UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

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Malaysian Learners' Conceptions of their Learning Processes and their Perceptions of their English as a Second Language (ESL) Courses in a Tertiary Distance Learning Context

by

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Volume Two: Chapters 8 to 11 and Bibliography & Appendices

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CHAPTER 8

Study Two

Conceptions of approaches to studying in general: Focusing on the data

8.1 Introduction

The relevant literature pertaining to approaches to studying has been discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter I am going to undertake a comparison of the conceptions of approaches to studying in general (i.e., in studying all subjects) of Malaysian ESL distance learners and on-campus learners from UKM. The chapter will begin by discussing the research design and proceed to analyse the data quantitatively with the use of the SPSS (9.0) package. This will be accompanied by relevant discussion of the results. In the final section, findings from previous studies (discussed in Chapter 7) will be drawn upon to help in the explanation of the overall results. Finally, the implications of the findings to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context will be discussed.

8.2 Research Design

8.2.1 Research questions

In an attempt to acquire a better understanding of the differences in conceptions of approaches to studying of distance ESL learners and on-campus ESL learners, Study Two of this thesis seeks answers to the following research questions:

(1) Are the Malaysian ESL distance learners' conceptions of their approaches to studying different from those of the Malaysian ESL on-campus learners and if yes, in what ways?

(2) Are the following categories of Malaysian ESL **distance learners'** conceptions of their approaches to studying different from each others and if yes, in what ways?

(i) Low Proficiency Learners (Lo), Average Proficiency learners (Av), High Proficiency (Hi) students.

(ii) Social Science (Soc.Sc.), Applied Science (Appl. Sc.) and Business Administration (Bus. Adm.) students.

(3) Are the following categories of Malaysian ESL **on-campus learners'** conceptions of their approaches to studying different from each others and if yes, in what ways?

(i) Low Proficiency Learners (Lo), Average Proficiency learners (Av), High Proficiency (Hi) students.

(ii) Social Science (Soc.Sc.), Applied Science (Appl. Sc.) and Business Administration (Bus. Adm.) students.

(4) Are there any differences between (2) and (3)? If so, what are they?

(5) What are the implications of the above findings to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context.

8.2.2 Research instrument

Only one type of instrument, i.e., a questionnaire was used in this study. This sub-questionnaire entitled **The New Approaches to Studying Inventory** (NASI), comprised items taken mainly from the Revised Approaches to Studying Inventory (RASI) (Entwistle and Tait, 1994) supplemented with some subscales and items from the original Approaches to Studying Inventory (ASI) by Entwistle and Ramsden (1983).

8.2.2.1 The New Approaches to Studying Inventory

RASI comprises 38 self-report items designed to measure student approaches to studying in a higher education context (see Appendix 8A for the composition of the scales/subscales). Five response categories -- agree, agree somewhat, unsure, disagree somewhat, and disagree -- are provided for each item. Fig.8.1 gives a breakdown of the items under each scale of the RASI.

Scale	Subscale	No. of items	Items under subscale
1.Deep Approach	Looking for meaning	2	30, 19
	Active interest/critical stance	2	5, 1
	Relating and organising ideas	3	13, 25, 28
	Using evidence and logic	3	38, 32, 35
2. Surface Approach	Relying on memorising	2	26, 20
	Difficulty in making sense	2	22,6
	Unrelatedness	2	9,23
	Concern about coping	4	17, 3, 33, 7
3. Strategic Approach	Determination to excel	2	27, 21
	Effort in studying	2	14, 24
	Organised studying	3	10, 2, 31
	Time management	3	18, 34, 37
4.Lack of Direction		4	29, 36, 11, 15
5. Academic Self-confidence		4	4, 8, 16, 12

Fig. 8.1 Breakdown of the items under each scale of the RASI

For my pilot study, I did not use RASI. Instead, I used the ASI. I was able to obtain some promising results from the pilot study (see Chapter 4, Pilot Study 2) suggesting that this inventory has good possibilities, but I found it unsuitable for my purpose for the following reasons: First, the ASI is too lengthy. Since the USLPCQ has three sub-questionnaires, it would be unwise to include all 64 items of the ASI. Beside that, many of the items are verbose, and some, repetitive. I found difficulty translating the wordy ones, and in spite of efforts to simplify them, many of my

subjects at the pilot study still complained about difficulty in comprehending some of them. I decided to use the RASI instead as it is much simpler and less wordy, and yet comprehensive in being able to include the dominant orientations (main groups) and subgroups. The two main orientations, i.e., Deep Approach and Surface Approach, which were clear-cut and identifiable in all of Entwistle and colleagues' analyses, are dealt with in sufficient depth and are better defined in this inventory. Comprehension Learning and Operation Learning are left out totally. This is suitable for the purpose of this study. These two orientations relate more to styles than approaches, and since styles had been dealt with amply in Chapters 5 and 6, It is unnecessary to consider them further at this stage.

In spite of its strengths, I found certain weaknesses in RASI too. In my opinion certain items should be included. Even though one of my intentions in using the RASI was to reduce the number of items in the USLPCQ, I realised I could not sacrifice quality in the process. In addition, my Pilot Study 2 had already shown that there was a lack of reliability in the classifications of questions for each subscale of the ASI. If the number of questions were further reduced, the reliability would be further affected. I realised I had to compromise, which meant discarding my initial aim of achieving reliability for each subscale, and instead focused on obtaining reliability for each scale. This I felt could be enhanced by including relevant items from the ASI which were left out in the RASI.

In my opinion, another weakness of the RASI was that two relevant subscales were excluded: Syllabus-boundedness and Extrinsic Motivation. I felt that Syllabus-boundedness should be included, but not be classified under Surface Approach as was the case in the ASI (see Appendix 7D for the subscales of this inventory). A review of the items in this group (as listed below) will help to explain why I arrived at this decision.

1. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments.
2. I prefer courses to be clearly structured and highly organised.
3. I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments.

(Taken from the Entwistle and Ramsden's ASI, 1983)

Although item 3 does suggest a Surface Approach to studying, items 1 and 2 do not necessarily do so. It is not difficult to imagine students taking courses that do not have much structure and direction responding positively to these items, as an expression of their needs for more guidance from their teachers or more organisation and direction in the programmes they are involved. This would most probably include distance learners who are capable of using the Deep Approaches to studying. Thus, I felt that Syllabus-boundedness should be included in the NASI as a separate group. I further added the following item to this scale so that each scale/subscale has at least four items:

4. I constantly check the course schedule to make sure I am reading what is required of me.

(Taken from ASI)

On comparing the RASI with the ASI, it became evident that many of the items in the subscales of the ASI that describe negative approaches to studying were not included in the RASL. However, instead were reworded positively, simplified, reduced in numbers and redistributed to other relevant groups. The items under Intrinsic Motivation were also simplified and redistributed to relevant groups. But, Extrinsic Motivation was excluded totally from RASI. In my opinion this was an unwise move. Thus, I decided to include it in, but I felt it should not be placed as a subscale of Reproducing Orientation (as in the case of ASI), but included as a separate group. This is because Extrinsic Motivation is ambivalent in nature. It has

both positive and negative connotations and does not fit properly in any of the groups (Kember, 2000). The final inventory I arrived at which I labelled as New Approaches to Studying Inventory (NASI) has 7 groups. See Fig.8.2 for the breakdown of the items under each scale of the NASI and Fig.8.3 for an explanation of the meaning of each scale/subscale. (See also Appendix 8B for a comparison of the composition of the RASI and the NASI and an explanation of the changes undertaken).

Scale	Subscale	No. of Items	Items in subscale
1.Deep Approach	Looking for meaning	3	46, 6, 17
	Active interest/critical stance	3	25, 19, 2
	Relating and organising ideas	3	38, 44, 3
	Use evidence and logic	3	12, 28, 53
2. Surface Approach	Relying on memorising	3	47, 20, 4
	Difficulty in making sense	3	16, 35, 52
	Unrelatedness	3	32, 7, 23
	Concern about coping	3	13, 29, 37, 49
3. Strategic Approach	Determination to excel	3	45, 14, 30
	Effort in studying	3	11, 34, 51
	Organised studying	3	50, 9, 22
	Time management	3	43, 21, 18
4.Lack of Direction		4	1, 36, 10, 48
5. Academic Self-confidence		4	33, 15, 41, 24
6. Syllabus-boundedness		4	8, 27, 42, 39
7. Extrinsic Motivation		4	26, 5, 31, 40

Fig. 8.2 Breakdown of the items under each scale of the NASI.

Scale/subscale	Meaning
1. Deep Approach	
Looking for meaning	Learners look for meaning in studying.
Active interest/critical stance	Learners have an active interest in subjects studied. They interact actively with what is being learnt and link what is being studied with real life.
Relating and organising ideas	Learners relate new information to previous information actively and organise ideas mentally.
Use evidence and logic	Learners use evidence and logic in trying to understand materials and to arrive at conclusions.
2. Surface Approach	
Relying on memorising	Learners rely on rote learning.
Difficulty in making sense	Learners find difficulty in understanding and making sense of what is being read and things that have to be remembered.
Unrelatedness	Learners find difficulty in perceiving what is important and also in seeing an overall picture or how ideas fit together.
Concern about coping	Learners are unduly concerned over ability to cope with work.
3. Strategic Approach	
Determination to excel	Learners are competitive and self-confident and determined to achieve success.
Effort in studying	Learners put in extra effort to make sure that work is being done well. They work hard and are able to concentrate well on work.
Organised studying	Learners have organised study methods. They make an effort to ensure that appropriate conditions and materials for study are available.
Time Management	Learners are able to organise time effectively and able to abide by good study plans.
4. Lack of direction	Learners are cynical and disenchanted about higher education. Feel driven to enter university to please others.
5. Academic-self confidence	Learners feel confident about ability to cope with work. They have no difficulty in understanding new information and ideas.
6. Extrinsic Motivation	Learners are primarily motivated by the qualifications and the prospects of a good job on graduation.
7. Syllabus-boundedness	Learners have the intention to restrict learning to the defined syllabus and tasks requirements.

Fig. 8.3 Meaning of the scale/subscales of the NASI (adapted from Ramsden, 1983)

Besides, the above-mentioned modifications, the number of responses to each question was reduced to four i.e., 4 for 'strongly agree', 3 'agree', 2 'disagree' and 1 'strongly disagree'. I left out the neutral response category because my Pilot Study 2 had revealed that it led to a great deal of ambiguity. As Waugh and Addison (1998) pointed out the neutral response category allows a variety of answers such as, 'don't know', 'not sure', 'neutral' or 'don't want to answer', and thus is not a good measurement procedure because interpretation is unclear (see also Dubois and Burns, 1975 and Sheridan, 1993). Similar to the RASI, the items in the NASI were randomly ordered and students were asked to respond to studying in general. It was not advisable to ask the students to respond specifically to their learning/studying of English because many of questions relate to studying in general. Besides, since the purpose of this study is to investigate learners' conceptions of their **approaches to studying** which are relatively stable and apply to the studying of all subjects, it is inappropriate to ask the students to focus only on their learning/studying of English.

8.2.3 Sample population

As the NASI was part of the USLPCQ, it was distributed to the same sample population as in Study One.

8.2.4 Research procedures

The same procedures as in Study One were involved. Out of the 750 USPLCQs that were received, it was discovered that the NASI section of 24 of the questionnaires was incomplete. These were discarded. The remaining 726 NASIs, which included those with missing components (i.e., missing information on year/proficiency level/discipline) were retained. See Fig.8.4 for a breakdown of the number of the

respondents according to the various categories and Fig.8.5 for a breakdown of respondents according to age groups.

Mode	Year	Proficiency level	Discipline				Total
			Soc. Sc.	Appl. Sc.	Bus. Adm.	Missing	
Distance Learners	1	1	1	2	15	0	18
		2	2	1	8	0	11
		3	3	0	3	1	7
		Missing	4	0	2	0	6
		Total	10	3	28	1	42
	2	1	92	19	43	1	155
		2	31	18	30	0	79
		3	13	7	13	0	33
		Missing	10	11	15	1	37
		Total	146	55	101	2	304
	Missing	1	0	1	1	1	3
		2	0	0	0	1	1
		Missing	0	1	1	3	5
		Total	0	2	2	5	9
On-campus Learners	2	1	31	42	46	0	119
		2	21	61	50	1	133
		3	18	35	58	0	111
		Missing	0	4	3	1	8
		Total	70	142	157	2	371
Grand Total							726

Fig. 8.4 A breakdown of respondents according to categories

Age group	Mode		Total
	distance learners	On-campus learners	
23 and below	6	353	359
24 to 30	197	2	199
31 to 40	112	12	124
41 and above	20	0	20
Total	335	367	702
With Missing data	20	4	24
Total respondents	355	371	726

Fig. 8.5 A breakdown of the respondents according to age groups

As can be seen from Fig.8.5, out of a total of 726 respondents used for the analysis of the data, 355 were distance learners and 371 were on-campus learners. 92.2 % of the distance learners were between 24 to 40 years of age. In other words, most of them were adult learners. As for the on-campus learners, 96.2% were 23 and below. In other words, most of them were recent school leavers.

Comparison of mean scores of each item, calculation of Cronbach's α reliability coefficients of the NASI scales, comparison of mean scores of NASI scales and factor analysis of subscales/scales (i.e., the subscales of Deep Approach, Surface Approach, Strategic Approach and the scales of Lack of Direction, Academic Self-Confidence, Extrinsic Motivation and Syllabus-boundedness) were completed using SPSS (Version 9) statistical package. ANOVA was employed in the comparison of all mean scores.

8.3 Analysis of Results

Before proceeding with the analysis of mean scores, it is essential to provide the guide for interpretation of mean scores. The mean scores should be interpreted in the following manner:

Mean Score	Meaning
4	Strongly agree
3	Agree
2	Disagree
1	Strongly disagree

8.3.1 Item analysis

Ramsden (1983) pointed out that "the answers to groups of questions are much more reliable than the answers to individual questions" (p. 5) in his discussion of the Lancaster Approaches to Studying and Course Perceptions Questionnaire. In view of that he did not carry out an item analysis in his research study. This is an echo of the view held in Study One. In spite of that, I decided to attempt an item analysis of mean scores of learners from the two different modes as I believed that some general trends could be derived from these comparisons. Besides, it would enable me to have a better understanding of how learners from the two different modes respond to each item individually. ANOVA was employed for this purpose. To ensure greater reliability only significant differences in mean scores (i.e., $p<0.05$) were taken into consideration.

8.3.1.1 Comparison of mean scores across modes

Presentation of results

The mean scores per item of the distance learners and on-campus learners were compared. The results were significant for the items displayed in Fig.8.6

SD = Standard Deviation

DLs = distance learners

OCLs = On-campus learners

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.001$

Underlined mean score = higher mean score

Fig. 8.6 Comparison of mean scores per question of the distance learners and on-campus learners

Scale	Subscale/items	Mean score		SD		F (df)
		DLs	OCLs	DLs	OCLs	
(I) Deep Approach (DA)	**Looking for meaning** **No. 17** I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand things which initially seem difficult.	3.30	3.22	0.56	0.59	4.14*(1/723)
	No. 46 I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.	3.35	3.26	0.54	0.54	4.36*(1/723)

	Active interest/Critical stance					
	No. 2					
	My main reason for being in university is to learn more about subjects that really interest me.	3.22	2.96	0.79	0.84	18.20**(1/723)
	No. 20					
	I 'm not prepared to accept things I'm told; I have to think them out myself.	3.12	2.90	0.60	0.64	23.13**(1/723)
	No. 25					
	Sometimes I find myself thinking about ideas from the course when I am doing other things.	3.12	3.01	0.62	0.60	5.86*(1/722)
	Relating and organising ideas					
	No. 3					
	Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thought about what I'm reading.	3.26	3.02	0.59	0.63	28.59**(1/724)
	No. 38					
	I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses whenever possible.	3.07	2.95	0.59	0.61	6.79*(1/724)
	No. 44					
	When I m working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.	3.12	2.93	0.54	0.57	20.53**(1/720)
	Use evidence and logic					
	No.12					
	I look at the evidence carefully and then try to reach my own conclusions about things I'm studying.	3.34	3.21	0.58	0.56	9.56*(1/723)
	No. 28					
	When I'm reading, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said.	3.34	3.13	0.55	0.58	23.60**(1/724)
	No. 53					
	It's important for me to be able to follow the argument or see the reasoning behind something.	3.27	3.17	0.58	0.55	5.48*(1/722)

(II) Surface Approach (SA)	**Relying on memorising** **No. 4** The best way for me to understand the meanings of technical terms is to remember the textbook definitions.	2.86	2.66	0.70	0.73	13.46**(1/721)
	No. 19 I spend quite a lot of time repeating or copying out things to help me remember them.	3.03	2.88	0.70	0.77	7.50*(1/724)
	Unrelatedness **No. 8** I'm not sure what's important, so I try to get down as much as I can in lectures.	2.48	2.76	0.87	0.84	19.04**(1/723)
	Concern about coping **No. 13** Sometimes I worry about whether I'll be able to cope with the work properly.	3.12	3.29	0.76	0.64	10.66*(1/724)
	No. 49 Often I lie awake worrying about work I think I won't be able to do.	3.02	3.15	0.78	0.74	5.19*(1/723)
(III) Strategic Approach (StrA)	**Determination to excel** **No. 14** I know what I want to get out of this course and I'm determined to achieve it.	3.48	3.32	0.60	0.68	11.28*(1/723)
	No. 30 I enjoy competition; I find it stimulating.	3.17	3.07	0.65	0.67	4.51*(1/724)
	Effort in studying **No. 34** I work hard when I'm studying and generally manage to keep my mind on what I'm doing.	3.02	2.85	0.59	0.64	14.41**(1/722)
	Organised studying **No. 22** I think I'm quite systematic and organised in the way I go about studying.	2.89	2.59	0.72	0.71	31.94**(1/724)

	Time Management **No. 18** I work steadily throughout the course, rather than leaving everything until the last minute.	3.08	2.77	0.69	0.76	32.58**(1/722)
	No. 43 I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.	2.95	2.70	0.72	0.69	23.23**(1/722)
(IV) Lack of Direction (LOD)	**No. 10** When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to enter the university.	2.07	2.32	0.89	0.95	14.01**(1/724)
	No. 36 I think I'm in university more to please other people than because I really wanted it myself.	1.61	1.80	0.76	0.83	10.64*(1/723)
(V) Academic Self-Confidence (ASC)	**No. 33** So far, I seem to have a good grasp of the subjects I'm studying.	2.93	2.74	0.59	0.61	17.82**(1/723)
	No. 41 I don't usually have much difficulty in making sense of new information or ideas.	2.57	2.41	0.74	0.66	9.90*(1/723)
(VI) Extrinsic Motivation (EM)	**No. 40** I suppose I am more interested in the qualifications I'll get than in the courses I'm taking.	2.48	2.66	0.83	0.75	8.84*(1/723)
(VII) Syllabus-Boundedness (SB)	**No. 27** I prefer courses to be clearly structured and highly organised.	3.66	3.48	0.49	0.58	20.28**(1/724)
	No. 39 I constantly check the course schedule to make sure I am reading what is required of me.	3.15	2.72	0.62	0.73	71.55**(1/722)
	No. 42 I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments.	2.43	2.58	0.74	0.76	7.41*(1/722)

It is possible to observe some general trends from Fig.8.6. A comparison of mean scores of the distance learners and the on-campus learners revealed that differences in mean scores of 30 items were significant: eleven items were from Deep Approach, five from the Surface Approach, six from the Strategic Approach, two from Lack of Direction, two from Academic Self-confidence, one from Extrinsic Motivation and three from Syllabus-boundedness.

The mean scores of the distance learners for all the items in the Deep Approach were significantly higher than the on-campus learners. This strongly suggested that the distance learners utilised more Deep Approach strategies in comparison to the on-campus learners. In the case of the Surface Approach, the mean scores of the on-campus learners were significantly higher than the distance learners for items 8,13 and 49. The reverse was true for items 4 and 19. However, since only five items out of a total of thirteen items displayed significant differences in mean scores, it is unwise to claim that this suggested that more on-campus learners preferred the Surface Approach. It is more prudent to consider each item separately. An examination of the five items in the Surface Approach seemed to suggest that more on-campus learners appeared unsure of what was important and seemed not to be coping well. On the other hand, more distance learners seemed to be relying on memorising. The rest of the items are also going to be considered separately, too, as they do not represent a majority of the items in the various categories.

In the case of the Strategic Approach, the mean scores of the distance learners were significantly higher than the on-campus learners for all 6 (out of 12) items i.e., for items 14, 30, 34, 22, 18, and 43. An examination of these items suggested that the distance learners were more motivated, better organised and able to manage time better.

As for Lack of Direction, the mean scores for items 10 and 36, were rather low (below 2.5) suggesting negative rather than positive responses to these items. However, the mean scores of the on-campus learners were significantly higher than the distance learners for these items, which suggested that more on-campus learners were unsure about their intentions for entering university than the distance learners.

With regard to Academic Self-confidence, the mean scores of the distance learners were significantly higher than the on-campus learners for items 33 and 41, which suggested that more distance learners had a good grasp of the subjects they were studying and had less difficulty making sense of new information.

The mean score of the on-campus learners was significantly higher than the distance learners for only one item from Extrinsic Motivation i.e., item 40. This suggested that more on-campus learners were more interested in the qualifications they would be getting than studying for the sake of knowledge.

Finally, for Syllabus-boundedness, the mean scores of the distance learners were significantly higher than the on-campus learners for two items i.e., items 27 and 39, which suggested that more distance learners preferred structured and highly organised courses, and were constantly checking to make sure that they were reading within the syllabus. On the other hand, the mean score of on-campus learners was higher than the distance learners for item 42, which suggested that on-campus learners tended to read very little beyond what was required for completing assignments.

Discussion of results

The results echoed some of the findings of Pilot Study 2. They suggested that generally more distance learners utilised Deep Approach studying techniques in comparison to on-campus learners. There were also indications that more of them were highly motivated, systematic, well-organised and able to manage time well. More of them also appeared to have a better grasp of the subjects they were studying. Their prime weaknesses seemed to be an over-reliance on memorisation and syllabus. Their seemingly strong preference for highly organised and structured courses and their diligent checking of their course schedules suggested over-anxiety and fear that they were not studying what were required of them. However, they appeared less likely "to read little beyond what was required for completing assignments" than on-campus learners. These characteristics are not unexpected of distance learners and may be a result of insufficient guidelines and lack of facilities, such as library books.

On the other hand, more on-campus learners seemed not to be sure what was important and appeared not to be coping well. More of them also appeared uncertain about their intentions for entering university and seemed to be motivated more by a desire to obtain an academic qualification than a desire to pursue knowledge. Their only strong point was that they were less bound by the syllabus. However, this may be just a result of the fact that they are full-time on campus learners and not necessary an intrinsic strength in them.

8.3.2 Scale Analysis

8.3.2.1 Analysis of reliability of classification of items based on the NASI scales

Before attempting an analysis of the classification of questions based on the NASI scales, the reliability of the classification of the items according to the scales had to be determined. The Cronbach's α reliability coefficients for the three major scales were above 0.7 suggesting reliability of classification (Deep Approach=0.78, Surface Approach =0.71 and Strategic Approach =0.79). Reliability coefficients for the four other scales were below 0.7 suggesting a lack of reliability in their classification (Lack of Direction =0.67, Academic Self-Confidence =0.62, Extrinsic Motivation =0.60, and Syllabus Boundedness =0.14). Since this is an exploratory study and considering that these four scales have only four variables which made it more difficult to obtain reliable results, I decided to include for further analysis the results of the three scales with Cronbach's α value of more than 0.6. The scale of Syllabus Boundedness was excluded as its Cronbach's α was too far below the acceptable level.

8.3.2.2 Analysis of approaches to studying preferred by learners of different modes

Presentation of results

Fig.8.7 gives the mean scores of the distance learners and on-campus learners for the six categories with ∝ reliability coefficient of more than 0.6.

Category	distance learners		On-campus learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Deep Approach	3.25	0.34	3.11	0.31
Strategic Approach	3.10	0.36	2.99	0.36
Surface Approach	2.84	0.34	2.88	0.31
Extrinsic Motivation	2.80	0.58	2.86	0.51
Academic-self confidence	2.68	0.47	2.60	0.45
Lack of Direction	1.75	0.60	1.89	0.59

SD = Standard deviation

Fig .8.7 Mean scores of the distance learners and on-campus learners for the six categories

The figure shows that mean scores for the Deep Approach to Studying were much higher for both groups of learners in comparison to the Surface Approach to Studying. The mean scores for Strategic Approach were also higher than Surface Approach for both groups of learners. The mean scores for the three other

categories followed the same order for both groups of learners, with Extrinsic Motivation having the highest mean scores, followed by Academic Self-Confidence and Lack of Direction. The mean scores for Lack of Direction were below 2 for both groups of learners suggesting that a majority of these learners 'disagreed' with the items in this category.

A comparison of mean scores of learners of the two different modes using ANOVA revealed significant results for the Deep Approach, Strategic Approach, Lack of Direction, Academic Self-Confidence and Extrinsic Motivation. The results showed that the mean scores of the distance learners were significantly higher for the Deep Approach, Strategic Approach and Academic Self-Confidence [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 37.52 (1/724), 16.42 (1/724), and 7.03 (1/724)] respectively, and significantly lower for Lack of Direction and Extrinsic Motivation than on-campus learners [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 9.40 (1/724), and 4.41 (1/724)] respectively.

Discussion of results

The results which give a rudimentary profile of both groups of learners echoed many of the findings of Pilot Study 2. Similarly, higher mean scores were evident for Deep Approach and Strategic Approach and lower mean scores for the Surface Approach for both groups of learners. These findings clearly suggested that both groups of learners indicated greater preferences for techniques of studying associated with Deep Approach and Strategic Approach to studying than those associated with Surface Approach to studying. Both groups also showed somewhat parallel preferences for Extrinsic Motivation, Academic Self-Confidence and Lack of Direction. The very much lower scores for Lack of Direction strongly suggested that Lack of Direction was not a problem with both groups of learners suggesting that most of them were personally motivated towards pursuing a university education. It is appropriate at this juncture to surmise that the findings suggested that both groups

were not very different with regard to the pattern of approaches to studying preferred.

However, a comparison across modes revealed that more distance learners responded positively to questions from the Deep Approach, Strategic Approach and Academic Self-Confidence categories than on-campus learners. This suggested that more distance learners were inclined to use effective studying strategies which involved deep level processing of information, and 'strategically-oriented' techniques than on-campus learners. They also indicated greater confidence academically. On the other hand, more on-campus learners scored positively for Extrinsic Motivation and Lack of Direction. This suggested that a greater number of them entered university not because of a desire to pursue knowledge, but because of other factors, such as pressure from parents and a desire for a better job.

The findings are indeed very interesting. Generally, learners from both modes displayed a similar pattern with regard to approaches to studying preferred but the distance learners seemed to be more effective and committed. A possible contributory factor may be that generally the distance learners are more mature learners who are genuinely interested in improving themselves.

8.3.2.3 Analysis of approaches to studying preferred by learners of different proficiency levels

Presentation of results of the distance learners

Fig.8.8 gives the mean scores of the distance learners from the three proficiency levels.

Category	Lo learners		Av learners		Hi learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Deep Approach	3.25	0.34	3.27	0.31	3.29	0.35
Strategic Approach	3.10	0.37	3.11	0.36	3.07	0.32
Surface Approach	2.88	0.36	2.85	0.31	2.74	0.28
Extrinsic Motivation	2.85	0.57	2.81	0.60	2.75	0.47
Academic Self- Confidence	2.67	0.45	2.69	0.48	2.68	0.50
Lack of Direction	1.77	0.59	1.69	0.58	1.76	0.60

SD =Standard deviation

Fig. 8.8 Mean scores of the distance learners from the three proficiency levels

From the figure, it can be seen that the mean scores of the distance learners from the three proficiency levels followed the same pattern, with the mean scores for the Deep Approach and Strategic Approach higher than that for the Surface Approach. The mean scores for the other three categories also followed the same order, with

Extrinsic Motivation having the highest mean scores followed by Academic Self-Confidence and Lack of Direction.

A comparison of mean scores across proficiency levels revealed significant result only for the Surface Approach. The mean score of the High proficiency distance learners was significantly lower than that of the Low proficiency distance learners [$p<0.05$; F (df) =2.91 (2/304)]

Presentation of results of the on-campus learners

Fig.8.9 gives the mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three different proficiency levels.

Category	Lo learners		Av learners		Hi learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Deep Approach	3.15	0.27	3.07	0.33	3.09	0.31
Strategic Approach	3.09	0.31	2.92	0.34	2.95	0.38
Surface Approach	2.90	0.32	2.89	0.35	2.76	0.34
Extrinsic Motivation	2.90	0.55	2.91	0.48	2.80	0.50
Academic Self- Confidence	2.64	0.41	2.49	0.45	2.63	0.44
Lack of Direction	1.88	0.66	1.86	0.55	1.89	0.56

SD =Standard deviation

Fig. 8.9 Mean scores of on-campus learners from the three different proficiency levels

The figure revealed that the mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three different proficiency levels followed the same pattern to that of the distance learners, with the mean scores for the Deep Approach and Strategic Approach being higher than that for the Surface Approach. The mean scores for the other three categories also followed the same order, with Extrinsic Motivation having the highest mean score, followed by Academic Self-Confidence and Lack of Direction.

A comparison of mean scores across proficiency levels revealed significant results for the Strategic Approach, Surface Approach and Academic Self-Confidence. For Strategic Approach, the mean scores of Low Proficiency on-campus learners was significantly higher than that of the Average Proficiency on-campus learners [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 8.44 (2/360)]. For Surface Approach, the mean scores of the Low Proficiency on-campus learners and the Average Proficiency on-campus learners were significantly higher than that of the High Proficiency on-campus learners [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 5.98 (2/360)]. For Academic Self-Confidence, the mean scores of the Low proficiency on-campus learners and the High proficiency on-campus learners were significantly higher than the Average Proficiency on-campus learners [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 4.68 (2/360)].

Discussion of results

The results revealed that there was no difference between the distance learners and on-campus learners of different proficiency levels as far as pattern of preferences was concerned. But, comparisons of mean scores across proficiency levels revealed some significant differences. They suggested that more High Proficiency distance learners were more effective learners, in the sense that they utilised fewer Surface Approach strategies, than Low Proficiency distance learners The same findings were found in on-campus learners. This finding confirmed the general belief that learners

of lower proficiency use less desirable methods of studying than learners of high proficiency level.

The comparison of mean scores between the on-campus learners of different proficiency levels also revealed that the High Proficiency on-campus learners were more confident academically than the Average Proficiency on-campus learners. This is understandable but, surprisingly, the results also showed that the Low Proficiency on-campus learners were more confident than the Average Proficiency on-campus learners. Besides, they also revealed that the Low Proficiency on-campus learners were inclined to be more strategically-oriented than the Average Proficiency on-campus learners. This hinted at the possibility that the Low proficiency on-campus learners may be more intrinsically motivated than the Average proficiency on-campus learners.

8.3.2.4 Analysis of approaches to studying preferred by learners of different disciplines

Presentation of results of the distance learners

Fig.8.10 gives the mean scores of the distance learners from the three different disciplines.

Category	SocSc group		ApplSc group		BusAdm group A	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Deep Approach	3.27	0.32	3.20	0.33	3.26	0.34
Strategic Approach	3.13	0.36	3.01	0.38	3.10	0.34
Surface Approach	2.85	0.34	2.79	0.32	2.86	0.61
Extrinsic Motivation	2.80	0.55	2.68	0.52	2.85	0.36
Academic Self- Confidence	2.77	0.46	2.50	0.47	2.67	0.44
Lack of Direction	1.75	0.60	1.77	0.59	1.74	0.59

SD = Standard deviation

Fig. 8.10 Mean scores of the distance learners from the three different disciplines

The figure revealed that the mean scores of the distance learners from the three disciplines followed the same pattern as that of the three proficiency levels.

A comparison of mean scores across disciplines revealed significant results for only Academic Self-Confidence. The mean scores of learners from the SocSc group and and BusAdm group were significantly higher than that from the ApplSc group [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 7.71 (2/344)].

Presentation of results of the on-campus learners

Fig. 8.11 gives the mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three different disciplines.

Category	Soc.Sc. group		Appl.Sc group		Bus.Adm. group	
	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD	Mean
Deep Approach	0.25	3.13	0.31	3.11	0.33	3.10
Strategic Approach	0.34	2.96	0.36	2.99	0.37	3.01
Surface Approach	0.54	2.83	0.35	2.90	0.48	2.93
Extrinsic Motivation	0.36	2.82	0.52	2.84	0.34	2.83
Academic Self- Confidence	0.44	2.55	0.45	2.56	0.45	2.64
Lack of Direction	0.60	2.06	0.61	1.86	0.57	1.82

SD = Standard deviation

Fig. 8.11 Mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three different disciplines

The figure revealed that the mean scores of the on-campus learners followed the same pattern as that of the distance learners. A comparison of mean scores across disciplines revealed significant results for only the Lack of Direction category. The mean score of learners from the SocSc group was significantly higher than that of the BusAdm group [$p<0.05$; $F(df) = 3.91$ (2/366)].

Discussion of results

The results reiterated earlier findings that there was no difference between the distance learners and the on-campus learners as far as pattern of preferences was concerned. Comparisons of mean scores across disciplines, however revealed some significant differences. In the case of the distance learners, the results suggested that learners from the AppSc. group seemed to be the least confident academically among learners from the three disciplines. This hinted at the possibility that more distance learners from the ApplSc group may have difficulty studying via the distance learning mode than learners from the other two disciplines.

As for the on-campus learners, learners from the SocSc group seemed to be more uncertain about the reasons why they had decided to pursue a university education in comparison to those from the BusAdm group. This is a very interesting finding and I believe it results from the way places are allocated in Malaysian Universities. Of the three disciplines, BusAdm is the most popular and SocSc is the least popular. Students who do not qualify for the more popular disciplines, but qualify for university admissions will be automatically allocated places in Social Sciences. This may explain why more students from the Social Science faculty are uncertain about their goals.

8.3.2.5 Comparison of approaches to studying across modes and across proficiency levels

Presentation of results

Fig.8.12 presents the significant results obtained from a comparison of mean scores across modes and across proficiency levels.

Proficiency	Scale	Mean score		SD		F (df)
		distance learners	On-campus learner	distance learners	on-campus learners	
Lo	Deep Approach	<u>3.25</u>	3.15	0.34	0.27	6.48*(1/293)
Av	Deep Approach	<u>3.27</u>	3.07	0.31	0.33	21.99**(1/223)
	Strategic Approach	<u>3.12</u>	2.92	0.36	0.34	16.71**(1/222)
	Academic Self-Confidence	<u>2.69</u>	2.49	0.48	0.45	9.59*(1/222)
Hi	Deep Approach	<u>3.29</u>	3.09	0.35	0.31	11.28**(1/149)

SD = Standard deviation

Note: Underlined scores = higher scores

Fig. 8.12 Comparison of mean scores across modes and across proficiency levels.

A comparison of mean scores of Low Proficiency learners revealed that the mean score of the distance learners was significantly higher than the on-campus learners for the Deep Approach. For Average Proficiency learners, the mean scores of the distance learners were higher than the on-campus learners for the Deep Approach, Strategic Approach and Academic Self-Confidence. For High Proficiency learners, the mean score of the distance learners was higher than the on-campus learners for only the Deep Approach.

Discussion of results

The results suggested that distance learners of all proficiency levels seemed to be more effective learners than the on-campus learners as they used more Deep Approach studying techniques. In the case of Average Proficiency learners, besides being more effective, they also appeared to be more committed, motivated and more confident academically than the on-campus learners. The findings clearly suggested that, generally, distance learners seemed to displayed more desirable methods of studying than the on-campus learners. This is particularly encouraging since the distance learners are studying independently most of the time.

8.3.2.6 Comparison of approaches to studying across modes and across disciplines

Presentation of results

Discipline	Scale	Mean score		SD		F (df)
		distance learners	On-campus learner	distance learners	On-campus learners	
SocSc group	Deep Approach	3.27	3.13	0.32	0.25	10.52**(1/224)
	Strategic Approach	3.13	2.96	0.36	0.34	12.01**(1/224)
	Academic Self-Confidence	2.77	2.55	0.46	0.44	11.26**(1/224)
	Lack of Direction	1.75	2.06	0.60	0.60	12.72**(1/224)
ApplSc. group	Deep Approach	3.20	3.11	0.33	0.31	3.83*(1/200)
	Surface Approach	2.79	2.90	0.32	0.35	4.58*(1/200)
	Extrinsic Motivation	2.68	2.84	0.52	0.52	4.42*(1/200)
BusAdm group	Deep Approach	3.26	3.10	0.34	0.33	15.64**(1/286)
	Strategic Approach	3.10	3.01	0.34	0.37	4.93*(1/286)

SD = Standard deviation

Fig. 8.13 Comparison of mean scores across modes and across disciplines

A comparison of mean scores revealed that in the case of learners from the SocSc group, the mean score(s) of the distance learners were significantly higher than the on-campus learners for the Deep Approach, Strategic Approach and Academic Self-confidence and was significantly lower for the Lack of Direction. For learners from the ApplSc group, the mean score of the distance learners was significantly higher than the on-campus learners for Deep Approach and were significantly lower than the on-campus learners for Surface Approach and Extrinsic Motivation. For

BusAdm learners, the mean scores of the distance learners were significantly higher than the on-campus learners for the Deep Approach, and the Strategic Approach.

Discussion of results

The results suggested that the distance learners from all three disciplines seemed to utilise Deep Approach studying techniques more than the on-campus learners. Besides, the distance learners from the ApplSc group used fewer Surface Approach studying techniques than on-campus learners, and learners from the SocSc and BusAdm groups utilised more Strategic Approach techniques than the on-campus learners. The findings suggested that the distance learners were not only more effective learners but also more committed and motivated.

With regard to 'negative strategies' classified under Extrinsic Motivation and Lack of Direction categories, more on-campus learners were more likely to use them. More on-campus learners from the Social Science faculty lacked direction and were unsure of their educational goals. This can been attributed to the method of placement practised by Malaysian Universities. Since no such method of placement was imposed on the distance learners, it appeared that less of them were confronted with this predicament. More on-campus learners from the Applied Science faculty were also more likely to be motivated by extrinsic factors, such as qualifications and job opportunities. The results further supported the earlier claim that the distance learners used more desirable methods of studying than the on-campus learners.

8.3.3 Factor Analysis

It was decided to carry out factor analysis as it would allow a comparison of the constructs identified from a Malaysian higher education context to be compared with constructs derived from other contexts and to extend the boundary of knowledge on student approaches to studying. There are a number of ways of reporting these factor analysis data. I felt that the most methodical way of analysing the data was to compare the factors of the distance learners and on-campus learners with those of Entwistle and Ramsden's (1983) to find out to what extent they resemble those of their study. Subsequently, other relevant studies would be drawn upon to lend further support to the analysis.

To begin with, principal component factor analysis was performed (with SPSS 9.0 programme) upon the scores which the distance learners and the on-campus learners obtained on the subscales of NASI, using varimax ® (orthogonal) rotation with Kaiser normalisation. This exercise yielded a three-factor solution for the distance learners which accounted for 55.88% of the variance and a four-factor solution for the on-campus learners which accounted for 57.08% of the variance. Factors I and II can be regarded as the most important factors for both groups of learners. Factor I accounted for 32.56% of the variance for the distance learners and 28.60% of the variance for the on-campus learners. As for factor II, it accounted for 16.18% of the variance for the distance learners and 15.44% of the variance for the on-campus learners. Factor III only accounted for 7.21% of the variance in the distance learners and 7.17% of the variance in the on-campus learners. Factor IV, which was only present in the on-campus learners, accounted for only 6.5% of the variance of the on-campus learners. The resulting pattern factor matrix is presented in Fig. 8.14. The exercise was repeated with oblimin (oblique) rotation. The factor solution produced was very similar to the one produced by the varimax ® rotation. Thus, I felt it was not necessary to discuss both sets of factor solutions. In the subsequent discussion I am only going to discuss the factor solution arising from the varimax rotation. Low

loadings of below 0.4 will not be considered. However, loadings below 0.4 but above 0.3 will be considered in cases of cross-loadings.

		Factors of distance learners			Factors of On-campus learners			
		I	II	III	I	II	III	IV
I Deep Approach	1. Looking for Meaning	0.676	0.391		0.726			
	2. Active Interest/Critical Stance	0.598			0.471			0.600
	3. Relating and Organising Ideas	0.745	0.314		0.611		0.327	
	4. Use Evidence and Logic	0.736			0.738			
II Surface Approach	1. Relying on Memorising	0.445	0.475		(0.212)	0.583		
	2. Difficulty in Making Senses			0.713		0.691		
	3. Unrelatedness		0.591	0.382		0.804		
	4. Concern about Coping		0.741		0.350	0.550	-0.313	
III Strategic Approach	1. Determination to Excel	0.695			0.686			
	2. Effort in Studying	0.792			0.651		0.446	
	3. Organised Studying	0.758					0.746	
	4. Time Management	0.676					0.730	
IV Lack of Direction				0.743				0.652
V Academic Self-confidence		0.696	-0.326				0.640	
VI Extrinsic Motivation				0.587		0.380		0.535

VII Syllabus-bounded-ness		(0.277)	0.621		0.466	0.427		

* Loadings below 0.3 were omitted except for those in parentheses

Eigenvalues above 1

Fig. 8.14 Factor solutions of the NASI in the distance learners and the On-campus learners

8.3.3.1 Presentation of results

In the case of the distance learners, all the subscales related to Deep Approach had high loadings on Factor I. Besides that, all the subscales related to Strategic Approach, the Relying on Memorising subscale and the Academic Self-confidence scale also had high loadings on this factor. However, it has to be pointed out that Relying on Memorising also had high loading on Factor II. As for the on-campus learners, similarly, all the subscales related to Deep Approach had high loadings on Factor I. However, unexpectedly, the Active Interest/Critical Stance subscale also loaded highly on Factor IV. As for the subscales of Strategic Approach, in this case, only two subscales i.e. 'Determination to Excel' and 'Effort in Studying' had high loadings on Factor I. Syllabus-boundedness also had high loading on this factor.

In the case of the distance learners, all the subscales of Surface Approach except for the 'Difficulty in Making sense' subscale had high loadings on Factor II. Syllabus-boundedness also had high loading on this factor. In the case of the on-campus learners, all the subscales of Surface Approach had high loadings on Factor II. Besides loading on factor I, Syllabus boundedness also loaded (almost equally high) on this factor.

Factor III, in the case of the distance learners, consisted of only three scales/subscales: Difficulty in Making Sense, Lack of Direction and Extrinsic Motivation. Factor III, in the case of the on-campus learners, had more items: three of the four subscales under Strategic Approach, i.e., Effort in Studying, Organised Studying and Time Management loaded highly on it. There was a clear case of cross loading in Effort in Studying as it also loaded highly on Factor I. Besides, Academic Self-confidence also loaded highly on it.

As for Factor IV, this was present only in the on-campus learners. It consisted of three items: Active Interest/Critical Stance, Lack of Direction and Extrinsic Motivation.

8.3.3.2 Discussion of results

The analysis of data shows that Factor I consisted of all the subscales of Deep Approach plus other components associated with effective learning approaches, except for the Relying on Memorising component. In view of this, it can be classified as being related to Meaning Approach (as defined by Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983). The same applies to the on-campus learners except in this case the unrelated component is Syllabus boundedness. The fact that both Relying on Memorising' (in the case of the distance learners) and Syllabus boundedness (in the case of the on-campus learners) loaded ambiguously on two factors is intriguing and more in depth discussion of this will be presented later in this section.

With regard to Factor II, for the distance learners, three out of four of the subscales of Surface Approach loaded highly on it. Syllabus-boundedness, which is generally considered as an ineffective approach to learning, also loaded highly on it. Thus, it is reasonable to claim that this factor is related to Reproducing Orientation (as defined by Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983). Almost the same components also loaded highly

on Factor II in the case of the on-campus learners. The only difference is that in this case all four subscales of Surface Approach loaded highly on it and that Syllabus-boundedness crossed loaded between Factor II and I. This factor is even more convincingly a representation of Reproducing Orientation.

Thus, it can be seen here that the two principal orientations towards studying (identified by Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983) that were found to be stable and replicable in many studies (see for e.g., Morgan, et. al, 1980; Harper and Kember, 1986; Kember and Gow, 1990 and many others) are also clearly evident in this study. As for the other factors, they showed a much less clear relationship with the other dimensions identified by Entwistle and Ramsden in the case of distance learners. A closer examination revealed that the three components of Factor III for the distance learners appeared to be all ineffective learning approaches. But, since literature revealed that it is incorrect to view Extrinsic Motivation solely in a negative light (Kembar, 2000), it makes the task of classifying this factor even more complicated. I would tentatively suggest that it is a narrow mixed orientation indexed by Lack of Direction, Extrinsic Motivation and Difficulty in Making sense. Since it accounted for only a very small percentage of the variance (7.2%), it is relatively unimportant and is a pattern evident in a very small proportion of the distance learners.

In the case of on-campus learners, however, Factor III seemed to resemble that of Entwistle and Ramsden's Achieving Orientation to a certain extent as three out of four subscales of Strategic Approach plus Academic Self-confidence loaded highly on it. Thus, it appeared that in the case of distance learners, only the two main factors resemble that of Entwistle and Ramsden, whereas in the case of on-campus learners, three main factors resemble those of Entwistle and Ramsden. These findings are indeed interesting. They support those of Morgan et al. (1980), Harper and Kembar (1986) and Richardson et al.(1999), who also found two main factors in Open University students. Thus, it would appear that the distinction between a reproducing orientation and a meaning orientation is valid for conventional as well for the distance

learning students in most contexts (including the Malaysian context), but Entwistle and Ramsden's pattern of three main factors is more applicable to conventional students. The similarities between this study and those taken in the Western context point to the applicable nature of much of the research undertaken on approaches to studying based on Entwistle and Ramsden's model to the Malaysian context.

In on-campus learners there was an extra factor which accounted for 6.5% of the variance. Like factor III of the distance learners, it was an ambiguous factor. It consisted of the components of Lack of Direction and Extrinsic Motivation but, besides that, instead of a Surface Approach subscale, it consisted of a Deep Approach subscale. I would tentatively classified this as narrow mixed orientation indexed by Lack of Direction, Extrinsic Motivation and Active Interest/Critical Stance. Since this factor accounted for only 6.5% of the variance, it is not a very important factor and shall not be discussed any further.

Next, I will discuss the ambiguity arising from cross-loadings. The analysis revealed two sets of cross-loadings which are worth investigating. The data revealed that the Relying on Memorising subscale loaded ambiguously across Factor I (Meaning Orientation) and Factor II (Reproducing Orientation) for the distance learners, but not for the on-campus learners. It also revealed that Syllabus-boundedness loaded ambiguously across Factor I (Meaning Orientation) and II (Reproducing Orientation) in the case of the on-campus learners.

Recent literature has pointed out that memorising should not be considered solely as rote learning as it entails very much more than that especially in Eastern cultures. Studies (by Kember and Gow, 1990; Biggs, 1996; Gow et al, 1996; Marton, Dall' Alba and Kun, 1996; Watkins, 1996 and Kember, 2000) reported observations of memorisation occuring in conjunction with understanding. Marton, Dall' Alba and Kun (1996) further reported that memorisation could be used to reach understanding

in addition to understanding preceding memorisation. In the case of the distance learners of this study, it is clear that the cross-loading does suggest the presence of both positive and negative connotations. In the case of the on-campus learners, it loaded highly only on Surface Approach suggesting mainly negative connotation in the case of these learners. What we can deduce from this finding is that the pattern of memorisation being used in conjunction with understanding is more prevalent in the case of the distance learners than in the case of the on-campus learners.

Similar to Memorisation, Syllabus-boundedness can be viewed as having positive and negative connotations depending on circumstances. For example, a conscious effort to study within the syllabus can be viewed positively as an attempt to be disciplined and a desire to be focused. Conversely, it can be viewed negatively as an inability to read beyond the required text. The fact that Syllabus-boundedness loaded almost equally on both the Meaning Orientation and Reproducing Orientation in the case of on-campus learners, suggested the presence of positive and negative connotations. On the other hand, in the case of distance learners it loaded highly on Reproducing Orientation suggesting the presence of mainly negative connotations.

8.3.4 Overall discussion of results

Through factor analysis, it was possible to identify two principal orientations towards studying. These two factors are similar to Entwistle and Ramsden's Meaning Orientation and Reproducing Orientation. As for the other two factors they are found to be much less distinct. Despite that, it is possible to suggest the existence of a third factor that somewhat resembles Entwistle and Ramsden's Achieving Orientation, in the case of on-campus learners. These results are consistent with those of Entwistle and colleagues and others undertaken in various parts of the world. What we can conclude from this is that the distinction between a

Reproducing Orientation and a Meaning Orientation in the Malaysian context is as valid for the distance learners as well as the on-campus learners.

Mean score analyses within modes further supported the presence of a similar pattern of preferences with regard to approaches to studying. It revealed that both the distance learners and the on-campus learners indicated a similar pattern of preferences with regard to the different approaches to studying, notwithstanding whichever mode, proficiency level or discipline they were from. They generally showed a preference for a Deep Approach to studying, were fairly motivated and committed to their studies, had fairly good study habits and were able to manage time fairly well. They were more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated. The level of self-confidence was generally below the level of Extrinsic Motivation and they did not encounter the problem of Lack of Direction. These similarities reconfirmed the 'portability' of the ASI from one system to another and strongly suggested that mainstream research literature based on the study of campus-based students will be valid for describing the approaches to studying of Malaysian ESL distance learners.

Mean scores analyses across modes also revealed that more distance learners utilised Deep Approach techniques in comparison to the on-campus learners. They were also more motivated, committed, systematic, well-organised and able to manage time better than the on-campus learners. They also indicated greater confidence academically. This was particularly evident in the case of Average Proficiency learners. The on-campus learners, on the other hand, were less confident, less motivated and uncertain of their educational goals and seemed to be more motivated by a desire to obtain an academic qualification, rather than a desire to pursue knowledge. They also tended to utilise more Surface Approach techniques than the on-campus learners. Their strong point was that they appeared less bound by the syllabuses, but this might be a result of the fact that they were on-campus learners and might not be an intrinsic strength in them. These findings are very encouraging in the case of the distance learners. It suggests that the distance learners in the

Malaysian context possess more desirable forms of studying/learning behaviour than the on-campus learners. These findings are in keeping with those undertaken in other distance learning contexts (Harper and Kember, 1986 and Richardson et al., 1999) and contribute to the general belief that these differences are caused by factors related to a difference in age such as differences in level of interest, experience, maturity and self-reliance, which all influence study behaviour. As for the on-campus learners, their preference for less desirable learning/studying behaviour may be a result of orientations they acquired from the examination-orientated mode of learning and studying in Malaysian schools.

However, item analysis revealed evidence of greater reliance on memorisation in the case of the distance learners. Factor analysis revealed another interesting feature i.e. the pattern of memorisation being used in conjunction with understanding (Kember, 1996; Watkins, 1996) was more prevalent in the distance learners than in the on-campus learners. These findings suggested that it was incorrect to assume that more distance learners were prone towards rote learning than the on-campus learners. In fact, the reverse was possibly more correct. Since a high proportion of the distance learners seem to use memorisation as a means towards understanding, the proportion of them using it to memorise without understanding was less prevalent than in the case of the on-campus learners. Studies by Kember (1996) suggested that the way the curriculum is designed and the way the course is taught can affect the learning approach which students adopt. Thus, if a teacher uses a didatic, spoon-feeding approach which does not encourage students to adopt a Deep Approach or to think critically, his/her students may be orientated to use Surface Approach to learning. In the Malaysian context, the higher proportion of rote learning among the on-campus learners may also be due to the exam-oriented approach and the teacher-centred approach used in schools which do not give much room for creative and critical thinking.

With regard to Syllabus-boundedness, as discussed earlier, the Cronbach α reliability coefficient for it was too low for it to be classified as a category and it had to be excluded from the scale analysis. In spite of that, it was possible to obtain some interesting findings from the item analysis. It was found that the distance learners indicated a higher preference for highly structured courses and diligent checking of course schedules than on-campus learners. These characteristics, I believe, arose from over-anxiety and fear that they had not been studying what were required of them and are also an indication that the course programmes, possibly, lacked sufficient guidelines and well-planned structures. They might also be aware that they had to take responsibility for following course direction and were anxious not to get it wrong. However, they did not indicate a higher preference for 'reading very little beyond what's required for completing assignments. text' than on-campus learners suggesting that they were less likely of displaying this weakness than on-campus learners.

Mean score analyses revealed that both the High proficiency distance learners and the on-campus learners were generally more effective learners in comparison to those of lower proficiency levels. The High proficiency on-campus learners were also found to be more confident academically than the Average proficiency on-campus learners. These findings are not unusual and comply with expectations that learners of higher proficiency will manifest more desirable approaches to studying. However, surprisingly, Low Proficiency on-campus learners were found to be more strategically-oriented and more confident academically than Average Proficiency learners. The reason for this needs to be determined by further research.

A comparison of the distance learners from the three disciplines further revealed that the distance learners from the ApplSc group were the least confident academically. These findings indicated that learners from the SocSc and BusAdm groups displayed more desirable approaches to studying than those from the ApplSc group. The results supported Ramsden and Entwistle (1981) to a certain extent as they also

found on-campus arts students to be more likely than science students to manifest a Deep Approach and other aspects of Meaning Orientation. But the results contradicted those of Harper and Kember (1986) who found similar results in both distance learning and campus-based students. They did not support that of Morgan et al.(1980) either. Richardson et al's results (1999) on the effects of academic subjects on approaches to studying were also rather mixed. This reaffirmed the general belief that approaches to studying vary with academic context. In the Malaysian context, the results do contribute to the belief that Science Students, due to the nature of the discipline they are studying, tend not to manifest Deep Approaches and critical thinking strategies.

An interesting finding regarding on-campus learners from the SocSc group is that they seemed to be more uncertain about the reasons why they decided to pursue a university education than those from the BusAdm group. In my opinion, this uncertainty is probably due to the fact that many of them were not given the disciplines they applied for when admitted into the university.

8.4 Implications of findings to teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context

As discussed, the underlying constructs and the pattern of preferences of both the distance learners and the on-campus learners are the same. A highly probable cause for differences between them is factor related to differences in age. In view of that, in designing a suitable ESL programme for Malaysian distance learners, it is possible to draw on the extensive literature carried on-campus learners in the fields of student learning and teaching and learning of English as L2. However, considerations should also be given to literature on adult learning. The differences between the learners from the two different modes also suggested that it would not be advisable

to continue the practice of offering the same courses and using the same materials for both groups of learners. Instead, the ESL distance learning programme should reflect the needs of the distance learners. Since the distance learners are more mature learners capable of utilising 'effective' learning approaches, the courses designed for them should allow greater flexibility in choosing subjects and greater opportunity to work at their own pace. But, clear guidelines and well-structured programmes should be prioritised to avoid insecurity arising from uncertainty about what is expected of them. The extent of flexibility should also vary according to proficiency levels. What is suggested is that greater flexibility should be given to learners of higher proficiency and more guided courses should be offered to learners of lower proficiency levels.

Courses offered should also be innovative and encourage critical thinking. Although memorisation with understanding, as revealed by research, is not a negative thing, research has also shown that Asian students are receptive to innovative programmes (Kember and Gow, 1992; Kember and Mckay, 1996 and Kember et al., 1997) and these programmes will enable them to enjoy learning more. Instances of rote learning will also be reduced as students learn more 'effective' ways of learning. The need for innovative ESL courses is particularly vital in the case of learners from the ApplSc group. Since there is some evidence that they tend to adopt less desirable approaches to studying and studying, it is essential to expose them to more materials that encourage to think critically otherwise they will be ineffective as ESL learners.

CHAPTER 9

Study Three

Perceptions of English Proficiency Courses: Focusing on the New Course Perceptions Questionnaire

9.1 Introduction

This study is a follow-up to study Two. In study Two it was pointed out that there was a dearth of literature into the approaches to studying of distance learners. The study was able to establish some very useful characteristics with regard to Malaysian ESL distance learners' conceptions of their approaches to studying in general. Study Three is designed to carry the investigation a step further by finding **out to what extent these approaches influence perceptions of learning of English as L2.** This is an uncharted territory. To my knowledge, there has been no research undertaken that establishes the associations between approaches to studying and perceptions of English Proficiency Courses in the same manner as I intend to do in this study. There are, however, a considerable number of studies on the associations between approaches to studying and perceptions of content courses undertaken along the same line as Entwistle and Ramsden's studies (1983). In the section that follows, Entwistle and Ramsden's development of the Course Perceptions Questionnaire (CPQ) and related studies carried out by them which provide the impetus to the

present thesis will be reviewed in depth. Other studies to support their work will be included where revelent.

Thus, in this chapter I will begin by giving a detailed description of the development of the CPQ by Entwistle and Ramsden. A review of some of their studies which used the CPQ are also included to provide some background information and to enable a better idea of what to expect from the present study. Subsequently, I will proceed to the research design of my study. In that section, I will first begin by describing the scope and objectives of the study and the rationale for using a revised version of the CPQ named New Course Perception Questionnaire (NCPQ) and the interviews which will enable a better understanding of how and why the questionnaire was choosen. This will be followed by the research methodology section. Then, I will proceed to analyse the data of the NCPQ quantitatively with SPSS (9.0). This will be accompanied by the relevant discussions of the results. The data of the interviews, is to be used to enhance the questionnaire data which, will be analysed qualitatively in the next chapter. The implications of the findings of NCPQ for the teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context will be discussed together with the implications of the findings of the interviews at the end of the next chapter.

9.2 Entwistle and Ramsden's Course Perceptions Questionnaire (CPQ)

9.2.1 Circumstances leading to the development of the CPQ

The CPQ were developed by Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) primarily to throw more light on the differences between academic departments at a time when there was not much research of such nature. The findings of two sets of related studies had a great influence towards the development of the questionnaire. The first set looked at the cultures of academic disciplines in terms of theoretical differences between areas of knowledge, and staff and student attitudes. The most pervasive difference identified was between Arts and Social Science departments, on one hand, and the Science department, on the other hand. Lecturers in the Science departments were found to be more formal in their teaching methods and less 'permissive' in their attitudes to student and student learning than Arts teachers (Roe, 1956; Gamson, 1966; Thompson et al, 1969; Wilson et al, 1975). Corresponding differences had been observed in the students attracted to Arts and Science departments. Findings revealed that student orientations and personality were systematically related to their field of study. "Arts and Social Science departments appear to attract more nonconformist, radical, 'person-orientated', neurotic, flexible, individualistic, and divergent students; science departments are populated more heavily with stable, 'thing-orientated' convergent students" (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:113). Gaff et al's study (1976) of students in four departments at a Dutch university used a questionnaire survey to examine 'atmosphere' in the departments and also found clear evidences of differences between the departments:

> ... they constitute markedly different learning environments. The pressure-packed, heavily prescribed nature of chemistry; the relaxed somewhat uncertain climate of law; the memory-orientated, highly structured environment in medicine; and the free-wheeling, independent atmosphere of psychology --- these distinctive 'atmosphere of each educational environment are apparent from this initial analysis.'
>
> (Gaff et al,cited by Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:140)

The second group of studies were concerned with another dimension of departmental context i.e., students' evaluation of teaching. Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) observed that the limited number of studies of academic departments in higher education as learning contexts clearly suggested that "students' perceptions and evaluations were associated with the approaches to studying" (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:119). One of the studies that suggested this was carried out by Fransson (1977) in one of the experiments at Gothenburg. In his study he found that Deep Approaches were functionally related to interest in the learning material, and Surface Approaches to threatening assessment conditions. Laurillard (1978) further showed that students' approaches to studying tasks in their everyday studies were associated with their perceptions of the purposes of the task. Besides, writers as diverse as Newman (1852), Pattison (1876), Veblen (1957) and Rogers (1969) had variously argued that rigid assessment systems, impersonal staff-student relationships and lack of choice over method and content had damaging effects on the quality of students' learning experiences. On the other hand, commitment to teaching amongst staff and freedom in learning facilitated student understanding.

There was also empirical evidence to support that assessment, teaching, and course structures in academic departments were critical variables in the determination of student learning, and that student perceptions were useful ways to measure these contextual characteristics. Becker et al (1968) studying Kansas University students' perceptions of their academic experiences argued that students reacted mainly to the environmental emphasis on grading. He found that students learned the requirements of the social situation which rewarded a high grade-point-average and turned

themselves into the sort of persons the academic context demands. Synder (1971), and Miller and Partlett (1974) studies supported Becker et al's conclusion. Ramsden further found that a perceived lack of any direction or helpful guidance by lecturers in an independent study course led to the development of negative attitudes to learning and when more guidance was given their attitudes improved. However, Brennan and Percy (1977), and Percy and Ramsden (1980) found that students valued independent learning and the opportunity to control the pace of their learning Pascarella and Terenzini (1977; 1978), further found a positive correlation between staff-student relationships and three dependent variables: academic performance, personal development, and intellectual development. Fearn-Wannan (1979) also found students perceptions of their lecturers' behaviour and satisfaction with the teaching to be a determinant of performance. It would be interesting to see which of these views are most applicable to this study.

The studies also revealed many similarities in the components students used to assess the perceived quality of teaching. Kulik and McKeachie (1975) in his review of eleven factor analytical studies of ratings of lecturers identified considerable overlap in the factors discovered. Among the common components were: the lecturer's skills as a teacher, his/her rapport with students, and the amount of work students were expected to tackle. Other investigations (see for e.g., Payne and Hobbs, 1974; Entwistle and Percy, 1971; Brennan and Percy, 1977; Amir and Krausz, 1974) noted the importance of students' evaluations of lecturers' concern for student learning, the amount of choice available of method and content of learning, social relationships between students, interpersonal relationship between staff and students, and transparency of grading procedures.

What Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) found missing in these studies were the **exploration of the effects of different subject areas and perceived 'quality' of departments or courses on students' approaches.** In view of that they carried out some interviews which concentrated on students' perceptions of disciplinary and

other differences in the departments in which they studied. Ten Social Science staff, thirteen Social Science students, three Applied Science staff and nine Applied Science students were interviewed. The staff were asked about their aims as teachers, the structure of their courses, how they thought students tackled the learning tasks they were set, their perceptions of differences between students and the reasons for their success or failure, and the kinds of contact they had with students. The staff interviews were complemented by study of course documents in the two departments which included recent examination and test papers, syllabuses, and course handbooks. As for the students, they were asked about the characteristics of the courses, and teaching and assessment in their department. Specific questions were put about the content of lectures, seminars, and tutorials, and about the student's relationship with members of staff.

The interviews revealed that students in both departments used similar constructs to describe the environments in which they were learning. These constructs were consistent with previous research on students' perceptions of departmental environments. Entwistle and Ramsden further found that particularly important to students were the effects of their lecturers: the extent to which they seemed to encourage learning, lectured effectively, and offered help with study problems. Assessment methods and workload were also important to students in both departments, although they were seen rather differently; the Applied Science students felt that a great deal of pressure was needed in order to 'get through' the syllabus, while the Social Science students would have preferred a much more lighter workload. Formality or informality of teaching and learning (e.g., lectures versus discussion methods) were also often mentioned by the students. Students were able to both identify differences within departments on all these criteria as well as speak meaningfully about the department as a whole. Moreover, students related their approaches to studying to a number of characteristics of the learning context. On occasion they attributed the use of a Deep or Surface Approach to the influence of environment. For example, they attributed the tendency to use Surface Approaches to tests, given periodically.

In the case of staff, Entwistle and Ramsden found that it was not possible to discern any clear patterns in the interviews. There were wider differences in the comments they made in comparison to the students. More apparent was the fact that many staff had little knowledge of how students tackled learning tasks. In view of the similarities in the constructs used by students in both departments in these preliminary interviews and the parallels between these constructs and those with previous research, they decided to develop the CPQ for identifying and comparing the course perceptions of larger groups of students in a number of departments.

9.2.2 Development of the CPQ: Part 1

Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) derived the items describing the context of learning through students' eyes from two principal sources: the preliminary student interviews and an earlier study of students' perceptions of courses. The 47 items were sorted into scales reflecting hypothesised dimensions by which students were expected to characterised their learning environments. An attempt was made to choose scales which were capable of distinguishing between subject areas or distinguishing between departments in other ways (e.g., quality of the teaching). The dimensions were chosen after examining the results of the most closely corresponding previous study (Gaff et al., 1976) and in the light of the concepts of framing and staff understanding. The items were provisionally grouped into the following eight scales:

Scale	Description of scale
1. Staff Understanding	the degree to which students feel their teachers provide an acceptant, understanding, and sincere environment for learning
2. Formal Relationship	the extent of formality or informality in staff-student student relationships.
3. Relevance to Work	how closely students feel the curriculum relates to vocational requirements.
4. Frame Strength	items thought to closely relate most closely to the amount of discretion possessed by students in organising their learning, selecting its content, and evaluating their progress.
5. Formal Instruction	the extent to which the department emphasises individual learning or attendance at lectures and classes.
6. Workload 7. External Pressure to Work	the extent of pressure placed on students to conform to deadlines for submitted work, and the amount of materials which students feel they have to cover in the syllabus.
8. Homogeneity of the Department	the degree to which students perceive themselves to be in a department in which the goals of their study are clear to them and shared by most other students.

Entwistle and Ramsden (1983:122)

The final version of the CPQ was administered to second year students in four university departments namely Psychology, Engineering, History and Physics – during 1977-78. A slightly amended form was used in two further departments (English and Independent Studies) in 1978.

The results were examined by means of item analysis. Item-scale correlations and percentage agreements to each item were calculated. Alpha factor analysis (chosen because it is specifically designed for use in scale development) was also carried out, using the SPSS programmes. Altogether eight factors were identified. A second analysis was run after removing a number of weaker items and produced similar results. The CPQ scales were then revised to produce eight dimensions (See Fig.9.1)

Dimension	Meaning
Relationships with Students	Closeness of lecturer/student relationships; help and understanding shown to students.
Commitment to Teaching	Commitment of staff to improving teaching and to teaching students at a level appropriate to their current understanding.
Workload	Pressure placed on students in terms of demands of the syllabus and assessment tasks.
Formal Teaching Methods	Formality or informality of teaching and learning (e.g. lectures vs. individual study)
Vocational Relevance	Perceived relevance of courses to students' careers.
Social Climate	Frequency and quality of academic and social relationships between students.
Clear Goals and Standards	Extent to which standards expected of students are clear and unambiguous.
Freedom in Learning	Amount of discretion possessed by students in choosing and organising academic work.

Fig. 9.1 Dimensions of learning environments derived from factor analysis of the first version of the CPQ (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:124)

On inspecting the CPQ results in terms of the eight dimensions in Fig. 9.1, Entwistle and Ramsden found that students saw the process of learning and teaching in quite different ways in the six departments (see, Ramsden, 1979). However, it was possible to discern a clear distinction between Science students (Applied and Natural Science) and Arts students (Social Science and Arts). Science students generally perceived the methods of teaching to be formal where clear goals of studies were established, the contents were of vocational relevance and workload was high, combined with close and co-operative relationships between students. Arts students perceived the environment to be friendly and fairly informal (except for History department). However, they complained about the lack of freedom and desired more opportunity to study on their own. More specifically, Psychology students complained about the heavy workload, and English and History students complained about the lack of relevance of their courses to their future employment.

9.2.3 Development of the CPQ: Part 2

Entwistle and Ramsden carried out further interviews on a sample of students who completed the CPQ in the original form. The interviews revealed that the eight main components of perceived learning environments appeared to be stable and replicable (Ramsden, 1981), although the relationships with students and commitment to teaching scales could not be clearly separated. A revised version of the questionnaire was next constructed, consisting of eight six-item scales. Items in the previous version which had not had significant loadings in the factor analysis, or which had low item-scale correlations, were deleted; other items were added to some scales (especially to the freedom in learning scale) in order to produced six-item scales in all cases.

This revised CPQ was administered to a sample of 767 students in nine departments at three universities during 1978. Item analyses largely confirmed the integrity of the revised scales, although the distinction between the relationships with students and commitment to teaching scales again failed to emerge empirically. Alpha-factoring of the items, extracting eight factors, followed by oblique rotation, produced the following eight factors:

Factor	Dimension
I	Relationships with Students plus Commitment to Teaching.
II	Vocational Relevance
III	Formal Teaching
IV	Clear Goals and Standards
V	Workload
VI	Social Climate
VII	Commitment to Teaching and Relationships with Students
VIII	Freedom in Learning (together with smaller loadings on several relationships with students items)

In spite of large differences between individual items in terms of percentage agreements for the nine departments, Entwistle and Ramsden found that item-scale correlations did not differ greatly between the departments, suggesting that the dimension tapped by the scales were generally applicable. Calculations of mean scales values for the departments, disciplines and subject areas confirmed the ability of the questionnaire to identify different departmental learning contexts. The scales of Formal Teaching Methods, Vocational Relevance, and (to a lesser extent) Clear Goals and Standards, Social Climate, and Freedom in Learning, distinguished between Science and Arts and Social Science departments. The other scales mainly seemed to differentiate between departments rather than disciplines. The scales were also found to be related to each other. For example, Freedom in Learning was negatively related to Formal Teaching Methods, but was positively associated with relationships with students.

The final research version of the CPQ was developed by re-ordering the items in the Relationships with Students and Commitment to Teaching scales into two new scales of Good Teaching and Openness to Students. The questionnaire was shortened to 40 items in eight scales by deleting the weakest item in each scale, and some items were rewritten. This questionnaire was administered to 2208 students in 66 departments at the same time as the Approaches to Studying Inventory (ASI). An analysis of the reliability of the scales was carried out using the Cronbach's α reliability coefficients. It was found that the α coefficents of the items in each of the scale of the final version of the CPQ were above 0.6 indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency for each of the scales (see Appendix 9A for the items contained in the final version of the CPQ and the Cronbach α values).

A comparison of mean scores across departments, disciplines and subject areas were conducted. The results confirmed expectations that some of the dimensions of the CPQ would describe differences between subject areas and disciplines, while others

would represent students' perceptions of differences between departments, as can be seen in Fig. 9.2

Scale	Mean (1) Science (2) Social Science (3) Arts	S.D.	Analysis of Variance F (df 2, 63)
Openness to Students	(1) 9.04 (2) 9.31 (3) 8.36	1.47 1.82 2.14	1.42
Social Climate	(1) 11.19 (2) 10.78 (3) 9.33	1.48 1.40 1.72	7.64*
Formal Teaching Methods	(1)12.17 (2) 6.67 (3) 3.06	1.61 1.37 0.77	232.86*
Clear Goals and Standards	(1) 11.83 (2) 9.62 (3) 7.35	0.89 1.87 1.94	37.88**
Workload	(1) 11.91 (2) 8.86 (3) 10.58	2.26 2.71 2.33	5.95*
Vocational Relevance	(1) 11.21 (2) 7.21 (3) 4.27	2.96 1.42	58.51**
Good Teaching	(1) 11.63 (2) 11.74 (3) 11.63	1.02 1.48 1.65	0.06
Freedom in Learning	(1) 8.24 (2) 10.21 (3) 11.54	1.72 1.46 2.67	15.35**

*p< 0.01 *p <0.001

Fig. 9.2 Students' perceptions of learning contexts in different subject areas (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:128)

Clear Goals and Standards were found to be very much related to subject areas; much more so, incidentally, than any other ASI subscales. The highest scores on all three of these CPQ scales were found in the engineering departments, and the lowest in the English or History departments. The two evaluative scales, Good Teaching and Openness to Students, were also found not to be related to subject area. Besides, the wide ranges of departmental means within each discipline on these scales illustrated how different the departments were perceived to be by their students (see Ramsden and Entwistle, 1981, for details). The remaining CPQ scales appeared to

describe differences between departments and between subject areas. For example, although the Freedom in Learning mean values were higher in Arts and Social Sciences than in scientific subjects, the range of mean scores within each discipline was wide.

Factor analysis of the CPQ scale totals was carried out and they were found to reveal a similar pattern (see Fig. 9.3)

Variables	Factor I	Factor II
Good Teaching	0.76	
Freedom in Learning	0.57	
Openness to Students	0.76	
Social Climate	0.42	0.32
Formal Teaching Methods		0.71
Clear Goals and Standards	0.30	0.57
Workload	(-0.24)	
Vocational Relevance		0.72

Most loadings less than 0.25 are omitted
Factor I: Positive evaluation of teaching and courses
Factor II: Formal vocational teaching

Fig. 9.3 Factor analysis of Course Perceptions scales (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:129)

Entwistle and Ramsden described Factor I as the evaluative dimension as it loaded highly on Good Teaching and Openness to Students. Freedom in Learning also loaded significantly on this factor and they suggested the possibility of this scale being considered as a component of students' evaluations of departments. They described Factor II as representing differences between subject areas, that is, the dimension which distinguished between formal vocational teaching and loosely-structured informal teaching, the former being more common in Science departments and the latter in Arts departments. Further, previous studies have revealed that Clear Goals and Standards, High Vocational Relevance, and Formal Teaching Methods came together with Good Social Climates.

The CPQ was subsequently used by Entwistle and Ramsden to attempt to establish possible links between the scales of the CPQ and the ASI. This will be discussed in detail in the next section.

9.3 Entwistle and Ramsden's investigation of the approaches to studying in contrasting departments

In the previous section it was mentioned that Entwistle and Ramsden were interested to find out **the effects of different subject areas and perceived 'quality' of departments or courses on students approaches.** To put it another way, they were interested to find out how contrasting academic contexts affected approaches to studying. Through the interviews they had managed to identify functional relationships between levels of approach and students' perceptions of the teaching and assessment they had experienced. Besides, the interviews also revealed that the ways students tackled academic tasks were related to the subject area in which they studied. Having developed the CPQ, it was then possible for them to attempt to establish possible links between the scales of the CPQ and the ASI in order to investigate the validity of connections between the two sets of scales and try to disentangle the effects of subject area and departmental organisation through a quantitative approach.

In order to investigate this, Entwistle and Ramsden administered both the ASI and the CPQ to 2208 students in 66 departments of Engineering, Physics, Economics, Psychology, History and English between 1979 and 1980. The scales of both

instruments and their meanings as a given by Entwistle and Ramsden are shown in Fig 9.4

Subscale	Meaning
Deep Approach	Active questioning in learning
Relating Ideas	Relating to other parts of course
Use of Evidence	Relating evidence to conclusions
Intrinsic Motivation	Interest in learning for learning's sake
Surface Approach	Preoccupation with memorisation
Syllabus-boundedness	Relying on staff to define learning tasks
Fear of Failure	Pessimism and anxiety about academic outcomes
Extrinsic Motivation	Interest in courses for the qualifications they offer
Strategic Approach	Awareness of implications of academic demands made by staff
Disorganised Study Methods	Unable to work regularly and effectively
Negative Attitudes to Studying	Lack of interest and application
Achievement Motivation	Competitive and confident
Comprehension Learning	Readiness to map out subject area and think divergently
Globetrotting	Over-ready to jump to conclusions
Operation Learning	Emphasis on facts and logical analysis
Improvidence	Over-cautious reliance on details
Formal Teaching Methods	Lecturers and classes more important than individual study
Clear Goals and Standards	Assessment standards and ends of studying clearly defined
Workload	Heavy pressures to fulfil task requirements
Vocational Relevance	Perceived relevance of courses to careers
Good Teaching	Well-prepared, helpful, committed teachers
Freedom in Learning	Discretion of students to choose and organise own work
Openness to Students	Friendly staff attitudes and preparedness to adapt to students' needs
Social Climate	Quality of academic and social relationships between students

Fig. 9.4 Subscales of the ASI and the CPQ (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:180)

Their analyses were designed to investigate the following questions:

1. To what extent can differences in students' approaches to studying and perceptions of the context of learning be explained (a) by type of discipline studied (b) by type of department, after controlling for subject area?
2. What links between the two sets of scales can be identified by means of factor analysis?

3. Using departments as unit of analysis rather than individual students, what associations between orientations to studying and course perceptions can be identified? In other words, do context of learning appear to influence approaches to studying?
4. Do some approaches to studying seem to be rewarded more highly (in terms of self-rated performance) in some contexts than others?

9.3.1 Differences in students' approaches in contrasting subject areas

Based on previous work, Entwistle and Ramsden proposed certain expectations with regard to how the students from different subject areas would respond to the following subscales.

Subscales likely to be more common with Arts and Social Science Students	Subscales likely to be more common with Science students
• Comprehension Learning • Improvidence • Deep Approach • Intrinsic Motivation • Relating Ideas	• Operation Learning • Globetrotting • Use of Evidence • Extrinsic Motivation • Syllabus-boundedness

(Enwistle and Ramsden, 1983:181)

As for the rest of the subscales they predicted that there would not be large differences in subject areas. The mean values were examined in two ways: mean values for each of the subscales by subject area (Science, Social Science, and Arts) and mean values for each discipline and each department. An analysis of average scores for departments and subject areas revealed that Operation Learning and Comprehension Learning were associated with types of disciplines in the expected

manner: Operation Learning received higher scores in Science, Comprehension Learning in Arts and Social Science. Globetrotting and Improvidence were also related to type of discipline, but less strongly.

They further found that globetrotting was highest in Psychology departments, and Improvidence in Economics departments. However, they found that Globetrotting was no more common in Arts department than in Science ones. They declared that on this evidence, it could not be stated that learning pathologies were a function of the type of discipline studied.

Deep Approach and Relating Ideas were found to be most common in Arts and Social Science departments, thus confirming earlier predictions, but Use of Evidence and Intrinsic Motivation were found to be only weakly associated with subject area, although in the expected directions. They were surprised to find large differences between subject areas in the sub-scales of Syllabus-boundedness, Extrinsic Motivation and Disorganised Study Methods. Large differences were also found in Achievement Motivation. Most of these differences conformed with theoretical predictions. However, for some reason, Arts students appeared to have Poor Study Methods. Considerable differences were also evident between individual departments.

In their factor analysis of the CPQ, Entwistle and Ramsden found two main factors: Positive Evaluation of Teaching and courses, and Formal Vocational Teaching. In their factor analysis of the ASI, they found three principal orientations: Meaning, Reproducing, and Achieving/Disorganised and Dilatory. This time they carried out a factor analysis of the two sets of scales together in order to examine the relationships between students' approaches and the context of learning in academic departments. See Fig. 9.5 for the results of this analysis.

Variables	Factors (54% variance explained)					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Approaches to studying						
Deep Approach	0.71			(0.22)	-0.29	
Relating Ideas	0.67			(0.21)		
Use of Evidence	0.52			0.28	-0.29	0.31
Intrinsic Motivation	0.64			0.39	-0.27	-0.34
Surface Approach			0.61			-0.30
Syllabus-boundedness	-0.38	0.26	0.53			
Fear of Failure			0.58		0.26	
Extrinsic Motivation		0.47	0.37			-0.51
Strategic Approach	0.27				-0.37	-0.26
Disorganised Study Methods					0.54	
Negative Attitudes to Studying	-0.28			-0.32	0.52	
Achievement Motivation					-0.32	
Comprehension Learning	0.60					
Globetrotting					0.44	
Operation Learning			0.56		-0.29	-0.30
Improvidence			0.65			-0.33
Course perceptions						
Formal Teaching Methods		0.75				
Clear Goals and Standards		0.53		0.38	-0.25	
Workload			0.45	(-0.23)		
Vocational Relevance		0.73				
Good Teaching				0.77		
Freedom in Learning		-0.28		0.50		
Openness to Students				0.79		
Social Climate		0.25		0.47		

Most loadings less than 0.25 omitted
No. of respondents = 2208

Fig. 9.5 Factor analysis of Approaches to Studying and Course Perceptions scales (Enwistle and Ramsden, 1983:185)

They discovered that three factors (numbers I, III and V) were recognisable as the main Studying Orientations and Factors II and IV were recognisable as the Formal Vocational and evaluative dimensions respectively. As for Factor VI, they labelled it as describing confident students with good entry qualifications. The interviews carried out by Entwistle and Ramsden suggested that students responded to the departmental context in which they worked by adopting different levels of approach. Although the factor analysis of the two sets of scales was unable to reveal a lot of overlap, Entwistle and Ramsden were able to make good sense of the analysis in

relation to the interviews. They were able to find the following associations between the two sets of scales (refer to shaded areas of Fig. 9.5):

- the association of the Reproducing Orientation with a heavy Workload (Factor III)
- the association of Disorganised and Dilatory attitudes with perceived Lack of Clarity in Goals (Factor V)
- the association of the Evaluative Factor with Intrinsic Motivation and Use of Evidence in learning (Factor IV)
- the association of Formal-Vocational factor with Extrinsic Motivation (Factor II)

They next attempted to find out to what extent were the approaches to studying factors, and the relationships between the CPQ and the approaches to studying scales, artefacts of area of study differences in the relationship between learning and its context? This was accomplished by carrying out separate factor analyses by subject area (Ramsden and Entwistle, 1981). They found that Meaning Orientation (Factor I) retained its emphasis on Syllabus-freedom and its stylistic component of Comprehension Learning across three subject areas. This approach was described as relating to less Formal Teaching Methods in Science. In Social Science, it was described as related to Freedom in Learning and Good Teaching, and in Arts, to a Good Social Climate and Clear Goals. As for Reproducing Orientation, they found it to be consistently defined in all the subject areas and related to heavy Workload. Factor V, representing a Disorganised and Dilatory Approach to Studying, was found to be associated with the learning pathology of Globetrotting, and, especially in Arts, to Comprehension Learning. They suggested that this meant that Comprehension Learning carried to extreme (and unleavened by Operation Learning) in Arts subjects might lead to Globetrotting. They found similar results in the interviews. On the other hand they found Operation Learning to be associated with Improvidence in all three subject areas equally (Factor III). Factor IV (Departmental Evaluation) was

found to be linked to Positive Attitudes and Meaning Orientation in all three faculties. These results conformed to their interview data.

9.3.2 Effects of departmental contexts on student learning

Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) next examined the relationships between context and approaches to studying while controlling for the effects of subject areas. Through the interviews conducted earlier they found that Deep Approaches and Favourable Attitudes to Studying were functionally related to students' perceptions of Good Teaching. Besides, unhelpful and Uncommitted Teaching was thought to encourage Poor Attitudes to Studying and Surface Approaches. The interviewees also associated Surface Approaches with perceived deficiencies in the assessment system and with a Lack of Freedom in Learning.

To investigate to what extent the processes identified operate in a large sample of students, they decided to carry out factor analyses. They realised that to present a more convincing explanation of the effects of departmental contexts on student learning, it would be necessary for them to provide a unit of analysis representing departments, rather than individual students. In order to do this, a set of analyses of covariance was performed on the departmental mean values of several subscales, students' pre-entry levels of achievement, and composite variables formed by combining subscales identified in the factor analyses. Through this mean it was predicted that departments which were positively evaluated by their students would:

a) have higher Meaning Orientation mean scores;

b) have lower Reproducing Orientation mean scores;

c) have lower Disorganised and Dilatory mean scores.

than departments which were negatively evaluated.

Based on this composite variables measuring different orientations and evaluations dimensions were formed as follows:

Meaning Orientation	Deep Approach + Relating Ideas + Use of Evidence + Intrinsic Motivation
Reproducing Orientation	Surface Approach + Syllabus-boundedness + Fear of Failure + Improvidence
Disorganised and Dilatory Attitudes	Disorganised Study Methods + Negative Attitudes to Studying + Globetrotting
Evaluation variable 1	Good Teaching + Freedom in Learning
Evaluation variable 2	Freedom in Learning - Workload

The above variables, all of which were measurements of departmental mean scores, were constructed after examining the results of the factor analyses and also took into account the interview findings. A third evaluation variable consisting of Openness to Students + Freedom in Learning + Good Teaching was used in the preliminary analysis but later rejected. This was because Openness to Students was found to be unrelated to any of the criterion variables; it seemed to be a measurement of students' satisfaction with the department but individual differences did not help to explain the quality of their learning. Similar results were reached by multiple discriminant analyses of the departmental mean scores (see Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:188 for details regarding this).

9.3.3 Academic progress in different departmental contexts

Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) also used the CPQ to analyse interactions between approaches to studying and types of contexts (defined separately from subject areas) in relation to self-rated academic progress. They were interested to find out whether

students with contrasting orientations to studying saw themselves as performing equally well (or equally badly) in departments of different kinds.

In order to examine the effect of different orientations to studying on performance while controlling for discipline, groups of departments were formed in terms of different extreme contexts. This meant that the two departments in each discipline with the highest mean scores on Good Teaching were compared with the two with the lowest mean scores on Good Teaching, and so on. Correlations between self-ratings of performance and the composite variables representing Meaning Orientation, Reproducing Orientation, and Disorganised and Dilatory Approaches were then computed. For the purpose of these analyses, another composite variable, **Accomplished Learning**, was created which was intended to represent more accurately the consistent Deep + Strategic Approach identified in the interviews. It consisted of Meaning Orientation + Strategic Approach + Comprehension Learning + Syllabus-Freedom + Positive Attitudes to Studying.

Entwistle and Ramsden deduced (see Fig. 9.6) that the correlations were suggestive of the interactions between contexts and orientations. They claimed that the correlations revealed that Meaning Orientation could be perceived to be related to academic progress most strongly in a condition of freedom in Learning with Light Workload, and Reproducing Orientation was least penalised when the teaching was poor and there was little freedom in learning. They further inferred that Disorganised and Dilatory approaches, were least effective under the same conditions. As for accomplished learning, they construed that it progressed favourably in all conditions, but particularly so when the teaching was poor and there was freedom in learning.

Conditions (types of departments)	Meaning Orientation	Reproducing Orientation	Disorganised & Dilatory Approach	Accomplished Learning
Highest freedom in learning	0.28	-0.25	-0.40	0.35
Lowest freedom in learning	0.25	-0.23	-0.35	0.29
Highest good teaching	0.23	-0.26	-0.28	0.27
Lowest good teaching	0.30	-0.18	0.42	0.36
Highest freedom in learning and highest good teaching	0.30	0.28	0.37	0.36
Lowest freedom in learning and lowest good teaching	0.26	-0.16	0.47	0.34
Highest workload	0.23	-0.24	-0.43	0.31
Lowest workload	0.26	-0.21	-0.27	-0.32
Highest workload with lowest freedom in learning	0.22	-0.20	-0.39	0.28
Lowest workload with highest freedom in learning	0.32	-0.26	-0.33	0.37

Fig. 9.6 Correlations between orientations to studying and performance under different extreme conditions, controlling for disciplines (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983: 191)

Entwistle and Ramsden further presented descriptions of students they considered representatives of the data. They are:

- consistent deep-level, strategic students perceiving deficiencies in the teaching, and freedom of choice, as challenges to perform better.
- disorganised students hoping that the helpfulness of his lecturers will enable him to progress more effectively.

- Reproducing students responding to a context of restricted choice over method and content of study combined with ineffective teaching and feeling that their method will not be heavily penalised.
- Students orientated towards meaning, feeling themselves least likely to do well when the workload is heavy and there is little freedom in learning.

In conclusion, Entwistle and Ramsden claimed that the results taken in conjunction with the interview findings show students' perceptions of teaching and assessment methods in academic departments are significantly associated with, and probably causally related to, students approaches to studying. Besides, self-rated student performance is related both to perceptions of courses and orientations to learning.

9.4 Research Design

9.4.1 Scope and the objectives of the study

As discussed earlier, the CPQ was developed by Entwistle and Ramsden to find out the effects of different subject areas and perceived 'quality' of departments or courses on student approaches to studying. In order to investigate this relationship they administered both the ASI and the CPQ to a large population of students of from various disciplines and from various departments. Then, they used factor analyses to determine the associations between orientations to studying and course perceptions.

In the present study the CPQ is also utilised but for a different purpose. In the present study, I am also interested in determining the associations between the orientations to studying and course perceptions but in this case, instead of determining students perceptions of 'quality' of their departmental courses I am

interested in determining **students' perceptions of only their English Proficiency Courses**. Thus, in the present study the subject area is fixed. The learners are the variable factors. They are from the following categories:

- two different modes of studying: distance learning and on-campus learning.
- three different disciplines: Social Science, Applied Science and Business Administration.
- varying Proficiency Levels in English: Low Proficiency level, Average Proficiency level and High Proficiency level.

In view of the different circumstances, the objectives of this study are also different from that of Entwistle and Ramsden's. The study is an attempt to acquire a better understanding of the differences in perceptions of the English Proficiency Courses by distance learners and on-campus learners. It also represents an effort to establish whether there are any associations between approaches to studying and student perceptions of the English Proficiency Courses. The research questions of the study are as follow:

(1) Are the distance learners' perceptions of the English Language Proficiency Courses different from those of the on-campus learners and if yes, in what ways?

(2) Are the perceptions of the English Language Proficiency Courses of the following categories of **distance learners** different from each others and if yes, in what ways?

(i) Low Proficiency Learners (Lo), Average Proficiency learners (Av), High Proficiency (Hi) students.

(ii) Social Science (Soc.Sc.), Applied Science (Appl. Sc.) and Business Administration (Bus. Adm.) students.

(3) Are the perceptions of the English Language Proficiency Courses of the following categories of **on-campus learners** different from each others and if yes, in what ways?

(iii) Low Proficiency Learners (Lo), Average Proficiency learners (Av), High Proficiency (Hi) students.

(iv) Social Science (Soc.Sc.), Applied Science (Appl. Sc.) and Business Administration (Bus. Adm.) students.

(4) Are there any differences between (2) and (3)? If so, what are they?

(5) Using modes of studying as unit of analysis rather than individual students, what associations between orientations to studying and course perceptions can be identified? In other words, are distance learners' and on-campus learners' perceptions of the English Language Proficiency Courses influenced by their approaches to studying?

(6) What are the implications of the above findings to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context?

9.4.2 Rationale for using the Course Perceptions Questionnaire (CPQ) and the interviews

The CPQ designed by Entwistle and Ramsden was not specifically intended for the purpose of the present study. In fact, so far, I have not come across any study that has utilised the CPQ and the ASI in the same manner as I have done in this study. Why have I decided to use them in such a manner? Besides the most obvious explanation, that is a study of such a nature will break new ground, a more important reason is that by utilising the two instruments in such a manner will enable me to find out whether the ways students approach studying influence their perceptions of

their learning of English as L2. So far, I have not come across any instrument that can help me to establish this link and instead of attempting to devise a new questionnaire, I decided a better method would be to try to modify Entwistle and Ramsden's CPQ to suit my purpose. A thorough examination of the CPQ revealed that only slight modifications were necessary to make it suitable for my purpose (the modifications will be discussed in 9.4.3.2).

Interviews with a selected number of the sample population to elicit their perceptions of the English Proficiency Courses were further carried out and add a more personal dimension and depth to the study.

9.4.3 Research instrument

A sub-questionnaire entitled **The New Course Perceptions questionnaire** (NCPQ) was designed for this study. It comprises items taken from Entwistle and Ramsden's CPQ with some modifications made to render it more appropriate for the purpose of this study. The results obtained from the NASI in Study Two were also used in this study in the factor analysis section.

9.4.3.1 New Approaches to Studying Inventory (NASI)

The data of the NASI was used for the factor analysis section. Fig. 8.3 on the meaning of the scales/subscales is presented again for easy reference.

Scale/subscale	Meaning
1. Deep Approach	
Looking for Meaning	Look for meaning in studying.
Active Interest/Critical Stance	Active interest in subjects studied. Interact actively with what is being learnt and link what is being studied with real life.
Relating and Organising Ideas	Relate new information to previous information actively and organise ideas mentally.
Use Evidence and Logic	Use evidence and logic in trying to understand materials and to arrive at conclusions.
2. Surface Approach	
Relying on Memorising	Rely on rote learning.
Difficulty in Making Sense	Find difficulty in understanding and making sense of what is being read and things that have to be remembered.
Unrelatedness	Find difficulty in perceiving what is important and also in seeing an overall picture or how ideas fit together.
Concern About Coping	Are unduly concerned over ability to cope with work.
3. Strategic Approach	
Determination to Excel	Are competitive and self-confident and determined to achieve success.
Effort in Studying	Put in extra effort to make sure that work is being done well. Work hard and are able to concentrate well on work.
Organised Studying	Have organised study methods. Make an effort to ensure that appropriate conditions and materials for study are available.
Time Management	Are able to organise time effectively and able to abide by good study plans.
4. Lack of Direction	Are cynical and disenchanted about higher education. Feel driven to enter university to please others.
5. Academic Self –confidence	Feel confidence about ability to cope with work. Have no difficulty in understanding new information and ideas.
6. Extrinsic Motivation	Are primarily motivated by the qualifications and the prospects of a good job on graduation.
7. Syllabus-boundedness	Have the intention to restrict learning to the defined syllabus and tasks requirements.

Taken from Fig. 8.3. Meaning of the scale/subscales of the NASI. (Ramsden, 1983)

9.4.3.2 New Course Perceptions Questionnaire

The CPQ designed by Entwistle and Ramsden comprises 40 self-report items designed to measure students' perceptions of the learning context – the teaching, assessment, and courses – in the academic department that they have undertaken. It consists of the following scales:

1. Good Teaching
2. Freedom in Learning
3. Workload
4. Formal Teaching
5. Clear Goals and Standard
6. Openness to Students
7. Vocational Relevance

Each scale has five items (see Appendix 9A for description of the items in each scale). Students were asked to relate their responses to the Field that they were spending the most time on. Five responses categories were provided for each item. They were:

4 -- means Definitely agree

3 -- means Agree with reservations

1 -- means Disagree with reservations

0 -- means Definitely disagree

2 -- is only to be used it the item doesn't apply to you, or if you find it impossible to give a definite answer.

In the New Course Perceptions Questionnaire (NCPQ) the scales 'Formal Teaching', 'Vocational Relevance' and 'Social Climate' were excluded. Certain questions were modified to make the questionnaire more relevant for the purpose of this study. Irrelevant items were also excluded. An extra scale 'Teaching/Learning Components' was added. (See Appendix 9B for an explanation of the modification made to the CPQ and the reasons for the changes). The scales of the NCPQ and explanation of the meaning of scores for each of the scale is presented in Fig. 9.7

Scale	Meaning of scores
I. Clear Goals and Standard	High scores show that the standards of assessment and the ends of studying are thought to be clearly defined.
II. Workload	High scores show that students feel themselves to be under excessive pressure from the demands of the curriculum and the assessment methods.
III. Good Teaching	High scores mean that students think that staff are well-prepared and confident teachers who helped them with study problems
IV. Freedom in Learning	High scores mean that students think the courses offer a high degree of choice over what is to be studied and how it is to be learnt.
V. Openness to Students	High scores show that staff are thought to be friendly and are prepared to adapt themselves to student needs.
VI.Teaching/Learning Components	High scores mean that the students have a good opinion of the teaching/learning components provided to them.

Fig 9.7 Scales of the NCPQ and explanation of the meaning of scores for each of the scale.

Similar to the NASI, the number of responses to each item was reduced to four completely leaving out 'the item doesn't apply/impossible to give a definite answer' response. However, instead of using the four other responses in the CPQ, I decided to use the four responses from the NASI i.e. '4 for 'strongly agree', 3 'agree', 2 'disagree' and 1 'strongly disagree' to make it consistent with the NASI, and hence, less confusing to the respondents. The questions in NCPQ, like the NASI, were also presented in a random manner. But unlike NASI, the respondents were told to respond to the questionnaire in the **context of learning English**. (See Appendix 6A for a copy of the NCPQ).

9.4.4 Sample population

As the NCPQ was part of the USLPCQ, it was distributed to the same sample population as Study One and Study Two.

9.4.5 Research Procedures

With regard to the NCPQ, the same procedures as in Study One and Study Two were involved. Out of the 750 USPLCQs that were received, it was discovered that the NCPQ section of 35 of them were incomplete. These were discarded. The remaining 715 NCPQs, which included those with missing components (i.e. missing information on year/proficiency level/discipline), were retained. See Fig.9.8 for a breakdown of the number of respondents in the various categories.

Mode	Year	Proficiency level	Discipline				Total
			Soc. Sc.	Appl. Sc.	Bus. Adm.	Missing	
Distance Learners	1	Lo	5	0	10	0	15
		Av	3	2	11	0	16
		Hi	0	0	4	0	4
		Missing	2	1	2	1	6
		Total	10	3	27	1	41
	2	Lo	87	20	46	1	154
		Av	28	18	31	0	77
		Hi	12	7	15	0	34
		Missing	14	9	8	1	32
		Total	141	54	100	2	297
	Missing	Lo	0	0	1	4	5
		Av	0	1	1	0	2
		Hi	0	1	0	0	1
		Missing	0	0	0	1	1
		Total	0	2	2	5	9
On-campus Learners	1	Lo	31	44	46	0	121
		Av	18	57	46	2	123
		Hi	20	35	61	0	116
		Missing	1	5	2	0	8
		Total	70	141	155	2	368
Grand Total							715

Fig. 9.8 Breakdown of the number of respondents in the various categories

9.5 Analysis of Results

The guide for interpreting the mean scores is the same as in Study Two. The mean scores should be interpreted in the following manner:

Mean Score	Meaning
4	Strongly agree
3	Agree
2	Disagree
1	Strongly disagree

9.5.1 Item analysis

Since item analysis was carried out on the data of Study One and Study Two, I decided to carry out an item analysis on the data of Study Three as well. As in the case of the previous studies, this item analysis would help me to identify some general trends and to enable a better understanding of how learners from the two different modes responded to each item individually. ANOVA was employed for this purpose. To ensure greater reliability only significant differences in mean scores (i.e. $p<0.05$) were taken into consideration.

9.5.1.1 Comparison of mean scores across modes

Presentation of results

The mean scores per item of distance learners and on campus learners were compared. The results were significant for the items displayed in Fig. 9.9.

Fig. 9.9 Comparison of mean scores per item of the distance learners and the on-campus learners

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SD = Standard Deviation
*p<0.05
** p<0.001
Underlined scores = higher scores

Scale	Items/questions	Mean scores		SD		F (df)
		DLs	OCLs	DLs	OCLs	
(I) Clear Goals and Standard	**No. 3** It's always easy to know the standard of work expected of me.	2.93	2.66	0.61	0.69	29.04 (1/692)**
	No. 6 I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what's expected of me in this department.	3.03	2.86	0.63	0.66	11.21 (1/688)**
(II) Workload	**No.14** There 's so much written work to do it's very difficult for me to get down to independent reading.	2.39	2.26	0.68	0.75	6.38 (1/693)*
	No. 23 It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover to many topics.	2.88	2.71	0.71	0.74	9.60 (1/690)*

(IV) Freedom in Learning	**No. 8** This department gives us a chance to use methods of study which suit our way of learning.	2.99	2.82	0.66	0.70	10.45 (1/683)**
	No. 21 We have a great deal of choice over how we are going to learn in this department.	2.83	2.73	0.65	0.68	3.942 (1/690)*
(V) Openness to Students	**No. 1** Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from us for changes to their teaching methods/materials.	3.14	2.97	0.65	0.72	9.74 (1/676)*
	No. 7 Staff generally consult us before making decisions about how the courses are run.	3.08	2.94	0.66	0.67	7.71 (1/682)*
	No. 12 Most of the teachers here really try hard to get to know us.	3.08	2.96	0.63	0.73	5.69 (1/690)*
(VI) Teaching/ Learning components	**No. 13** I utilise the teaching materials (which include text, course guides, study guides, audio and video materials – which ever are relevant) provided by the department extensively.	2.92	2.71	0.68	0.75	14.03 (1/689)**

It was possible to detect some interesting trends from the table. A comparison of mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners revealed that differences in mean scores were significant for 10 items out of a total of 24 items: 2 out of the 4 items were from Clear Goals and Standard, 2 out of 4 items were from Workload, 2 out of 4 were from Freedom in Learning, 3 out of 4 were from Openness to Students and 1 out of 4 was from Teaching/Learning Components. However, none was from Good Teaching. The comparison further revealed that all the significantly higher

mean scores came from the distance learners. This suggested consistency in the data and allowed me to come up with some general postulations.

Discussion of findings

It is possible to deduce at this juncture that in the learning of English as L2 the distance learners on the whole displayed greater confidence and clarity of goals and standard than the on-campus learners. Their attitudes to the staff and the courses of the English proficiency Department were also more positive than the on-campus learners. It is not surprising to find them expressing satisfaction over a greater degree of freedom in the form of more opportunities to use methods of study that suited them, but it is surprising to find them expressing satisfaction over the staff's openness towards suggestions and eagerness to get to know them. Besides, there seemed to be no difference in the two groups' perceptions of Good Teaching. One would expect on-campus learners who had more contact with the staff to express more positive views towards Openness to Students and Good Teaching. This unexpected turn of event is in a way a good sign as it suggested that the distance learning courses provided by the EPD were generally well-received by the distance learners.

The data also revealed that the distance learners utilised the teaching materials to a greater extent than on-campus learners. This is also not unexpected. Since the distance learners do not have much contact with their tutors, logically they will have to depend on the teaching materials provided to a greater extent than on-campus learners. With regard to workload, it was quite evident that the distance learners found the workload heavier in comparison to the on-campus learners.

The findings clearly suggested that the distance learners' attitudes towards the staff and courses of the English Proficiency department were more positive than the on-campus learner. They did have some problem with workload, but considering that most of them are holding full-time jobs as well, this can be expected.

9.5.2 Scale Analysis

9.5.2.1 Analysis of reliability of classification of items based on the NCPQ scales

Before attempting an analysis of classification of questions, it is necessary to carry out an analysis of the reliability of the classification of the items according to scales. In this case, it was revealed that the Cronbach's α reliability coefficient for all the scales were below 0.7 suggesting lack of reliability in their classification. However, since this is an exploratory study and considering that each of the scales has only four variables which made it more difficult to obtain reliable results, I decided to include in my analysis all scales with Cronbach's α reliability coefficients of above or almost approaching 0.6. Besides, Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) concluded α coefficient of above 0.6 is satisfactory. The scales included were Clear Goals and Standard (α = 0.64), Good Teaching (α = 0.69), Freedom in Learning (α = 0.63), Openness to students (α = 0.66) and Workload (α = 0.58). The scale of Teaching and Learning Components was excluded (α = 0.44) as the α value was too far below the acceptable level.

9.5.2.2 Analysis of perceptions of courses of learners of different modes

Presentation of results

Fig.9.10 gives the mean scores of the distance learners and the on-campus learners for the five selected scales.

Scale	Distance learners		On-campus learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clear Goals and Standard	3.07	0.43	2.96	0.42
Workload	2.64	0.48	2.56	0.47
Good Teaching	3.08	0.46	3.03	0.41
Freedom in Learning	2.79	0.52	2.69	0.48
Openness to Students	3.06	0.49	2.93	0.47

SD = Standard Deviation

Fig. 9.10 Mean scores of the distance learners and the on-campus learners for the five selected scales

The figure shows that the mean scores for Good Teaching were the highest for both groups of learners, followed by mean scores for Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students for both groups of learners. The mean scores for all three scales were fairly close for both groups of learners (all hovering around 3). The next scale for both groups of learners was Freedom in Learning, with much lower mean scores. The scale with the lowest mean scores for both groups was Workload.

A comparison of mean scores of learners of the two different modes using ANOVA revealed that the mean scores of distance learners were significantly higher for Clear Goals and Standard, Freedom in Learning Openness to Students and Workload [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 12.63 (1/693), 6.91 (1/693), 14.21 (1/693), and 5.19 (1/693) respectively].

Discussion of results

Based on the results, it is possible to say that the general trends with regard to perceptions of the English Language Proficiency Course for both groups of learners were very similar. For both groups, Good Teaching was awarded the highest mean scores, followed by Clear Goals and Standard and Openness to Students. The fact that the mean scores of these three scales hovered around 3 is a positive sign as it suggested approval by both groups of learners towards the staff and courses of the English Language Proficiency Department. A lower mean scores for the fourth scale, Freedom in Learning, suggested less satisfaction with regard to this scale. Although the mean scores for Workload were the lowest, it is still not a positive sign as it above 2.5, suggesting that both groups of learners found heavy workload a problem.

The results from the comparison across modes reiterated those obtained from the Item Analysis. They suggested that the distance learners were more confident and had much clearer perceptions of the goals and standard expected of them. Besides, they had more positive attitudes towards the staff and the way the courses were run. They also indicated that they enjoyed more freedom in learning when compared to the on-campus learners. Their major complaint seemed to be the heavy workload which they found a more serious problem than on-campus learners. As discussed earlier, this is expected since most of them are holding full-time jobs. However, it is not possible to reveal the seriousness of this problem through quantitative analysis. More light on this matter will be shed through the interview data which will be discussed in Chapter 10.

9.5.2.3 Analysis of perceptions of courses of learners of different proficiency levels

Presentation of results of distance learners

Fig.9.11 gives the mean scores of the distance learners from the three proficiency levels.

Scale	Lo learners		Av learners		Hi learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clear Goals and Standard	3.09	0.42	3.05	0.44	2.96	0.39
Workload	2.65	0.49	2.65	0.45	2.65	0.54
Good Teaching	3.10	0.49	3.01	0.43	3.09	0.41
Freedom in Learning	2.85	0.51	2.76	0.51	2.72	0.58
Openness to Students	3.09	0.46	3.00	0.53	3.06	0.50

SD = Standard Deviation

Fig. 9.11 Mean scores of the distance learners from the three proficiency levels

The figure shows that the mean scores for the top three scales i.e. Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students were fairly close for all three proficiency levels (all hovering around 3). The next two scales for all three proficiency levels were Freedom in Learning and Workload.

A comparison of mean scores of the distance learners of the three proficiency levels using ANOVA revealed no significant results.

Presentation of results of on-campus learners

Fig. 9.12 gives the mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three proficiency levels.

Scale	Lo learners		Av learners		Hi learners	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clear Goals and Standard	3.06	0.42	2.92	0.40	2.89	0.43
Workload	2.55	0.47	2.62	0.46	2.52	0.48
Good Teaching	3.07	0.44	2.98	0.39	3.04	0.37
Freedom in Learning	2.76	0.42	2.63	0.52	2.67	0.51
Openness to Students	2.93	0.49	2.88	0.46	2.97	0.47

SD = Standard Deviation

Fig. 9.12 Mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three proficiency levels

Similar to distance learners, the mean scores for the top three scales i.e. Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students were also fairly close (all hovering around 3) in the case of the on-campus learners of the three proficiency levels. The next two scales for all three proficiency levels were also Freedom in Learning and Workload.

A comparison of mean scores of on-campus learners across the three proficiency levels using ANOVA revealed significant results for Clear Goals and Standard. The mean score of on-campus learners of Low Proficiency level was significantly higher than that of on-campus learners of Average and High Proficiency levels [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 5.45 (2/256)]

Discussion of results of both distance learners and on-campus learners

The results indicated that the mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners of the three proficiency levels all hovered around the mean scores of 3.0 for Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students. This suggested that both distance learners and on-campus learners, generally expressed approval towards the staff and the courses of the English Proficiency Department. Lower mean scores for the fourth scale, Freedom in Learning, for all three proficiency levels suggested less approval as far as this scale was concerned. The fact that the mean scores for Workload was above 2.5 suggested that it was perceived as a problem by these learners.

The lack of significant results in the comparison across proficiency levels for distance learners suggested that proficiency levels did not influence perceptions of courses as far as distance learners were concerned. However, in the case of the on-campus learners it was found that the mean scores of Low Proficiency on-campus learners was significantly higher than Average Proficiency and High Proficiency on-campus learners for Clear Goals and Standard. This suggested that Low Proficiency on-campus learners had a clearer understanding of what the English Proficiency Department and the staff expected of them. This is not something that is difficult to understand. Since the Low Proficiency level students undertook very structured courses focusing on the learning of specific grammar items, it is not surprising that these learners knew clearly what the expectations were. In the case of higher level

courses, especially the advanced level courses, the goals were not that clear as abilities to think critically and express opinions and views were expected of them. However, I am surprised that this finding was not evident in the case of distance learners. A possibility is that distance learners are mature learners and so thinking critically, expressing opinion and views are less problematic for them.

9.5.2.4 Analysis of perceptions of courses of learners of different disciplines

Presentation of results of distance learners

Fig. 9.13 gives the mean scores of distance learners from the three disciplines.

Scale	SocSc Group		ApplSc Group		BusAdm Group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clear Goals and Standard	3.06	0.43	3.07	0.42	3.08	0.43
Workload	2.62	0.52	2.70	0.48	2.63	0.44
Good Teaching	3.08	0.49	3.15	0.41	3.05	0.46
Freedom in Learning	2.86	0.54	2.77	0.48	2.73	0.53
Openness to Students	3.09	0.51	3.05	0.48	3.05	0.49

SD = Standard Deviation

Fig. 9.13 Mean scores of the distance learners from the three different disciplines

The figure shows that the mean scores for the top three scales i.e. Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students were fairly close for all three disciplines (all hovering around 3). The next two scales for all three disciplines were

Freedom in Learning and Workload. A comparison of mean scores of the distance learners of the three disciplines using ANOVA revealed no significant results.

Presentation of results of on-campus learners

Fig. 9.14 gives the mean scores of the distance learners from the three disciplines.

Scale	SocSc Group		ApplSc Group		BusAdm Group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clear Goals and Standard	2.97	0.44	2.95	0.41	2.96	0.42
Workload	2.48	0.44	2.64	0.49	2.53	0.47
Good Teaching	2.98	0.43	3.05	0.40	3.05	0.40
Freedom in Learning	2.72	0.44	2.65	0.49	2.71	0.49
Openness to Students	2.82	0.53	2.91	0.47	2.99	0.45

SD = Standard Deviation

Fig. 9.14 Mean scores of the on-campus learners from the three different disciplines

Similar to distance learners, the mean scores for the top three scales i.e. Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students were also fairly close (all hovering around 3) in the case of the on-campus learners of the three disciplines. The next two scales for all three disciplines were also Freedom in Learning and Workload.

A comparison of mean scores of on-campus learners across the three disciplines using ANOVA revealed significant results for Openness to Students. The mean score

of on-campus learners from the BusAdm group was significantly higher than that of SocSc group [$p<0.05$; F (df) = 3.28 (2/362)].

Discussion of results of both distance learners and on-campus learners

The results indicated that the mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners of all disciplines all hovered around the mean scores of 3.0 for Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standard, and Openness to Students. This suggested that they generally expressed approval towards the English Proficiency Courses, the staff and courses offered. Lower mean scores for the fourth scale, Freedom in Learning, for all three proficiency levels suggested less approval as far as this scale was concerned. The mean scores of above 2.5 for Workload suggested it was perceived as a problem by these learners.

The lack of significant results in the comparison across disciplines for distance learners suggested that disciplines did not influence perceptions of courses as far as distance learners were concerned. In the case of on-campus learners, it was found that the mean score of the BusAdm group was significantly higher than that of SocSc group. It suggests that the BusAdm group is much more contented with the attitude of the staff than the SocSc group. One possible explanation is that the Social Science group were more used to more open attitudes between staff and students in their respective departments, and hence found the attitudes of the English Proficiency Courses staff more constraining in comparison. However, due to the possibilities of other variables coming into play, it is sufficient to say that, generally, disciplines did not seem to influence perceptions of courses with regard to the distance learners but they did (in certain cases) with regard to the on-campus learners. A factor that may contribute to this is the difference in learning context. On-campus learners, studying in normal circumstances, take English courses as well as their departmental courses in normal classroom settings and under normal departmental contexts (see Entwistle

and Ramsden, 1983). Distance learners, on the other hand, are not confined to such learning environment and this may have freed them from the constraints of the various departments. As a result, their perceptions of courses are not influenced by departmental contexts.

9.5.3 Factor Analysis

9.5.3.1 Introduction

In their studies, Entwistle and Ramsden carried out two types of factor analysis. First they carried out factor analysis of the CPQ scales to identify the factors in this questionnaire. Then they carried out another on the combined scales/ subscales of ASI and the CPQ in an attempt to examine the relationships between students' approaches to studying and the context of learning in academic departments. They were able to identify two factors from the analysis of the CPQ scales. They described the first factor as representing students' evaluation of teaching and courses, and the second as representing differences between subject areas. Good Teaching, Openness to Students and Freedom in Learning loaded on Factor I, and Formal Teaching Methods, Clear Goals and Standard, High Vocational Relevance. On Factor II. In some studies, they also found that good Social Climate also loaded on Factor II. As for Workload, it only loaded negatively and weakly on Factor I.

From the analysis of the combined ASI and CPQ scale/subscales totals, they were able to find the following associations between the two scales:

- the association of the Reproducing Orientation with a heavy Workload (Factor III)
- the association of Disorganised and Dilatory Attitudes with perceived Lack of Clarity in Goals (Factor V)
- the association of the Evaluative Factor with Intrinsic Motivation and Use of Evidence in Learning (Factor IV)
- the association of Formal-Vocational factor with Extrinsic Motivation (Factor II) (see 9.3.1 for more details)

9.5.3.2 Factor Analysis of the NCPQ scales

For this study, I first carried out a factor analysis of the NCPQ scales on the distance learners and the on-campus learners separately to enable a comparison of factors between the two modes of learners. For both sets of factor analyses, principal component factor analyses were performed (with SPSS 9.0 programme) using first varimax ® (orthogonal) rotation with Kaiser normalisation, and then oblimin (oblique) rotation with Kaiser normalisation.

The factor analysis of the NCPQ scales using varimax ® rotation yielded a two-factor solution for both the distance learners and the on-campus learners which accounted for 74.46% of the variance in the case of distance learners, and 66.94% of the variance in the case of on-campus learners. The resulting pattern matrix is presented in Fig. 9.15.

Scale	Factors of Distance learners		Factors of On-campus learners	
	I	II	I	II
Clear Goals and Standard	0.81		0.78	
Workload		1.0		0.98
Good Teaching	0.88		0.85	
Freedom in Learning	0.78		0.70	
Openness to Students	0.88		0.85	
Teaching/Learning Components	0.79		0.67	

Fig 9.15 Factor solutions of the NCPQ scales in the Distance learners and the On-campus learners

The factor solutions from the oblimin rotation were very similar and hence will not be discussed. From the table it can be seen that the factor solutions in both distance learners and on-campus learners were the same. Factor I represented students' evaluation of the teaching and courses, similar to those of Entwistle and Ramsden, except in this case, Clear Goals and Standard, and Teaching and Learning Components (a new scale) also loaded on it. Factor II had only one scale i.e. Workload which appeared to represents students' dissatisfaction with the teaching and courses. The factor solutions identified were not very helpful as they did not enable a better understanding of the associations between the various scales and the various items in the scales In view of that I decided to further carry out a factor analysis of the NCPQ items.

9.5.3.3 Factor Analysis of the NCPQ items

The factor analysis of the NCPQ items using varimax rotation ® rotation yielded a five- factor solution for the distance learners which accounted for 56.32% of the variance and a seven-factor solution for the on-campus learners which accounted for 56.80% of the variance. A careful examination of the factors suggested that the last factor in the case of distance learners and the last three factors in the case of on-campus learners should be eliminated as the scree tests revealed a levelling off with lower components after the fourth factor in both cases. Principal factor analyses using varimax ® rotation were performed again. This time the factors to be extracted were limited to four in both cases. The four-factor solution for distance learners accounted for 52.04% of the variance and the four-factor solution for on-campus learners accounted for 43.14% of the variance. (See Fig.9.16 and 9.17 for % variance accounted for by each factor).

The resulting pattern factor matrix revealed that most of the items that loaded highly on Factor I of the distance learners also loaded highly on Factor II of the on-campus learners for all factors (except for items in the Teaching/Learning components scale) and vice versa. Fig. 9.16 presents a comparison of the items that loaded on these factors except for Teaching/Learning Components as it did not fit into the pattern.

Fig. 9.16 Comparison of the NCPQ items that loaded on Factor I and Factor II of the Distance learners and the On-campus learners

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0.77 Items that have high loadings on Factor I of the distance learners and Factor II of the on-campus learners

0.66 Items that have high loadings on Factor I of the distance learners only

0.88 Items that have high loadings on Factor II of the distance learners and Factor I of the on-campus learners

~~0.33~~ Deletion of weak loadings

	Factor I of Distance learners	Factor II of On-campus learners	Factor II of Distance learners	Factor I of On-campus learners
Percentage of variance accounted for by this factor	**20.97**	**12.46**	**16.68**	**14.73**
Clear Goals and Standard				
3. It's always easy to know the standard of work expected of me.			0.44	0.41
6. I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what's expected of me in this department.	~~0.37~~		0.58	0.72
15. Teachers here usually tell us exactly what we are supposed to be learning.	0.76	~~0.36~~		~~0.32~~
22. Teachers here generally make it clear from the start what will be required of us.	0.75	~~0.32~~		

Good Teaching				
5. The teachers in this department always seem ready to give their help and advice on approaches to studying.	~~0.39~~		0.65	0.64
11. Teachers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching /materials at the right level for us.	0.62	0.58		
18. Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching /materials very thoroughly.	0.67	0.52		
24. Staff here makes a real effort to understand difficulties we may be having with our work.	0.66	0.56		
Freedom in Learning				
4. We seem to be given a lot of choice in the work we have to do.			0.71	0.51
8. This department gives us a chance to use methods of study which suit our own way of learning.	~~0.35~~		0.69	0.54
17. There is a real opportunity in this department for us to choose the particular areas we want to study.	~~0.38~~	~~0.38~~	~~0.36~~	
21. We have a great deal of choice over how we are going to learn in this department.	0.52	0.56	~~0.37~~	

Openness to Students				
1. Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from us for changes to their teaching methods/materials.			0.68	0.61
7. Staff generally consult us before making decisions about how the courses are run.	~~0.38~~		0.73	0.67
12. Most of the teachers here really try hard to get to know us.	0.66	~~0.38~~	~~0.39~~	
19. Teachers in this department generally take our ideas and interests seriously.	0.65	0.67		~~0.32~~

A careful examination of Factor I of the distance learners and Factor II of the on-campus learners revealed that all of the items (except for item no. 21) that loaded highly on both these factors were teacher-**centred.** These factors can be described as representing students' evaluation of the extent the teachers were successful in improving their teaching and the courses. This pattern seemed to be more distinct in distance learners as the percentage of variance accounted for was higher in the distance learners. Besides, Factor I of the distance learners had three additional items (displaying 'teacher-centred characteristics' i.e. items nos. 15, 22 and 12) loading highly on it. In my opinion, it is appropriate to call factors that loaded highly on both these factors as common factor 1: Teacher-centred evaluation of teaching and courses.

On the other hand, all the items (except for item 5) of Factor II of the distance learners and Factor I of the on-campus learners were **learner-centred.** These factors can be described as representing students evaluations of how successful they personally were in adapting to the teaching. It includes students' perceptions of their own independence as learners. I had named these as Common Factor II: Learner-centred evaluation of teaching and courses. These findings are very enlightening as they offer a deeper insight into students' evaluation of teaching and courses. They pointed to the existence of two patterns of evaluations one, focusing on the teacher and the other on the learners. These patterns were present in both the distance learners and on-campus learners. The results further suggested generally that Common Factor I was more distinct in distance learners than in the on-campus learners.

With regard to Factor III and IV, the pattern factor matrix revealed that most of the items that loaded highly on Factor III of the distance learners also loaded highly on Factor IV of the on-campus learners for all factors and vice versa. Fig.9.17 presents the items that loaded on these factors.

Items	Factor III of Distance learners	Factor IV of On-campus learners	Factor IV of Distance learners	Factor III of On-campus learners
Percentage of variance accounted for by this factor	**8.22**	**7.96**	**6.17**	**7.99**
Workload				
2. There's a lot of pressure on me as a student.	0.58	0.34	0.48	0.38
9. The workload is too heavy.	0.74	0.72		
14. There's so much written work to do it's very difficult for me to get down to independent reading.	0.75	0.77		
23. It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover too many topics.	0.54	0.56		
Teaching /learning Components				
10. The teaching/learning components offered by this department are sufficient for my purpose.			-0.48	
16. A greater variety of teaching /learning components should be provided.			0.71	0.76
20. The teaching/learning components are very helpful.				0.68

0.56 Items that have high loadings on Factor III of distance learners and Factor IV of on-campus learners

0.76 Items that have high loadings on Factor IV of distance learners and Factor III of on-campus learners

Fig. 9.17 Comparison of the NCPQ items that loaded on Factor III and IV of the distance learners and on-campus learners

Factor III of the distance learners and Factor IV of the on-campus learners can be described as representing students' dissatisfaction with the teaching and courses. As for Factor IV of the distance learners and Factor III of the on-campus learners, they seem to represent a desire for more teaching/learning components. There also seems to be an association of pressure/anxiety (item 2) with a desire for teaching/learning components. However, since these factors accounted for only small percentages of the variance, they are patterns evident only in a small proportion of learners and thus unimportant factors.

On discovering common Factor I and common Factor II, I decided to probe deeper by carrying out mean scores comparison between modes of the items in these two factors. (See Fig.9.18 for coherent lists of the items that loaded 0.4 or higher on these factors).

	Common Factor I		Common Factor II	
	Distance learners	On-campus learners	Distance learners	On-campus learners
Good Teaching				
21. Teachers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching /materials at the right level for us.	0.62	0.58		
18. Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching /materials very thoroughly.	0.67	0.52		
24. Staff here make a real effort to understand difficulties we may be having with our work.	0.66	0.56		
Openness to Students				
19. Teachers in this department generally take our ideas and interests seriously.	0.65	0.67		

Clear Goals and Standard				
3. It's always easy to know the standard of work expected of me.			0.44	0.41
6. I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what's expected of me in this department.			0.58	0.72
Freedom in Learning				
4. We seem to be given a lot of choice in the work we have to do.			0.71	0.51
8. This department gives us a chance to use methods of study which suit our own way of learning.			0.69	0.54
Openness to Students				
1. Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from us for changes to their teaching methods/materials.			0.68	0.61
7. Staff generally consult us before making decisions about how the courses are run.			0.73	0.67

Fig.9.18 Coherent and significant loadings of Common Factor I and Common Factor II

Before carrying out the mean scores comparison, I carried out an analysis of the reliability of the classification of the items in these two factors. It was revealed that the Cronbach α reliability coefficient was 0.71 for Common Factor I and 0.75 for Common Factor II suggesting reliability in their classification. This further encourages me to carry out the mean scores comparison. Fig.9.19 presents a comparison of mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners for Common Factor I and Common Factor II.

Scale	Mean scores		Standard Deviation		F(df)
	Distance learners	On-campus learners	Distance learners	On-campus learners	
Common Factor I	3.01	2.96	0.49	0.42	1.91(1/693)
Common Factor II	2.97	2.81	0.47	0.46	22.04(1/693)**

*p<0.05

**p<0.001

Fig. 9.19 Comparison of mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners for Common Factor I and Common Factor II

The figure shows that the mean scores for Common Factor I is higher for both distance learners and on-campus learners than the mean scores for Common Factor II suggesting that in their evaluations of teaching and courses generally they gave higher scores to the teacher-centred items than learner-centred items. This seems to indicate that the learners have a higher opinion of the teachers' capabilities in teaching and preparing courses than in their own abilities in coping with the courses.

A comparison of mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners for each factor revealed significant result for Common Factor II. The mean score of distance learners for Common Factor II was significantly higher that of on-campus learners. This suggests that generally distance learners gave higher scores to learner-centred items than on-campus learners. This suggests that the distance learners are more confident in their own abilities to cope with the courses than on-campus learners.

9.5.3.4 Factor Analysis of the combined ASI scales/subscales and the NCPQ scales

The factor analysis of the ASI and the NCPQ scales using the varimax rotation yielded a four-factor solution for the distance learners and a five- factor solution for the on-campus learners. The four-factor solution for distance learners accounted for 58.56% of the variance. and the five-factor solution for on-campus learners accounted for 57.70% of the variance. A thorough examination of the factors suggested that the last factor in the case of on-campus learners should be eliminated as the scree test revealed a levelling off with lower components after the fourth factor. Principal components analysis was performed again using varimax ® rotation but this time the factors were limited to four in both cases. The new four-factor solutions in the case of on-campus learners accounted for 52.93% of the variance. Fig. 9.20 presents the resulting pattern matrix including the variance accounted for by each factor.

Scale/subscales	Factors of Distance learners				Factors of On-campus learners			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
Percentage of variance accounted for by each factor	**23.64**	**16.30**	**10.53**	**8.09**	**20.42**	**14.40**	**12.18**	**5.93**
Deep Approach								
1. Looking for meaning	0.74				0.74			
2. Active interest/critical stance	0.67				0.40			0.57
3. Relating and organising ideas	0.66	0.32			0.60	0.34		
4. Use evidence and logic	0.80				0.71			

Surface Approach								
1. Relying on memorising	0.47		0.39		0.31		0.54	
2. Difficulty in making sense			0.37	0.67			0.63	
3. Unrelatedness			0.64				0.78	
4. Concern about coping			0.77				0.66	
Strategic Approach								
1. Determination to excel	0.72				0.73			
2. Effort in studying	0.81				0.77			0.38
3. Organised studying	0.69				0.60			0.72
4. Time management	0.64				0.61			0.70
Lack Of Direction				0.66	-0.34		0.35	0.56
Extrinsic Motivation				0.65			0.44	0.50
Academic Self-confidence	0.54		-0.45	0.35	0.55			0.34
Syllabus-boundedness	0.44		0.47		0.41		0.48	
Clear Goals and Standard	0.36	0.73			0.43	0.66		
Workload			0.61				0.51	
Good Teaching		0.87				0.86		
Freedom in Learning		0.80				0.67		
Openness to Students		0.86				0.86		
Teaching/Learning Components		0.73				0.59		

Fig.9.20 Factor solutions of the combined ASI and NCPQ scales in Distance Learners and On-campus learners

The factor solutions from the oblimin rotation was also very similar and hence will not be discussed. It is possible to make the following associations between the combined ASI and NCPQ scales/subscales:

- **The association of Clear Goals and Standard with positive approaches to studying**

  Clear Goals and Standard were associated with Deep Approach, Strategic Approach and Academic Self-confidence in Factor I of distance learners and with Deep Approach, Strategic Approach, Academic Self-confidence and no problem with Lack of Direction in Factor I of on-campus learners (shaded 0.36 in Fig.9.20).

- **The association of positive evaluation of teaching and courses with a positive approach to studying**

  Positive evaluation of teaching and courses were associated with Relating and Organising Ideas in Factor II of distance learners and Factor II of on-campus learners (shaded 0.51 in Fig. 9.20)

- **The association of negative approaches to studying with heavy Workload**

  Surface Approach, and Lack of Academic Self-confidence in Factor III of distance learners and Surface Approach and Lack of Direction in Factor III of on-campus learners were associated with a heavy Workload (shaded 0.70 in Fig. 9.20)

The association of Clear Goals and Standard with ambivalent approaches to studying

Clear Goals and Standard was associated with Relying on Memorising and Syllabus-boundedness in Factor I of distance learners and Factor I of on-campus learners.

- **The association of heavy Workload with ambivalent approaches to studying** Heavy Workload was associated with Syllabus-boundedness in Factor III of the distance learners and with Extrinsic Motivation and Syllabus-boundedness in Factor III of the on-campus learners.

The basic pattern that can be observed from the associations bears some striking resemblance to that of Entwistle and Ramsden. There is evidence of some positive approaches to studying being associated with some positive evaluations of teaching and courses and some negative approaches to studying being associated with some negative evaluations of teaching and courses. From these findings it is possible to deduce that learners' approaches to studying affect their perceptions of the teaching and learning of not only content courses but also language courses. This pattern is evident not only on-campus learners but also distance learners. In fact the associations are almost identical in both groups of learners except for some minor differences.

As for the differences, as far as I can see the only difference worth considering is the association of heavy Workload with Extrinsic Motivation in on-campus learners and not in distance learners. As discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, literature has revealed that it is incorrect to view Extrinsic Motivation solely in a negative light (Kembar, 2000). However, it is I think reasonable to assume that Extrinsic Motivation is negative in this instance, since it is associated with heavy Workload. I believe the same rationale can be applied to the other two ambivalent approaches to studying i.e. Relying on Memorising and Syllabus-bounded. It should be considered positive when it is associated with positive evaluation of teaching and courses and negative when associated with negative evaluation of teaching and courses. Thus, Relying on Memorising and Syllabus-boundedness should be considered positive when associated with Clear Goals and Standard and Syllabus-boundedness should be considered negative when associated with Workload. The discovery of the association of positive and negative evaluations of teaching and courses with Relying

on Memorising, Syllabus-boundedness and Extrinsic Motivation further strengthened the belief that these approaches are ambivalent in nature.

9.5.4 Summary of results obtained from analyses of the NCPQs

The results indicated a general trend with regard to perceptions of English Proficiency Courses. Generally, both the distance learners and the on-campus learners showed approval towards the staff and courses of the English Proficiency Department, appeared less satisfied with the degree of freedom given and perceived heavy workload as a problem. This pattern was evident in all cases, despite differences in modes, proficiency levels and disciplines.

The results from the comparison across modes reiterated those obtained from the item analysis. They suggested that distance learners on the whole were more confident, had much clearer perceptions of the goals and standard expected of them, and had more positive attitudes of the staff and courses of the EPD than on-campus learners. They also indicated that they enjoyed more freedom in learning and were able to utilise the teaching materials to a greater extent than on-campus learners. Since they are distance learners it is not surprising that they are more dependent on the teaching materials provided. Besides, the finding suggested that they had more problem with heavy workload than on-campus learners. I attribute this to the fact that they are adult learners with full-time jobs.

The results obtained from comparison of mean scores across proficiency levels suggested that proficiency levels seemed not to influence distance learners' perceptions of courses. However, this was not in the case with the on-campus. It appeared that the Low Proficiency on-campus learners had a clearer understanding of what the English Proficiency Department and the staff expected of them than the other proficiency levels. This is possibly due to the structured nature of the courses

they are taking, unlike the more advance courses which require more advanced skills like critical thinking. The reason why this finding is not evident in distance learners may be because the distance learners are mature learners and can think more critically and are able to expressing their opinion and views better in advance level courses.

Similarly, the results obtained from the comparison of mean scores across disciplines for distance learners were not significant. This suggested the lack of influence of disciplines on perceptions of courses. However, in the case of on-campus learners, it appeared that the BusAdm group was much more contented with the attitude of the staff than the SocSc group. One possible explanation is that the SocSc group found the attitudes of the English Proficiency Courses staff more constraining because they were use to more open attitudes in their respective departments in comparison. However, due to the possibilities of other variables coming into play, it is sufficient to say that generally, disciplines seemed not to influence distance learners' perceptions of courses but they did (in certain cases) with regard to on-campus learners. A contributory factor may be the difference in learning context.

Factor analysis of the NCPQ items was able to identified two distinctive factors in the distance learners and the on-campus learners: (a) Common Factor I: Teacher-centred evaluation of teaching and courses which represents students' evaluations of how successful the teachers are in improving their teaching and the courses and (b) Common Factor II: Student-centred evaluation of teaching and courses which represents students evaluations of how successful they are in adapting to the teaching including their perceptions of their own independence as learners. These patterns seemed more distinct in distance learners. Two other factors identified in both groups of learners were: students' dissatisfaction with the teaching and courses, and students under pressure desiring more teaching/learning components. These two factors were less important as they accounted for only small percentages of the variance.

A comparison of mean scores of distance learners and on-campus learners suggested that learners had a higher opinion of their teachers' capabilities in teaching and preparing courses than in their own abilities in coping with the courses. Besides, they suggested that distance learners were more confident of their own abilities to cope with the courses than on-campus learners. These findings support those of the item analysis and scale analysis.

Through a factor analysis of the combined ASI scales/subscales and the NCPQ scales, a basic pattern associating positive approaches to studying with positive evaluations of teaching and courses and negative approaches with negative evaluations was discovered. This suggested that learning approaches to studying in general affected learners' perceptions of the teaching and learning of not only content courses but also language courses. This pattern was found in both the distance learners and the on-campus learners suggesting that this pattern was not unduly influenced by mode of learning.

The discovery of the associations of Relying on Memorising, Syllabus-boundedness and Extrinsic Motivation with positive and negative evaluations of teaching and courses further strengthened the belief that these approaches were ambivalent in nature. Thus, it would be reasonable to consider Relying on Memorising and Syllabus-boundedness as positive when associated with Clear Goals and Standard, and Syllabus-boundedness and Extrinsic Motivation as negative when associated with Workload.

These findings are enlightening and have serious implications to the teaching and learning of English in an L2 distance learning context. However, the implications of these findings cannot be discussed without considering the findings of the

interviews. Thus, it is more appropriate to discuss them at the end of the next chapter, together with the implications of the findings of the interviews.

CHAPTER 10

Study Three

Perceptions of English Proficiency Courses: Focusing on the interviews

10.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the results of the NCPQ were analysed and discussed. In this chapter, I will discuss the results of the interviews. The data from the interviews will be explored in two ways. First, I will use the results obtained from the analyses of the NCPQs to derive themes that act as the framework to examine the interviews. It is necessary to point out here that it is not possible to map out the actual questions asked onto these themes, as the interview guide was designed before the analysis of the NCPQ data. Thus, what I intend to do, is to examine the data of the interviews in detail to look for evidence to enhance the data from the NCPQ. Second, the interviews will be explored for further themes that will enable me to gain a deeper insight into the interviewees' beliefs about the learning of English. The interviewees were all distance learners, thus, no comparisons between modes will be involved.

The chapter will begin with a description of the research design and then proceed to an analysis of the results in the above-mentioned manner. Finally, the chapter will

discuss the implication of the findings of the NCPQ and the interviews to the teaching and learning of English as L2.

10.2 Research design

10.2.1 Research Instrument

According to Patton (1987), there are three basic approaches to collecting qualitative data through in-depth, open-ended interviews. The three approaches involve different types of preparation, conceptualization, and instrumentation. Each approach has strengths and weaknesses and each serves a somewhat different purpose. The three choices are: (1) the informal conversational interview; (2) the general interview guide approach; and (3) the standardized open-ended interview. The difference among these three approaches is the extent to which interview questions are determined, and standardised before the interview occurs.

In this study I decided to use the general interview guide approach. I was not in favour of the informal interview, as it relies too much on 'spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction' (Patton, 1987:110), and does not allow the interviewer the opportunity to consistently ask specific questions. The standardised open-ended interview, on the other hand, is too rigid as it does not allow any free interaction as indicated below:

> It consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged for the purpose of taking each respondent through the same sequence, and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words.
>
> Patton (1987:112)

Hence, an interview guide with a list of questions or issues to be explored in the course of interview would be most suitable. This would ensure that each participant would have the opportunity to give his/her opinions on issues delineated by the interviewer. It would further serve as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered. It would also help the interviewer to plan ahead on how best to utilise the limited time available in an interview situation. In a nutshell, it would keep an interaction focused, and at the same time allow individual perspectives and experience to emerge.

My interview guide was designed to get feedback from the Distance Learners on the English Proficiency Courses they were taking. It was divided into the following seven sections:

Section I: Opening Questions

Section II: Introductory Questions

Section III: Transition Questions

Section IV: Key Questions

Section V: Ending Questions

Section I and II were the 'warming-up' section designed to put the interviewees at ease. Section III, consisted of general questions related to the programme designed to lead the interviewees to the key questions in Section IV. There were altogether four key questions. The first three questions focused on the following three main aspects of the programmes:

Administration/running of the course

Support system provided to the Distance Learners

Distance Learners' personal needs

The fourth question was an 'open question'. Interviewees were asked to suggest issues related to the programme that they felt should be discussed. For each key question, some follow-up questions were offered. These questions would only be brought up if the interviewees failed to cover a particular area, or to clarify certain points brought up by them. Section V comprised only one question designed to 'round up' the discussion by asking the interviewees to suggest which issue they considered to be most in need of attention. For more details refer to Appendix 10A for the Interview Guide.

10.2.2 Sample population

The individual interviews were conducted with 13 second-year distance learning students from UKM. All of them had completed one English Proficiency Course. I decided to interview only distance learners because the focus of this thesis is on the learning needs of the distance learners. Besides, I felt that sufficient comparisons had been made through the NCPQs, and what was required at this stage was more evidence to support what had been discovered about the distance learners and not more comparisons. A more pragmatic reason was that the interviews involved only a small number of students, insufficient for any reliable comparisons. The interviewees were all from Klang Valley (i.e., Kuala Lumpur and surrounding areas), thus, they cannot be considered to be representatives of all distance learners, but rather representatives of distance learners from the urban areas.

The interviews were conducted a few weeks after they had completed their final examination for the second semester of their second year. The students were selected at random. Fig.10.1 presents a breakdown of the distance learners who took part in the individual interviews. Some background information on the students is also provided.

Student	Gender	Profession	Proficiency level	Discipline	Type of English Course taken
A	Female	teacher	Low	SocSc	VG 1023
B	Female	teacher		SocSc	
C	Male	teacher		ApplSc	
D	Female	bank clerk		BusAdm	
E	Male	teacher	Average	SocSc	VG1033
F	Male	teacher		SocSc	
G	Male	teacher		ApplSc	
H	Female	teacher		BusAdm	
I	Female	teacher		BusAdm	
J	Male	teacher	High	SocSc	VG 2003 or VG 2013 or VG 2023
K	Male	teacher		ApplSc	
L	Female	teacher		BusAdm	
M	Female	finance clerk		BusAdm	

SocSc = Social Science
ApplSc = Applied Science
BusAdm = Business Administration

Fig. 10.1 Breakdown of the distance learners who took part in the individual interviews.

10.2.3 Research Procedures

The interviews were conducted over a period of one month. Distance learners that met the criteria were randomly phoned to inquire whether they would be willing to participate in the interviews. Appointments were made with those who were willing. Most of the interviews were conducted in the interviewees' place of work. The interviews took about one to one-and-a half hours. The questions were asked in English, but students were allowed to respond in either English or Malay. Most of the Low Proficiency students switched from English to Malay frequently. They normally switched to Malay to illustrate a point, or to elaborate an issue. Average Proficiency students tended to use English, but occasionally reverted to Malay, except for one student who used only Malay. High Proficiency learners used only English. The interviews were recorded on tapes, transcribed verbatim, and analysed.

10.3 Analysis of the interviews

10.3.1 Analysis of interviews according to themes

As mentioned earlier, the results obtained from the analyses of the NCPQs were used to derive themes that would act as the framework to examine the interviews. The common themes are listed in Fig.10.2.

No.	Theme
1	Distance learners indicated approval of the staff and courses of the English Proficiency Department.
2	Distance learners enjoyed the freedom given in the learning of English.
3	Heavy workload was a serious problem with distance learners.
4	Distance learners were confident and had a clear perceptions of the goals and standard expected of them.
5	They depended to a large extent on the teaching materials.
6	Proficiency levels did not influence their perceptions of courses.
7	Disciplines did not influence their perceptions of courses.
8	Distance learners had a higher opinion of their teachers' capabilities in meeting their needs than in their own abilities in coping with the courses.
9	Distance learners' approaches to studying in general affected their perceptions of the teaching and learning of learning English as L2.
10	Relying on memorising, Syllabus-boundedness, and Extrinsic Motivation were associated with positive and negative evaluations of teaching and courses.

Fig. 10.2 Common themes identified from the analyses of the NCPQs

Theme 1

Distance learners indicated approval of the staff and courses of the English Proficiency Department.

The interview results supported this theme. They revealed that a majority of the interviewees had a favourable opinion of their English Language instructors, in spite of the fact that they only had two tutorial sessions per semester, once towards the fifth week of the semester and another towards the tenth week. Each tutorial session was from 8 am to 6pm (with a lunch break of two hours from 12pm to 2pm). The analysis of the responses of the thirteen interviewees revealed that eight of them spoke enthusiastically of their English Language instructors (whom they frequently referred to as 'lecturers'):

> Lecturers' English very good. They come on time. There is a support system. Two assignments, one writing task and one project. Lecturer gives back the next writing task the next meeting. We know our mistakes we can improve our English.
>
> (Student B: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> Our English teacher very good. She encourages us to speak to our friends in English. Style of teaching also very good. Can provide good climate for teaching.
>
> (Student C: Male, Low Proficiency, ApplSc)

One praised the friendly environment as well:

> Interesting. It helps us. A friendly type of environment. Not so serious. Not formal. Unlike other courses (in other departments). We feel like enjoying ourselves.
>
> (Student E: Male, Average Proficiency, SocSc)

As for the other five students, Student G (Female, Average Proficiency, BusAdm) was fairly satisfied. Her only complaint was that her English instructor did not provide her with sufficient guidelines and instructions. Student H (Female, Average Proficiency, BusAdm) was unhappy that the "lecturers do not teach them the basics", but admitted that "with such a short time also cannot teach much". Two were non-committal. Only one student was exceptionally negative about the staff. He complained that, "Instructors not good. All this year no good instructors. We learn all by ourselves". (Student F: Male, Average Proficiency, ApplSc). But he acknowledged he did get some help from them.

With regard to the courses offered by the English Proficiency Department, all except one interviewee appeared quite satisfied with the courses in general, considering them to be useful and beneficial, but were unhappy with the modules in their study guides. (See Appendix 10B for a sample lesson from a Study Guide). Only two students found the modules useful. Student C (Male, Low Proficiency, ApplSc), because "the modules are according to skills", and Student J (Male, High Proficiency, ApplSc), because the module for Writing Skills "prepares a person to start in the future to write thesis, footnotes etc". The rest of the students complained about the modules, not because they found the materials irrelevant for improving their English, but because they were too busy and did not have time to go through the thick modules, and because what they studied from the modules were not directly related to the examinations:

> Modules? I never use – useless. Nothing I can get. During exams – *tak ada kaitan* dengan (no connections with) modules. Only *buku teks ada kaitan* (the textbooks have connections). We don't have time to refer modules, better to refer to textbook. Most of my friends say you *bagi us modules lebih baik beli us textbooks* (give us modules you better buy the textbooks for us).
>
> (Student A: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> (Modules for English) too thick. Actually lecturer also only use Headway. I listen to tips from lecturers, study this study that. *Kita belajar untuk peperiksaan* (We study for exams). Not enough time.
>
> (Student B: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> Psychology and communication questions based on modules. English modules only to brush up English okay-lah.
>
> (Student E: Male, Average Proficiency, SocSc)

> Modules? Lecturers should consult students in writing modules. Modules should be combined with textbooks. No time to refer to the modules. Only go to textbooks, during last week before the exams.
>
> (Student I: Male, High Proficiency, SocSc)

> Modules useless. Because I don't like the presentation. I prefer the coursebook 'Headway'. I go straight to Headway, grammar book and check computer. I made my own notes. I only study for exams. maybe that is the weakness of the Malaysian Education System.
>
> (Student F: Male, Average Proficiency, ApplSc)

However, all the students used the modules of their departmental courses which comprised mainly content courses diligently. They found these modules useful as examination questions were based on them, unlike English, where examinations were based on the format of the Course textbook.

Theme 2

Distance learners enjoyed the freedom given in the learning of English.

This theme was not that evident in the interviews. Although all interviewees expressed satisfaction in being given an opportunity to study through the distance learning mode, none of them explicitly mentioned that they enjoyed learning English through this mode. In fact, only three students stated that enough guidance had been given. The rest requested for more support or guidance, in one form or another.

Seven explicitly asked for more tutorials. The three who did not want more tutorials admitted that tutorials were beneficial, but said they had no time to attend and asked for alternatives forms of guidance, such as more project work and more teacher-marked assignments. Two students even wanted easier access to the instructors. Another two went so far as to suggest that intensive courses, instead of the present English Proficiency Courses, be offered.

Theme 3

Heavy workload was a serious problem with distance learners.

Only Student I (Male, High Proficiency, SocSc) specifically complained about being given too many assignments. The recurring complaint in all the interviews was a lack of time to study and to practise English. None appeared to follow the guidelines given by the English Proficiency Department with regard to the number of hours they should spend on each unit (see Appendix 10C for a sample of this type of guideline) Instead, all students, except one, studied English at the last minute (i.e., close to the examination period). As for their departmental courses, ten out of thirteen of them mainly studied at the last minute, but the rest of them did prepare notes on a regular basis, which none of them did for English. Heavy workload, as seen from these interviewees' perspectives, seemed to refer not only to coursework, but to encompass work, and family commitments and responsibilities, resulting in many of them studying at the last minute, as seen in the examples below:

> Quite difficult when we want to ulangkaji (revise) pelajaran (coursework). As a teacher, housewife, kadang-kadang mesti pileh masa sesuai untuk belajar (Sometimes must choose an appropriate time to study). Bukan (Not) everyday I can take a book and read.
>
> (Student B, Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> I have a husband, two children working also. So many things I have to do at the same time, especially if we have an exam. So difficult. At home I cannot study. Only at exam time-lah. Even I cannot hold a book. My children one and a half years old and two and a half years old. Also always quarrelling.
>
> (Student D, Female, Low Proficiency, BusAdm)

Three, however, admitted that as teachers they were better of than those working in the private sector as they only work half a day. Besides, they did not work on Saturdays and Sundays, and had long school holidays.

Theme 4

Distance learners were confident and have a clear perception of the goals and standard expected of them.

Nine interviewees expressed desire for more tutorials and other means of support as indicated in the examples that follows. All these were students of Average Proficiency or Low Proficiency except for one. They did not appear very confident as far as learning of English was concerned. They expressed no clear perceptions of goals and standard expected of them. They also felt that their English had not improved much. Among these students, one was from the High Proficiency level group. The other three students from the High Proficiency level group appeared more confident and seemed to have a better idea of what was expected of them. The remaining student, Student D (of Low Proficiency level group), had no complaints because she was taking a course that was too easy for her. She admitted that she deliberately under-performed for the English Proficiency Exam, so that she could be placed at a much easier level.

> English courses useful but English has not improved after following the courses because lectures only twice per semester.....
>
> (Student A, Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

English interesting, tak cukup masa (not enough time). Kita ambil tutorial satu kali mid-sem dan satu kali akhir (We take tutorial once, during mid-semester and once, end of semester).....

I think it is beneficial. Helpful. Improve my English a bit.....

For 1013 and 1023, I learned what I already know. 1033, I learn more.

(Student B, Female, Low Proficiency, ApplSc)

I think I start at what level. I still in that level. If you have time you can improve yourself. But I have not studied so I think my level is the same.

Tutorials? The lecturers do not teach us the basics. But with such a short time also cannot teach much. Must have more tutorials.

(Student H, Female, Average Proficiency, BusAdm)

Not enough time. Too many tasks to finish in one meeting. Some tutors do not give enough guidelines. No clear instructions.

Help me to brush up my English but better to apply for one year intensive course.

(Student I, Male, Average Proficiency, SocSc)

The English course is very ideal but I don't have time to study. We have to use it but I don't have time.

We should get more tutorials. Intensive course in the summer break is the best because the semester break is too long. Nothing to do. All Sundays during Semester break should be English.

My English is not good and cannot improve in a short time. But every semester our English programme is more difficult and if we have to improve to that level. Very difficult.

(Student K, Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

Theme 5

They depended to a large extent on the teaching materials.

This interview data clearly supported this theme. However, the interviewees relied not so much on the modules, but on the textbooks. They hardly referred to materials outside the textbooks. The main reason for this was because they perceived the modules as being 'useless', as they were not directly related to the examinations.

All students indicated some awareness of the usefulness of involvement in activities, such as reading English newspapers and magazines, watching English programmes on television, listening to the radio and English tapes to improve their English, but complained that they did not have the time to do so. As one student put it:

> No time to refer to modules. Only go to the textbook during last week before exams. Audio-visual aids useful but should be given in classes. No time to do it at home.....
>
> Sometimes, read newspapers to improve vocabulary .....
>
> Maybe, some students like me have no time to listen to radio .....
>
> (Student I: Male, High Proficiency, SocSc)

Themes 6 and 7

Proficiency levels did not influence their perceptions of courses.
Disciplines did not influence their perceptions of courses.

The interview data did not entirely support these themes. The data suggested that interviewees who were confident and more proficient had a better opinion of the English Proficiency Courses. Student E (Male, Average Proficiency, SocSc), a

confident student and relatively fluent in English who majored in TESL in a Teachers' Training College, expressed enjoyment of the English courses, and felt that they helped him remember what he learnt in college. Student J (Male, High Proficiency, ApplSc), a confident and highly proficient student, felt that some of the courses were too easy for him, but enjoyed the Writing Skill Course which the other less proficient students found very difficult:

> To me the most useful part is 'Writing Skill Part II'. It prepares a person to start in the future to write thesis footnotes etc. Most challenging.
>
> It does not have an exam but I think it is tougher. Exam easier. One shot I can get through. This one you don't study but lots of work – a lot of photostating, a lot of support materials.
>
> (Student J: Male, High Proficiency, ApplSc)

Student L (Female, High Proficiency, BusAdm), also highly confident and proficient in English had nothing but good things to say regarding the English Proficiency Courses, and even asked for debates, dramas and poetry-reading. Only one student i.e., Student K (Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm) found the High Proficiency course, he was taking, tough.

Thus, it was evident from the data that proficiency levels did play a part in determining perceptions of courses. As for disciplines, there was no evidence to suggest that they influenced perceptions of English Proficiency Courses. I was expecting BusAdm students to be more aware of the need to improve their English in order to make themselves more 'marketable', but there was no evidence of this. Maybe, this was not a major concern, since most of them were already in rather stable occupations.

Theme 8

Distance learners had a higher opinion of their teachers' capabilities in meeting their needs than in their own independence and their own abilities in coping with the courses.

The results supported this theme. Eight interviewees explicitly stated that they needed more teacher's guidance and support, in forms such as tutorials and teacher-marked assignments, to help them improve their English. One student (i.e., Student K) even wanted tutorials during the semester break. The results here clearly indicated a lack of autonomy among these students as they expected someone to take charge of their learning.

> *Tanpa* (without) guidance, *kita tidak boleh cope dengan* (we cannot cope with) higher level.....
>
> (With teacher-marked assignments), we know our mistakes. We can improve our English.
>
> (Student B, Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> Time is not enough. Need more tutorials. Tutors should provide more opportunities for us to speak. I am not fluent. Need more oral activities....
>
> (Student C, Male, Low Proficiency, ApplSc)

> We want to improve our English. We should get more tutorials classes. Intensive courses in the month of semester break. Because semester break is too long. Nothing to do. All Sundays or two weeks once during semester break should be English.
>
> (Student K, Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> Two tutorials not enough, maybe three or four. Have more discussion. Mostly discussions. Oral activities among ourselves. Tutorials should focus on the exams.
>
> (Student L, Female, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

Three others did not want more tutorials, not because they felt that they would not be useful, but because they would not have the time to attend them. Two others (of High Proficiency level) felt that two were enough for them but felt that there should be more for students of Lower Proficiency levels.

Theme 9

Distance learners' approaches to studying affected their perceptions of the teaching and learning of learning English as L2.

The associations between approaches to studying and perceptions of courses could not be determined from the interviews as the questions were not designed for this purpose. However, what was repeatedly revealed from the interviews was that most interviewees indulged in ineffective study practices in learning/studying English, notwithstanding whether they had positive, or negative perceptions of the English Proficiency Courses. This resulted in them being 'unsuccessful' language learners. They attributed this to a 'lack of time', but in reality, they appeared to display also a lack of awareness about language learning and the language learning processes, and an unwillingness to take charge of their own learning. This will be discussed in greater depth in section 10.3.2.

Theme 10

Relying on memorising, Syllabus-boundedness, and Extrinsic Motivation were associated with positive and negative evaluations of teaching and courses.

There was insufficient evidence to support or contradict **Theme 10.** However, the interviews data did provide us some insights regarding Memorising, Syllabus-boundedness, and Extrinsic Motivation. Since most of the interviewees were studying last minute it was reasonable to assume that, to a large extent, they were depending on memorisation, like this student:

> Akhir, I think, pada saya, saya mudah ingat last minute. Kalau buat revision awal-awal lupa. Dulu saya buat nota-nota tetapi semester dulu saya target dua minggu sebelum exam, saya study hard, very hard sampai dua pagi. Saya boleh recall balik. Inggeris belajar sambil belajar lain. Bila saya boring apabila saya belajar psikologi saya buat Inggeris.
>
> **Translation**
>
> At the end. I think I can remember better last minute. If I carry our my revision earlier, I cannot remember. I used to make notes but last semester I gave myself a target. Two weeks before the examination, I studied very hard, until two o'clock in the morning. I can recall back. I study English while studying other subjects. When I am bored of studying psychology, I study English.
>
> (Student B: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

Besides studying English last minute, she mentioned that she did some exercises and occasionally read the New Straits Times. She complained that her English had not improved at all. Not surprising, since she put so little effort into learning the language. The same seemed to apply to the other interviewees as well. The analysis of approaches to studying through the NASI suggested the association of Memorisation to Deep approach, and Strategic approach, but this was not evident in

the interviews. As mentioned earlier the interview questions were not designed to investigate approaches to studying, so it is not surprising that the data did not divulge any such information.

Syllabus-boundedness could be inferred from the interview data. An indication of this was the interviewees' zealous attempts to look for tips from lecturers and English Language instructors with regard to what they should study. This seemed to be the result of the 'lack of time' phenomenon. This suggested that Syllabus-boundedness, in this case, was negative as the interviewees were not learning beyond what was absolutely necessary.

The data revealed that all the interviewees were motivated by extrinsic factors to further their studies. The factors include:

> All my family members are graduate that is why I want to upgrade myself. I try to apply to go to University but I couldn't get a place.
>
> (Student H: Female, Average Proficiency, BusAdm)

> Further my studies, to upgrade myself, find a better job.
>
> (Student L: Female, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> Salary low, cost of living in KL (Kuala Lumpur) high. I need a higher salary. The only way is to get a degree.
>
> (Student F: Male, Average Proficiency, ApplSc)

With regard to the learning of English, it was compulsory for the students to sit and pass twelve units of it. English was also included in the PNGK (Purata Nilai Gred Kumulatif)(Cumulative Grade Point Average). This determines whether a student gets a first class, second class [upper/lower] or a third class degree). This means that a student's scores in English would affect their overall PNGK. Thus, there was an extrinsic factor motivating them to perform well in English. Besides, all students

interviewed realised the importance of English and felt that the university should continue to offer the English Proficiency Courses. Higher proficiency students wanted more courses.

> Yes, it is the second language in Malaysia. We see those in Standard 6, their standard is so poor. (Student E: Average Proficiency, SocSc)

> Important to have English, International Language.
>
> I would like more English courses but how can we manage? because we have other things to study. (Student L: High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> Should offer English because Malaysians English not very good. Opportunity to learn, but should give more suitable time. (Student K: High Proficiency, ApplSc)

> Yes, I am dealing with vendors in Sony so I need to be good in English. maybe one of these days I want to major in English.
>
> I think it is a good idea to have more courses. Why not have Sijil (Certificate) in Public Speaking/Effective Communication. (Student M: High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> More courses? Yes, because English is very important. Quality of English is very poor. Need to improve English.
>
> We must make English compulsory in School like last time. (Student I: High Proficiency, BusAdm)

Eleven out of the thirteen students felt that it should be included in the PNGK. Some of their responses are as follows:

> If you don't nobody will do well. (Student F: Average Proficiency, SocSc)

> Then nobody will study it. (Student L: High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> I think so it will help to improve others English. If not they won't bother to study. (Student E: Average Proficiency, SocSc)

> Yes, should be in PNGK. Help me improve my grades. (Student B: Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> Credits? Yes, if not students will not be interested to study English. I also will not be interested. (Student I: High Proficiency, SocSc)

> Yes, I am good in English. It benefits me. (Student J: High Proficiency)

Only one student felt strongly that it should not be included in the PNGK as it would affect her grades negatively (Student A: Low Proficiency). And only one student felt that it was unimportant whether it was included or not:

> More courses, even though I have to spend more time. Grades optional. Only want opportunity to improve.
>
> (Student C: Low Proficiency, ApplSc -- the only student who studied consistently)

The unexpected thing was that although all the students were extrinsically-motivated to learn English, none of them appeared to be spending much time studying English and depended on external forces to encourage and support study.

10.3.2 Analysis of other relevant themes arising from the data

In this section I will discuss other relevant themes from the interview data that will shed more light on students' beliefs about language learning. An examination of the interviews revealed that the interviewees' views about the best way to improve their

English varied and there was no approach that was consistent with proficiency level or discipline. Some of the views include the following:

> I think to improve English I must read more but I have no time.
>
> English *bukan* (not) learning subject. *Dia* (It's) natural. *Hanya* (Only) study grammar and do exercises. *Kita tidak dapat belajar* (We do not need to study) passages. To improve *vocab saya baca NST* (vocabulary I study the New Straits Times).
>
> (Student A: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> Tutorials should provide us with more opportunity to speak. My main problem is writing, and speaking too.
>
> I think we should have more tutorials to discuss our problems face-to-face.
>
> (Student C, Male, Low Proficiency, ApplSc)

> I prefer grammar. Oral activities I can practise myself. I need to know what grammar to use in different situations. Normally, I talked to people I want to know whether my grammar is correct or not.
>
> I want the teachers to focus on grammar points. If I talked in not grammatical way I feel not confident to speak.
>
> (Student F, Male, Average Proficiency, ApplSc)

> The English course is very ideal but we don't have time. English is not a studying subject. We have to use it.
>
> (Student K, Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

> English we have to practise, not like other subject. But I don't have time to practise and don't have the environment.
>
> I like to have more discussion. Mostly discussion and oral activities among ourselves.
>
> (Student L, Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

The above quotations also indicated that these interviewees realised that English is not a 'studying subject', like a content course, and learning English involves a lot of practice. One of these students (i.e. Student F) appeared to belong to the category that Ellis and Sinclair (1989:8) described as being 'analytical', i.e., students who would like to be as accurate as possible at all times. Some students (e.g., Student A) believed that learning English is a 'natural process'. Ellis and Sindair (1989a:8) described this as relaxed style, i.e., 'picking up' language without really making too much effort. Only Students J and M appeared to belong to this category. The rest appeared to belong to the mixed category. There was evidence of a certain amount of 'naïveness' in some of the students' beliefs about learning English. As one student put it:

> Other courses we can discuss with our coursemates. We understand what we study. In other courses, not language courses, we can study, we can pass. Language courses? all our coursemates same standard. And sometimes our coursemates different levels. So we cannot discuss.
>
> (Student K: Male, High Proficiency, BusAdm)

This reference to the difference between language learning and other content-based subjects revealed an awareness of the difference, but limited insight into the difference. What I would like to suggest is that although a majority of the interviewees had some awareness of what constitutes a 'good language learner' (see Cotterall, 1995; Stern, 1975; Rubin, 1975; Naiman et al, 1978; Reiss, 1985; Ellis and Sindair, 1989), they did not appear to have a clear idea of how to go about practising their English, and how to 'study' English autonomously. Dickinson and Carver (1980) pointed out that in order to be able to study independently a learner must have three kinds of preparations: methodological preparation, psychological preparation, and practice in self direction (see Appendix 10D for a description of these preparations). These students were not given such preparations before they started their English Language proficiency courses, nor did they display distinct evidence of being aware of such preparations. An example of their lack of awareness of what

constituteed self learning was their disinterest in IT support. Only two students who possessed computers indicated some interest. The others, even those who possessed a computer, were not in favour of it, claiming that poor students would not be able to afford it. Besides, none of them was aware of the availability of an English Resource Centre within the English Proficiency Department. Admittedly, this information should be made available to all distance learners at the beginning of the courses, which the department failed to do. However, the students also had the onus to find out about such matters, which none of them bothered to do. When informed of the facility and the fact that it was not open during off-office hours, none of them showed much interested, claiming that it was not convenient for them to visit the centre during working hours, in spite of the fact that some of them lived within a few miles of the university main campus. They were also not keen to visit the facility during school holidays. These findings clearly indicated a lack of willingness and capacity for independent learning.

There was also clear evidence of a consumer-approach to language learning. They seemed to be over-concerned that they were not getting their money's worth. They had the tendency to attribute their lack of progress to the items (such as materials, units, tutorials etc.) that they paid for.

> Kita bayar $130 x 12 units untuk Inggeris tetapi apabila kita graduate standard Inggeris masih sam. Belajar untuk Peperiksaan sahaja. Walaupun ambil Inggeris, masih sama – tidak improve. ..... Tanpa lebih guidance kita tidak cope dengan higher level.

Translation

> We pay $130 x 12 units for English but when we graduate our standard of English is still the same. We study for examination only. Although we have taken English, our English is still the same – no improvement.... Without more guidance we cannot cope at higher level.
>
> (Student B: Female, Low Proficiency, SocSc)

> We pay a lot but not much facilities. Not enough tutorials. Whole cost $15,600 much more than university students.
>
> (Student F: Male, Average Proficiency, ApplSc)

10.4 Overall discussion of results

Some of the results of the interviews supported those of the NCPQs (discussed in Chapter 9). They reiterated that the distance learners generally had a favourable opinion of the staff, and the courses of the English Proficiency Department. But, they contradicted those of the NCPQs, in revealing that most distance learners would prefer more support and guidance, than greater freedom in learning. Besides, the interviews also revealed that most of the distance learners were not very confident, as far as the learning of English was concerned. In my opinion, Knowles' theory can help to explain some of these contradictions. Knowles (1975:64-68) pointed out that adults possess a self-concept of being responsible for their decisions and their lives. This will lead to the development of a deep psychological need, to be seen and treated by others, as being capable of self-direction. I believe that this attitude might have influenced the distance learners, to respond to the NCPQs, in a more positive manner, than they really felt. This over-enthusiasm could also be a result of a desire to show their approval of the courses. Studies (for e.g., Kelly & Swift, 1983; Fage, 1987; Hiola and Moss, 1990; Hiola, 1988; and Stevenson et al, 1996,1998) on the attitudes of distance learners to face-to-face tutorials provisions, clearly showed that distance learners' strongly supported this form of instruction. I believe that the distance learners of the present study are of no exception.

One very important finding that was clearly evident in the interview data, and the quantitative data was that both indicated that heavy workload was a serious problem with the distance learners. Studies (for e.g., Kahl & Cropley, 1986) revealed that distance learners faced more anxiety in learning compared to face-to face learners

due to reasons such as the pressure from competing roles and needs, lower levels of self-confidence and poorer study skills. In the case of the distance learners under investigation in this thesis, the results of Study Two revealed that they appeared to be more confident and have more effective approaches to studying than on-campus learners. Study Three further revealed that they had clearer goals and standards than on-campus learners. This study seemed to suggest that competing roles and needs, which was perceived by them as 'heavy workload' and 'lack of time', resulted in them being unable to utilise the positive approaches and strategies to studying that they already possessed effectively in learning English. Instead they indulged in 'bad study habits', such as memorising, depending on last minute tips from supervisors and last-minute revision However, in my opinion there is another possible explanation for these frequent complaints about heavy workload. I would like to suggest that the distance learners seemed to be favourably disposed towards distance learning as long as it was convenient for them and their lifestyles, but as soon as distance learning demanded more time and effort, they started to complain about the workload, the course materials, the examinations etc. This suggests the likelihood that these distance learners have the capacity for making informed decisions about their own learning, but may choose not to be self-directed at times (see for eg., Dickinson, 1988, 1992; Holec, 1981; Ellis and Sinclair, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c; Sinclair, 1994, 1999, 2000; Wenden, 1991).

Another finding of the interview data that contradicted that of the NCPQs is that distance learners of Higher Proficiency appeared to have a better opinion of the EPCs. This, however, did not result in them becoming more efficient learners than the Lower Proficiency learners as most of them still indulged in last minute 'mugging'. Besides, Memorising and Syllabus-boundedness seemed to have negative implications as far as these students were concerned.

Research into what motivates distance learners reveals both extrinsic and intrinsic motives (see Appendix 10E for a list of some of the main motives why distance learners participate in distance education programmes). According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsic motivation refers to learning situations where people perform an activity for its own sake rather than because of external pressure or promise of reward for doing it. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to learning situations where the reason for doing a task is something other than an interest in the task (or broader learning endeavour) itself. In addition, undertaking the task may be something the person feels pressured to do rather than genuinely wants to do (p.35). This more general distinction is related to Gardner's integrative/instrumental dichotomy. Initial studies undertaken by Gardner and Lambert and others on second/foreign language learning (see for e.g., Gardner and Lambert, 1985; Lambert, 1972; and Spolsky, 1969) showed that integratively-orientated (or intrinsically-motivated) individuals were more highly motivated than instrumentally-orientated (or extrinsically-motivated) ones. A recent research by Dörnyei and Clément (2000 cited in Dornyei 2001:51) supported this finding. However, research carried out on Asian students seemed to suggest the reverse (Lukmani, 1972; Kachru, 1977; Warden and Lin, 2000). The interviews undertaken in this study also revealed that all thirteen interviewees seemed to be more extrinsically-motivated than intrinsically motivated to study at a distance. This finding contradicted that of Study Two which suggested that, generally, the distance learners were more intrinsically motivated than extrinsically motivated. The interview data, instead, suggested that the interviewees appeared to be aware of the importance of learning English, and were extrinsically motivated to pass it, but lacked the motivation to try to perform well in it.

As a whole, what did the contradictions suggest regarding the distance learners? I would like to suggest that they revealed the paradox of the 'desirable' versus the 'desired' (Hofstede, 1991:). This can be seen in their desire to be seen as a grown up, autonomous individuals, in charge of their own lives, and the reversion back to total dependence on Teacher, which was evident in their requests for more tutorials,

teacher's guidance and support, and more teacher-marked assignments, in a hope for an easy solution to their language learning problems. This can also be extended to their belief that more support would be good (desirable) but actually wanting something quick and easy, requiring minimal effort (desired) to help them achieve success in language learning. It can also be seen in terms of students' awareness of the importance of intrinsic motivation, but finding themselves 'motivated by a desire to pass their examinations' more than anything else. Their requests for more grammar exercises, more discussions, more activities etc., and then turning round and saying, "I don't have time for them", could also be seen as sign of an awareness of what was appropriate and a desire for a 'quick fix' to solve their language learning difficulties

Tudor (1996) pointed out:

> many learners may be relatively ill-prepared for assuming a self-directive role in language study, either because they lack the necessary knowledge and skills, or simply because their prior learning experience or their culturally-based expectations of language study have led them to assume that language learning is an essentially teacher-driven undertaking.
>
> (Tudor, 1996:41)

There is indeed evidence in the interview data to support Tudor's view (1996). The data revealed a lack of knowledge and skills about self-directed learning in the form of lack of awareness of language learning and language learning processes. The interviewees' strong disapproval of the modules because examination questions were not based on them, is a clear indication of their lack of awareness of the purposes of the examinations, and modules. They did not realise that examinations are to test skills and not to test content (Little, 1991:40). As for modules, they did not realise that they were designed to help them to be able to identify specific learning objectives, and to provide relevant tasks, keys, and feedback so that they could learn more effectively on their own. The interview data also revealed limited insight into the difference between language learning and content courses, and how to study English effectively on their own.

A consumer-approach towards language learning in the form of desire for more support from teachers is also evident in the data. This is a very post-modernistic concept. It is related to what is term the consumers' rights to get what they pay for. When applied to learning, it may not be that appropriate, especially when the 'consumers' are not sure what is the best for them.

The possibility that the learners genuinely desired more support because they believed that "language learning is an essentially teacher-driven" (Tudor, 1996) contradicts the findings of the NCPQs and my earlier postulation that the learners have the capacity to learn on their own by themselves, but are sometimes unwilling to do so. Thus, the issues governing the contradictions between the findings of the NCPQs and the interviews are very complex, and I can only attempt to make some postulations. However, based on my experience with these students and review of literature, I am confident that my postulations have strong applicability to the Malaysian context.

In conclusion, I would like to admit that it may be too hasty to declare that the disturbing trend found in thirteen students is present in the whole population of ESL distance learners in UKM, or, that it can be extended to the whole population of Malaysian ESL distance learners. However, it is not over-presumptuous to say that this pattern is most probably fairly prevalent among Malaysian ESL distance learners, especially those from the urban areas of Malaysia, such as areas around Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Johor Bahru and Penang. The implications of these findings will be discussed in the next section.

10.5 Implications of the findings to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL distance learning context

There is a need to explore the claim that the workload is too heavy, and to try to rectify this problem if it is found to be valid. More importantly, it is necessary to explore what can be done to change their overall attitudes towards learning English. This involves making them realise the inappropriateness of some of their beliefs regarding the learning of English, and promoting greater language and language processes awareness. There is also a need to make them aware of the need to invest time and effort in learning a language through continual practice and review. It is also necessary to promote greater autonomy among the students. This can be accomplished through the introduction of an orientation/learner training programme which will be discussed in depth in Chapter eleven, the last chapter of the thesis.

The finding that the distance learners appears to have reasonably good perceptions of the courses and staff of the English Proficiency Department is a positive sign. However, we should be cautious not to read too much into this as there is a possibility that these students' strong approval may be their way of showing support for the distance learning mode of instruction, and for being given a 'second chance' to further their studies.

CHAPTER 11

Summary, Pedagogical implications, and Strategy for developing an ESL distance learning programme

11.1 Introduction

In this final chapter of the thesis, I will first summarise the main findings, and the implications of the three studies to the teaching and learning of English as L2. Then I will proceed to describe the strategy for developing a distance learning programme that I have devised based on the findings of this thesis. Then, I will list out some of the limitations of the studies undertaken in this thesis. Finally, I will present some concluding remarks.

11. 2 Summary of the main findings of the three studies

Study One which investigated Malaysian ESL learners' conceptions of their learning styles, revealed that the dominant learning style among distance learners was the 'analytical-communicative learning style'. It further revealed that more distance learners were oriented to learning English on their own than on-campus learners. This suggested that more of them were capable of utilising opportunities in their daily life to interact in English. However, there was still a reasonably high

percentage of distance learners who were very dependent on classroom interaction, and teachers' directions and guidance. There was also a smaller and less significant group of distance learners who expressed no interest in classroom interaction, and were more audio-visual oriented.

The findings further suggested that distance learners of High Proficiency level were more oriented to learning English successfully at a distance, and the reverse was true in the case of the Low Proficiency learners, which hinted at a positive relationship between distance learners' proficiency levels in English, and their abilities to learn English successful. There was also indication in the study that Applied Science distance learners were the most oriented to learning English successfully at a distance, and the Social Science distance learners, the least oriented.

I arrived at the conclusion that many of the differences between the learning styles of distance learners and on-campus learners could be attributed to cognitive style flexibility. For example, distance learners' greater orientation to learning English independently than on-campus learners, could be attributed to the inclination among more 'mobile' on-campus and distance learners to opt for learning styles they considered more appropriate to their mode of learning. This argument could also be used to explain the differences between the learning styles of distance learners and on-campus learners of High Proficiency level, and the learning styles of Applied Science (High Proficiency) distance learners and on-campus learners.

Study Two, which investigated Malaysian ESL learners' conceptions of their approaches to studying in general, (i.e. in learning of all subjects) and revealed the presence of two principal orientations towards studying among distance learners and on-campus learners. These orientations are similar to Entwistle and Ramsden's Meaning Orientation and Reproducing Orientation. These results are consistent with those of Entwistle and colleagues and others undertaken in various parts of the

world, and suggested that the distinction between a reproducing orientation and a meaning orientation in the Malaysian context is as valid as those in other contexts.

The results further revealed a similar pattern of preferences with regard to the different approaches to studying. In general, notwithstanding whichever mode, proficiency level or discipline, the learners were from. Distance learners, generally, showed a preference for Deep Approach to studying, were fairly motivated and committed to their studies, had fairly good study habits and were able to manage time fairly well. They were more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated. The level of self-confidence was generally below the level of Extrinsic Motivation, and they did not encounter the problem of Lack of Direction. These similarities confirmed the 'portability' of the ASI from one system to another, and strongly suggested that mainstream research literature based on the study of campus-based students will be valid for describing the approaches to studying in general of Malaysian ESL distance learners.

The findings further revealed that more distance learners utilised deep approach techniques in comparison to the on-campus learners. They were also more motivated, committed, systematic, well-organised, and able to manage time better than the on-campus learners. They also indicated greater confidence academically. These findings are very encouraging as they suggest that Malaysian distance learners possess more desirable forms of studying behaviour than the Malaysian on-campus learners. These findings are in keeping with those undertaken in other distance learning contexts (Harper and Kember, 1986 and Richardson et al. 1999), and contribute to the general belief that these differences are caused by factors related to a difference in age, such as differences in level of interest, experience, maturity, and self-reliance which all influence study behaviour. As for the on-campus learners, their preference for less desirable studying behaviour may be a result of orientations they acquired from the examination-orientated mode of learning and studying in Malaysian schools.

There was evidence of greater reliance on memorisation in the case of the distance learners. However, the pattern of memorisation being used in conjunction with understanding (Kember, 1996; Watkins, 1996) was more prevalent in the distance learners than in the on-campus learners, which suggested a high proportion of the distance learners used memorisation as a means towards understanding. The results suggested that the higher proportion of rote learning among the on-campus learners may also be due to their examination-oriented approach, and the teacher-centred approach used in schools which do not give much room for creative and critical thinking.

With regard to syllabus-boundedness, there was some indication that the distance learners indicated a higher preference for highly structured courses, and diligence in checking of course schedules than on-campus learners. These characteristics, I believe, arose from over-anxiety and fear that they had not been studying what were required of them, and were also an indication that the course programmes, possibly, lacked sufficient guidelines and well-planned structures.

The findings also revealed that generally the High Proficiency learners (both distance learners and on-campus learners) were more effective, and academically more confident compared to lower proficiency levels. These findings comply with normal expectations that learners with higher proficiency will manifest more desirable approaches to studying.

The findings further indicated that distance learners from the SocSc and BusAdm groups displayed more desirable approaches to studying in general than those from the Applied Science group. The results supported Ramsden and Entwistle (1981) to a certain extent. But they contradicted those of Harper and Kember (1986), Morgan et al. (1980) and Richardson et al (1999). This reaffirmed the general belief that

approaches to studying in general vary with academic context. In the Malaysian context, the results do contribute to the belief that Science students, due to the nature of the discipline they are studying, tend not to manifest deep approaches and critical thinking strategies.

However, it is important to be aware of the fact that Study two investigated learners' conceptions of their approaches to studying in general, and not specifically, the studying/learning of English. A crucial question to ask at this stage is to what extend are these findings applicable to the studying/ learning of English. A factor analysis of the combined ASI scales/subscales and the CPQ scales revealed a basic pattern associating positive approaches to studying with positive evaluations of the teaching of English, and the English courses, and negative approaches with negative evaluations. This suggested that learning approaches to studying in general affected learners' perceptions of the teaching and learning of not only content courses but also language courses. This pattern was found in both distance learners and on-campus learners suggesting that this pattern was not unduly influenced by mode of learning.

Study Three investigated Malaysian ESL learners' perceptions of their English Proficiency Courses through the NCPQs and interviews. The results of the NCPQs supported those of Study Two in suggesting that the distance learners were more confident. They also revealed them to have much clearer perceptions of the goals and standard expected of them, and had a more positive attitudes of the staff and courses of the EPD than on-campus learners. However, out of all these findings, the only one that was clearly evident in the interview data was that the distance learners generally had a favourable opinion of the staff and the courses of the EPD. Besides that, the findings of the interviews contradicted those of the NCPQs in revealing that most distance learners would prefer more support and guidance, than greater freedom in learning (which was found in the NCPQs). Knowles' theory (1975) could be used to explain some of these contradictions. I believe that the distance learners responded in a more positive manner towards the NCPQs than they really felt,

because as Knowles (1975) puts it as adults they would like to appear capable of being responsible for their decisions and their lives and would like to be treated by others as such. Their over-enthusiasm could also be a result of a desire to show their strong support for the distance learning courses. This finding is supported by studies carried out on distance learners by Kelly & Swift (1983); Fage (1987); Hiola, (1988); Hiola & Moss (1990); and Stevenson et al, (1996, 1998).

The results of the CPQs and the interviews further suggested that heavy workload was a serious problem with the distance learners. Thus, it seemed that competing roles and needs, which was perceived by them as 'heavy workload' and 'lack of time', resulted in them being unable to utilise the positive approaches and strategies to studying that they already possessed effectively in learning English. However, there is also the possibility that their complaints about heavy workload and 'lack of time' were mere excuses used to justify not spending more time learning and studying English.

The results of the NCPQs indicated that proficiency levels did not influence distance learners' perceptions of courses, but the interview data suggested that distance learners of higher proficiency appeared to have a better opinion of the EPCs. Unfortunately, this did not result in them becoming more efficient learners than the Lower Proficiency learners as most of them still indulged in last minute 'mugging'. Besides, Memorising and Syllabus-boundedness seemed to have negative implications as far as these distance learners were concerned.

Similar to results obtained from studies carried out on Asians (see Lukmani, 1972; Kachru; 1977; Warden and Lin, 2000), the interviews undertaken in this study revealed that all thirteen interviewees (all distance learners) seemed to be more extrinsically-motivated than intrinsically-motivated to studying at a distance. This finding contradicted that of Study Two which suggested that the distance learners

were more intrinsically- motivated than extrinsically-motivated in their approaches to studying. Besides, the interviewees appeared to be aware of the importance of learning English, and were extrinsically-motivated to pass English. However, there was a lack of motivation to perform well in English.

I would like to suggest that the results revealed the paradox of the 'desirable' versus the 'desired' (Hofstede, 1991:). This could be seen in these distance learners' desire to be seen as a grown up, autonomous individuals, in charge of their own lives, and the reversion back to total dependence on Teacher, which was evident in their requests for more tutorials, teacher's guidance and support, and more teacher-marked assignments, in a hope for an easy solution to their language learning problems. This could also be extended to their belief that more support would be good (desirable), but actually wanting something quick and easy, requiring minimal effort (desired) to help them achieve success in language learning. The interview data also revealed a consumer-approach towards language learning that led to a desire for more support in order to get one's money worth.

There was also evidence of lack of awareness of language learning and language learning processes, and what is involved in autonomous learning in the interview data. The interview data further revealed limited insight into the difference between language learning and content courses, and how to study English effectively on their own.

11.3 Implications of the findings of the three studies to the teaching and learning of English as a second language

Study One was carried out to determine Malaysian ESL learners' conceptions of their learning styles. The findings suggested the possibility that differences in learning styles between distance learners and on-campus learners were a result of cognitive style flexibility. Basically, it appeared that High Proficiency learners and Applied Science (High Proficiency learners) were the most 'mobile' in terms of learning styles. These findings suggested that in designing an ESL distance learning programme it is necessary to assure that these learning styles are taken into consideration. Besides, it is necessary to teach through the students' styles and also to "help the students stretch by learning through alternative styles" (Kinsella, 1995: 190).

Study Two was carried out to explore Malaysian ESL learners' approaches to studying in general. It revealed that the underlying constructs and the pattern of preferences of both the distance learners and the on-campus learners were the same. It further indicated that learning approaches to studying in general affected learners' perceptions of the teaching and learning of not only content courses, but also language courses. This pattern was found in both distance learners and on-campus learners suggesting that this pattern was not unduly influenced by mode of learning. This suggested the possibility of applying the extensive literature on student learning, L2, and adult learning in the conventional classroom setting to the distance learning context. There was further evidence that distance learners were more capable of utilising 'effective' learning approaches. A highly probable cause for this was difference in age. This suggested that courses designed for distance learners should allow greater flexibility in choosing subjects and greater opportunity for them

to work at their own pace. But, clear guidelines and well-structured programmes should be prioritised to avoid insecurity arising from uncertainty regarding what is expected of them. The extent of flexibility should also vary according to proficiency levels, since High Proficiency distance learners appeared more capable of handling their courses. What is suggested is that greater flexibility should be given to learners of higher proficiency, and more guided courses should be offered to learners of lower proficiency levels.

Study Two also revealed a higher incidence of memorisation among distance learners, although to a large extent this was memorisation with understanding (which should not be considered as negative). Nevertheless, innovative courses which encouraged critical thinking should be included. These courses are particularly vital to Applied Science group since there was evidence that they tended to adopt less desirable approaches to studying.

The only finding that was clearly evident in both the NCPQ and the interviews, was that the distance learners appeared to have reasonably good perceptions of the courses and staff of the English Language Proficiency Department. This is a positive sign. However, we should be cautious not to read too much into this, as there is a possibility that these students' strong approval may be their way of showing support for the distance learning mode of instruction, and for being given a 'second chance' to further their studies.

The findings of the interviews contradicted those of the NCPQ in many ways as discussed in Section 11.2. I believe that the implication of this is not that the results derived from the NASI and the NCPQ are incorrect. What I would like to suggest is that the distance learners are aware of the appropriate approaches to studying in general, but they may not be able to apply them to the learning of English due to extenuating circumstances, such as lack of awareness of language learning and

language learning processes. In solving their problems, the most important step is to change their overall attitudes towards the learning of English as I believe that is the root of their problems. This involves making them realise the inappropriateness of some of their beliefs regarding the learning of English, and promoting greater language and language processes awareness, and greater autonomy among students. This can be accomplished through the introduction of learner training. Since the findings of Study Two revealed that learners of High Proficiency level were more flexible, my suggestion is that in introducing learner training more preparation has to be given to Low Proficiency learners in the beginning stage. Finally, the problem put forth by the distance learners as being their major problem, i.e. heavy workload, also needs to be explored to find out to what extent it is valid, and to rectify it, if necessary.

11.4 Strategy for developing a distance learning ESL programme

Based on the findings of the three studies undertaken in this thesis, I would like to make the following proposals for distance learning students.

11.4.1 Proposal One -- Reorganisation of the English Proficiency Programme (EPP)

First, I would like to suggest the dividing of the EPP into two levels:

Level 1: General English Proficiency Courses (GEPCs)

Two courses should be offered at this level. The level of difficulty will be equivalent to that of VG1023 and VG1033. However, there will be changes in the courses in line with the ideas put forth in Proposal 2. These courses are designed for distance learners who have not reached a certain level in the SPM/EPT or other recognised examinations. Exemptions from these courses will be given to the better students

(see Appendix 1C for more information on criteria and conditions for exemptions). Credits will be given to exempted students.

Level 2: High Level English Proficiency Courses

Students are allowed to choose the maximum of two courses from this level. These courses are not compulsory and students can opt to replace them with courses from other departments. Courses in this level are equivalent to the following under the present system i.e. English for Specific Purposes/ English for Occupational Purposes, which include English for: Social Sciences, Applied Sciences, Law, Medicine, Business, and Nursing. Other advanced level courses like Critical Thinking, Interactive Reading, and Writing Skills should also be included. However, Speech Communication and Public Speaking should not be offered as the distance learning mode is not conducive to the learning of the skills required by these courses.

Under this proposal, students have to acquire only **6 units of English**, and not 12, which is the case in the present system. Fig. 11.1 gives a description of how students are divided under this new proposal.

(Low Proficiency level students)	(Average Proficiency level students)	(High Proficiency level students)
Courses students have to take: VG 1023* (3 units) VG1033* (3 units)	Courses students have to take: VG 1033* (3 units) Exempted from VG 1023* (awarded 3 free units)	Courses students have to take: None Exempted from both VG 1023* & VG 1033* (awarded 6 free units)
Optional courses: High level courses		

* Courses equivalent to those specified

Fig. 11.1 A description of division of students under this new proposal.

11.4.1.1 Reasons for recommending this proposal

1. Students are not forced to sign up for the high level courses. This means a greater likelihood of getting genuinely motivated students for the high level courses.
2. This will increase flexibility in the programme, in the sense that students have the choice to decide whether they want to take the high level courses or not, which will be more acceptable to the adult distance learners.
3. This move will reduce the number of students taking EPCs which means it will be easier to implement the learner training programme that I am going to suggest in Proposal 2. In time, more students may sign up for the high level courses, but by then the department will be more equipped to handle larger student population.
4. This move is in line with initiatives to reduce the number of students taking English, thus reducing the amount of money spent on the teaching of English. The forcing of students to take 12 units of English under the present system is not cost-effective, and is counter productive, as many of these students are not motivated to improve their English. What I propose is the channelling of some of the money saved to the improvement of the English Proficiency Programme.

11.4.2 Proposal Two -- Learner Training

"Learner training could be defined as the process by which learners are helped to deepen their understanding of the nature of language learning, and to acquire the knowledge and skills they need in order to pursue their learning goals in an informed and self-directive manner" (Tudor, 1996:37). It is not a one way flow of information in which the teacher provides learners with the knowledge and skills they possess, but is a forum within which the teacher and learners exchange insights and perceptions of the learning process. Gremmo and Riley (1995:158) further explained that the aim of learner-training is not to transform all learners into 'successful

language learners', with the cognitive and psycho-social features which research has identified, but rather to help learners to come to terms with their strengths and weaknesses, to learn a language efficiently in ways which are compatible with their personalities.

There are many ways of carrying our learner training. Some approaches, such as the one by Thomas and Augstein (1985) at the Centre for the Study of Human learning, and Willing's (1981) in his book, 'Teaching how to learn', are very teacher-controlled. CRAPEL's (Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pedagogiques en Langues) 'learning to learn' schemes, the Cambridge system, McCafferty's proposal, and Moray House College scheme (see Dickinson, 1987: 44-58) are more learner-centred. However, none of this schemes are tailored for the distance learning context. Since the English Proficiency Department of UKM has never embarked on any autonomous learning scheme before, it will be too much to expect the university to accept a completely learner-centred scheme at the start. So the learner training scheme I propose, will draw upon some of the ideas from the above mentioned schemes, but it will not be fully learner-centred. I will also be drawing upon ideas I obtained from attending a series of seminars and workshops organised by CIEL (Curriculum and Independence for the learners). CIEL is one of the ten language projects funded by HEFCE under *the fund for the development of Teaching and Learning*. The aims of CIEL are to identify, disseminate, and support best practices in independent learning through integration with the taught language curriculum (for more information on CIEL go to http://ciel.lang.soton.ac.uk). Ideas will also be drawn from works of Little (1991), Dickinson (1987), Dickinson and Carver, (1980), Ellis and Sinclair (1989a; 1989b; 1989c), Cotteral (1995), Reid (1995, 1998), Kinsella (1995), Gremmo and Riley (1995), Victori and Lockhart (1995), Tudor (1996), and Sinclair et. al (2000).

The learner training scheme proposed here will begin on a modest scale, but hopefully, it will increase in size and stature with more funding and support from UKM and other organisations. The scheme proposed here will be considered the first stage of development towards a totally learner-centred scheme, which is the ultimate goal. This scheme has two main components:

(1) Preparation of teachers

(2) Preparation of learners

It is commonly acknowledged that both learners and teachers need to take preparations to undertake self-instruction. Dickinson and Carver distinguished between psychological preparation, and practical or methodological preparation. Holec (1980:27) described psychological preparation as a gradual "deconditioning process" through which the learner can free himself from many kinds of assumptions and prejudices about learning languages. Dickinson (1987:121) further described psychological preparation as being concerned first with persuading learners to try self-direction, secondly with facilitating a change of attitude about language. The same three components may be use for teachers, especially in situations where teachers have to be persuaded that self-instruction is a viable mode.

Ideally, psychological preparation and methodology preparation should go hand in hand. But, there are cases where for instance the learners are either very sceptical, or reluctant to try it out. In that case psychology instruction would have to proceed before methodology preparation. Dickinson (1987) described methodology preparation for the learners as:

> the process of acquiring the abilities and techniques he needs to undertake self-instruction. It is a matter first of becoming aware of learning processes and techniques which learners operate implicitly, and them combining this knowledge with certain skills more usually expected in teachers than in learners.
>
> (p.122)

The findings of the three studies of this thesis revealed that it is necessary to provide preparation for self-instruction for the distance learners of UKM in learning English. In my opinion, psychological preparation and methodology preparations will be appropriate for this purpose. In the first section, I will describe how psychological preparation and methodological preparations of the teachers should be carried out in UKM, and in the second section, I will describe how they should be carried out on the learners.

11.4.2.1 Preparation of the teachers

It is necessary to prepare teachers to be effective facilitators in a Learner Training Scheme (LTS) as teachers who were themselves taught in the expository mode, and whose training was in the same tradition, are likely to find it difficult to make the transition from purveyor of information to counsellor and manager of learning resources (Little, 1991: 45-46). Dickinson (1987:24) recommended that teachers be given both psychological and methodological preparation. He explained that psychological preparations would help them to understand the various possible meanings of self-instruction, to reflect on their attitudes to this instructional mode, and to consider the necessary changes of roles and tasks required of the teachers. Regarding methodological preparations for the teachers, he described it as "recognising the necessary changes of teachers working in a self-instructional mode, and learning the new skills such role changes demand" (p.122). This he suggested can be acquired through learning about the methodological preparations required by the learners in order that teacher can help to prepare groups of learners (p.124).

The LTS, I propose for orientating the teachers of distance learners of UKM will begin with a three-day workshop that incorporates ideas from Dickinson's suggested workshops. The workshop will include the following:

- a session on psychological preparations of teachers for self-directed learning.
- a session on how to be an effective 'helper' (see Tough, 1979:181; Carver, 1982:33; and McCafferty, 1982);
- a session on suitable methodological preparations for the teachers;
- a session on how to use the resources available at the resource centre effectively. This will include opportunities for teachers to practice using these resources.

The workshop will further incorporate a session to create an awareness among teachers regarding students' different learning styles. It will also attempt to familiarise teachers with activities that teachers can utilise to help 'students stretch by learning through alternative learning styles' (Kinsella, 1995: 190), in order to help them develop cognitive styles flexibility. (See Appendix 11A for 'Sample materials for preparation of teachers', which provides some ideas and resources for this workshop).

Under the present distance learning programme, students are given two face-to-face tutorials with their teachers, once before the mid-semester examination and one towards the end of the semester. Presently, the two tutorials are used to teach grammar, to run through key points of certain lessons, to discuss exam questions/formats, to carry out listening activities, and/or for writing activities. From the interview data it is clear that the two tutorials have not been utilised effectively. As pointed out by the interviewees, it is not possible to teach much in two sessions and it is a 'waste' to use them for listening activities and assessments, which as the interviewees suggested could be easily carried out by themselves at home. In my opinion these two tutorials can be more effectively used to prepare students for self-directed learning. In view of this, I would to suggest that both tutorials be converted into training sessions to be held before the mid-semester examination. The first session should be held in the second week of the semester, and the second, in the fifth week. More information on these sessions will be discussed in the next section.

Before concluding this section, I would like to add that there is a likelihood that some teachers may be unconvinced and unhappy to work in this way. Dickinson (1987:24) believed that it would be wrong to try to change them. I do see the logic in his opinion, but I believe that efforts should be undertaken to introduce them to this new way and they should be given the opportunities to try it out. I am convinced if given this opportunity, many who are initially against it, may find it more effective than the conventional way, especially in a distance learning context.

11.4.2.2 Preparation of the learners

In the LTS that I am proposing, there will be two training sessions to formally train the UKM distance learners in self-instruction. Two sessions are not sufficient for the intended purpose, but I do not foresee the university being willing to increase the amount of time and money spent on face-to-face sessions in the near future. Thus, the EPD have to make do with the two training sessions. These sessions will not follow the time schedule of the present tutorials, which is from 9am to 5pm with a two-hour lunch break in between, instead they will be divided into shorter sessions with shorter breaks in between, as learners lose concentration and get bored with sessions that are too long.

These distance learners will also have the opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills on self-directed learning through utilising the resources in the resource centre, and through discussion with the language advisor/counsellor who is in-charge of the resource centre. Those who live in the Klang valley, i.e. Kuala Lumpur and surrounding areas, will be able to access these facilities from the main campus in Bangi. Regarding the distance learners in other parts of Malaysia, the English Proficiency Department will arrange for access to resource centres of other institutions, and language advisors/counsellors that are within reasonable travelling distance for them (see Appendix 11B and Appendix 11C for ideas and resources on

"the roles of a language advisor/counsellor" and "preparation of a resource centre" respectively).

Presently, the distance learners are provided study guides to help them to learn on their own, and the contents of the courses are predetermined. It is not possible to implement what Little (1991) described as teacher and students "negotiating a joint interpretations of the syllabus" (p. 45) due to the large number of distance learners that UKM is handling (for eg., for semester 1 of the 2001/2002 session, UKM had 1034 distance learners taking English Proficiency courses.). However, it is possible to revise these study guides to make them more in line with the objectives of self-directed learning, by offering greater choices of materials, and greater flexibility in the utilisation of these materials for the goals that they learners have decided on. These goals will have to be within the syllabus predetermined by the EPD, and there should be clear guidelines on how to utilise the materials, especially for Low Proficiency learners.

The use of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to aid self-directed learning would also be taken into consideration. Some applications, such as the use of e-mail, chat-rooms, internet-based activities, and video conferencing, have been proven to be helpful (see Cameron, 1999 for examples of studies on this). However, as Gremmo and Riley (1995) pointed out these applications should be used judiciously as "It is vital, in self-directed systems that technology be at the service of the learners and not vice-versa" (p.160). Besides, there is the problem of accessibility. For example, many students do not possess a computer yet. There is also the problem of cost. A video conferencing system is very expensive to implement, and not necessary cost-effective. Thus, for the first stage of the implementation of the LTS, CALL will not be implemented yet. In a later stage when conditions are more conducive, it will be introduced. In the next section, I will describe the training sessions that I am recommending to prepare the distance

learners for self-directed learning. These sessions will take into consideration three key kinds of preparations:

1. Psychological preparation
2. Methodological preparation
3. Practice in self-direction

Dickinson (1987:125) pointed out that the amount of psychological preparation required will vary from group to group depending on learners' readiness to undertake this learning mode For example, with learners who have time only for short preparation, it may necessary to curtail this to a short talk, and depend on the demonstration through methodological preparation to convince those who are sceptic. Since I am planning training sessions for a large population of learners, it is not possible to cater to the needs of individual groups of learners. Thus, the programme I propose will be a flexible one with guidelines given to teachers on how to run the training sessions, accompanied by sample materials. Teachers are encouraged to produce their own materials based on the guidelines and sample materials given. The key aspects of psychological preparation that I will be incorporating in the sessions include the following:

- development of self confidence
- development of 'process orientation'
- development of self-motivation
- development of awareness of one's own learning
- development of awareness of one' own learning problems and of one's own progress

The key aspects of methodological preparation and practice in self-direction will also be taken into consideration. (see Appendix 10D for more details on such preparations). The guidelines and sample materials prepared will be divided into two categories. Type I will be for students taking GEPCs, and Type II for students taking HLCs (see Appendix 11D for 'Sample materials for preparation of learners' which provides some ideas and resources for the training sessions).

The recommended proposals given here need to be developed further into a proper programme. In order to do so, there is a need to consider the developmental plans of the EPD and the university distance learning programme. In conclusion, I would like to say that in line with the findings of this thesis, a self-directed programme along the line I have suggested would be beneficial to the ESL distance learners of UKM, and possibly, distance learners of other institutions of higher learning in Malaysia too. However, there are certain limitations that need to be highlighted, and this is undertaken in the next section of this thesis.

11.5 Limitations of the thesis

From the discussion of results, it is apparent that there are a number of limitations in the present thesis. Firstly, since the studies were carried out on only one university (on both conventional programme and distance learning programme), it is not possible to conclude that the findings are applicable to all such universities in Malaysia. In order to gain deeper insights into Malaysian ESL learners' conceptions of their learning processes, and their perceptions of their English proficiency courses, it would be necessary for future research to increase the sampling to include ESL learners of different universities so that the findings can be confidently generalised to a wider population. Similarly, the sampling for the interviews should be increased to distance learners from urban as well as rural students from various universities in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the collection of data through questionnaires and interviews were undertaken during the same period of time, i.e. within a three-month period. In view of that, it was not possible to analyse the results of the questionnaires first, and then make adjustments to the interviews to address issues of interest, revealed by the questionnaires.

Finally, another limitation was that some factors that may affect Malaysian ESL learners' conceptions of their learning processes, and their perceptions of their EPCs, such as social and cultural influences, and differences in ethnic origins and gender, have not been considered. It would be interesting to explore the effects of these factors in future research.

11.6 Concluding remarks

Despite these limitations, it is evident that the findings of this thesis have significant implications to the distance teaching and learning of English in the Malaysian context and, possibly, to other distance learning contexts too. The research is particularly significance for the following reasons:

- It is a major research of ESL distance learners in an area that has not been investigated before in Malaysia.
- It brought new insights into the conceptions of learning styles and approaches to studying, and perceptions of courses of ESL distance learners.
- It formed the basis for future development of appropriately targeted distance learning language courses for adult learners as opposed to content courses.
- It formed the basis for the development of a suitable support system for ESL distance learners.

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Appendix 1A

Criteria and conditions for placement of students in the English Proficiency Courses prior to the 1998/99 session

Criteria	Conditions	First course he/she had to take
Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia (SPM) (Malaysian Certificate of Examination)	A1, A2	VG 1043
	C3, C4	VG1033
	C5, C6	VG1023
	P7, P8, F9	VG1013
Matriculation One-year matriculation course run by MARA and selected Malaysian Universities)	A, A-	VG 1043
	B+, B, B-	VG1033
	C+, C, C-	VG1023
	D+, D, D-	VG1013
SPM holders (with results more than four years old) **AND** Students with diplomas from other institutions of higher learning	EPT grade A	VG 1043
	EPT grade B	VG1033
	EPT grade C	VG1023
	EPT grade D	VG1013

Appendix 1B

English Proficiency Courses that the various categorises of students have to take prior to the 1998/99 session

Category I (High Proficiency students)	Category II (Average Proficiency students)	Category III (Low Proficiency students)	Category IV Low Proficiency students)
1) VG 1043 2) ESP/ EOP 3) ESP/ EOP 4) ESP/ EOP	1)VG 1033 2)VG 1043 3) ESP/ EOP 4) ESP/ EOP	1) VG 1023 2) VG 1033 3) VG 1043 4) ESP/ EOP	1) VG 1013 2)VG 1023 3) VG 1033 4) VG 1043

Appendix 1C

Criteria and conditions for exemptions and awarding free credits units

Criteria	Conditions	Credit units awarded	Additional Condition
Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia (SPM) (Malaysian Certificate of Examination)	A1, A2	6 units (exempted from VG 1023 &VG1033)	If a student 's result is more than four years old, he has to take the EPT.
	C3, C4	3 units (exempted from VG 1023	
Matriculation One-year matriculation course run by MARA and selected Malaysian Universities)	A, A-	6 units (exempted from VG 1023 &VG1033)	If a student's SPM grade is higher than his Matriculation grade than his SPM grade will be used as the criteria for consideration.
	B+, B, B-	3 units (exempted from VG 1023	
TOEFL	550 marks	6 units (exempted from VG 1023 &VG1033)	
IELTS	Levels 6 - 9	6 units (exempted from VG 1023 &VG1033)	
SPM holders (with results more than four years old) AND **Diplomas** from other institutions of higher learning	EPT grade A	6 units (exempted from VG 1023 &VG1033)	
	EPT grade B	3 units (exempted from VG 1023	
Others	Will be decided by the Faculty		

Appendix 1D

English Proficiency Courses that the various categorises of students have to take beginning from the 1998/99 session

Category 1 High Proficiency students	Category 2 Average Proficiency students	Category 3 Low Proficiency students
1) Exempted from VG 1023 (awarded 3 free units) 2) Exempted from VG 1033 (awarded 3 free units) 3) ESP/ EOP 4) ESP/ EOP	1) Exempted from VG 1023 (awarded 3 free units) 2) VG 1033 3) ESP/ EOP 4)ESP/ EOP	1) VG 1023 2) VG 1033 3) ESP/ EOP 4)ESP/ EOP

Appendix 2A

A list of the books used for the various proficiency courses

VG 1013 – Elementary Level	Headway Elementary's Student Book and Workbook
VG 1023 – Pre-intermediate level	Headway Pre-intermediate's Student Book and Workbook
VG 1033 – Intermediate level	Headway Intermediate's Student Book and Workbook
VG 1043 – Upper-intermediate level	Headway Upper-intermediate's Student Book and Workbook

Appendix 4A

Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey (PLSPS)(1987)

Directions: People learn in many different 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" tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone, and 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 pages. 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* (SA), mark:

strongly agree (SA)	*agree* (A)	*undecided* (U)	*disagree* (D)	*strongly disagree* (SD)
X				

Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please answer all the questions. Then use the materials that follow the questionnaire to score your responses.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. When the teacher tells me the instructions, I understand better.					
2. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.					
3. I get more work done when I work with others.					
4. I learn more when I study with a group.					
5. In class, I learn best when I work with others.					
6. I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.					
7. When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better.					
8. When I do things in class, I learn better.					
9. I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read.					
10. When I read instructions, I remember them better.					

	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. I learn more when I can make a model of something.					
12. I understand better when I read instructions.					
13. When I study alone, I remember things better.					
14. I learn more when I make something for a class project.					
15. I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.					
16. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.					
17. I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.					
18. When I work alone, I learn better.					
19. I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.					
20. I learn better in class when I listen to someone.					
21. I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.					
22. When I build something, I remember what I have learned better.					
23. I prefer to study with others.					
24. I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.					
25. I enjoy making something for a class project.					
26. I learn best in class when I can participate in related activities.					
27. In class, I work better when I work alone.					
28. I prefer working on projects by myself.					
29. I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to a lecture.					
30. I prefer to work by myself.					

Self-Scoring Sheet for Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey

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

strongly agree (SA)	*agree* (A)	*undecided* (U)	*disagree* (D)	*strongly disagree* (SD)
5	4	3	2	1

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

Visual

6— 5

When you have completed all the numerical values for ***Visual***, add the numbers together. 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 that follows. It will help you determine your

major learning style preference(s): score: 38–50
minor learning style preference(s) score: 25–37
negligible learning styles: score: 0–24

If you need help, please ask your teacher.

Scoring Sheet

Visual

6 _____
10 _____
12 _____
24 _____
29 _____

Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)

Tactile

11 _____
14 _____
16 _____
22 _____
25 _____

Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)

Auditory

1 _____
7 _____
9 _____
17 _____
20 _____

Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)

Group

3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
21 _____
23 _____

Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)

Kinesthetic	*Individual*
2 _____	13 _____
8 _____	18 _____
15 _____	27 _____
19 _____	28 _____
26 _____	30 _____
Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)	Total _____ x 2 = _____ (Score)

Major learning style preference(s) score: 38–50

_____

Minor learning style preference(s) score: 25–37

_____

Negligible learning styles score: 0–24

_____

Explanation of Perceptual Learning Style Preferences*

Students learn in many different ways. The results of the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire show which ways you prefer to learn English. In many cases, students' learning style preferences show how well students learn material in different situations.

The explanations of major learning style preferences below describe the characteristics of those learners. The descriptions will give you some information about ways in which you learn best.

Visual Major Learning Style Preference

You learn well from *seeing words* in books, on the chalkboard, and in workbooks. You remember and understand information and instructions better if you *read* them. You don't need as much oral explanation as an auditory learner, and you can often learn alone with a book. You should take notes of lectures and oral directions if you want to remember the information.

Auditory Major Learning Style Preference

You learn from *hearing words* spoken and from oral explanation. You may remember information by *reading aloud* or by moving your lips as you read, especially when you are learning new material. You benefit from hearing audiotapes, lectures, and class discussion. You benefit from making tapes to listen to, by teaching other students, and by conversing with your teacher.

* The explanation of learning styles has been adapted from the C. I. T. E. Learning Styles Instrument, Murdoch Teacher Center, Wichita, Kansas 67208. Used with permission.

Kinesthetic Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences. You remember information well when you actively participate in activities, field trips, and role-playing in the classroom. A combination of stimuli—for example, an audio tape combined with an activity—will help you understand new material.

Tactile Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best when you have the opportunity to do *"hands-on" experiences* with materials. That is, working on experiments in a laboratory, handling and building models, and touching and working with materials provide you with the most successful learning situations. *Writing notes or instructions* can help you remember information, and *physical involvement* in class-related activities may help you understand new information.

Group Major Learning Style Preference

You learn more easily when you study with at least one other student, and you will be more successful completing work well when you *work with others*. You value group interaction and class work with other students, and you remember information better when you work with two or three classmates. The stimulation you receive from group work helps you learn and understand new information.

Individual Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best when you work *alone*. You think better when you study alone, and you remember information you learn by yourself. You understand material best when you learn it alone, and you make better progress in learning when you work by yourself.

Minor Learning Styles

In most cases, minor learning styles indicate areas where you can function well as a learner. Usually, a very successful learner can learn in several different ways, and so you might want to experiment with ways to practice and strengthen your minor learning styles.

Negligible Learning Styles

Often, a negligible score indicates that you may have difficulty learning in that way. One solution may be to direct your learning to your stronger styles. Another solution may be to try to work on some of the skills to strengthen your learning style(s) in the negligible area(s).*

* For permission to use this survey, contact the author by e-mail (see e-mail address in the "Contributors" section of this volume) or at Department of English, University of Wyoming, Hoyt 201, Laramie, WY 82071-3355.

Appendix 4B

Approaches to Studying Inventory (Ramsden, 1983)

SECTION B

In this section we would like you to show whether you agree or disagree with each of the statements listed below. We are concerned here with your approaches to studying in general. Please answer for the Field which you are spending most time on this year.

Please circle the number beside each statement which best conforms with your view.

4	(√√)	means Definitely agree
3	(√)	means Agree with reservations
1	(x)	means Disagree with reservations
0	(xx)	means Definitely disagree
2	(?)	is only to be used if the item doesn't apply to you, or if you find it impossible to give a definite answer.

		√√	√	x	xx
1.	I find it difficult to organise my time effectively.	4	3	1	0
2.	I try to relate ideas in one subject to those in others, whenever possible.	4	3	1	0
3.	Although I have a fairly good general idea of many things, my knowledge of the details is rather weak.	4	3	1	0
4.	I enjoy competition: I find it stimulating.	4	3	1	0

	√√	√	x	xx
5. I usually set out to understand thoroughly the meaning of what I am asked to read.	4	3	1	0
6. Ideas in books often set me off on long chains of thought of my own, only tenuously related to what I was reading.	4	3	1	0
7. I chose my present courses mainly to give me a chance of a really good job afterwards.	4	3	1	0
8. Continuing my education was something which happened to me, rather than something I really wanted for myself.	4	3	1	0
9. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments.	4	3	1	0
10. I often find myself questioning things that I hear in lectures or read in books.	4	3	1	0
11. I generally prefer to tackle each part of a topic or problem in order, working out one at a time.	4	3	1	0
12. The continual pressure of work - assignments, deadlines and competition - often makes me tense and depressed.	4	3	1	0
13. I find it difficult to "switch tracks" when working on a problem: I prefer to follow each line of thought as far as it will go.	4	3	1	0
14. My habit of putting off work leaves me with far too much to do at the end of term.	4	3	1	0
15. It's important to me to do really well in the courses here.	4	3	1	0
16. Lecturers seem to delight in making the simple truth unnecessarily complicated.	4	3	1	0

	√√	√	x	xx
17. Distractions make it difficult for me to do much effective work in the evenings.	4	3	1	0
18. When I'm doing a piece of work, I try to bear in mind exactly what that particular lecturer seems to want.	4	3	1	0
19. I usually don't have time to think about the implications of what I have read.	4	3	1	0
20. Lecturers sometimes give indications of what is likely to come up in exams, so I look out for what may be hints.	4	3	1	0
21. In trying to understand a puzzling idea, I let my imagination wander freely to begin with, even if I don't seem to be much nearer a solution.	4	3	1	0
22. My main reason for being here is that it will help me to get a better job.	4	3	1	0
23. Often I find myself wondering whether the work I am doing here is really worthwhile.	4	3	1	0
24. I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand things which initially seem difficult.	4	3	1	0
25. I prefer courses to be clearly struct--ured and highly organised.	4	3	1	0
26. A poor first answer in an exam makes me panic.	4	3	1	0
27. I prefer to follow well tried approaches to problems rather than anything too adventurous.	4	3	1	0
28. I'm rather slow at starting work in the evenings.	4	3	1	0

	√√	√	x	xx
29. In trying to understand new ideas, I often try to relate them to real life situations to which they might apply.	4	3	1	0
30. When I'm reading I try to memorise important facts which may come in useful later.	4	3	1	0
31. I like to play around with ideas of my own even if they don't get me very far.	4	3	1	0
32. I generally choose modules more from the way they fit in with career plans than from my own interests.	4	3	1	0
33. I am usually cautious in drawing conclusions unless they are well supported by evidence.	4	3	1	0
34. When I'm tackling a new topic, I often ask myself questions about it which the new information should answer.	4	3	1	0
35. I suppose I am more interested in the qualifications I'll get than in the modules I'm taking.	4	3	1	0
36. Often I find I have to read things without having a chance to really understand them.	4	3	1	0
37. If conditions aren't right for me to study, I generally manage to do something to change them.	4	3	1	0
38. In reporting practical work, I like to try to work out several alternative ways of interpreting the findings.	4	3	1	0
39. My main reason for being here is so that I can learn more about the subjects which really interest me.	4	3	1	0
40. In trying to understand new topics, I often explain them to myself in ways that other people don't seem to follow.	4	3	1	0
41. I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what we have to learn.	4	3	1	0

	√√	√	x	xx
42. It is important to me to do things better than my friends, if I possibly can.	4	3	1	0
43. I find it better to start straight away with the details of a new topic and build up an overall picture in that way.	4	3	1	0
44. Often when I'm reading books, the ideas produce vivid images which sometimes take on a life of their own.	4	3	1	0
45. One way or another I manage to get hold of the books I need for studying.	4	3	1	0
46. I often get criticised for introducing irrelevant material into my essays or tutorials.	4	3	1	0
47. I find that studying academic topics can often be really exciting and gripping.	4	3	1	0
48. The best way for me to understand what technical terms mean is to remember the text-book definitions.	4	3	1	0
49. I certainly want to pass the next set of exams, but it doesn't really matter if I only just scrape through.	4	3	1	0
50. I need to read around a subject pretty widely before I'm ready to put my ideas down on paper.	4	3	1	0
51. Although I generally remember facts and details, I find it difficult to fit them together into an overall picture.	4	3	1	0
52. I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments.	4	3	1	0
53. Having to speak in tutorials is quite an ordeal for me.	4	3	1	0

	√√	√	x	xx
54. Puzzles or problems fascinate me particularly where you have to work through the material to reach a logical conclusion,	4	3	1	0
55. I spend a good deal of my spare time in finding out more about interesting topics which have been discussed in classes.	4	3	1	0
56. I find it helpful to 'map out' a new topic for myself by seeing how the ideas fit together.	4	3	1	0
57. I seem to be a bit too ready to jump to conclusions without waiting for all the evidence.	4	3	1	0
58. I hate admitting defeat, even in trivial matters.	4	3	1	0
59. I think it is important to look at problems rationally and logically without making intuitive jumps.	4	3	1	0
60. I find I tend to remember things best if I concentrate on the order in which the lecturer presented them.	4	3	1	0
61. When I'm reading an article or research report, I generally examine the evidence carefully to decide whether the conclusion is justified.	4	3	1	0
62. Tutors seem to want me to be more adventuruous in making use of my own ideas.	4	3	1	0
63. When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.	4	3	1	0
64. I find academic topics so interesting, I should like to continue with them after I finish this course.	4	3	1	0

Appendix 5A

A contrast of the two poles of the field independent/ field dependent dimension (Willing, 1988:50-51)

Analytical (Field Independent)	Concrete (Field Dependent)
Information Processing	
1. this person finds it relativeley easy to detach an experienced (perceived) item from its given background	1. this person experiences item as fused with its context; what is interesting is the impression of the whole
2. the item is extractable because it is percieved as having a rudimentary meaning on its own; thus it can be moved out of its presented surroundings and into a comprehensive category system—for understanding (and 'filing' in memory)	2. item is experienced and comprehended as part of an overall associational unity with concrete and personal interconnections; (item's storage in, and retrieval from, memory is via these often affectively-charged associations)
3. tendency to show traits of introversion (the person's mental processing can be strongly activated by low-intensity stimulus; hence dislikes excessive input)	3. tendency to show traits of extraversion (person's mental processing is activated by relatively higher-intensity stimulus; therefore likes rich, varied input)
4. tendency to be 'reflective' and cautious in thinking tasks	4. tendency to be 'impulsive' in thinking tasks; 'plays hunches'
5. any creativity or unconventionality would derive from individual's development of criteria on a rational basis	5. any creativity or unconventionality would derive from individual's imaginativeness or 'lateral thinking'
Learning Strengths	
6. performs best on analytical language tasks (e.g. understanding and using correct syntactical structures; semantically ordered comprehension of words; phonetic articulation)	6. performs best on tasks calling for intuitive 'feel' for language (e.g. expression; richness of lexical connotation; discourse; rhythm and intonation)
7. favours material tending toward the abstract and impersonal; factual or analytical; useful; ideas	7. prefers material which has a human, social content; or which has fantasy or humour; personal; musical, artistic

8. has affinity for methods which are: focused; systematic; sequential; cumulative	8. has affinity for methods in which various features are managed simultaneously; realistically; in significant context
9. likely to set own learning goals and direct own learning; (but may well choose or prefer to use—for own purpose—an authoritative text or passive lecture situation.	9. less likely to direct own learning; may function well in quasi-autonomy (e.g. 'guided discovery'); (but may well express preference for a formal, teacher-dominated learning arrangement, as a compensation for own perceived deficiency in ability to structure
10. 'left hemishpere strengths'	10. 'right hemisphere strengths'
Human Relations	
11. greater tendency to experience self as a separate entity; with, also a great deal of internal differentiation and complexity	11. tendency to experience and relate not as a completely differentiated 'self', but rather as—to a degree—fused with group and with environment
12. personal identity and social role to a large extent self-defined	12. greater tendency to defer to social group for identity and role-definition
13. more tendency to be occupied with own thoughts and responses; relatively unaware of the subtle emotional content in interpersonal interactions	13. more other-oriented (e.g. looking at and scrutinizing others' faces; usually very aware of others' feelings in an interaction; sensitive to 'cues')
14. relatively less need to be with people	14. greater desire to be with people
15. self-esteem not ultimately dependent upon the opinion of others	15. learning performance much improved if group or authority figure give praise

Appendix 5B

Willing's rank order of questions/items according to average level of response (Willing, 1988:116-117)

Rank - Order of Question			% who marked this as 'best'
(Q20)	I like to practise the sounds and pronunciation.	(3.54)	62%
(Q11)	I like the teacher to tell me all my mistakes.	(3.51)	61%
(Q4)	In class, I like to learn by conversations.	(3.42)	55%
(Q8)	I like the teacher to explain everything to us.	(3.40)	54%
(Q19)	I like to learn many new words.	(3.38)	47%
(Q28)	I like to learn by talking to friends in English.	(3.31)	48%
(Q29)	I like to learn by watching, listening to Australians.	(3.19)	39%
(Q22)	I like to learn English words by hearing them.	(3.16)	37%
(Q21)	I like to learn English words by seeing them.	(3.16)	38%
(Q10)	I like the teacher to help me talk about my interests.	(3.15)	35%
(Q15)	I like to learn English in a small group.	(3.14)	35%
(Q23)	I like to learn English words by doing something.	(3.12)	36%
(Q18)	I like to study grammar.	(3.10)	39%
(Q25)	At home, I like to learn by watching TV in English.	(3.01)	26%
(Q7)	I like to have my own textbook.	(3.00)	34%
(Q30)	I like to learn by using English in shops/CES/trains...	(2.96)	30%
(Q9)	I like the teacher to give us problems to work on.	(2.92)	24%
(Q17)	I like to go out with the class and practise English.	(2.91)	30%
(Q27)	At home, I like to learn by studying English books.	(2.87)	21%
(Q1)	In English class, I like to learn by reading.	(2.84)	21%

(Q6)	I want to write everything in my notebook.	(2.77)	21%
(Q2)	In class, I like to listen and use cassettes.	(2.77)	22%
(Q12)	I like the teacher to let me find my mistakes.	(2.76)	27%
(Q24)	At home, I like to learn by reading newspapers. etc.	(2.73)	21%
(Q5)	In class, I like to learn by pictures, films, video.	(2.72)	19%
(Q16)	I like to learn English with the whole class.	(2.68)	21%
(Q26)	At home, I like to learn by using cassettes.	(2.63)	15%
(Q14)	I like to learn English by talking in pairs.	(2.63)	15%
(Q3)	In class, I like to learn by games.	(2.35)	10%
(Q13)	I like to study English by myself (alone).	(1.69)	3%

Appendix 6A
USLPCQ

Sub-questionnaire 1: How do you learn English ?
Sub-questionnaire 2: Approaches to Studying
Sub-questionnaire 3: Perceptions of Courses

Introductory Section: Students' Personal Details

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Name:
(optional)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Home address:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Telephone no (optional):
E-mail address (optional):</td><td>Faculty:
Year:
Name of class instructor:</td></tr>
<tr><td>English course that you are taking this semester:</td><td>English courses that you have taken:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sex:</td><td>Age:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Grade in English in the SPM:
Year exam was taken:</td><td>Hometown:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marks in the EPT (if any):</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What is you first language?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Other languages?</td></tr>
</table>

All information given will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Please do not ponder over each question, answer each question spontaneously.
Thank you for answering the questionnaire.

Thang Siew Ming (researcher)
Faculty of English Language Studies,
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Sub-questionnaire 1: How do you learn English?

In this section we would like to find out how you learn English. Please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement.

4 for "strongly agree"
3 for "agree"
2 for "disagree"
1 for "strongly disagree"

Circle the response of you choice.

1. In English class, I like to learn by reading.	4	3	2	1
2. In English class, I like to learn by listening to cassettes.	4	3	2	1
3. In English class, I like to learn by taking part in activities.	4	3	2	1
4. In English class, I like to learn by taking part in conversations and discussions.	4	3	2	1
5. In English class, I like to learn by viewing pictures, films, and videos.	4	3	2	1
6. In English class, I like to learn by taking down notes.	4	3	2	1
7. In English class, I like to learn by listening to lectures.	4	3	2	1
8. I like the teacher to explain everything to us.	4	3	2	1
9. I like the teacher to give us problems to work on.	4	3	2	1
10. I like the teacher to ask me to talk about my interests.	4	3	2	1
11. I like the teacher to tell me all my mistakes.	4	3	2	1
12. I like the teacher to let me find my own mistakes	4	3	2	1

13. I like to study English on my own.	4	3	2	1
14. I like to learn English by talking in pairs.	4	3	2	1
15. I like to learn English in a small group.	4	3	2	1
16. I like to learn English with the whole class.	4	3	2	1
17. I like to go out with the class and practise speaking in English.	4	3	2	1
18. I like to study grammar.	4	3	2	1
19. I like to learn many new words.	4	3	2	1
20. I like to practise the sounds and pronunciation of English words.	4	3	2	1
21. I like to learn English words by seeing them.	4	3	2	1
22. I like to learn English words by hearing them.	4	3	2	1
23. I like to learn English words by participating in related activities.	4	3	2	1
24. At home, I like to learn by reading newspapers, etc.	4	3	2	1
25. At home, I like to learn by watching TV in English.	4	3	2	1
26. At home, I like to learn by listening to cassettes.	4	3	2	1
27. At home, I like to learn by studying English books.	4	3	2	1
28. I like to learn English by talking to friends.	4	3	2	1
29. I like to learn English by watching and listening to people whose English is good.	4	3	2	1
30. I like to learn English by using it in my daily life.	4	3	2	1

Sub-questionnaire 2: New Approaches to Studying Inventory (NASI)

In this section we would like you to show whether you agree or disagree with each of the statements listed below. We are concerned here with your approach to studying in general.

Please circle the number beside each statement which best conforms with your view.

4 for "strongly agree"
3 for "agree"
2 for "disagree"
1 for "strongly disagree"

1. I rather drifted into higher education without deciding for myself what I really wanted to do.	4	3	2	1
2. My main reason for being in university is to learn more about subjects that really interest me.	4	3	2	1
3. Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thought about what I'm reading.	4	3	2	1
4. The best way for me to understand the meanings of technical terms is to remember the text-book definitions.	4	3	2	1
5. My main reason for being here is that it will help me to get a better job.	4	3	2	1

6. When I'm reading an article or book, I try to work out for myself exactly what it is about.	4	3	2	1
7. I'm not sure what's important, so I try to get down just as much as I can in lectures.	4	3	2	1
8. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments.	4	3	2	1
9. One way or another I manage to get hold of books or whatever I need for studying.	4	3	2	1
10.When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.	4	3	2	1
11. I put a lot of effort into making sure I have the most important details in my finger tips.	4	3	2	1
12. I look at the evidence carefully and then try to reach my own conclusions about things I'm studying.	4	3	2	1
13. Sometimes I worry about whether I'll ever be able to cope with the work properly.	4	3	2	1
14. I know what I want to get out of this course and I'm determined to achieve it.	4	3	2	1
15.Generally, I find the set work easy to do.	4	3	2	1
16. Often I find myself reading things without really trying to understand them.	4	3	2	1
17. I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand things which initially seem difficult.	4	3	2	1
18. I work steadily throughout the course, rather than leaving everything until the last minute.	4	3	2	1
19. I'm not prepared just to accept things I'm told; I have to think them out myself.	4	3	2	1

20. I spend quite a lot of time repeating or copying out things to help me remember them.	4	3	2	1
21. I generally try to make use of my time during the day.	4	3	2	1
22. I think I'm quite systematic and organised in the way I go about studying.	4	3	2	1
23. When learning a new topic, I find it difficult to see how the ideas fit together.	4	3	2	1
24. I seem to be able to grasp things for myself pretty well on the whole.	4	3	2	1
25. Sometimes I find myself thinking about ideas from the course when I am doing other things.	4	3	2	1
26. I chose my present courses mainly to give me a chance of a really good job afterwards.	4	3	2	1
27. I prefer courses to be clearly structured and highly organised.	4	3	2	1
28. When I'm reading, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said.	4	3	2	1
29. I often seem to panic if I get behind with my work.	4	3	2	1
30. I enjoy competition; I find it stimulating.	4	3	2	1
31. I generally choose courses more from the way they fit in with career plans than from my own interests.	4	3	2	1
32. Although I can remember facts and details, I often can't see any overall picture.	4	3	2	1
33. So far, I seem to have a good grasp of the subjects I'm studying.	4	3	2	1
34. I work hard when I'm studying and generally manage to keep my mind on what I'm doing.	4	3	2	1
35. I often have trouble making sense of the things I have to remember.	4	3	2	1

36. I think I'm on this course more to please other people than because I really wanted it myself.	4	3	2	1
37. Often I feel I'm drowning in the sheer amount of material we're having to cope with on this course.	4	3	2	1
38. I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses whenever possible.	4	3	2	1
39. I constantly check the course schedule to make sure I am reading what is required of me.	4	3	2	1
40. I suppose I am more interested in the qualifications I'll get than in the courses I'm taking.	4	3	2	1
41. I don't usually have much difficulty in making sense of new information or ideas.	4	3	2	1
42. I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments.	4	3	2	1
43. I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.	4	3	2	1
44. When I'm working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.	4	3	2	1
45. It's important to me to feel I'm doing as well as I really can in the courses here.	4	3	2	1
46. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.	4	3	2	1
47. I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what I have to learn.	4	3	2	1
48.Coming here wasn't really my choice: more other people's expectations and no obvious alternative.	4	3	2	1
49.Often I lie awake worrying about work I think I won't be able to do.	4	3	2	1

50. I make sure I find conditions for studying which let me get on with my work easily.	4	3	2	1
51. When I'm doing a piece of work, I try to bear in mind exactly what that particular teacher wants.	4	3	2	1
52. I usually don't think about the implications of what I have read.	4	3	2	1
53.It's important for me to be able to follow the argument or see the reasoning behind something.	4	3	2	1

Sub-questionnaire 3: New Course Perception Questionnaire (NCPQ)

In this section we would like you to show whether you agree or disagree to each of the statements listed below. We would like you to relate your answers specifically to the Learning of English.

Circle the number beside each statement which best conforms with your view:

4 means 'strongly agree'
3 means 'agree'
2 means 'disagree'
1 means 'strongly disagree'

1. Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from us for changes to their teaching methods/materials.	4	3	2	1
2. There's a lot of pressure on me as a student.	4	3	2	1
3. It 's always easy to know the standard of work expected of me	4	3	2	1
4. We seem to be given a lot of choice here in the work we have to do.	4	3	2	1
5. The teachers in this department always seem ready to give their help and advice on approaches to studying.	4	3	2	1

6. I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what's expected of me in this department.	4	3	2	1
7. Staff generally consult us before making decisions about how the courses are run.	4	3	2	1
8. This department gives us a chance to use methods of study which suit our own way of learning.	4	3	2	1
9. The workload is too heavy.	4	3	2	1
10. The teaching/learning components offered by this department are sufficient for my purpose.	4	3	2	1
11. Teachers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching/materials at the right level for us.	4	3	2	1
12. Most of the teachers here really try hard to get to know us	4	3	2	1
13. I utilise the teaching materials (which include text, course guide, study guide, and video materials -- whichever are relevant) provided by the department extensively.	4	3	2	1
14. There is so much written work to do that it' s very difficult for me to get down to independent reading.	4	3	2	1
15. Teachers here usually tell us exactly what we are supposed to be learning.	4	3	2	1
16. A greater variety of teaching/learning components should be provided.	4	3	2	1
17. There is a real opportunity in this department for us to choose the particular areas we want to study.	4	3	2	1
18. Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching/materials very thoroughly.	4	3	2	1
19. Teachers in this department generally take our ideas and interests seriously.	4	3	2	1

20.The teaching/learning components are very helpful.	4	3	2	1
21.We have a great deal of choice over how we are going to learn in this department.	4	3	2	1
22.Teachers here generally make it clear from the start what will be required of us.	4	3	2	1
23.It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover too many topics.	4	3	2	1
24.Staff here make a real effort to understand difficulties we may be having with our work.	4	3	2	1

Soal-selidik 1: Bagaimana anda belajar Bahasa Inggeris

Soal-selidik 2: Pendekatan Pembelajaran

Soal-selidik 3: Persepsi terhadap kursus

Bahagian Pengenalan: Hal Peribadi Penuntut

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Nama:
(optional)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Alamat Rumah:</td></tr>
<tr><td>No. Talipon (optional):
Alamat E-mail (optional):</td><td>Fakulti:
Tahun:
Nama Pengajar:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Kursus B. Inggeris yang sedang diikuti:</td><td>Kursus-kursus B. Inggeris yang telah diikuti:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jantina:</td><td>Umur:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Gred B. Inggeris dalam SPM:
Tahun SPM diambil:</td><td>Kampung Halaman:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Markah EPT (jika ada):</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Apakah bahasa utama anda?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Bahasa-bahasa lain?</td></tr>
</table>

Semua matlumat akan ditimbang secara sulit.

Mahasiswa diharapkan tidak berfikir terlalu lama pada sesuatu pertanyaan dan menjawab secara spontan. Saya mengucapkan ribuan terima kasih kerana sudi menjawab soal-selidik ini

Thang Siew Ming (penyelidik)
Fakulti Pengajian Bahasa Inggeris
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Soal-selidik 1 : Bagaimana anda belajar Bahasa Inggeris?

Di bahagian ini, kami ingin mengetahui cara anda mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris. Sila nyatakan setakat mana anda bersetuju dengan setiap satu dari kenyataan berikut.

4 untuk **'sangat bersetuju'**
3 untuk **'bersetuju'**
2 untuk **'tidak bersetuju'**
1 untuk **'sangat tidak bersetuju'**

Bulatkan nombor pilihan anda.

1. Saya suka belajar melalui pembacaan.	4 3 2 1
2. Saya suka belajar dengan mendengar kaset.	4 3 2 1
3. Saya suka belajar melalui aktiviti.	4 3 2 1
4. Saya suka belajar melalui perbualan dan perbincangan.	4 3 2 1
5. Saya suka belajar melalui gambar, filem dan video.	4 3 2 1
6. Saya suka belajar melalui catatan nota.	4 3 2 1
7. Saya suka belajar dengan mendengar syarahan.	4 3 2 1
8. Saya suka guru memberi penerangan yang perinci kepada saya.	4 3 2 1
9. Saya suka diberi masalah oleh guru untuk diselesaikan.	4 3 2 1
10. Saya suka guru meminta saya bercerita tentang kegemaran saya.	4 3 2 1
11. Saya suka guru memberitahu saya mengenai kesilapan saya.	4 3 2 1

12. Saya suka diberi peluang untuk mencari kesilapan saya sendiri. 4 3 2 1

13. Saya suka belajar Bahasa Inggeris secara bersendirian. 4 3 2 1

14. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan bertutur dalam pasangan. 4 3 2 1

15. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris secara berkumpulan. 4 3 2 1

16. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan seluruh kelas . 4 3 2 1

17. Saya suka keluar dengan kelas dan mengamal perbualan Bah. Inggeris. 4 3 2 1

18. Saya suka belajar nahu/tatabahasa Bah. Inggeris. 4 3 2 1

19. Saya suka belajar banyak perkataan baru. 4 3 2 1

20. Saya suka mengamal bunyi dan cara sebutan Bahasa Inggeris. 4 3 2 1

21. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris melalui penglihatan. 4 3 2 1

22. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris melalui pendengaran. 4 3 2 1

23. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris melalui penglibatan dalam aktiviti-aktiviti yang berkaitan. 4 3 2 1

24. Di rumah, saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan membaca surat khabar dll. 4 3 2 1

25. Di rumah, saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan menonton rancangan–rancangan Inggeris di telivisyen. 4 3 2 1

26. Di rumah, saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan mendengar kaset.	4 3 2 1
27. Di rumah, saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan membaca buku-buku Inggeris.	4 3 2 1
28. Saya suka belajar dengan bertutur dengan kawan-kawan dalam Bah. Inggeris.	4 3 2 1
29. Saya suka belajar dengan memerhati dan mendengar mereka yang fasih dalam Bah. Inggeris.	4 3 2 1
30. Saya suka belajar Bah. Inggeris dengan menggunanya dalam pergaulan harian.	4 3 2 1

Soal-selidik 2 : Pendekatan Pembelajaran

Di bahagian ini, sila nyatakan setakat mana anda bersetuju dengan setiap kenyataan di bawah. Berjawab berhubung <u>Pembelajaran secara am.</u>

4 bermaksud **'sangat bersetuju'**
3 bermaksud **'bersetuju'**
2 bermaksud **'tidak bersetuju'**
1 bermaksud **'sangat tidak bersetuju'**

Bulatkan nombor pilihan anda.

1. Saya diserapkan ke pengajian tinggi dengan tidak memikirkan apa yang saya idamkan.	4	3	2	1
2. Tujuan utama saya berada di universiti ialah untuk mempelajari subjek yang saya minati.	4	3	2	1
3. Ide-ide yang terkandungan di dalam buku rujukan dan petikan sentiasa membangkitkan pemikiran saya.	4	3	2	1
4. Cara yang terbaik bagi saya memahami makna sesuatu perkataan teknikal adalah untuk mengingat definasi yang terdapat dalam buku teks.	4	3	2	1
5. Tujuan utama saya memasuki universiti adalah untuk mendapat pekerjaan yang baik.	4	3	2	1
6. Semasa membaca buku atau sesuatu petikan, saya cuba memahami apa yang dimaksudkan.	4	3	2	1
7. Saya lebih suka diberitahu apa yang perlu dibuat dalam sesuatu tugasan kerja.	4	3	2	1

8. Semasa kuliah, saya tidak pasti apa yang mustahak, maka saya cuba menyalin seberapa banyak yang boleh.	4	3	2	1
9. Saya sentiasa dapat memperolehi buku-buku atau bahan-bahan yang diperlukan untuk pembelajaran.	4	3	2	1
10. Apabila diimbas kembali, saya kadang-kadang tertanya-tanya kenapa saya memasuki universiti.	4	3	2	1
11. Saya berusaha untuk memastikan saya menguasai fakta-fakta penting.	4	3	2	1
12. Apabila membaca, saya meneliti fakta-fakta dengan cermat sebelum membuat kesimpulan mengenai apa yang dipelajari.	4	3	2	1
13. Kadangkala saya berasa risau tentang samada saya berkeupayaan untuk mengikuti kursus dengan sempurna.	4	3	2	1
14. Saya tahu apa yang saya inginkan daripada kursus ini dan saya berazam untuk mencapainya	4	3	2	1
15. Pada amnya, saya dapati tugasan-tugasan yang diberi mudah.	4	3	2	1
16. Biasanya saya membaca sesuatu dengan tidak cuba memahaminya.	4	3	2	1
17. Pada amnya, saya akan cuba sedaya upaya untuk memahami sesuatu saya anggap susah pada mulanya.	4	3	2	1
18. Saya membuat kerja tugasan sepanjang kursus dan tidak menunggu sehingga saat-saat terakhir.	4	3	2	1

19. Saya menghabiskan banyak masa mengulang atau menyalin sesuatu untuk membantu saya mengingat apa yang telah dipelajari.	4	3	2	1
20. Saya tidak akan menerima sesuatu yang diberitahu; tanpa memikirkan maksudnya.	4	3	2	1
21. Saya cuba menggunakan masa siang hari dengan sepenuhnya.	4	3	2	1
22. Saya mempunyai cara teratur dan sistematik untuk belajar.	4	3	2	1
23. Semasa mempelajari sesuatu topik baru, saya menghadapi kesukaran memahami konsep dengan sepenuhnya.	4	3	2	1
24. Pada keseluruhannya, saya boleh memahami apa yang dipelajari.	4	3	2	1
25. Ada kalanya saya memikirkan ide-ide yang saya dapat dari kursus ini apabila melakukan kerja lain.	4	3	2	1
26. Saya memilih pengajian ini untuk memperolehi pekerjaan yang baik.	4	3	2	1
27. Saya lebih suka kursus yang dirancang dan disusun dengan rapi.	4	3	2	1
28 Semasa membaca, saya meninjau konsep dengan teliti untuk melihat perkaitan ide dengan apa yang telah diajar.	4	3	2	1
29. Saya berasa cemas jika ketinggalan dalam sesuatu kerja atau tugasan.	4	3	2	1
30. Saya suka cabaran; saya dapati ia merangsangkan.	4	3	2	1

31. Saya memilih kursus yang boleh memenuhi kehendak pekerjaan walaupun bukan minat saya.	4	3	2	1
32. Walaupun saya boleh mengingat fakta-fakta dengan terperinci, saya biasanya tidak memahami sesuatu sepenuhnya.	4	3	2	1
33. Sehingga kini, saya berjaya memahami perkara-perkara yang saya pelajari.	4	3	2	1
34. Saya belajar dengan bersungguh-sungguh dan dapat menumpukan perhatian pada sesuatu tugasan.	4	3	2	1
35. Saya biasanya menghadapi masalah untuk memahami perkara yang perlu saya ingat.	4	3	2	1
36. Saya mengikuti pengajian ini untuk memenuhi kehendak orang lain dan bukan kerana saya meminatinya.	4	3	2	1
37. Biasanya saya dapati terlalu banyak bahan yang perlu dibelajari dalam kursus ini.	4	3	2	1
38. Saya cuba mengaitkan ide yang dipelajari didalam kursus ini dengan tajuk atau kursus lain yang saya ikuti.	4	3	2	1
39. Saya sentiasa menyemak jadual kursus untuk mempastikan saya membaca bahan yang diperlukan.	4	3	2	1
40. Saya lebih berminat dengan kelayakan yang akan saya perolehi daripada menerokai isi kursus yang saya ikuti.	4	3	2	1
41. Saya tidak menghadapi masalah memahami maklumat dan ide baru.	4	3	2	1

Soal-selidik 3: Persepsi Terhadap Kursus

Bahagian I

Di bahagian in, sila nyatakan setakat mana anda bersetuju dengan setiap kenyataan di bawah. Berjawab berhubung <u>Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris.</u>

4 bermaksud **'sangat bersetuju'**
3 bermaksud **'bersetuju'**
2 bermaksud **'tidak bersetuju'**
1 bermaksud **'sangat tidak bersetuju'**

Bulatkan nombor pilihan anda.

1. Kebanyakan tenaga pengajar dari JKBI (Jabatan Kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris) sedia menerima cadangan dari kami untuk membaiki teknik mengajar dan bahan-bahan mengajar.	4	3	2	1
2. Sebagai pelajar saya menghadapi banyak tekanan.	4	3	2	1
3. Saya sentiasa tahu taraf kerja yang diperlukan.	4	3	2	1
4. JKBI memberi peluang untuk kami memilih bahagian khusus yang ingin kami pelajari.	4	3	2	1
5. Tenaga pengajar dari JKBI sedia memberi pertolongan dan nasihat mengenai pendekatan belajar.	4	3	2	1
6. Saya sentiasa tahu matlamat saya dan apa yang diperlukan dari saya di JKBI ini.	4	3	2	1
7. Tenaga pengajar dari JKBI, pada amnya, memandang berat terhadap pendapat dan minat kami.	4	3	2	1
8. JKBI memberi kami peluang untuk mengguna cara belajar yang sesuai untuk kami.	4	3	2	1

9. Beban kerja dari JKBI terlalu berat.	4	3	2	1
10. Komponen mengajar/belajar yang ditawar oleh JKBI cukup untuk keperluan saya.	4	3	2	1
11. Tenaga pengajar dari JKBI bijak mengubah-suai pengajaran/bahan-bahan	4	3	2	1
12. Kebanyakan pengajar di JKBI cuba sedaya-upaya untuk berkenalan dengan kami.	4	3	2	1
13. Saya sering mengguna bahan pengajaran (yang termasuk buku teks, panduan kursus, panduan belajar , dan bahan pandang-dengar) yang di bekal oleh JKBI.	4	3	2	1
14. Terdapat terlalu banyak tugasan bertulis sehingga tidak terdapat masa untuk saya membaca.	4	3	2	1
15 Tenaga pengajar biasanya memberitahu kami apa yang patut dipelajari.	4	3	2	1
16. Lebih banyak komponen mengajar/pelajar ~~perlu~~ dibekalkan.	4	3	2	1
17. Kami diberi banyak peluang dalam memilih tugasan.	4	3	2	1
18. Kebanyakan tenaga pengajar membuat persiapan mengajar/bahan-bahan mengajar dengan teliti.	4	3	2	1
19. Tenaga pelajar sentiasa berbincang dengan pelajar bagaimana merancang kursus.	4	3	2	1
20. Komponen mengajar/belajar sangat berguna.	4	3	2	1
21. Kami mempunyai banyak pilihan untuk menentukan cara belajar yang sesuai.	4	3	2	1
22. Tenaga pengajar pada amnya memberitahu kami dari awalnya apa yang diharapkan.	4	3	2	1
23. Sukatan yang dipelajari mengandungi terlalu banyak tajuk.	4	3	2	1
24. Tenaga pengajar cuba sedaya upaya untuk memahami masalah yang dihadapi oleh kami.	4	3	2	1

42. Saya tidak banyak membaca lebih daripada apa yang dikehendaki untuk menyiapkan sesuatu tugasan kerja.	4	3	2	1
43. Saya menyusun masa belajar dengan teliti untuk mendapat faedah maksima.	4	3	2	1
44. Semasa mempelajari sesuatu tajuk baru, saya cuba mengait ide-ide yang ada dan melihat kesinambungannya.	4	3	2	1
45. Adalah penting bagi saya untuk merasa yang saya boleh mengikuti kursus-kursus dengan sebaik mungkin.	4	3	2	1
46. Biasanya saya cuba memahami apa yang perlu saya pelajari	4	3	2	1
47. Saya dapati saya perlu menghafal kebanyakan perkara yang saya perlu	4	3	2	1
48. Memasuki universiti bukan pilihan saya tetapi untuk memenuhi kehendak orang lain dan disebabkan tiada pilihan lain.	4	3	2	1
49. Saya biasanya berasa risau dengan kerja tugasan yang saya fikir saya tidak dapat siapkan.	4	3	2	1
50. Saya pastikan keadaan sesuai untuk pembelajaran supaya tugasan dapat dibuat dengan mudah.	4	3	2	1
51. Semasa membuat sesuatu tugasan, saya cuba ingat apa yang dikehendaki oleh guru.	4	3	2	1
52. Saya biasanya tidak memikirkan mengenai implikasi dalam apa yang telah saya baca.	4	3	2	1
53. Adalah penting untuk saya memahami hujah-hujah dalam sesuatu perkara.	4	3	2	1

Appendix 6B

Revisions made to Willing's questionnaire and reasons for the changes.

All Willing's questions were used except for the following two:

Q 7 I like to have my own textbook.

Q 45 I try to understand the Australian way of life.

I felt that Question 7 could not be considered as a type of classroom activity in the same manner as the rest of the questions (i.e. questions 1-6). In replacement I came up with the following question which I felt was a more appropriate classroom activity.

Q7 In English class, I like to learn by listening to lectures.

As for question 45, it was left out because it was unsuitable for my sample population

The questions I revised and the reasons for doing so are given in the figure in the following page.

Original version	Revised version	Reason for change
2. In class, I like to listen and use cassettes.	2. In English class, I like to learn by listening to cassettes.	revised version sufficiently conveys the desired meaning.
3. In class, I like to learn by games.	3. In class, I like to learn by taking part in activities.	revised version is less awkward and covers a wider scope.
4. In class, I like to learn by conversations.	4. In English class, I like to learn by taking part in conversations and discussions.	revised version is less awkward and covers a wider scope.
5. In class, I learn by pictures, films and videos.	5. In English class, I like to learn by viewing pictures, films and videos.	revised version is less awkward.
6. I want to write everything in my notebook.	6. In English class, I like to learn by taking down notes.	revised version describes a type of learning activity whereas the original doesn't seem to.
20. I like to practise the sounds and pronunciation.	20. I like to practise the sounds and pronunciation of English words.	revised version is more specific.
26. At home, I like to learn by using cassettes.	26. At home, I like to learn by listening to cassettes.	revised version is clearer.
28. I like to learn by talking to friends in English.	28. I like to English by talking to friends.	revised version is more specific.
29. I like to learn by watching, listening to Australians.	29. I like to learn by watching and listening to people proficient in English.	revised version is more appropriate for the Malaysian context.
30. I like to learn by using English in shops/CES trains.	30. I like to learn English by using it in my daily life.	revised version is more appropriate for the Malaysian context.

Appendix 6C

Discipline*Proficiency*Learning Styles Crosstabulation for distance learners

Discipline	Proficiency level	'analytical-communicative learners'		'communicative-authority-oriented learners'		'pseudo-authority-oriented learners'		'pseudo-concrete learners'	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Soc. Sc.	Low	34	35.8	43	45.3	4	4.2	14	14.7
	Average	17	50.0	12	35.5	3	8.8	2	5.9
	High	9	56.3	4	25.0	2	12.5	1	6.3
Appl.Sc.	Low	12	52.2	2	8.7	4	17.4	5	21.7
	Average	10	50.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	3	15.0
	High	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.3	0	0
Bus.Adm.	Low	28	42.4	28	42.4	6	9.1	4	6.1
	Average	18	46.2	15	38.5	1	2.6	5	12.8
	High	10	62.5	4	25.0	1	6.3	1	6.3

Appendix 6D

Discipline*Proficiency*Learning Styles Crosstabulation for on-campus learners

Discipline	Proficiency level	'analytical-communicative learners'		'communicative-authority-oriented learners'		'pseudo-authority-oriented learners'		'pseudo-concrete learners'	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Soc.Sc.	Low	8	25.8	9	29.0	12	38.7	2	6.5
	Average	11	47.8	7	30.4	3	13.0	2	8.7
	High	8	40.0	6	30.0	3	15.0	3	15.0
Appl. Sc.	Low	14	32.6	17	39.5	10	23.3	2	4.7
	Average	12	19.7	24	39.3	13	21.3	12	19.7
	High	8	22.2	15	41.7	7	19.4	6	16.7
Bus.Adm.	Low	15	32.6	12	26.1	10	21.7	9	19.6
	Average	19	38.0	14	28.0	11	22.0	6	12.0
	High	23	38.3	25	41.7	11	18.3	1	1.7

Appendix 7A

Factor loadings of study strategy scales of Entwistle and Ramsden's second inventory (1983:39)

Sub-scale	I	II	III	IV
Deep approach	62		33	
Comprehension learning	73			
Intrinsic motivation	54		47	
Internality	61			
Openness	50			
Surface approach		67		
Operation learning		67		
Extrinsic motivation		61		
Fear of failure		36		-32
Syllabus-boundness	-41	50		
Strategic approach				
Organised study methods			64	
Achievement motivation			45	
Disillusioned attitudes			-55	
Sociability				58

Note: A negative sign indicates that the direction has to be reversed (For example, Factor I is associated with the reverse of syllabus- boundedness, which is syllabus-freedom).

Appendix 7B

Meanings of the subscales of the Approaches to studying Inventory (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983:180)

Subscale	Meaning
Deep approach	Active questioning in learning
Relating ideas	Relating to other parts of course
Use of evidence	Relating evidence to conclusions
Intrinsic motivation	Interest in learning for learning's sake
Surface approach	Preoccupation with memorisation
Syllabus-boundedness	Relying on staff to define learning tasks
Fear of failure	Pessimism and anxiety about academic outcomes
Extrinsic motivation	Interest in courses for the qualifications they offer
Strategic approach	Awareness of implications of academic demands made by staff
Disorganised study methods	Unable to work regularly and effectively
Negative attitudes to studying	Lack of interest and application
Achievement motivation	Competitive and confident
Comprehension learning	Readiness to map out subject area and think divergently
Globetrotting	Over-ready to jump to conclusions
Operation learning	Emphasis on facts and logical analysis
Improvidence	Over-cautious reliance on details

Appendix 7C

A model of styles and approaches to studying (by Entwistle, Hanley and Hounsell, 1979)

Approach or Style	Process		Outcome
	Stage I	Stage II	
Deep approach/ Versatile	All four processes below used appropriately to reach understanding		Deep level of understanding
Comprehension Learning	Building overall description of content area	Reorganising incoming Information to relate to previous knowledge or experience and establishing personal meaning	Incomplete understanding attributable to globetrotting
Operation learning	Detailed attention to evidence and steps in the argument	Relating evidence to conclusion and maintaining a critical, objective stance	Incomplete understanding attributable to providence
Surface approach	Memorisation	Overlearning	Surface level of understanding

Appendix 7D

Items contained in the final version of the approaches to studying inventory (ASI) (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983)

	MEANING ORIENTATION	Corrected* item-scale total correlation
	Deep Approach (Cronbach Alpha = 0.56)	
DA1	I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand things which initially seem difficult	0.38
DA2	I often find myself questioning things that I hear in lectures or read in books	0.30
DA3	I usually set out to understand thoroughly the meaning of what I am asked to read.	0.37
DA4	When I'm tackling a new topic, I often ask myself questions about it which the new information should answer	0.33
	Relating Ideas (0.47)	
RI1	I try to relate ideas in one subject to those in others, whenever possible	0.31
RI2	In trying to understand new ideas, I often try to relate them to real life situations to which they might apply	0.24
RI3	I need to read around a subject pretty widely before I'm ready to put my ideas down on paper	0.20
RI4	I find it helpful to 'map out' a new topic for myself by seeing how the ideas fit together	0.30
	Use of Evidence (0.38)	
UE1	In reporting practical work, I like to try to work out several alternative ways of interpreting the findings	0.23
UE2	I am usually cautious in drawing conclusions unless they are well supported by evidence	0.13

* Corrected to remove contribution of that item to scale total

Use of Evidence (0.38) (continued)

UE3	Puzzles or problems fascinate me, particularly where you have to work through the material to reach a logical conclusion	0.19
UE4	When I'm reading an article or research report I generally examine the evidence carefully to decide whether the conclusion is justified	0.27

Intrinsic Motivation (0.72)

IM1	My main reason for being here is so that I can learn more about the subjects which really interest me	0.49
IM2	I find that studying academic topics can often be really exciting and gripping	0.55
IM3	I spend a good deal of my spare time in finding out more about interesting topics which have been discussed in classes	0.44
IM4	I find academic topics so interesting, I should like to continue with them after I finish this course	0.56

REPRODUCING ORIENTATION

Surface Approach (0.49)

SA1	Lecturers seem to delight in making the simple truth unnecessarily complicated	0.21
SA2	I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what we have to learn	0.32
SA3	When I'm reading I try to memorise important facts which may come in useful later	0.13
SA4	The best way for me to understand what technical terms mean is to remember the text-book definitions	0.24
SA5	I usually don't have time to think about the implications of what I have read	0.28
SA6	Often I find I have read things without having a chance to really understand them	0.32

Syllabus-Boundness (0.51)

SB1	I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments	0.38
SB2	I prefer courses to be clearly structured and highly organised	0.33
SB3	I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments	0.27

Fear of Failure (0.45)

FF1	The continual pressure of work-assignments, deadlines and competition often makes me tense and depressed	0.30
FF2	A poor first answer in an exam makes me panic	0.30
FF3	Having to speak in tutorials is quite an ordeal for me	0.22

Achievement Motivation (Q.58)

AM1	I enjoy competition: I find it stimulating	0.43
AM2	It's important to me to do really well in the courses here	0.32
AM3	It is important to me to do things better than my friends	0.48
AM4	I hate admitting defeat, even in trivial matters	0.25

STYLES AND PATHOLOGIES OF LEARNING

Comprehension Learning (Q.65)

CL1	Ideas in books often set me off on long chains of thought of my own, only tenuously related to what I was reading	0.45
CL2	In trying to understand a puzzling idea, I let my imagination wander freely to begin with, even if I don't seem to be much nearer a solution	0.39

Comprehension Learning (Q.65) (continued)

CL3	I like to play around with ideas of my own even if they don't get me very far	0.47
CL4	Often when I'm reading books, the ideas produce vivid images which sometimes take on a life of their own	0.41

Globetrotting (Q.36)

GT1	Although I have a fairly good general idea of many things, my knowledge of the details is rather weak	0.13
GT2	In trying to understand new topics, I often explain them to myself in ways that other people don't seem to follow	0.16
GT3	I often get criticised for introducing irrelevant material into my essays or tutorials	0.25
GT4	I seem to be a bit too ready to jump to conclusions without waiting for all the evidence	0.24

Operation Learning (Q.49)

OL1	I generally prefer to tackle each part of a topic or problem in order, working out one at a time	0.32
OL2	I prefer to follow well tried out approaches to problems rather than anything too adventurous	0.29
OL3	I find it better to start straight away with the details of a new topic and build up an overall picture in that way	0.18
OL4	I think it is important to look at problems rationally and logically without making intuitive jumps	0.34

Extrinsic Motivation (0.78)

EM1	I chose my present courses mainly to give me a chance of a really good job afterwards	0.63
EM2	My main reason for being here is that it will help me to get a better job	0.67
EM3	I generally choose courses more from the way they fit in with career plans than from my own interests	0.58
EM4	I suppose I am more interested in the qualifications I'll get than in the courses I'm taking	0.46

ACHIEVING ORIENTATION

Strategic Approach (0.32)

ST1	Lecturers sometimes give indications of what is likely to come up in exams, so I look out for what may be hints	0.16
ST2	When I'm doing a piece of work, I try to bear in mind exactly what that particular lecturer seems to want	0.16
ST3	If conditions aren't right for me to study, I generally manage to do something to change them	0.18
ST4	One way or another I manage to get hold of the books I need for studying	0.16

Disorganised Study Methods (0.71) (reversed scoring)

DS1	I find it difficult to organise my study time effectively	0.52
DS2	My habit of putting off work leaves me with far too much to do at the end of term	0.50
DS3	Distractions make it difficult for me to do much effective work in the evenings	0.46
DS4	I'm rather slow at starting work in the evenings	0.52

Negative Attitudes to Studying (0.60) (reversed scoring)

NA1	Often I find myself wondering whether the work I am doing here is really worthwhile	0.44
NA2	Continuing my education was something which happened to me, rather than something I really wanted for myself	0.37
NA3	When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here	0.48
NA4	I certainly want to pass the next set of exams, but it doesn't really matter if I only just scrape through	0.25

Improvidence (Q 42)

IP1	Although I generally remember facts and details, I find it difficult to fit them together into an overall picture	- 0.25
IP2	I find it difficult to "switch tracks" when working on a problem: I prefer to follow each line of thought as far as it will go	0.19

Improvidence (Q 42) (continued)

IP3	Tutors seem to want me to be more adventurous in making use of my own ideas	0.22
IP4	I find I tend to remember things best if I concentrate on the order in which the lecturer presented them	0.26

Appendix 7E

Correlations between approaches to studying and indices of academic progress in Britain and Australia (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983)

	Arts		Social Sci.		Science		British
	Brit (N=491)	Aus (295)	Brit (852)	Aus (89)	Brit (865)	Aus (156)	Total (2208)
'A' level Grades	15	-	10	-	24	-	
Meaning Orientation							
Deep Approach	30	11	23	11	21	15	24
Relating Ideas	07	07	19	12	10	-08	12
Use of Evidence	16	07	17	12	13	02	15
Intrinsic Motivation	26	21	31	16	24	13	26
Reproducing Orientation							
Surface Approach	-27	-22	-13	-27	-20	-23	-19
Syllabus-boundness	-34	-17	-24	-06	-14	-07	-22
Fear of Failure	-25	-10	-15	-14	-15	-12	-18
Extrinsic Motivation	-13	-22	-09	-07	-06	-04	-09
Achieving Orientation							
Strategic Approach	09	02	20	09	27	00	19
Disorganized Study Methods	-22	-18	-34	-27	-37	-34	-32
Negative Attitudes to Studying	-26	-25	-33	-23	-30	-30	-29
Achievement Motivation	16	04	25	18	20	28	20
Styles and Pathologies							
Comprehension Learning	15	03	08	16	05	00	08
Globetrotting	-18	-25	-11	-03	-19	-19	-16
Operation Learning	-16	-09	-03	-03	06	-12	-04
Improvidence	-23	-10	-06	-18	-17	-27	-15
Significant for r>	.12	.15	.09	.27	.09	.21	.06
Multiple Correlation	-	.41	-	.47	-	.54	-

Appendix 8A

Items of the Revised Approaches to Studying Inventory (RASI) (Entwistle and Tait, 1994)

Item No.	Item wording
Subgroup: Deep Approach (10 items)	
Looking for meaning	
30	I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.
19	When I'm reading an article or book, I try to work out for myself exactly what's being said.
Active interest/critical stance	
5	Sometimes I find myself thinking about ideas from the course when I'm doing other things.
1	I'm not prepared just to accept things I'm told; I have to think them out for myself.
Relating and organising ideas	
13	I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses whenever possible.
25	When I'm working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.
28	Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thought about what I'm reading.
Using evidence and logic	
38	I look at the evidence carefully and then try to reach my own conclusions about things I'm studying.
32	When I'm reading, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said.
35	It's important for me to be able to follow the argument or see the reasoning behind something.
Subgroup: Surface Approach (10 items)	
Relying on memorising	
26	I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what I have to learn.
20	I spend quite a lot of time repeating or copying out things to help me remember them.
Difficulty in making sense	
22	Often I find myself reading things without really trying to understand them.
6	I often have trouble in making sense of the things I have to remember.
Unrelatedness	
9	Although I can remember facts and details, I often can't see any overall picture.
23	I'm not really sure what's important, so I try to get down just as much as I can in lectures.

Concern about coping

17 Sometimes I worry about whether I'll ever be able to to cope with the work properly.
3 Often I feel I'm drowning in the sheer amount of material we're having to cope with on this course.
33 I often seem to panic if I get behind with my work.
7 Often I lie awake worrying about work I think I won't be able to do.

Subgroup: Strategic Approach (10 items)

Determination to excel

27 It's important to me to feel I'm doing as well as I really can in the courses here.
21 I know what I want to get out of this course and I'm determined to achieve it.

Effort in studying

14 I put a lot of effort into making sure I have the most important details at my finger tips.
24 I work hard when I'm studying and generally manage to keep my mind on what I'm doing.

Organised studying

10 I make sure I find conditions for studying which let me get on with my work easily.
2 One way or another I manage to get hold of books or whatever I need for studying.
31 I think I'm quite systematic and organised in the way I go about studying.

Time management

18 I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.
34 I generally try to make use of my time during the day.
37 I work steadily throughout the course, rather than leaving everything until the last minute.

Subgroup: Lack of Direction (4 items)

29 I rather drifted into higher education without deciding for myself what I really wanted to do.
36 I think I'm on this course more to please other people than because I really wanted it myself.
11 When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.
15 Coming here wasn't really my choice: more other people's expectations and no obvious alternative.

Subgroup: Academic Self-Confidence (4 items)

4 So far, I seem to have a good grasp of the subjects I'm studying.
8 Generally, I find the set work easy to do.
16 I don't usually have much difficulty in making sense of new information or ideas.
12 I seem to be able to grasp things for myself pretty well on the whole.

Notes

1. The subgroup, Deep Approach, contains items 1, 5, 13, 19, 25, 28, 30, 32, 35 and 38. All items are scored in a positive sense.
2. The subgroup, Surface Approach, contains items 3, 6, 7, 9, 17, 20, 22, 23, 26 and 33. All items are scored in a negative sense; that is, these items are reverse scored.
3. The subgroup, Strategic Approach, contains items 2, 10, 14, 18, 21, 24, 27, 34 and 37. All items are scored in a positive sense.
4. The subgroup, Lack of Direction, contains items 11, 15, 29 and 36. Items 29 and 36 are reverse scored.
5. The subgroup, Academic Self-Confidence, contains items 4, 8, 12 and 16. All items are scored in a positive sense.

Appendix 8B

Comparison of the composition of RASI and NASI and the explanation of changes undertaken

The RASI	The NASI
Scale 1: Deep Approach	**Scale 1: Deep Approach**
Subscale 1: Looking for Meaning	**Subscale 1: Looking for Meaning**
30. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.	46. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.
19. When I'm reading an article or book, I try to work out for myself exactly what's being said.	6. When I'm reading an article or book, I try to work out for myself exactly what's being said.
	17. I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand what initially seem difficult.
Subscale II : Active Interest/Critical stance	**Subscale II : Active Interest/Critical stance**
5. Sometimes I find myself thinking of ideas from the course when I'm doing other things.	25. Sometimes I find myself thinking of ideas from the course when I'm doing other things.
1. I'm not prepared just to accept things I'm told; I have to think them out myself.	19. I'm not prepared just to accept things I'm told; I have to think them out myself.
	2. My main reason for being in university is to learn more about subjects that interest me.
Scale III: Relating and Organising Ideas	**Scale III: Relating and Organising Ideas**
13. I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses wherever possible.	38. I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses wherever possible.
25. When I'm working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.	44. When I'm working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.
28. Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thoughts about what I' reading.	3. Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thoughts about what I' reading.

Subscale IV: Using Evidence and Logic	Subscale IV: Using Evidence and Logic
38. I look at the evidence carefully and then try to reach my own conclusions about things I'm studying.	12. I look at the evidence carefully and then try to reach my own conclusions about things I'm studying.
32. When I'm reading, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said.	28. When I'm reading, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said.
35. It's important for me to be able to follow the argument to see the reasoning behind something.	53. It's important for me to be able to follow the argument to see the reasoning behind something.

Fig. A8.1 Comparison of Scale 1 of the RASI and the Revised Version of the RASI

Fig. A8.1 shows the changes made to Scale 1 of the RASI. As can be seen from the Figure, ' I generally put a lot of effort into trying to understand things which initially seem difficult' (which was from the ASI) was added to Subscale I. The emphasis in this item was on 'something that initially seem difficult', which had not been mentioned by the other two items. 'My main reason for being in University is to learn more about subjects that really interest me' (from ASI) was added to Subscale II since its focus was on an issue not considered by the other two items. No items were added to Subscale III and IV as there were sufficient number of items in these categories.

The RASI	The NASI
Scale 2: Surface Approach	**Scale 2: Surface Approach**
Subscale 1: Relying on Memorising	**Subscale 1: Relying on Memorising**
26. I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what I have to learn.	47. I find I have to concentrate on memorising a good deal of what I have to learn.
20. I spend quite a lot of time repeating or copying out things to help me remember them.	20. I spend quite a lot of time repeating or copying out things to help me remember them.
	4. The best way for me to understand the meaning of technical terms is to remember the textbook definitions.

Subscale II : Difficulty in making sense 22. Often I find myself reading things without really trying to understand them. 6. I often have troubles in making sense of the things I have to remember.	**Subscale II : Difficulty in making sense** 16. Often I find myself reading things without really trying to understand them. 35. I often have troubles in making sense of the things I have to remember. 52. I usually don't think about the implications of what I have to read.
Subscale III: Unrelatedness 9. Although I can remember facts and details, I often can't see any overall picture. 23. I'm not really sure what's important, so I tryto get down just as much as I can in lectures.	**Subscale III: Unrelatedness** 32. Although I can remember facts and details, I often can't see any overall picture. 7. I'm not really sure what's important, so I try to get down just as much as I can in lectures. 23. When learning a new topic, I find it difficult to see how the ideas fit together.
Subscale IV: Concerning about coping 17. Sometimes I worry about whether I'll ever be able to cope with the work properly. 3. Often I feel I'm drowning in the sheer amount of material we're having to cope with on the course. 33. I often seem to panic if I get behind in my work. 7. Often I lie awake worrying about work I won't be able to do.	**Subscale IV: Concerning about coping** 13. Sometimes I worry about whether I'll ever be able to cope with the work properly. 37. Often I feel I'm drowning in the sheer amount of material we're having to cope with on the course. 29. I often seem to panic if I get behind in my work. 49. Often I lie awake worrying about work I won't be able to do.

Fig.A8.2 Comparison of Scale 2 of the RASI and the Revised Version of the RASI.

Fig.A8.2 shows the changes made to Scale 2 of the RASI. 'The best way for me to understand what technical terms mean is to remember the text-book definitions' (from the ASI) was added to Subscale I as this aspect had not been sufficiently covered by the other two items. For the same reason 'I usually don't have time to think about the implications of what I have read' (from the ASI in Subscale II) was added to subscale II.

For Subscale III, since there were were only two items, an extra item, very pertinent to the issue of unrelatedness, i.e. 'When learning a new topic, I find it difficult to see how the ideas fit together.' was added. As for subscale IV, the four items given sufficiently covered the scope and hence there was no necessity to add any more.

The RASI	The NASI
Scale 3: Strategic Approach	**Scale 3: Strategic Approach**
Subscale 1: Determination to excel	**Subscale 1: Determination to excel**
27. It's important to feel I'm doing as well as I really can in the courses here.	45. It's important to feel I'm doing as well as I really can in the courses here.
21. I know what I want to get out of this course and I'm determined to achieve it.	14. I know what i want to get out of this course and I'm determined to achieve it.
	30. I enjoy competition; I find it stimulating.
Subscale II : Effort in studying	**Subscale II : Effort in studying**
14. I put a lot of effort into making sure I have the most important details at my finger tips.	11. I put a lot of effort into making sure I have the most important details at my finger tips.
24. I work hard when I'm studying and generally manage to keep my mind on what I'm doing.	34. I work hard when I'm studying and generally manage to keep my mind on what I'm doing.
	51. When I'm doing a piece of work, I try to bear in mind exactly what it particularly wants.
Subscale III: Organised studying	**Subscale III: Organised studying**
10. I make sure I find conditions for studying which let me get on with my work easily.	50. I make sure I find conditions for studying which let me get on with my work easily.
2. One way or another I manage to get hold of books or whatever I need for studying.	9. One way or another I manage to get hold of books or whatever I need for studying.
31. I think I'm quite systematic and organised in the way I go about studying.	22. I think I'm quite systematic and organised in the way I go about studying.
Subscale IV: Time Management	**Subscale IV: Time Management**
18. I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.	43. I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.
34. I generally try to make use of my time during the day	21. I generally try to make use of my time during the day
37. I work steaditly throughout the course, rather than leaving everything until the last minute.	18. I work steaditly throughout the course, rather than leaving everything until the last minute.

Fig.A8.3 Comparison of Scale 3 of the RASI and the Revised Version of the RASI.

Fig.A8.3 shows the changes made to Scale 3 of the RASI. 'I enjoy competition: I find it stimulating' (from the ASI) was added into Subscale I as it covered an area not dealt with by the other two items. 'When I'm doing a piece of work, I try to bear in mind exactly what that particular teacher wants' (from ASI) was added to Subscale II for the same reason. No items were added to Subscale III and IV since sufficient items had been given.

Other Scales

The RASI	The NASI
Scale 4: Lack of direction	**Scale 4: Lack of direction**
29. I rather drifted into higher education without deciding for myself what I really wanted to do.	1. I rather drifted into higher education without deciding for myself what I really wanted to do.
36. I think I'm on this course more to please others than because I really wanted it myself.	36. I think I'm on this course more to please others than because I really wanted it myself.
15. Coming here wasn't really my choice: more other people's expectations and no obvious alternative.	48. Coming here wasn't really my choice: more other people's expectations and no obvious alternative.
11. When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.	10. When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.
Scale 5: Academic self-confidence	**Scale 5: Academic self-confidence**
4. So far, I seem to have a good grasp of the subjects I'm studying.	33. So far, I seem to have a good grasp of the subjects I'm studying.
8. Generally, I find the set work easy to do.	15. Generally, I find the set work easy to do.
16. I don't usually have much difficulty inmaking sense of new information or new ideas.	41. I don't usually have much difficulty inmaking sense of new information or new ideas.
12. I seem to be able to grasp things for myself pretty well on the whole.	24. I seem to be able to grasp things for myself pretty well on the whole.

	Scale 6: Syllabus-boundedness 8. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments. 27. I prefer courses to be clearly structured and highly organised. 42. I tend to read very little beyond what's required for completing assignments. 39. I constantly check the course schedule to make sure I'm reading what is required of me.
	Scale 7: Extrinsic Motivation 26. I chose my present courses mainly to give me a chance of a really good job afterwards. 5. My main reason for being here is that it will help me to get a better job. 31. I generally choose courses more from the way they fit in with my career plans than from my own interests. 40. I supposed I am more interested in the qualifications I'll get than in the courses I'm taking.

Fig.A8.4 Comparison of the other Scales of the RASI and the Revised Version of the RASI.

Fig.A8.4 shows the changes made to the other Scales of the RASI. As can be seen, Scale 4:Lack of Direction and Scale 5:Academic Self-Confidence were maintained and two other scales i.e. Scale 6:Syllabus-boundedness and Scale 7:Extrinsic Motivation were added. Syllabus-boundedness was added as a separate group. An extra item particularly relevant to distance learners was added to this subscale: 'I constantly check the course schedule to make sure I am reading what is required of me'. Extrinsic motivation was also included as a separate group in NASI. The items in it were taken from ASI.

Appendix 9A

Items contained in the final version of the Course Perceptions Questionnaire (CPQ) (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983)

		Corrected item-scale correlation
	Formal teaching methods (alpha = 0.70)	
FT1	A great deal of my time is taken up by timetabled classes (lectures, practicals, tutorials, etc)	0.49
FT2	You can learn nearly everything you need to know from the classes and lectures; it isn't necessary to do much further reading	0.56
FT3	In this department you're expected to spend a lot of time studying on your own *	0.38
FT4	Lectures in this department are basically a guide to reading *	0.44
FT5	Lectures seem to be more important than tutorials or discussion groups in this department	0.43
	Clear goals and standards (0.76)	
CG1	You usually have a clear idea of where you're going and what's expected of you in this department	0.54
CG2	It's always easy here to know the standard of work expected of you	0.60
CG3	It's hard to know how well you're doing in the courses here *	0.42
CG4	Lecturers here usually tell students exactly what they are supposed to be learning	0.50
CG5	Lecturers here generally make it clear right from the start what will be required of students	0.58
	Workload (0.80)	
WL1	The workoad here is too heavy	0.54
WL2	It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover too many topics	0.19
WL3	There is so much written work to be done that it is very difficult to get down to independent reading	0.29

* reversed scoring

Workload (0.80) (continued)

WL4	There seems to be too much work to get through in the courses here	0.53
WL5	There's a lot of pressure on you as a student here	0.39

Vocational Relevance (0.78)

VR1	The courses in this department are geared to students' future employment	0.50
VR2	Lecturers in this department are keen to point out that they are giving us a professional training	0.34
VR3	The courses here seem to be pretty well determined by vocational requirements	0.50
VR4	The work I do here will definitely improve my future employment prospects	0.19
VR5	There seems to be considerable emphasis here on inculcating the 'right' professional attitudes	0.27

Good teaching (0.67)

GT1	Lecturers here frequently give the impression that they haven't anything to learn from students *	0.32
GT2	Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching very thoroughly	0.40
GT3	Lecturers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching at the right level for us	0.42
GT4	Staff here make a real effort to understand difficulties students may be having with their work	0.49
GT5	The lecturers in this department always seem ready to give help and advice on approaches to studying	0.47

Freedom in Learning (0.72)

FL1	There is a real opportunity in this department for students to choose the particular areas they want to study	0.48

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* reversed scoring

Freedom in Learning (0.72) (continued)

FL2	The department really seems to encourage us to develop our own academic interests as far as possible	0.38
FL3	We seem to be given a lot of choice here in the work we have to do	0.55
FL4	This department gives you a chance to use methods of study which suit your own way of learning	0.45
FL5	Students have a great deal of choice over how they are going to learn in this department	0.53

Openness to students (0.70)

OS1	Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from students for changes to their teaching methods	0.43
OS2	Staff generally consult students before making decisions about how the courses are organized	0.36
OS3	Most of the lecturers here really try hard to get to know students	0.53
OS4	Lecturers in this department seem to go out of their way to be friendly towards students	0.51
OS5	Lecturers in this department generally take students' ideas and interests seriously	0.47

Social climate (0.65)

SC1	A lot of the students in this department are friends of mine	0.40
SC2	Students from this department often get together socially	0.49
SC3	This department seems to foster a friendly climate which helps students to get to know each other	0.53
SC4	This department organizes meetings and talks which are usually well attended	0.25
SC5	Students in this department frequently discuss their work with each other	0.36

Appendix 9B

Modifications to the CPQ and reasons for the changes

Three main types of changes to the CPQ were undertaken. They were:

1. trimming of the questionnaire by rewording inappropriate or inconsistent words, rephrasing unwieldy items and removing repetitive items.
2. deleting repetitive/unsuitable questions
3. removing three groups i.e. 'Formal Teaching Methods', 'Vocational Relevance' and 'Social Climate' and adding in an extra group i.e. 'Teaching/Learning Components.

All the above changes are shown Fig. A9.1 which presents a comparison of the scales of the CPQ and the NCPQ.

Fig. A9.1 A comparison of the scales of the CPQ and the NCPQ.

Scale	Items in CPQ	Items in NCPQ
I. Clear Goals and Standard	4. You usually have a clear idea of where you're going and what is expected of you in your department.	6. I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what's expected of me in this department.
	12. It's always easy here to know the standard of work expected of you.	3. It's always easy here to know the standard of work expected of me.
	20. It's hard to know how well you're doing in the courses here.	This question was left out.
	28. Lecturers here usually tell students exactly what they are supposed to be learning.	15. Teachers here usually tell us exactly what we are supposed to be learning.
	38. Lecturers here generally make it clear right from the start what will be required of students.	22. Teacher here generally make it clear right from the start what will be required of us.
II. Workload	6. The workload here is too heavy.	9. The workload here is too heavy.
	14. It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover too many topics.	23. It sometimes seems to me that the syllabus tries to cover too many topics.
	22. There are so much written work to be done that it is very difficult to get down to independent reading.	14. There is so much written work to be done that it is very difficult to get down to independent reading.
	30. There seems to be too much work to get through in the courses here.	This question was left out.
	36. There 's a lot of pressure on you as a student.	2. There's a lot of pressure on me as a student here
III. Good Teaching	3. Lecturer have frequently give the impression that they haven't anything to learn from students.	This question was left out
	11. Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching very thoroughly.	18. Most of the staff here seem to prepare their teaching/materials very thoroughly.
	19. Lecturers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching at	11. Teachers in this department seem to be good at pitching their teaching/

	the right level for us. 27. Staff here make a real effort to understand difficulties students may be having with their work. 35. The lecturers in this department always seem ready to give help and advice on approaches to studying.	materials at the right level for us. 24. Staff here make a real effort to understand difficulties we may be having with our work. 5. The teachers in this department always seem ready to give help and advice on approaches to studying.
IV. Freedom in Learning	2. There is a real opportunity in this department for students to choose areas they want to study. 10. The department really seems to encourage us to develop our own academic interests as far as possible. 18. We seem to be given a lot of choice here in the work we have to do. 26. This department gives you a chance to use methods of study which suit your own way of learning. 34. Students have a great deal of choice over how they are going to learn in this department.	17. There is a real opportunity in this department for us to choose the particular areas we want to study. This question was left out. 4. We seem to be given a lot of choice here in the work we have to do. 8. This department gives us a chance to use methods of study which suit our own way of learning. 21. We have a great deal of choice over how we are going to learn in this department.
V. Openness to students	7. Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from students for changes to their teaching methods. 15. Staff generally consult students before making decisions about how the courses are organised. 23. Most of the lecturers here really try hard to get to know students. 31. Lecturers in this department seem to go out of their way to be friendly towards students. 40. Lecturers in this department generally take students' ideas and interest seriously.	1. Most of the staff here are receptive to suggestions from us for changes to their teaching methods. 7. Staff generally consult us before making decisions about how the courses are organised. 12. Most of the teachers here really try hard to get to know us. This question was left out. 19. Teachers in this department generally take our ideas and interest seriously.

VI. Teaching/ Learning Components		10. The teaching/learning components offered by the department is sufficient for my purpose. 13. I utilise the teaching materials (which include text, course guide, study guide, audion and video materials – whichever are relevant) provided by the department extensively. 16. A greater variety of teaching/learning components should be provided. 20. The teaching/learning components are very helpful.
VII. Social Climate	5. A lot of students in this department are friends of mine. 13. Students from this department often get together socially. 21. This department seems to foster a friendly climate which helps students to get to know each other. 29. This department organises meetings and talks which are usually well-attended. 37. Students in this department frequently discuss their work with each other.	This section was left out.
VIII. Formal Teaching Methods	1. A great deal of my time is taken up by timetabled classes(lectures, practicals, tutorials, etc. 9. You can learn nearly everything you need to know from the classes and lectures; it isn't necessary to do much further reading. 17. In this department you're expected to spend a lot of time studying on your own. 25. Lectures in this department are	This section was left out.

	basically a guide to reading. 33. Lectures seem to be more important than tutorials or discussion groups in this departments.	
IX. Vocational Relevance	6. The courses in this department are geared to students' future employment. 16. Lecturers in this department are keen to point out that they are giving us a professional training. 24. The courses here seem to be pretty well determined by vocational requirements. 32. The work I do here will definitely improve my future employment prospects. 39. There seems to be considerable emphasis here on inculcating the 'right' professional attitudes.	This section was left out.

1. Rewording inappropriate or inconsistent words and adding relevant words

As can be seen from Fig. A9.1 (refer to the underlined words), the term 'lecturers' was changed to 'teachers' which was more appropriate in the context of the learners of this study as most of them were taught by ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers. In the CPQ, Personal Pronouns Type 1 as well as Personal Pronouns Types 2 and 3 such as 'you', 'your' students', 'they', and 'their' were used to refer to learners. To avoid unnecessary confusion, the use of the Personal Pronouns Type 1 such as 'I', 'we', 'us', 'our' and 'me' were maintained wherever appropriate when

referring to the learners throughout the questionnaire. Finally, 'materials' were added wherever applicable to make the questionnaire more applicable to Distance Learners.

2. Deleting repetitive/unsuitable items

In Scale I, item 20 was left out as I felt it was asking for the same information as item 12 except that it was phrased in a negative manner.

In Scale II, item 30 was left out as I felt that this was a repetitive item. Items 6 and 22 had sufficiently covered the scope of this item.

In Scale III, item 3 was left out as I felt it was too strongly-worded. Besides, the gist of its content had been covered by other items.

In Scale IV, item 10 was left out. This was an irrelevant item since the intention of the NCPQ was to obtain students' responses with regard to the learning of English and not their learning of an academic subject.

In Scale V, item 31 was left out as I felt it was not very different from item 23. Besides, item 23 is more appropriate to a student-teacher relationship.

3. Removing and adding of scales

The scales 'Formal Teaching Methods' and 'Social Climate' were left out because Distance Learners' responses to the items in these two groups could be easily predicted and hence the results would be a foregone conclusion. 'Vocational relevance' was also excluded since the learning of English has no direct vocational relevance. The scale Teaching/Learning Components was added. It was designed to elicit more information regarding students' perceptions of the teaching and learning components provided by the English Language Proficiency Department.

Appendix 10A

Interview Guide

Introduction

I am indeed glad that you are able to attend interview I would like to thank you for being here today. As you know, the reason why I invited here is to give you a chance to voice your opinions on the English proficiency courses we are offering through the distance learning mode and to share you experience with me. Your feedback will be most beneficial and will go a long way to helping us improve our programmes. Please rest assure that everything you say here is in confidence.

You can answer in English or Bahasa Malaysia. Feel free anytime during the discussion to shift from one language to the other.

I. Opening Questions

1. *Can you please tell me which department you are in?*
2. *What courses are you taking this semester?*

II. Introductory Questions

1. *I would like to find out from you why you have decided to study through the distance learning mode?*
2. *How would you describe your experience on the whole?*

III Transition questions

1. *What do you think of the English Proficiency programme on the whole?*
2. *What do you like best about the programme?*
3. *a. Is there anything you dislike about the programme?*
   b. (If yes) Can you tell me what they are?

IV Key questions

Now, I'd like you to reflect on specific aspects of the programme. (a short pause)

1. *Let's start by considering the administration/running of the course.....*

Are you satisfied with the way the programme is run?

(Follow-up questions --- only if necessary)

- *(If yes) What would you consider to be the positive aspects of this programme?*
- *(If no) What types of administrative problems do you face?*
- *How do you think the administrative problems can be solved?*

2. ***Let's consider the support system given to you. This includes tutorials, comments on teacher-marked assignments, course and study guides , audio and visual aids and others.***

Do you feel that sufficient support has been given to you?

(Follow-up question --- only if necessary)

- *Why do you say so?*
- *(For those who say that greater support should be given) What types of extra support would you like to have? How often do you want them?*
- *What do you feel about the quality of the support system given? How do you think this can be improved?*

3. ***Let's now go on to your individual needs .....***

Do you feel the programme has managed to meet your individual needs?

(Follow-up questions --- only if necessary)

- *(If yes) how has the programme managed to meet your needs?*
- *(If no) How has it failed to meet your needs? How do you think it should be changed to meet your needs?*

4. ***If you have any other issues that have not been discussed, now is the time to bring it up. I'll give you a few minutes to think over it.....***

(Follow-up questions --- only if necessary)

- *In your opinion, how can these issues can be resolved?*

V Ending questions

1. ***Of all the issues we have discussed , which would you consider to be the most in need of attention?***

(Follow-up questions --- only if necessary)

- *What do you think should be done in the immediate future?*

Appendix 10B

Sample lesson from the Study Guide for VG 2113 (English for Social Science)

VG 2113 is designed for High Proficiency learners and is based on the text 'Global Views' by Sokolik (1993).

UNIT V

CHANGING POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Welcome to Unit V. The theme of this unit is Changing Political Systems. You're going to read three passages and a poem.

Prior to reading, you'll get to do activities that will provide you with the background knowledge to understand the materials better. The activities include:

- guessing contents by looking at titles
- listening to a national news programme
- studying a cartoon
- picturing scenes in your mind
- referring to a map and a flag

After reading, you'll get to undertake activities that will enable you to understand the materials better and improve your command of vocabulary and language skills. The activities include:

- recalling key ideas and details
- understanding, rephrasing and explaining unfamiliar structures in line with the author's intention
- guessing the meanings of slang, colloquial and unfamiliar words from context
- choosing suitable themes for a poem and explaining your choice

LESSON 1

Turn to SB p. 2.

PLANNING & GOALS

Do the ranking task in your SB.

There are no fixed answers to this task. Identifying your goals will help you to determine what is important to you. Check to see whether you've achieved your goals at the end of the Unit.

SB p.2

LOOKING AHEAD

OBJECTIVES

This activity will activate your knowledge about the materials in this chapter.

Turn to SB p.3.

Do numbers 1-5 orally.

Can you guess the contents of this unit? If you can't, don't worry, you'll learn more about the World's Changing Political Systems in this unit.

SB p.3

LISTENING

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this section, you should be better able to:

1. listen for new ideas.
2. make notes.
3. share your ideas with someone.
4. write down description of news items.

Watch a national television news programme on TV2, TV3 or Mega TV instead

Turn to SB p.4.

Do exercises A 1-5. Write your answers in your SB.

SB p.4

Instead of doing B 1-3, do the following activity.

- Contact by phone the coursemate assigned to you.
- Narrate to her/him your answers for questions 3 and 5. Try to include as many details as possible. You've to listen to your friend's narration too. Jot down notes as you listen to her/him.
- Write a report of the news stories as told by your course mate. Include your personal reactions towards the news items.
- Share your report with your coursemates at your tutorial.

Turn to SB p. 5.

ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE

This activity will provide you with the background knowledge to comprehend the reading passage better.

Do numbers 1 and 2 in your Exercise book.

Check your answers with the sample answers on the next page.

Sample Answers for Analysis p.5

1. In the " before" picture, the U.S.S.R. is unified while the rest of Europe is divided into many different countries. In the "after" picture, Europe is unified, while the US.S.R. is shown split into several countries.

2. The cartoon is portraying the separation of the Soviet Union into different nations and the unification of Europe with the introduction of the European Economic Community, a single European passport, and a common currency.

If your answers are similar to ours, well done. You've sufficient background knowledge to understand the reading passage. Go on to the next section.

But if you can't answer the questions, don't worry. Do read up a little more on the collapse of the totalitarian regimes in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe.

SB p. 5

THE STATE OF EUROPE, CHRISTMAS EVE, 1989

OBJECTIVE

When you've completed this section, you should be better able to recall key ideas and details.


Read the passage.

SB p.6

COMPREHENSION

Do numbers 1-3 in your SB.

Check your answers with ours on the next page.

Answers for Comprehension p.6

1. d (This is an important detail in the passage. The event is especially significant because he is so old.)

2. b (This is the key idea in the passage.)

3. c (If you manage to get a general understanding of the passage, you'll realize that the writer is excited about the change.)

If you've got all the answers correct, good work . You're now ready to proceed to more challenging tasks.

SB p. 6

ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE

When you've completed this section, you should be better able to:

1. understand unfamiliar constructions.
2. rephrase complex sentences into simpler sentences.

To understand an unfamiliar construction, first you must know the meaning of key words and phrases. The key words and phrases are:

contemporaries	---	people of the same generation
larger impersonal history	---	a historic event that does not have direct effect on their personal lives
unfolded before their eyes	---	happening during their lifetime
strike each separately as being his or hers intensely felt personal experience	---	affect each person emotionally

Now you can try to rephrase the sentence into a simpler sentence.

Here are some acceptable answers:

Although the younger generation were not personally involved in a historic event, the event might affect each of them emotionally.

OR

An impersonal historic event that happened during the younger generation's lifetime might affect each of them emotionally.

OR

A historic event happening during the younger generation's lifetime might be impersonal to them but the event might hit/touch/affect each of them personally.

Your answers need not be the same as these. They're acceptable as long as the gist is the same

SB p.6

Now, do questions a - e in your SB. Since you are not working in a group, do the exercise on your own. Share your answers with the coursemate assigned to you.

Turn to SB p. 7.

Do questions a and b in your SB.

Check your answers with the sample answers on the next page.

Sample Answers for Analysis p.7

a. The current events in the Soviet Union, East Germany, Czechoslavakia, Hungary and Bulgaria make me feel like I am seeing something I had hoped would happen, but didn't expect it would happen so soon.

OR

The events that have happened in Soviet Union and Bulgaria make me feel like I am witnessing a miracle.

OR

The events that have happened in Soviet Union and Bulgaria appear to me like the act of God.

b. I gave up hope of seeing the collapse of the totalitarian governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in my lifetime.

OR

The fall of the totalitarian governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is something I had never thought I would get to see in my life time.

OR

The writer never expected to be able to see the fall of the totalitarian governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in his lifetime.

Don't worry if your answers are different. As long as the gist is the same you're on the right track.

Appendix 10C

Guidelines on the number of weeks to spend on each unit as indicated in the course outline

Scheme of work for students taking VG 2113 (English for Social Science)

Week	Unit	Lessons
1	1 : Eco-politics	1 & 2
2	1 : Eco-politics	3 & 4
3	2 : Languge	1 & 2
4	2 : Language	3 & 4
5	3 : War	1 & 2
6	3 : War	3 & 4
7	4 : Travel	1 & 2
8	4 : Travel	3 & 4
9	Preparation for: Reading Recall Test Listening Test Oral Presentation	
10	5 : Changing Political Systems	1 & 2
11	5 : Changing Political Systems	3 & 4
12	6 : International Media	1 & 2
13	6 : International Media	3 & 4
14	Preparation for the Final Exam	

Schedule for tutorials for tutors and students for the VG 2113

TUTORIAL ONE (3 hours) 9 - 12 am.

Time Allocated	Activities	Things to do before tutorials	
		by students	by tutor
½ hour	General Discussion of Course	Read Course Booklet	Read Course Booklet
1 hour	Discussion of student's assignments for Units 1 - 3.	Bring to class your assignments for units 1 - 3. Discuss problematic assignments with your tutor.	Prepare units 1 - 3 (refer to the Study Guide).
1 ½ hours	Practice of Role-Plays from : Unit 1 : Ecopolitics SB p. 103 Unit 2 : Language SB p. 193 Unit 3 : War SB p. 85	Practise the role-plays in Units 1 - 3.	Prepare role-plays found in Unit 1 - 3. (Divide students into groups of 3 - 4 and assign different role-plays for different groups).

(3 hours) 2 - 5 pm.

1 ½ hours	Writing Task 1 - A Reaction Paper	Practise writing a reaction paper	Prepare suitable materials for the reaction paper.
1 ½ hours	Practice of Oral Presentation	Prepare a suitable topic for the oral presentation. Your presentation should be between 5 to 10 mins.	Familiarise yourself with the Oral Assessment scale.

TUTORIAL TWO (3 hours) 9-12am

Time Allocated	Activities	Things to do before tutorials	
		by students	by tutor
30 mins 30 mins	Reading Recall Test Listening Test	Prepare for the Reading Recall Test and the Listening Test	Collect Test papers and the video tape from the PJJ coordinator.
1 hour	Discussion of students' assignments for Units 4 - 6.	Bring to class your assignments for units 4 - 6. Discuss problematic assignments with your tutor.	Prepare Units 4 - 6 (refer to the Study Guide).
1 hour	Practise of Role-Plays from : Unit 4 : Travel SB p. 121 Unit 5 : Changing Political Systems SB p. 19 Unit 6 : International Media SB p. 153	Practise the role-plays in Units 4 - 6.	Prepare role plays found in Unit 4 - 6 (Divide students into groups of 3 - 4 and assign different role-plays for different groups).

(3 hours) 2-5pm.

2 hours	Oral Presentation	Prepare a suitable topic for the oral presentation. Your presentation should be between 10 - 15 mins	-
1 hour	Discussion of Final Exam	Practise the Final Exam paper (given in the Course Booklet)	Prepare the Final Exam paper (given in the Course Booklet)

Appendix 10D

Dickson and Carver's three kinds of preparations for independent study (1980)

1. *Methodological preparation*

Methodological preparation includes learning aspects of the meta-language of both language description and language teaching, and learning techniques of language learning. The first four aspects listed below are concerned with learning aspects of the metalanguage.

1.1 The pupils must become aware of the units of language description. These include the terminology used in grammars and dictionaries.

1.2 The pupils must become aware of the learning units—which may not be the same as 1.1 above. Thus, depending on the approach being used, they need to know what '*structures*' are, what *functions* and *notions* are, and so on.

1.3 The pupils must become aware of the objectives of their language course. To understand these, they probably need to know 1.1 and 1.2 above.

1.4 Closely related to 1.3 above they need to have a synoptic view of the course in order to take an active part in planning.

The following aspects are more directly concerned with preparation for how to continue learning.

1.5 The pupils need to be given extended practice in organising their own work. They need to be given opportunities to make decisions relating to their own work. Thus:

1.6 They need practice in making decisions about how to use materials; e.g. when doing an exercise for which the answers are available they make the decision of how to use the answers; some pupils might *begin* by looking at the answers, others might not refer to them until the end.

1.7 They need practice in making decisions about *what* material to use. Thus, while there might be a common course for the whole class, there could be variation in the supplementary materials used by individuals. Thus there could be a wide choice for extensive reading and listening; or pupils could be encouraged to select materials which were appropriate to remedy areas of difficulty.

1.8 They need practice in correcting their own work, both written and spoken, either from answers provided or from other sources.

1.9 They need practice in keeping a record of their own progress through the syllabus, and maybe how well they were doing.

1.10 they need practice in working co-operatively with other learners. Autonomous learning does not imply learning in isolation, and many aspects of language practice are best done with others.

2. *Psychological preparation*

2.1 The development of self-confidence. This is one of the most important aspects of psychological preparation, and we must seek to find techniques which will achieve this. We see this as one of the most important skills of any teacher, not merely of the language teacher.

2.2 The development of 'process orientation'. By this we mean the development of an attitude in which education is viewed as a formal process for acquiring learning rather than as a game in which the players score points by getting the right answers (i.e. 'product orientation').

2.3 The development of self-motivation. 2.2 above is one important aspect of this.

2.4 Development in the pupil of awareness about his own learning. This can be fostered by giving opportunities for discussion of how different pupils go about particular learning tasks, of what learning difficulties different pupils have, and of how they might overcome them. This relates closely to 2.5 and 2.6 below.

2.5 Development in the pupils of awareness of their own learning problems, and of

2.6 their own progress.
(2.4, 2.5, 2.6 can be viewed as the psychological correlates of 1.8 and 1.9 above).

3. *Practice in Self-Direction*

Opportunities for this pervade the whole language-learning/teaching process, and it is essentially a matter of the teacher seeking opportunities to relinquish some degree of control to the pupils for the duration of particular activities. There are two aspects of it which are listed below, however, since these mesh neatly with the *techniques* we are going to discuss.

3.1 Giving pupils opportunities for making decisions about (a) when they perform certain learning tasks and (b) where they perform them. At a later stage it might be appropriate for pupils to make decisions about (c) whether they perform certain learning tasks.

3.2 Giving pupils opportunities to gain periods of independence from the teacher—as in some forms of group work, for example, or project work.

Appendix 10E

Motives why distance learners participate in distance education programmes

1.	• **Barriers to on-campus study** • **Situational barriers** such as commitments related to job, family, geographical distance and financial issues (Holmberg, 1995; Hiola, 1988) • **Institutional barriers** such as inadequate learner support, entry procedures, inflexibility in terms of entry requirements, learning environment, and course times (Rubenson, 1986; Race, 1989). • **'Psychosocial barriers'** such as lack of confidence, bad experience studying in a conventional classroom setting (Thorpe, 1987).
2.	**Attractions of distance education programme** • **Flexibility of distance education** such as providing a mean of teaching people wherever they are (Jenkins, 1981); easily adaptable to individual needs, easy to combine mode with other methods (Coggin, 1986; Coath, 1987); advantages in terms of pace and time of studies (Flinck, 1987); learning opportunities for women denied education either for cultural or financial reasons (Hiola and Moss, 1990) • **Cost effectiveness** (Hiola, 1988)
3.	**Other motives** • **Seeking knowledge** (Putra, 1993) • **upgrading of working skills or qualifications/seeking improvement of occupational performance or prospects** (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982) • **Seeking specific occupation/ better jobs** (Roberts et al, 1991) • **'Second chance' opportunity** (Ljosa, 1992) • **Personal satisfaction** (Roberts et al, 1991)

(Mohammad, 1999: 91; and cited sources)

Appendix 11A

Sample materials for preparation of teachers (Dickinson, 1987:158-163)

Psychological preparation

What is self-instruction?

This is an activity designed to help people to find out about self-instruction.

Objectives

- To discover what is meant by self-instruction;
- To consider what type and degree of self-instruction would be appropriate for a described set of learners in some particular situation.

Resources

- Chapters 1, 3 and 7 of this book.
- Gross (1979) Chapter 2, pp. 23–48.
- Tough (1979) Chapter 3, pp. 16–32.

Tasks

- Participants are asked to produce a definition or a brief description of self-instruction. They are asked to read the references beforehand, though it is useful if these can also be available during the activities session. Individuals attempt to formulate a definition or description and then agree on a common formulation with another person. It may be possible to sustain this to group level – two or three pairs agreeing a definition or description.

  The main value of this activity is the discussion that goes on while attempting to come to an agreement.
- Using a similar procedure, participants are asked to produce an agreed list of points for and against self-instruction. The various reports can be discussed at a plenary session.
- Participants are asked to make specific proposals (though in outline) for elements of self-instruction suitable for a specified set of learners following a particular course.
- In addition to these activities, some of those suggested for the psychological preparation of learners could also be used with teachers.

The characteristics of the ideal helper

This is concerned with changes of role expected of teachers operating in a self-instructional mode.

Objectives

- To enable participants to reflect on the changing role of the teacher in a self-instructional mode;
- To consider in detail what the role of the helper is;
- To list the personal characteristics necessary to fulfil this role.

Resources

- The list of the characteristics of the ideal helper in Chapter 7 of this book.
- Tough (1979) pp. 177–84.
- Rogers (1969) Chapter 7, pp. 164–6.
- Rogers (1969) Chapter 4.

Task

Draw up a list of the characteristics and skills of the ideal helper for the learning situation *in your institution.*

Self-assessment

The following activities are all directly concerned with various changes of role that teachers need to adjust to in a self-instructional mode. Many, of course, will find these role changes easy, indeed they may already relate to learners in ways facilitative of self-instruction. Others may find it difficult to change their attitudes to learners and to learning activities. Preparation for learners' self-assessment is concerned first with possible attitudes of teachers towards self-assessment, and then with aspects of the teacher's role in preparing learners for self-assessment. Attitudes to assessment are crucially important to self-instruction. The success of a learner-centred approach to self-instruction is dependent upon the learner being willing and able to take on responsibility for his own learning; and this is often dependent upon the teacher being willing to share this responsibility. The teacher's willingness to relinquish sole responsibility for grading and assessment could be a big issue in the success of a self-instructional programme.

Objectives

- To enable participants to reflect upon their attitudes to assessment, with particular reference to the respective roles of teacher and learner;
- To consider the feasibility of self-assessment;
- To consider the desirability of emphasising formative assessment at the expense of summative assessment.

Resources

- Heron (1981) especially pp. 57–61.
- Pirsig (1974) Chapter 16, especially pp. 190–6.
- Tough (1979) pp. 158–63.
- Rogers (1969) Chapter 6, pp. 151–5.
- Chapter 8 of this book.

Tasks

- Participants are asked to respond to Carl Rogers' conclusions about grades and examinations:

  ... by themselves these interpretations of my experience may sound queer and aberrant, but not particularly shocking. It is when I realize the implications that I shudder a bit at the distance I have come from the commonsense world that everyone knows is right ...
  - Such experience would imply that we would do away with teaching. People would get together if they wished to learn.
  - We would do away with examinations. They measure only the inconsequential type of learning.
  - We would do away with grades and credits for the same reason.
  - We would do away with degrees as a measure of competence partly for the same reason. Another reason is that a degree marks an end or a conclusion of something, and a learner is only interested in the continuing process of learning.
  - We would do away with the exposition of conclusions, for we would realize that no one learns significantly from conclusions.

- Participants are asked to consider the two questions posed in Chapter 8 of this book:
  - Can learners make reasonably accurate self-assessments?
  - Will learners make reasonably accurate self-assessments?

Helping learners in self-assessment

The second aspect of self-assessment concerns the kinds of things teachers may be involved in when they are helping learners.

Resources

- Chapter 8 of this book.
- Oskarsson (1984).
- Windeatt (1981).

Tasks

- Specify a number of language learning goals – for example, developing fluency in spontaneous spoken language – and devise ways that learners can self-assess their achievement.
- Consider critically one of the examples of self-assessment tests in Chapter 8 and Appendix D(I) of this book. Make suggestions for modification.

Methodological preparation

The workshops suggested here are all concerned with examples of tasks which teachers may be asked to undertake when they are helping in a self-instructional mode.

Needs analysis

Resources

- Chapter 5 of this book.
- Allwright (1982) pp. 24–31.
- Munby (1978) Chapter 10.

Tasks

- Examine a needs analysis questionnaire and modify it to suit your situation.
- Design a needs analysis questionnaire to be used by learners.
- Design an interview schedule to be used by a tutor to elicit learners' needs.

Materials evaluation, adaptation and preparation

Resources

- Chapter 4 of this book.
- Geddes and Sturtridge (1982).
- Cross (1980).
- Logan (1980).
- Windeatt (1981).

Tasks

- Construct a text book evaluation schedule from the criteria in Chapter 4, and apply it to a course book.
- Apply the text book evaluation schedule to a course book, identify needs for adaption to make the book more suitable for self-instruction, and adapt it.
- Produce a unit of self-instructional materials for a specified group of learners. Carefully record the problems met in preparing the materials and the proposed solutions.

Setting up a self-access resource

Resources

- Chapter 6 of this book.
- Riley and Zoppis (1976).
- Geddes and Sturtridge (1982).
- Harding-Esch (1982).

Tasks

- Produce a specification of the components of a self-access resource in the ideal system.
- Propose a plan for the development of a self-access resource over a period of, say, four years.

The training of learners for self-instruction

Resources

- Stanchina and Riley (1978).

Tasks

- Take a course book and consider what training learners would need to use it in a self-instructional mode.
- What particular learning activities could you suggest to autonomous groups?
- What uses can learners make of their own authentic documents? What training would they need?

Specific training for language learning

Resources

- Chapter 7 of this book.

- Cohen and Aphek (1981).
- Rubin (1981).
- Wesche (1979).

Tasks

- Participants, individually and then in pairs, recall their own language learning experience and confirm and add to the list of learning strategies in Chapter 7.
- Sort the strategies into those that can be usefully taught and those that cannot.
- Consider how to train learners in these strategies. Each group takes one strategy and proposes a way of training learners in it.
- Consider how these strategies could be introduced into the language learning programme.

Conducting workshops

Gibbs (1981:93) suggests a way of organising workshops – he calls them Structured Group Exercises – which involves participants first thinking through a problem individually, then working in pairs, sharing with one other person the results of their thinking; then two or three pairs join together to form small groups within which the decisions reached by each pair are formulated into a group response to the topic. Finally, there is a plenary session, chaired by the tutor, at which each group reports its results. This structure is a very effective way of involving everyone in a group in a discussion, since it gives everyone the opportunity to express their opinions, anxieties and so on under the least threatening conditions. It also emphasises co-operative learning.

Appendix 11B

Roles of a language advisor/counsellor

The language advisor/counsellor of UKM resource centres will have two main roles:

1. helping learners develop their learning competence through separate counselling sessions. During these sessions, the counsellor have at least three functions. On the basis of what learners say, they may choose to provide:

   (a) conceptual information which help learners to develop their representations, metalinguistic and metacognitive notions;

   (b) methodological information on topics such as materials and work techniques, and planning programmes of work;

   (c) psychological support, acting mostly as a "benevolent outsider" who can help learners come to terms with their successes and failures;

   (d) a more recent development – 'learning to learn' sessions in which no reference is made to a specific foreign language.

   (Gremmo and Riley, 1995)

2. creating the material conditions favourable to language learning, which in practice often means designing, establishing and running resource centres. See Little (1989), Holec (1994), Riley (1986), Dickinson (1987), and Esch (1994) for research into how to establish parameters for the selection and organisation of materials to be made available to learners, It is also the responsibility of the language advisor/counsellor to help learners to learn how to use the available resource materials and the education technology available for information on .

Appendix 11C

Preparation of a resource centre

The resource centre that I propose must have the following:

1. **Access to materials.** This means facilities for such things as perusing, selecting, listening, viewing, sampling, getting copies of print or audio to take away (and these facilities available in minutes rather than hours).
2. **Access to activities.** The learner needs people to talk to, to listen to, to discuss, argue and exchange information with, to write to, to practice with, to learn from. Thus, the resource centre should organise discussion groups or group activities.
3. **Access to helpers.** The learners should be able to access the language counsellor or other helpers by telephone, by note, or by answer-phone to arrange for appointments.

The resource centre must be 'user friendly'. It must allow the learners to do the following things:

1. to access the building for long hours.
2. to access to the staff easily.
3. to access materials easily.
4. to have a suitable work place to look at print and video, listen to and sample tapes, meet in small groups.
5. to obtain copies of print materials and tapes quickly.
6. to store materials and reproduce materials effectively.

The resource centres must provide the following facilities:

1. audio cassette machines with headsets.

2. video playback machines and suitable place to view the videos.

3.computers with access to internet, and other CALL packages.

4. sound-proof room for learners to practice pronunciation.

It must have a user-friendly classification and indexing system. Finally, learners should be helped to learn how to use the self-resource centre, and be encouraged to give feedback on how to improve the facilities available.

(Information derived from Dickinson, 1987:108-120, and from visits to the self-resource centres in Leeds Metropolitan University and Southampton University.)

Appendix 11D

Sample materials for preparation of learners (Dickinson, 1987:164-170)

Psychological preparation

The following suggestions are concerned with demonstrating to learners what self-instruction is, and that it is a viable learning mode.

Describing self-instruction

Resources

– Chapters 1 and 8 of this book.

Activity

This might begin with a general description of the possibilities – using a device similar to Figure 2 in Chapter 1 – and then give several examples similar to those in Chapter 1. This could be extended into describing self-assessment, using a similar approach – a description of the possibilities, and several relevant examples.

For and against

Objectives

– To express anxieties about, and aspirations for a self-instructional learning mode;
– To consider one's own and others' anxieties and aspirations carefully.

Resources

– Gross (1979) pp. 17 and 18.
– Rogers (1969) Chapter 6, pp. 152–5.

Activity

Following the tutor's introduction to self-instruction, individuals list points in favour of and against self-instruction. Pairs combine their lists and then groups attempt to agree on, say, three major points for self-instruction and three against. The following plenary session is concerned first with establishing a total list of points and, secondly, and most importantly, with discussing them.

Learning project I

Objective

- To show that self-instruction is a viable learning mode.

Resources

- Tough (1979) Chapter 3, pp. 16–32, in particular the quantitative findings of his research.
- Gross (1979) Chapter 2, pp. 23–48, in particular the examples he gives of learners and their projects.
- Chapters 1 and 8 of this book.

Activity

The tutor reviews Tough's quantitative data on adult learning projects, and gives examples from Gross, and this book. Participants individually note two or three learning projects they have undertaken over the past year and also note any particular difficulties or satisfaction they found with them. Pairs put two lists together and consider the difficulties to see if they can find a solution. Groups operate likewise.

Learning project II

Objective

- To demonstrate that self-instruction is a viable language learning mode.

Resources

- Whatever is relevant to the tasks selected.

Activity

Participants are helped to select a relevant limited language learning objective. This is easier if this activity follows needs analysis for those learners to whom it is relevant. However, the objective should be achievable within an hour or two of learning time. Examples of this might include discovering a satisfactory explanation for some grammatical point, or discovering the expressions of some communicative function in the target language, such as appropriate ways of expressing thanks to the hostess after a dinner party or polite expressions to use when asking where the lavatory is.

Participants begin working on their objective(s) during a class session where they can be helped to plan the work, decide what resources, material or human, would be useful in helping to achieve it, discover how to obtain these resources, and decide how to assess whether, and to what degree, they have achieved their objective(s).

In some circumstances it will be necessary for participants to work on these objectives in their own time, outside of a classroom session; in others it will be possible for participants to work on them in class where the teacher is available to give assistance. Anyway, participants work on

their chosen objectives and try to achieve them. They are asked to note any particularly successful techniques they use, and whatever difficulties they encounter.

Finally students, working in pairs and then in groups, make a simple collation of successful techniques and particular difficulties, after which they seek solutions for the difficulties. The plenary session following should focus on the solutions of problems, and these solutions can be added to the list of techniques.

Methodological preparation

Methodological preparation is concerned with preparing learners to undertake the actual tasks of language learning in a self-instructional mode. The majority of suggestions which follow are concerned with the use of authentic texts.

Choosing authentic documents to study

Learners need guidance on selecting listening and reading texts as well as preparation in how to use them. When the document is a written text it may be necessary simply to have regard to topic and length, and maybe to an estimate of linguistic complexity measured perhaps by sentence length or some more precise index of readability. The selection of a recording of spoken language would consider many more criteria. This list from Riley (1981) might function both as a useful guide to the cataloguing of a listening resource, and as a check-list to be suggested to learners to take into account when selecting a text.

- *Topic.* What is the recording about?
- *Setting.* What is the physical context of the recording (for example a conference, a radio talk, etc.)?
- *Number of speakers.* Is it a monologue (only one speaker), a dialogue (two speakers), or are there more than two speakers?
- *Clarity.* What is the level of background noise, traffic noise, other speakers, etc., which might make the recording more difficult to understand?
- *Spontaneous or prepared.* Is the text read from a prepared script either as a monologue or acted in a dialogue, or is it spontaneous?
- *Formal or informal.* What is the degree of formality/informality of the language?
- *Accents.* Do all the speakers use a standard accent familiar to the listener or do some use regional accents likely to be unfamiliar?
- *Speed of delivery.* How fast is the delivery? A BBC newsreader running short of time can read the news at a surprisingly fast rate.

- *Length.* How long is the recording?
- *Date of production.* How current is the information?
- *Supporting materials.* Is there a transcription available? Are there any other supporting materials?

Study techniques

The following suggestions to learners for study techniques are taken largely from three sources, Moulden (1982), Riley (1981) and Dickinson (1980). These suggestions do not take account of the learners' levels. Some may be appropriate only for intermediate to advanced learners.

Work on written texts

The majority of the suggestions here come from Moulden (1982:25).

- *Reading speed.* Time yourself while reading a text. Global comprehension can be checked by reading the text again carefully. Reading-speed tables can be found in several places – for example, de Leeuw (1965).
- *Search reading.* Use the title, illustrations and perhaps the introduction to generate questions on the content of the text. Try to answer the questions quickly by reading the text. Be prepared to revise the questions as you read. Check the answers by reading the text more carefully. Get another learner to read the text, and discuss your questions and answers with the other person. Finally, if all else fails to solve a problem, ask a teacher/counsellor or find someone with a competent knowledge of the language.
- *Reading comprehension.* Work with another learner. Each take a different text or a different part of the same text. Read it carefully and prepare questions for the other person. Exchange texts and answer the other person's questions. Discuss the answers you have each given to the other person's questions. Use texts for which there is a translation to check on global and detailed comprehension.

Many of these ideas can be put together in ways such as those suggested in the 'Standard Reading Exercise' suggested by Scott *et al.* (1984). They suggest that tutors construct a standard exercise which can be used on any text. The questions are written in the learners' mother tongue. The form of the standard exercise which they use is reproduced in Appendix C(II).

Texts as the basis for grammar, vocabulary and discourse exercises and problem solving. Work either with a partner or alone. If you work alone, you will have to allow a lapse of time between preparing the activity and actually doing it.

- *Cloze tests and exercises.* Select a text and make a photocopy. Prepare a cloze test either by blocking out every seventh word, or by blocking out selected word types – for example, verb forms, or prepositions or articles. Your partner (or you, after a time lapse) replaces the missing words. Check the answers on the original. If you are working on your own, cut a narrow strip of paper and place it across a reading text (you will probably need to fold it or you will see through it!). Read the text and attempt to replace the obscured words, part words and phrases. You can alter the level of difficulty by changing the width of the strip (Riley 1980).
- *Mechanical exercises.* Many of the exercise types used in (older) course books can be prepared almost automatically, though this sometimes results in very difficult activities. For example, one learner writes out the sentences of a paragraph at random, the other rearranges. Parts of sentences can be obliterated on a copy of a text by one learner, the other attempts to reconstruct them. Other examples include changing all the verbs in a set of sentences to another tense and making other necessary changes. Change the number to plural/singular and make the necessary changes. Change the gender of the subject; change from affirmative to negative, etc.

Work on recorded texts

- *Global comprehension.* Listen to the recording and try to get a general idea of what it is about. Check comprehension by listening more carefully, stopping and replaying sections and/or by using a transcription* of the recording, and check it against the transcription supplied.
- *'Heighten' the transcription you have made.* That is, convert it into an acceptable written form of the language by removing all the false starts, hesitation phenomena, repetitions and so on, and put it into the normal sentence organisation of the written language.
- *Selective listening.* Construct questions from the title of the talk and from the introduction. Listen to the recording for the answers, revising the questions as you proceed. Check the answers by reading the transcript.
- *Work with another learner.* Each construct comprehension questions on a different recording (or a different part of the same one). Exchange questions, and answer them. Discuss questions and answers with your partner. Check answers against the transcript.
- *Summary writing.* Take notes from the recording as you listen. Write

* Transcribe and transcription here refer to a version written out in standard orthography – not in phonetic symbols.

a summary from the notes. Check the summary either against the original recording or/and against a transcription.

A 'Standard Listening Exercise' can be constructed on the model of the Standard Reading Exercise. (See the example in Appendix C(III).)

Practice in specific listening skills

- *Memory (I).* Stop the cassette and repeat the last few words. Rewind and check.
- *Memory (II).* Stop the cassette and try to remember the last two or three points the speaker has made. Rewind and check.
- *Prediction.* As you listen, try to predict what the speaker will say. This can be either prediction of the actual words or prediction of the content.
- *Guessing strategies.* When listening to a new text for the first time, attempt to piece together the sense from the fragments you understand. Check by more careful listening and/or by using the transcription.
- *Pronunciation (I).* Shadow the speaker in a recording, and if you are using a language laboratory compare your version with the original.
- *Pronunciation (II).* Read from a transcript and compare your recording with the original. Clearly, learners will need help and preparation in devising these activities.

Communicative activities

Communicative activities concerned with the written language may be relatively easily initiated by the learner. The work Liz Pearson has undertaken in practising reading business letters and replying to them has already been described (see example 3 Chapter 1). Advanced language learners who are involved in scientific research in a medium other than their mother tongue frequently need to write papers or a dissertation and learn on the job, as it were, by getting someone to read and criticise what they have written.

In addition, post-intermediate learners can benefit from an activity described by Cohen (1983), which he calls 'reformulation'. After writing two or more drafts of the essay, and getting feedback from peers and teachers on the writing, the writer gets a native speaker of the target language (or failing a native speaker, a competent non-native) to reformulate part or all of the essay in his own words making it read in a 'native-like' way. There are no constraints put on the reformulator; he uses whatever vocabulary and style he thinks is appropriate. The learner then compares the two versions, either with the reformulator or alone. Cohen recommends that the comparison is made along the following lines:

- *Lexis.* Vocabulary is compared word for word.
- *Syntax.* The text is examined for word order and the choice and ordering of clauses.
- *Cohesion.* The text is examined for differences in pronominal reference, use of conjunctions and lexical substitution.
- *Discourse functions.* The marking of discourse functions are compared.
- *Paragraphs.* Physical and conceptual paragraphs are compared.

The specific problems *vis-à-vis* the target language of learners with particular mother tongues can be emphasised in the comparison.

Some learners with highly specialist requirements in communication in the spoken language may also initiate simulated activities. Stanchina and Riley (1978) describe the case of Dr A, a French cardiologist who wished to attend a conference held in English where he would give a slide lecture and act as chairman of one of the round table discussions. As part of his language preparation for these events, he worked with a helper in simulations of these activities.

In general, however, it would be unrealistic to expect learners to design their own spoken language communication activities, though it may be reasonable to expect them to *manage* such activities themselves after a period of preparation. In order to facilitate this it is necessary to have a large selection of activities available, with simple and clear descriptions of what is to be done. Ideas for activities can be taken from course books and articles (see, for example, Hendrickson 1980, 1983). Games and role-play activities can also be used, providing the instructions of what to do and how to do it are simple and clear (maybe in the learner's mother tongue if this is feasible). Alternative arrangements which preserve the learners' freedom of choice include 'activity options' (Roberts 1975, Geddes and McAlpin 1978) and 'sign-up' options. In activity options a regular time-span is allocated each week from the course timetable, during which learners can choose among several activities. The activities described by Geddes and McAlpin include Games, Listening, Research and Films; they are set up in separate areas and learners can circulate from one to the other. The system of 'sign-up' options has been in use in SCEO for some years. Learners sign up for role-play or simulation activities which are organised by a tutor.