



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**METACOGNITION, STUDY APPROACHES AND READING
ATTITUDE: TOWARDS IMPROVING READING EFFICIENCY IN
ENGLISH**

MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

FBMK 2002 14

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MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2002



Dedicated to my beloved wife who encouraged me to start on my PhD programme and inspired me to finish it on time. To my children, Filzah and Farhan, thank you for being so tolerant, considerate and understanding throughout my studies

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of
the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Chairman: Associate Professor Rosli Talif, Ph.D.

Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

The study investigated aspects of metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude of university students to enhance reading efficiency in English. A total of 503 students enrolled in the proficiency courses at UPM participated in the study. Three hundred and eighty-five students participated in the questionnaire survey and 118 students were involved in the needs analysis. From this population of 503 students, 40 students took part in the quasi-experimental study and out of this sample, ten students were randomly selected for the unstructured interview. It is also important to note that ten lecturers took part in the students' needs analysis.

The results of the needs analysis have shown that factors like metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude are important for reading efficiency. It is noted from the questionnaire survey (metacognition and study approaches) that variables like programme of study, home background, gender and race were not related to reading

efficiency among students. The main factor that revealed a significant difference in reading efficiency was students' SPM English grades. Students with distinctions and credits in English at SPM appeared to have a high level of metacognitive awareness, effective study approaches and a positive reading attitude in English. Besides, the questionnaire survey has shown a strong relationship between study approaches and reading attitude. In like manner, metacognition is guided by students' positive reading attitude.

The results of the quasi-experimental study have shown that average readers at the university level can increase their reading rate by about 27%, and their comprehension score by 22%. A pre and post-test administered for both treatment and control groups have shown a convincing improvement for treatment group students. In fact, all participants of the treatment group gained in their overall score after the eight weeks' (16 hours) of training on reading efficiency.

The interview results revealed that both treatment and control group students faced problems in reading. However, most of the treatment group students have learnt to overcome some of these problems. On the other hand, control group students have said that they did not know how to solve their reading problems. Both treatment and control group students have shown elements of metacognitive awareness. However, what were lacking for the control group students were strategies, both reading and metacognitive strategies.

The study has proposed a reading efficiency model to enhance speed and comprehension in reading. The reading efficiency model proposed in this study with its three major components that is metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude is felt practical and applicable to students. And finally, the findings of this study have established the need for training in reading efficiency for students taking the English proficiency courses at UPM and similarly placed students elsewhere in the country.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**METAKOGNITIF, CARA BELAJAR DAN SIKAP MEMBACA: KE ARAH
MENINGKATKAN BACAAN SECARA EFISIEN DALAM
BAHASA INGGERIS**

Oleh

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Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Rosli Talif, Ph.D.

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Penyelidikan ini mengkaji aspek metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca di kalangan pelajar universiti untuk mempertingkatkan bacaan secara efisien dalam bahasa Inggeris. Seramai 503 pelajar yang mengikuti kursus kemahiran dalam bahasa Inggeris telah menyertai kajian ini. Sejumlah 385 pelajar telah melibatkan diri dalam tinjauan soal-selidik dan 118 pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam analisis keperluan pelajar. Daripada populasi sejumlah 503 pelajar ini, 40 pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian eksperimen kuasi (quasi-experimental study). Sepuluh pelajar dari kajian eksperimen kuasi ini telah dipilih secara rawak untuk mengambil bahagian dalam kaedah temuduga yang tidak berstruktur. Seramai 10 pensyarah telah mengambil bahagian dalam analisis keperluan pelajar.

Hasil kajian keperluan pelajar telah menunjukkan bahawa faktor-faktor metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca adalah penting bagi meningkatkan bacaan secara efisien. Kajian soal-selidik yang melibatkan metakognitif dan cara belajar telah menunjukkan bahawa pembolehubah seperti program, latarbelakang rumah, jantina dan bangsa tidak mempengaruhi bacaan secara efisien di kalangan pelajar. Faktor utama yang telah menunjukkan perbezaan secara signifikan dalam kajian ini adalah gred bahasa Inggeris SPM. Pelajar-pelajar yang telah memperolehi gred yang cemerlang dan kepujian dalam bahasa Inggeris di peringkat SPM didapati mencapai tahap yang tinggi dalam aspek metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca dalam bahasa Inggeris. Selain daripada itu, tinjauan soal-selidik telah menunjukkan perkaitan yang kukuh di antara cara belajar dan sikap membaca. Disamping itu aspek metakognitif mempunyai hubungkait dengan sikap membaca yang positif di kalangan pelajar.

Hasil kajian eksperimen telah menunjukkan bahawa pembaca yang sederhana di universiti boleh meningkatkan kadar bacaan sebanyak 27% dan kadar pemahaman sebanyak 22%. Ujian sebelum dan selepas yang telah diberi kepada kedua-dua kumpulan rawatan dan terkawal telah menunjukkan peningkatan yang memuaskan bagi kumpulan rawatan. Kesemua pelajar kumpulan rawatan telah meningkat dalam skor keseluruhan selepas menjalani latihan membaca secara efisien selama lapan minggu (16 jam).

Keputusan temuduga telah menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua pelajar kumpulan rawatan dan terkawal menghadapi masalah dalam bacaan khususnya memahami perkataan.

Walaupun, pelajar daripada kumpulan rawatan telah mengetahui cara-cara bagi mengatasi sebahagian daripada masalah-masalah ini. Sebaliknya, pelajar dari kumpulan terkawal telah mengatakan bahawa mereka tidak mengetahui bagaimana untuk mengatasi masalah membaca. Kedua-dua kumpulan ini telah menunjukkan elemen kesedaran metakognitif. Tetapi, kekurangan pada kumpulan kawalan adalah strategi, iaitu strategi bacaan dan metakognitif.

Kajian ini telah mencadangkan satu model bagi bacaan yang efisien untuk meningkatkan kelajuan dan pemahaman dalam bacaan bahasa Inggeris. Model bacaan efisien yang dicadangkan dalam kajian ini yang merangkumi ketiga-tiga komponen iaitu metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca adalah praktik dan bersesuaian untuk semua pelajar. Hasil kajian ini juga telah mencadangkan latihan dalam bacaan efisien untuk pelajar yang mengikuti kursus kefasihan bahasa Inggeris di UPM dan pelajar yang serupa di tempat lain di negara ini.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This doctoral thesis was made possible by the generous co-operation and sympathetic interest of many individuals to whom I wish to acknowledge my debt of gratitude. First and foremost, I wish to express and record my heartfelt and sincere gratitude to the chairman of the supervisory committee, Associate Professor Dr. Rosli Talif whose constructive criticisms, probing questions, comments, suggestions and reminders have enormously encouraged and helped me through the writing of the thesis. Through his effort, it was possible for me to develop both the necessary skills and the self-confidence to complete this research.

The other members of the committee, both Dr Mohd Faiz and Dr. Shameem have been major contributors to the completion of this project in many ways. I would like to acknowledge the help that Dr. Shameem gave in the preparation of this study. I would like to thank her for her comments and ideas. I am indebted to her untiring guidance and scholarly suggestions that assisted greatly towards the completion of this thesis. I gratefully acknowledge the judicious guidance of Dr.Faiz particularly during the difficult period of conceptualising the problem. I would like to thank him for all his invaluable comments and guidance towards the completion of this work.

I am most grateful to Dr Jegak Uli and Dr. Bahaman Abu Samah from the Department of Professional Development and Continuing Education, Faculty of Educational Studies, UPM for allowing me to attend their statistics courses as audit subjects and providing the necessary assistance when I sought their help. My thanks are also due to

Dr. Raja Ahmad Tajuddin Shah and Dr Shamsuddin Ahmad from the Department of Professional Development and Continuing Education, Faculty of Educational Studies, UPM for the advice and constructive suggestions given through the qualitative research methodology course. I am also pleased to record my gratitude to Hafizah, Rozaimah, Saliza and other clerical staffs from the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication for all the assistance provided when I greatly needed them.

The thesis would not have been possible without the proficiency lecturers from the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication. I owe them a big thank you. The following lecturers had responded to the need analysis questionnaire for lecturers and made arrangements for me to meet the students. They are Abdul Rafil b. Abdul Halim, Zainor Izat Zainal, Tenku Mazuwana Tenku Mansor, Saiful Amin Jalun., Yazariah Yacob, Yong Mei Fung, Daniel Hasni Mustaffa, Mohammad Othman, Liew Nyuk Lan, Christiantine Della and Nor Azura Adzharuddin. I express my deep gratitude for the generous comments and suggestions made by the many lecturers at the faculty. I owe thanks to the students who were involved in this study. They were most co-operative especially their voluntary participation in this study despite their numerous other commitments. Their co-operation served immensely in the completion of this thesis.

My deepest gratitude to the Ministry of Education for the leave and the scholarship, which has enabled me to pursue my studies at UPM. My appreciation is also extended to the Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education for granting

me permission to conduct my research and the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication for allowing me to conduct my research at the faculty. I would like to thank UPM for granting me the research funds needed for the study.

Most important recognition and appreciation go to my family who shared in the joys and frustrations of this study. My greatest praise is reserved for my wife, Faridah. I appreciate her admirable patience, understanding and encouragement, which helped immensely in sustaining my efforts especially during the writing of this thesis. I am indebted to her for encouraging me to start on my PhD studies, and inspired me to finish it on time. She has been there for me whenever I needed someone for inspiration, friendship and advice. She made me stay on schedule and was tactful in making me believe that I had really written something great. Her pride in each small accomplishment I achieved made me believe that anything was possible. To my two children Filzah and Farhan, thanks for understanding why ‘Abah’ often had to lock himself up in the study room. They deserve praise for their patience and tolerance throughout my PhD programme.

A special note of thanks goes to Mr. Terry Lamb (University of Sheffield) for his willingness to offer help and valuable suggestions whenever required. Last but not least, thanks to Rohimmi, Hadinah, Rosmah, Ghani and my colleagues at the English Unit, Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, and other friends for their constant encouragement and support which have made it possible for me to complete my dissertation on time.

This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee are as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	Anticipation, Realisation and Contemplation.
ASEAN	Association of South- East Asian Nations
ASI	Approaches to Studying Inventory
BM	<i>Bahasa Malaysia</i> (Malay Language)
C1-C20	Control Group (Quasi-Experimental Study)
CR1-CR5	Interview (Control Group)
DA	Deep Approach
EAP	English for Academic Purpose
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
HE	Higher Education
IT	Information Technology
K-economy	Knowledge economy
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language (English Language)
PSA	Present Situation Analysis.
RASI	Revised Approaches to Studying Inventory
SA	Surface Approach
SPM	<i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</i> (Malaysian Certificate of Education)
SQ3R	Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Revise
SQ4R	Survey, Question, Read, Record, Recite, Reflect
SSR	Sustained Silent Reading
STR	Strategic Approach
T1-T20	Treatment Group (Quasi-Experimental Study)
TR1-TR5	Interview (Treatment Group)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In many parts of the world, an adequate knowledge of the English language is often important for academic studies, professional success, and personal development. This is particularly true of English as so much professional, technical and scientific literature is published in the language today. The most frequently given reasons for the teaching of English in foreign countries, and particularly in developing ones are for economic growth, advanced technology and applied science (Heilman et al. 1998).

It is reasonable, therefore to say that the English language has become an essential language for much social, professional and academic activity in the international milieu. The fact that most developing countries are investing a substantial amount of their resources in the teaching of English shows its position as an important second language (Mohd Faiz, 1998). In the Malaysian context, *Bahasa Malaysia* is the national and official language and it is used as the medium of instruction at all levels of educational institutions. Nevertheless, English is taught as a second language in schools and tertiary-level institutions. The English language enjoys a high position in the Malaysian education system. This is partly due to historical events, as well as recognition of its importance since independence in 1957. It would be reasonable to state that although the status of English in Malaysia has been changed from a medium of instruction to a compulsory subject at all levels of education, the government is