups?

A: Oh, yes.



## THIRD AND FOURTH INTERVIEW

Q: Isham the other day you mentioned that your parents encouraged you to speak in English, besides, encouraging you to speak in English, can you recall other ways your parents helped you to improve your English?

A: My parents always tell me to read a lot and if I don't understand what I read, to read that again and again to understand. Then they say that when I don't understand a word, to try and guess the meaning. Guessing is also good.

Q: How about your tutor?

A: Same. He also tell me to read a lot and to read many times. He said to try and guess from the sentence the meaning of the word. He always told me that.

Q: How often do your parents speak to you in English?

A: I think it is fifty– fifty. Bahasa Malaysia is also important and English is also more important especially for studies.

Q: How about your English teacher in UiTM, did he or she teach you any skills and/or strategies to overcome any problems while reading in English(with reference to reading comprehension lessons)?

A: Well, actually this is my third semester in UiTM and yes I learn a lot. We practise a lot in reading. My lecturer she teach me how to try and guess the meaning of a word when I don't know the meaning. My English book also has chapter on contextual clues and discourse markers.

Q: Do you think you could elaborate what you learnt while studying contextual clues and how whatever knowledge you gained helped you while you were completing the reading task?

A: Well, I can remember my lecturer taught me how to read the sentence many times and try and get clues from the sentence. (long pause) . And then I think she say we have to look at the

sentence before and after to get more clues if not success. Well, I think my English lecturer is very good.

Q: Do you think you could explain to me how you used this knowledge on contextual clues to complete the earlier given reading task?

A: Like I say before, I look for clues in the sentence to get the meaning of the word 'snarl', 'embark on', 'apprehension' and others. I think contextual clues are very helpful especially for reading as my lecturer says.

Q: Besides that.

A: I think to read many times. Like when I read the passage many times to understand. I think this is very helpful also.

You know, like I say to summarize short notes of paragraphs like I do is also very helpful to understand.

Q: Earlier on you mentioned that while you were reading paragraph 4, you referred to paragraph 3? Do you think you could elaborate a little more on this or where did you learn about this strategy?

A: In paragraph 3, the main idea is about the 'history' of hand phones. Then in Paragraph 4, I want to see what is the main idea. I want to check it is the same idea or different. That's why I refer back.

I think it is more of a habit. I practise this from very long ago, maybe even secondary school. But I can remember my tutor and my father always tell me to understand what I read. And now my lecturer and my course lecturers also tell me the same thing. So, I think it is a good thing and I remember it.

#### FIFTH INTERVIEW (NEXT DAY)

Q: In the earlier interview you mentioned about several types of strategies which you used while completing your task. Did you learn how to use these strategies this semester or earlier on maybe in primary or secondary school; or from your tutor, parents, friends or

your course subject lecturers?

A: Actually, I think this is a habit. My parents and my tutor always tell me to read a lot because English is very important I think I learn to read many times from my father and my tutor.

Q: How old were you when you had a tutor?

A: From primary school.

Q: What else did he teach you?

A: To guess what the word mean, if I don't know.

Q: How about making short notes and summarizing paragraphs?

A: I think maybe in secondary school when my Ilmu Alam teacher ask me to make short notes in the subject because it help me to understand better.

Q: Did you practise making short notes during your English lessons in secondary school .

A: No, only for Ilmu Alam and also Sejarah.

Q: How about in UiTM, did your English teachers teach you how to write short notes or main ideas during English classes?

A: Short notes, no, but main ideas yes. We do a lot of main ideas in our reading comprehension classes. Main idea and topic sentence always come out for reading comprehension. It also help to summarize the paragraph.

Q: Do you think writing short notes, summarizing, main ideas and topic sentences are more or less the same?

A: (Long pause) Maybe yes. Summarizing and main ideas is the same.

Q: When you compared para 4 to para 3, do you think you were comparing the main ideas of these paras?

A: Yes. To see they connect or not.

Q: After reading the whole passage, did you find a theme in the passage?

A: Yes, I think it is hand phones.... And the importance of hand

phones, and the history, and look the look on new horizon and finally the increase by nature. (He picks out all the short notes made by the side of the paragraphs and points them out to the interviewer)

Q: Considering all the main ideas what do you think is the general overall idea in the passage?

A: (Thinks hard for a while) May be it is the importance of hand phones and how it develops because it talks about the history and the importance and the increase of 'one million cellular phone users in Malaysia'(line 64-65) currently.

Q: Do you use the above mentioned strategies like reading many times, guessing meanings of words, writing short notes and connecting different paragraphs only when completing English tasks or do apply them when you are reading for the other subjects in your course as well?

A: Actually I use all these strategies when I am reading in English. It is a habit now. The reference books in my course subjects are all in English. It help me to understand.

Q: Have the lecturers in your core subjects ever mentioned or emphasized about using these strategies to help you understand what you are reading?

A: Er ... no, I think. But they always tell us to improve our English because it is important. But, they tell us to make short notes from reference books to do assignments.

Q: Do you find these strategies very helpful to overcome the problems you have with the language?

A: Actually, my English is good and I don't have many problems. But for me it is a habit.

Q: Would you encourage other students to practise these strategies to help them improve their ability to read?

A: Yes, this is very good. They should make it a habit.