

# Education Reform: Going beyond Classroom Teaching towards Acquiring English Language Competency and Exploring Students' Interest in Second Language Learning {through Activity Lessons and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Lessons}

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## 1.0 Introduction

Confucian Private Secondary School like all other schools help students prepare for examinations. Much emphasis was given to reading and writing in the hope of producing good results. Listening and speaking skills were often neglected as there was insufficient time in the school curriculum. Students were able to read and write but were unable to conduct a decent conversation. They lack confidence as there was insufficient opportunity. As such the school authority saw the need to make a **Paradigm Shift in Education**. In 2006, Confucian Private Secondary School decided to embark on an education reform in English Language teaching.

The **target Group** for our education reforms were all Students of **Junior Foundation, Junior Middle One** and **Senior Middle One**. The 2010 Senior 2 students were the pioneers of this education reform. The school decided there was a need to move away from classroom teaching and provide time for Activity Lessons where there is integrated learning; and Multi-media Laboratory Lessons where there is autonomous learning. With this in mind, the number of English Language periods was increased from 6 periods to 9 periods. These periods were further reduced to 7 periods in 2010. Lessons comprise 5 periods for Conventional and 2 alternate periods for Activity and MML lessons.

## 2.0 Research Background

### 2.1 Differences between Conventional and Integrated Lessons

There are vast differences between the **Role of a Teacher** in a class practicing **Conventional Lessons** and the **Role of a Facilitator** in a class using **Integrated Lessons**.

**In Conventional Lessons, the learning process is teacher-centred.** Teacher does the talking most of the time. It is **difficult** for the teacher **to focus on individual strengths and weaknesses** as the number of students in a class is usually very big. Lessons are **Examination driven** as schools aim to do well in public examinations. **Learning can be a chore** as the teacher tries to complete the syllabus for the examinations.

Lessons are also **focused on rote-learning**. Teachers make students memorize grammar rules hoping that they can put into use what they have learnt. To the students **the classroom** seems to be their **world** as lessons are centred in the classroom and they can be **rigid**. On the other hand, during **integrated lessons, the teacher acts as a facilitator**. The learning process is **student-centred**. A facilitator is **sensitive to his students' needs**. He is **not in a hurry** to

finish the syllabus. He **creates situations** in class for students **to internalize** and **put into practice** what they have learnt. These can be seen in **role-plays**. There is **recognition of students' strengths** and **weaknesses** during class participations. There is also **development of multiple intelligences** as these can be seen at presentations. **Learning is fun** to the students as we take students out for project work. Lessons are **focused on understanding concepts and ideas**. To the students, **the world becomes the classroom**. Lessons are **flexible** as they can be conducted outside the classroom.

## 2.2 Activity Lessons

Interactive learning is a common method employed in schools today. From early days, children begin learning both interactively and passively. As children grow, they continue to learn and respond differently to each method. Thus, active learning developed out of the work of an earlier group of theorists - those promoting discovery learning.

In our school, Confucian Private Secondary School, teachers use activity lesson as a way to get our students involved. We have 2 periods of activity lesson in alternate weeks. Before the lesson, teachers worked together to prepare handouts and power-point slides with animations, colourful pictures or video-clips based on given Quartet materials to enable students to learn in more effective and interesting ways.

A teacher starts a lesson with 'ice breaker' by asking questions to help students focus on the topic. Handouts will be given to the students and they are divided into pairs or groups and handouts will be given to them. Students learn better when they are in pairs or groups as they can discuss and role-play. Students have the chance to practise by themselves and do peer-corrections as well and lessons are student-centred. Teacher acts as a facilitators and monitor students' progress. The facilitator shows slides to stimulate students' interest. Students will be inspired when watching the video clips. Students learn more if they are actively engaged with the material they are studying. During activity lessons, students are exposed to cultures of different countries. At the same time, we draw our students' attention to the local context which they are more familiar with. Grammar component are introduced indirectly during lessons. Students recite poems and tongue twisters, perform dramas and do jazz chant etc. for their presentation.

## 2.3 Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL)

The first development of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) software programs can be traced back to the early 1960s (Ahmad et. al, 1985), namely the Program Logic for Automated Teaching Operations (PLATO) project. The English Language Department has been using the Multiple Quality Learning (MQL) programmes and eClass online exercises as their CALL system to conduct the Multimedia Laboratory (MML) lessons since 2006.

During the MML lessons, Listening, Reading, Writing & Integrated Skills are given due attention. Each student has access to a computer. Lessons are unique because they are on-line, student-centred and related to the Activity Class. As Ahmad et al (1985) pointed out, 'the computer is a tool, of itself incapable of action'. Instead of the teacher being replaced, what

happens is a change in the role of the language teacher, from the traditional know-it-all authoritarian to a facilitator or a guide in the language learning process.

The MQL lessons are based on a flexible blend of delivery channels, combining group and individual learning, teacher-monitored or self-paced learning, and include delivery means as: course books, computer-based lessons, language tools (Lexicon and Grammar), online community (Forum and Chat), additional online activities, lab tasks, assessment and teacher's guide. All course materials are theme-based and integrated.

In order to cater to different learning styles and levels of our students, our English teachers have utilized the eClass platform and customized our own eClass lessons. With the on-line lessons provided by MQL and additional learning materials which are prepared and packaged by our English Language teachers, students' reading and listening skills can be honed. Our Foundation students started off with Winnie's World and Freddy's Island. Junior One students started with Quartet Starter or Quartet One. Students sat for a proficiency test to determine the level of their English language proficiency. There are nine levels in the MQL software which are conducive to the realization of autonomous learning as such advances in educational applications of computer hardware and software have undeniably provided a vast resource for language classrooms.

Being the supplement to MQL lessons, eClass plays a vital role in reinforcing the lessons with more practices (e.g., word enrichment, opinion-based questions, grammar exercises and others) to make sure our students are learning effectively. Based on the contents of Quartet lessons, our English teachers have been working wholeheartedly to think outside the box to create and improve the quality of our tailor-made eClass lessons.

The process of learning to read a second language can surely be enhanced through computer adaptive programmes as they offer lexical and grammatical information at predicted points of difficulty. Hence, the course objectives (especially reading and listening skills) can be reinforced. Engaging games and simulations which involve verbal language presents students with stimulating problem-solving tasks.

All in all, the reasons for using Computer-assisted Language Learning include: (a) experiential learning, (b) motivation, (c) enhancing student achievement, (d) authentic materials for study, (e) greater interaction, (f) individualization, (g) independence from a single source of information, and (h) global understanding.

'Computers will not replace teachers, teachers who use computers will replace teachers who do not' (Clifford, 1998: 5). While we've still got a very long way to go before CALL can be accurately called 'intelligent' (Warschauer 1998:67) or fully-fledged, this technology is becoming more and more sophisticated in our school.

### 3.0 Participants and Instruments

The target respondents for this research are all Senior Middle Two classes.

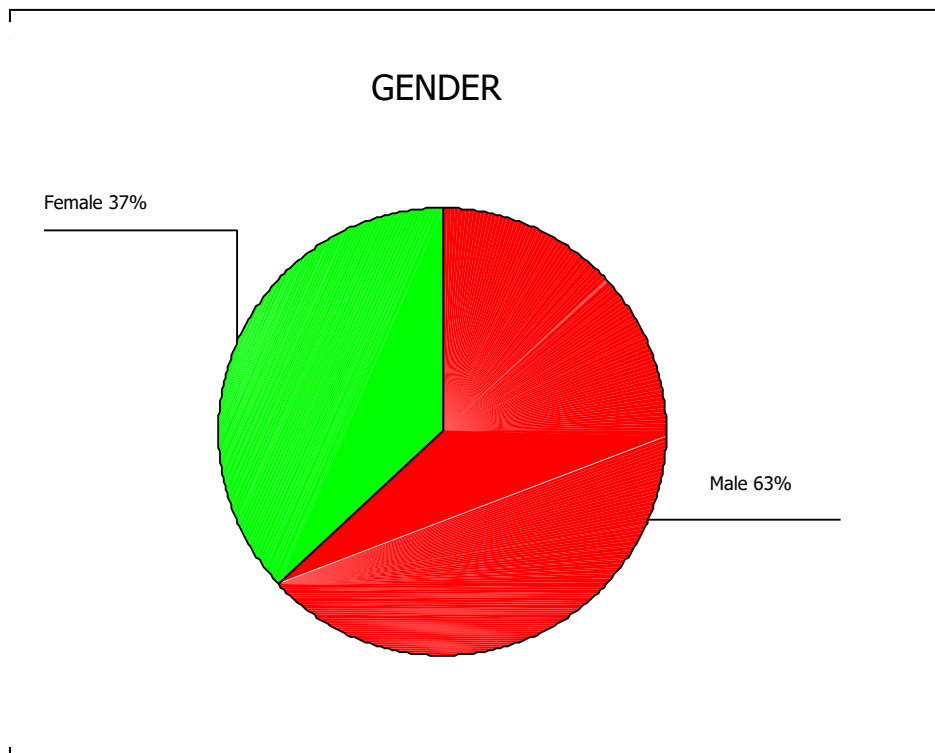
All respondents completed a questionnaire. The primary variables in the analysis were measured using the Questionnaire as survey instrument presented in Appendix A. (Questionnaire). Four major constructs are assessed: (i) Demographic Profile of Students (ii) Students' general interest towards the English Language (iii) Students' response towards Activity Lessons (iv) Students' response towards MML (Multi-media Laboratory) Lessons.

Students' performances are measured using the Assessment Criteria during Activity Lessons. The Quartet Software allows auto-marking by the computer for the Multi-media Laboratory Lessons whereas the E-class platform allows both auto-marking and assessment by the teacher.

### 4.0 Data Analysis

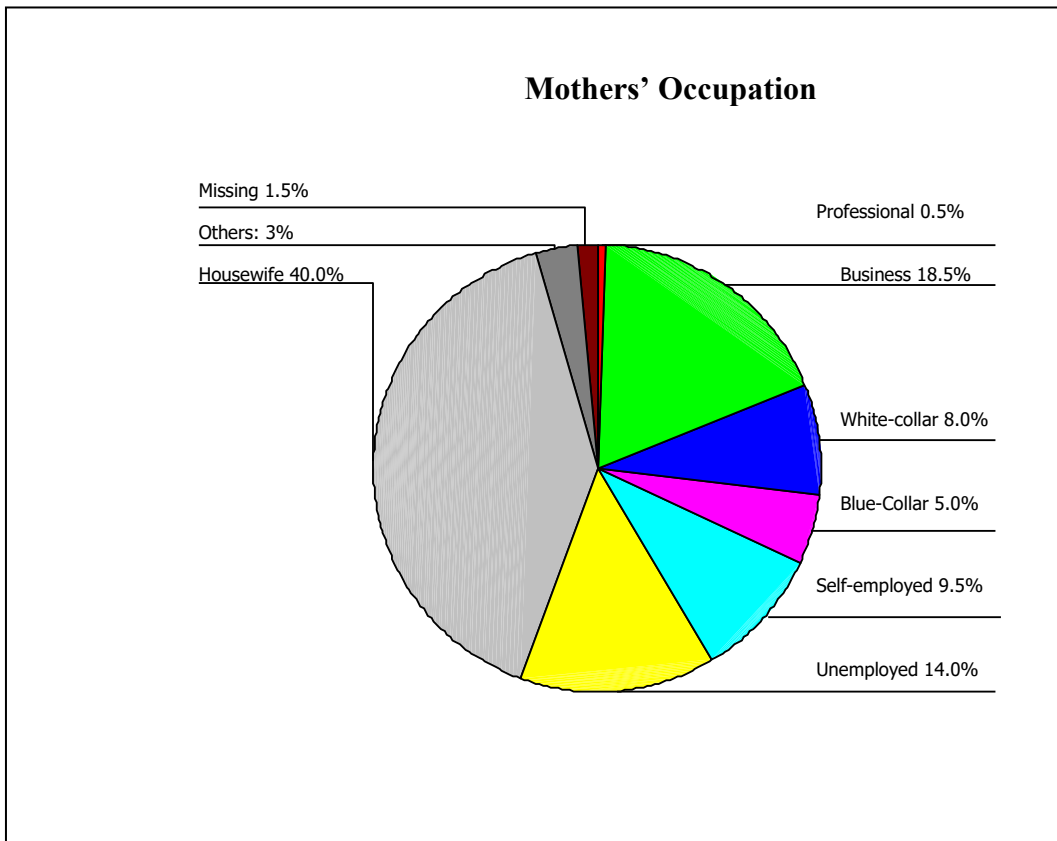
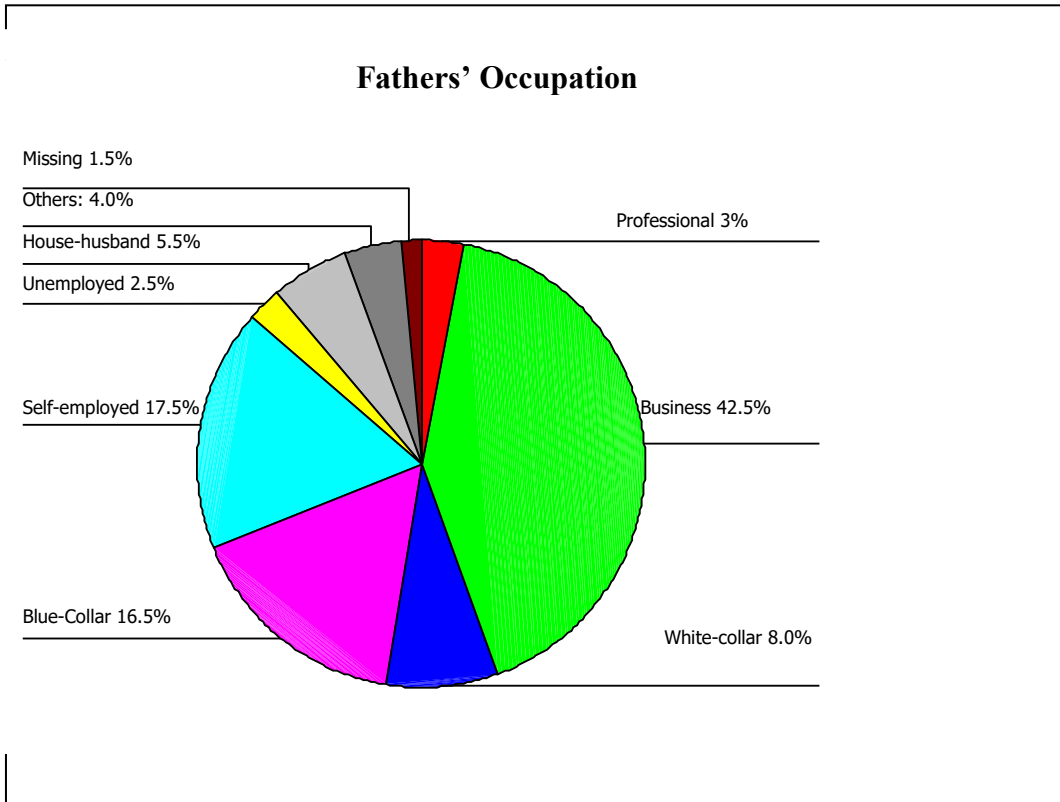
#### 4.1 Demographic Profile of Students

##### 4.1.1 Gender



The respondents are 200 students from all Senior Middle 2 classes. 37% of the respondents are females whereas 63% are males. The average age of the respondents is 17 years.

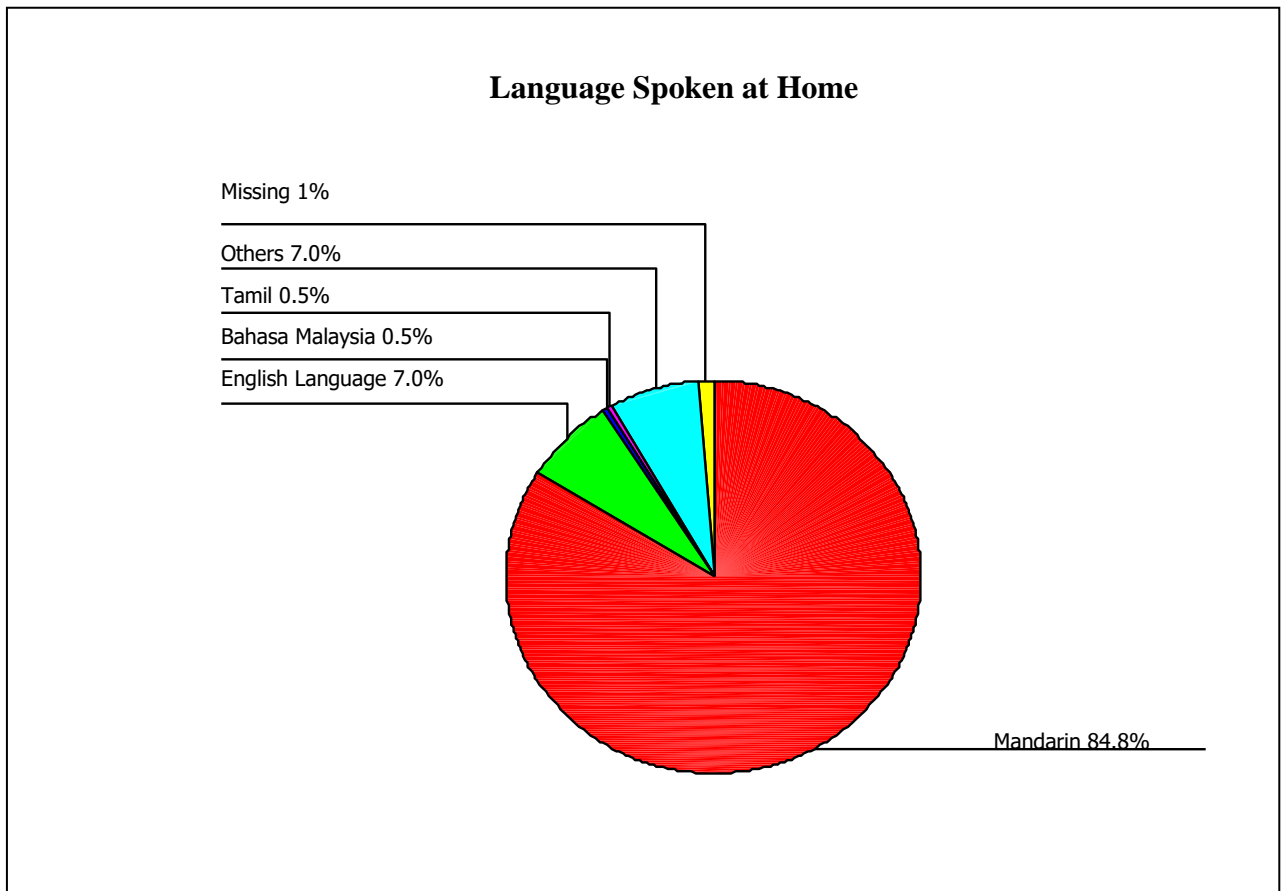
### 4.1.2 Parents' Occupation



The survey on fathers' occupation reveals that 42.5% of the fathers are businessmen, 16.5% hold blue-collar jobs, 17.5% are self-employed and 2.5% are unemployed. 40% of the mothers are house-wives, 18.5% are businesswomen, 5% hold blue-collar jobs, 9.5% are self-employed, 14% are unemployed and only 0.5% are professional.

We can deduce that the majority of our students' parents are not highly qualified as only 3% of the fathers are professionals and 8.1% hold white-collar jobs whereas only 0.5% of the mothers are professionals and 8% hold white-collar jobs. Their lack of higher education could indirectly influence the students' exposure to and interest towards the English Language.

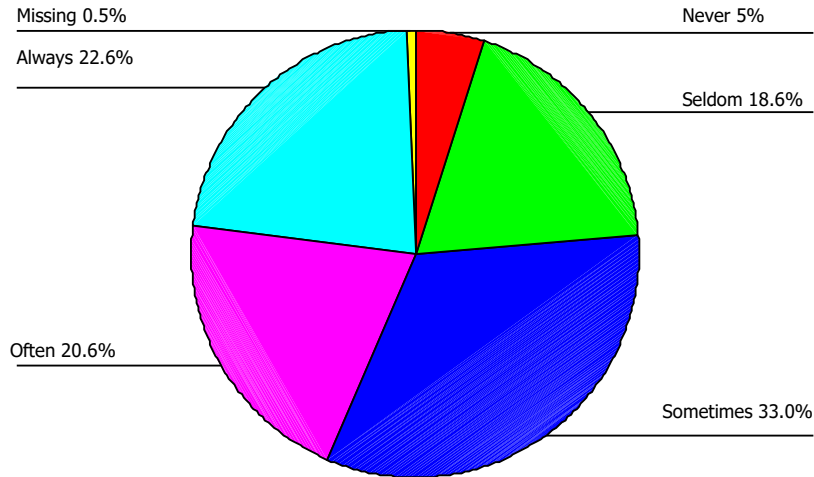
### 4.1.3 Language Spoken at Home



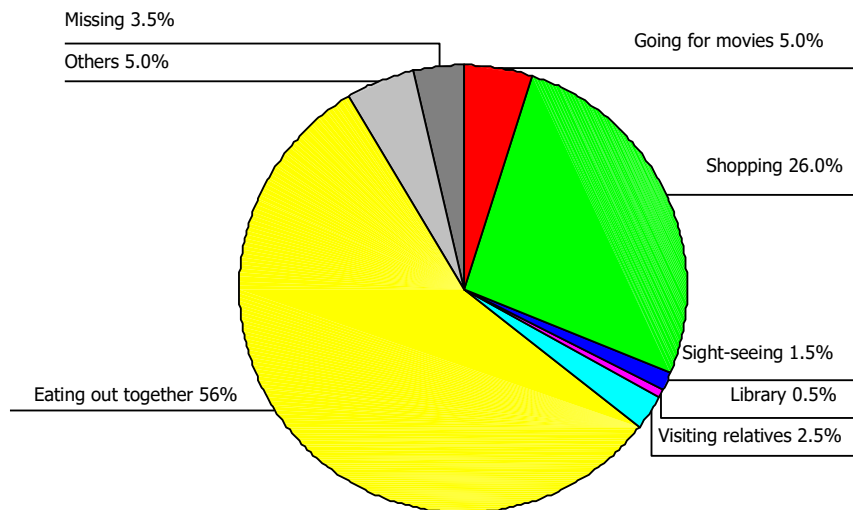
84% the students come from Mandarin-speaking families. Only 7% of the families communicate in the English Language at home. The background of the students' parents and the language they use at home reveal that majority of the students do not have the home environment to speak the language. They hardly have family support when it comes to using the English language after school-hours. The mastery of any language starts when the learners are young and proficiency will only develop when the language is used regularly. With the majority of the families not speaking the English Language at home, the students will find it difficult to achieve competency in the English language as there will be little immersion and exposure to the language.

#### 4.1.4 Family Weekend Time Together & Family Activities

**Family Weekend Time Together**



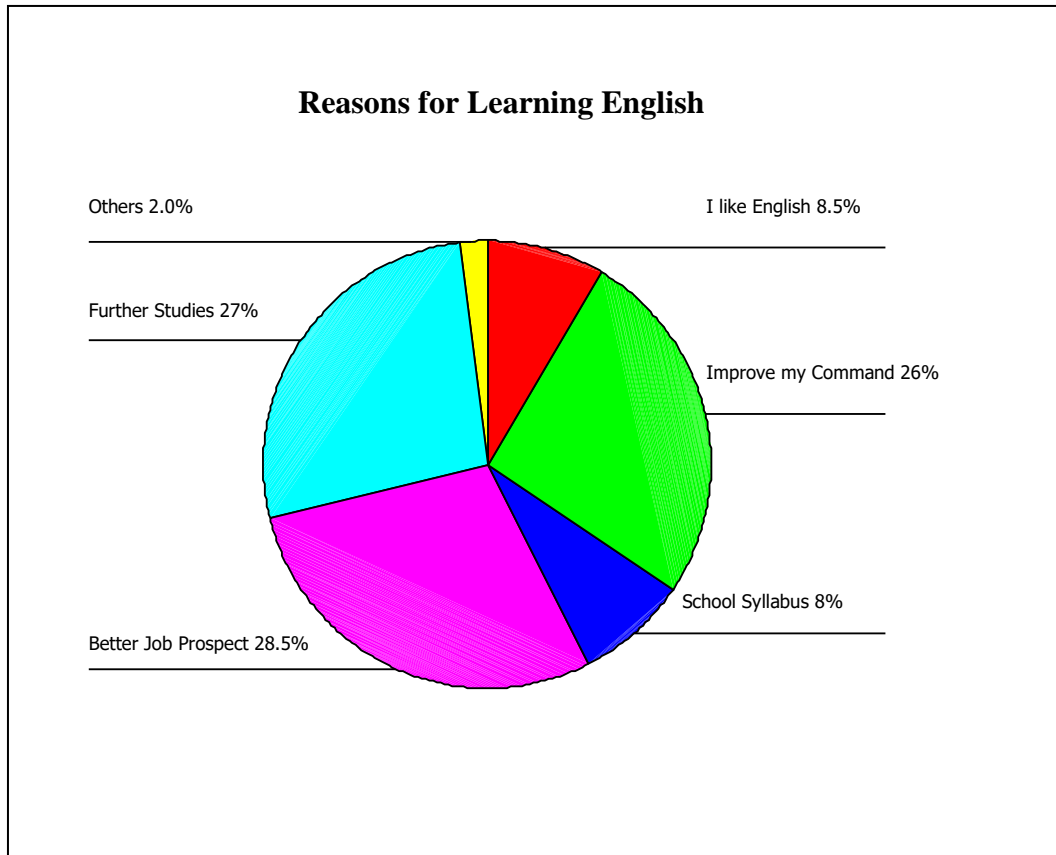
**Family Activities**



Only 5% of the students do not have family time together at weekends. 94.5% of the families spend family time at weekends. We can observe that they spend most of their time on leisure and entertainment. 56% of the families eat out together, 26% go shopping, 2.5% of the families visit relatives and 1% goes sight-seeing. Only 0.5% of the families spend time at the library implying that parents do not see the need to inculcate the reading habit among their

children. This does not augur well for students as reading is a vital receptive skill in language learning. Students need to read before they can master the English Language.

#### 4.1.5 Reasons for Learning English



Most of the students realize the importance of learning the English Language. 28.5% of the students know that a good command of the language will provide better job prospects and 27% understand the need to equip themselves with the English Language as this will put them at an advantage during their tertiary education. 26% of the students show the desire to improve on their command of the language. These reflect on the students' maturity that at the age of 17, they are able to map their future. They know that it is vital to learn the language so as to stay competitive in society.

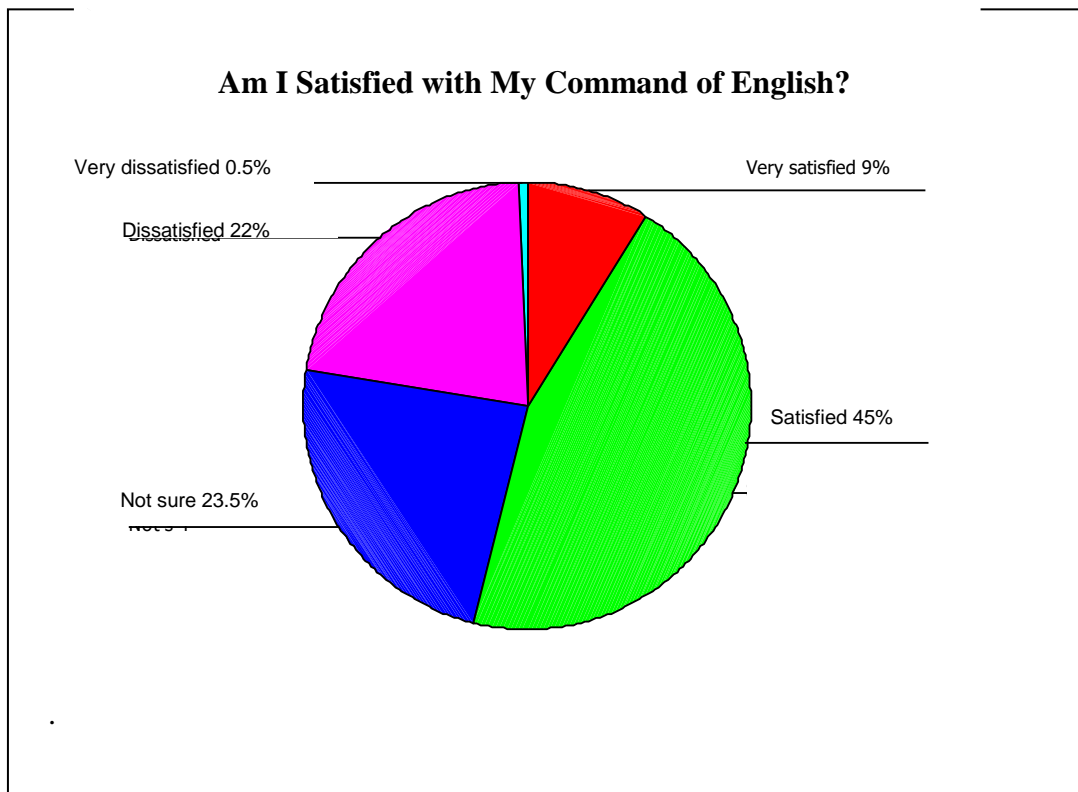
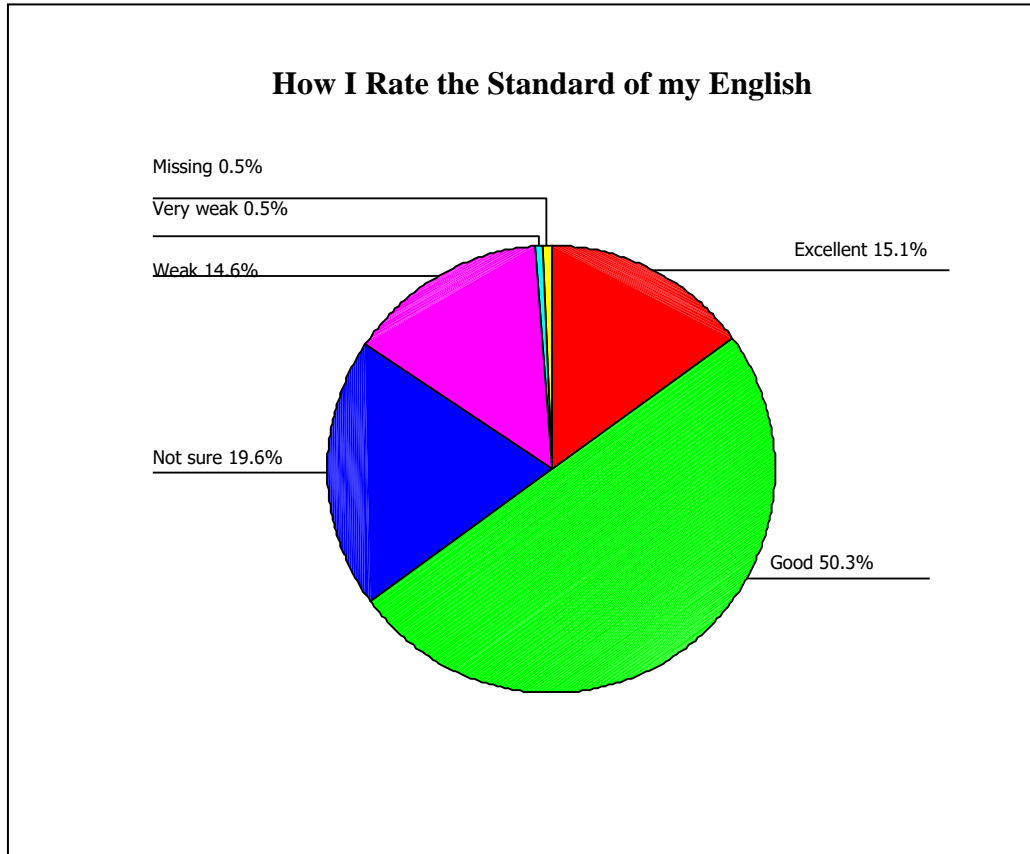
Only 8.5% of the students like the English language. This could be due to the fact that the language is hardly spoken at home for these students and therefore majority of the students see no relevance in using the language and to like the language.

8% of the students however feel that they are forced to learn the language as part of the school syllabus. Hopefully these students can be made to like the language through student-centred lessons which often can be fun and motivating.

#### 4.1.6 How I Rate the Standard of My English & Am I Satisfied with My Command of



## English



65.4% of the students have rated themselves as having achieved a good or excellent standard of the language and 15.1% rated themselves as weak or very weak. 19.6% are unsure

of their own standard. 54% of the students have expressed satisfaction at their level of command. 22.5% of these students have expressed dissatisfaction at their command of the language whereas 23.5% are still unsure. This could reflect an irony within them when comparing the rating of their standard as compared to their satisfaction of their own command of the language. We can view positively that the students realize there are still obstacles that they have to overcome to achieve competency in the language. These two variables could be further investigated in depth.

## 4.2 Student's General Interest towards the English Language.

The learning of a second-language could be achieved through Formal and Informal acquisition.

	Description	Never %	Seldom %	Some -times %	Often %	Always %	Mean %	Std Dev %
1.	Do you like learning English?	2.5	16.0	35.5	23.0	23.0	3.8	1.1
2.	Do you bring your English textbooks to school?	2.5	3.5	8.0	25.5	60.5	4.4	1.0
3.	Do you spend time revising your English Lessons at home?	18.5	45.0	27.0	9.0	0.5	2.3	0.9

Formal acquisition is done in a classroom. 86% of the students often or always bring their English textbooks to school. This reflects their compliance to the school rule and their understanding that there must be textbooks during lessons. 44% of the students often or always like learning English. These students could be extrinsically or intrinsically motivated. There could be various factors which would affect their fondness of the subject. They could be linked to the teacher, the lesson, the curriculum and their peers. Only 9.5% of the respondents diligently spend time revising their English lessons. These are the students who are intrinsically motivated and would complete their work at all cost.

Most students would probably not spend time revising their lessons due to various factors. They could either be too tired after spending practically 12 hours a day travelling to school, attending lessons, tutorials and or co-curricular activities before travelling home. Most of these students would not have support from their parents if they encounter difficulties in revising their English lessons – as parents would either be too busy with their careers or would have inadequate language proficiency to assist their children.

	Description	Never %	Seldom %	Some -times %	Often %	Always %	Mean %	Std Dev %
4.	Do you listen to	1.0	7.0	15.5	25.5	51.0	4.2	1.0

	English songs?							
5.	Do you try to understand the lyrics in the English songs?	2.5	14.5	31.5	27.5	24.0	3.6	1.0
6.	Do you watch English programmes on television?	7.5	18.5	30.5	24.5	19.5	3.3	1.2
7.	Do you watch English movies at the cineplex?	2.5	10.0	20.5	34.5	33.0	3.9	1.1
8.	Do you enjoy reading English story- books and magazines?	17.5	36.0	29.0	13.5	4.0	2.5	1.5

Language proficiency could be achieved through informal acquisition using Receptive Skills. Immersion and exposure to the language could be achieved during the students' leisure. 76.5% of the students' listen to English songs but only 51.5% often or always try to understand the lyrics. This could be due to the fact that students enjoy listening to hits or popular songs because of peer influence and they could even sing without having to understand the lyrics.

67.5% of the students' watch movies at the Cineplex and 44% watch English programmes on television. Most of the students' may be attracted to movies at the Cineplex because of the audio and visual effects. Only 17.5% of the students' enjoy reading English books and magazines. Reading is a habit which needs to be cultivated since young and we can observe that this is obviously neglected by the respondents' parents and teachers.

	Description	Never %	Seldom %	Some-times %	Often %	Always %	Mean %	Std Dev %
9.	Do you speak English to friends and strangers?	16.5	34.5	34.5	9.5	5.0	2.5	1.0
10	Do you write emails and letters to your friends in English?	16.5	27.5	23.0	17.5	15.5	2.9	1.3

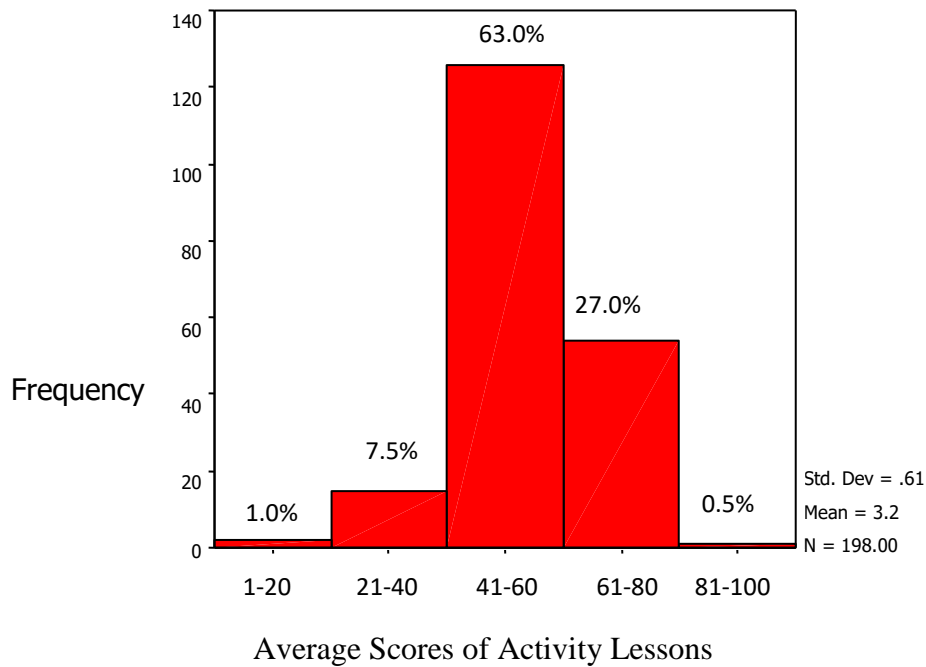
33% of the students write emails and letters to friends in English as compared to 14.5% who speak English to friends and strangers. With the advent of the computer, it is now common for students to communicate with each other via the email. Students can hide behind the computer screen and feel less inhibited as compared to talking face to face.

It can be observed that the Productive skills i.e. the Speaking skill has not been fully utilized for various reasons. The circle of friends of the students could be mainly mandarin-speaking and therefore there may not be many opportunities to communicate in English. The students could be staying in Chinese neighbourhoods and as such there is no necessity for them to speak in other languages. The school being a Chinese medium institution does not carry out activities

in the English Language and that does not warrant the students to speak in the English Language.

### 4.3 Students' Perception towards Activity Lessons

#### 4.3.1 Performance



From the bar chart above, we find that the result of the activity lessons reveal most of the students (63.0%) obtain marks within the range of 41-60 marks followed by 27% of our students with results ranging from 61-80 marks. This may be caused by the factors below. 84% of the students come from Chinese education background (refer to demographic background). It may be difficult for our students to pick up a second language as they are not exposed to the language. They have to overcome obstacles and it will take extra time and effort.

#### 4.3.2 Teachers

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
1	My teacher gives clear instructions during Activity Lessons.	1.5	5.0	26.0	58.0	9.5

2.	My teacher encourages us to speak English during our Activity Lessons.	1.0	3.0	15.0	51.5	29.5
3.	My teacher creates lessons to make learning fun and interesting.	3.0	16.0	34.0	40.0	7

We believe that students may have difficulty in learning when instructions are not clearly given during Activity Lessons. The result shows that 67.5% of the students strongly agree or agree that our teachers give clear instructions while 81% of the students agree or strongly agree that teachers encourage them to speak English with other students during activity lesson. 47% of the students agree or strongly agree that lessons created by the teachers are fun and interesting.

Overall, we found that students highly appreciate the role of teachers during activity lessons.

### 4.3.3 Lessons

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
4.	There are a variety of activities during Activity Lessons. (e.g. Ice-breaker, Role-play and Presentation)	4.0	17.6	25.1	42.7	10.6
5.	Activity Lessons are easy to follow and understand.	2.5	17.5	36.0	35.0	9.0
6.	Activity Lessons are fun and interesting when the students participate.	3.5	14.5	34.5	36.5	11
7.	I enjoy the power-point clips and video clips during Activity Lessons.	6.5	14.5	33.0	34.0	12
8.	Activity Lessons give me opportunities to communicate in English.	3.0	11.5	29.0	45.0	11.5

56.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that Activity Lessons give them opportunity to communicate in English. Results shows that 53.3% of the students agree or strongly agree that there are a variety of lessons during Activity Lessons. It shows that our teachers have put a lot of time and effort in creating the lessons.

As clear instructions are given throughout the variety of activities, it is easy for students to follow and understand the lesson. 44% of the students agree to the agreement. 47.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that students' participation make activity lessons fun and interesting. 46% of the students enjoy the video clips and power-point slides. During lessons, 56.5% of the students think that lessons give them opportunities to communicate in English.

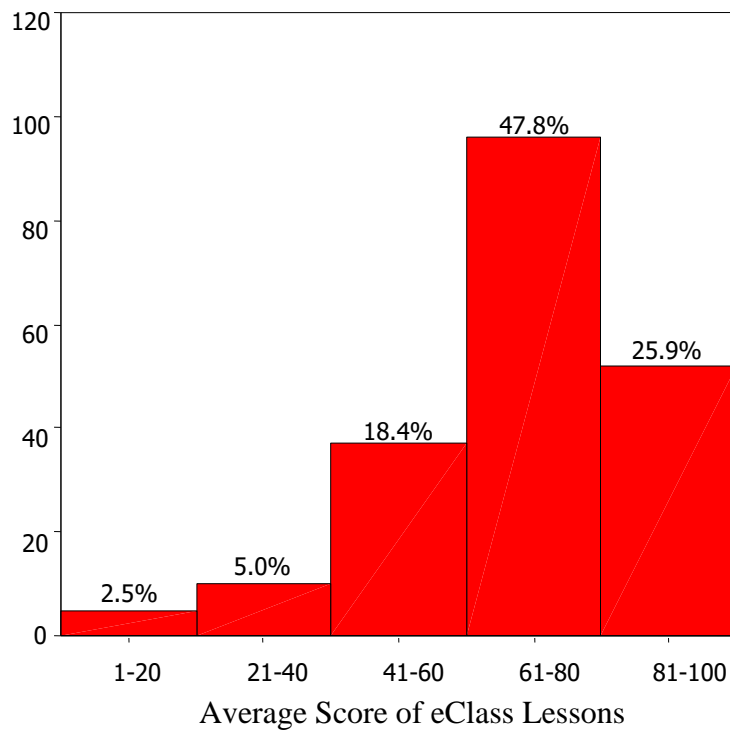
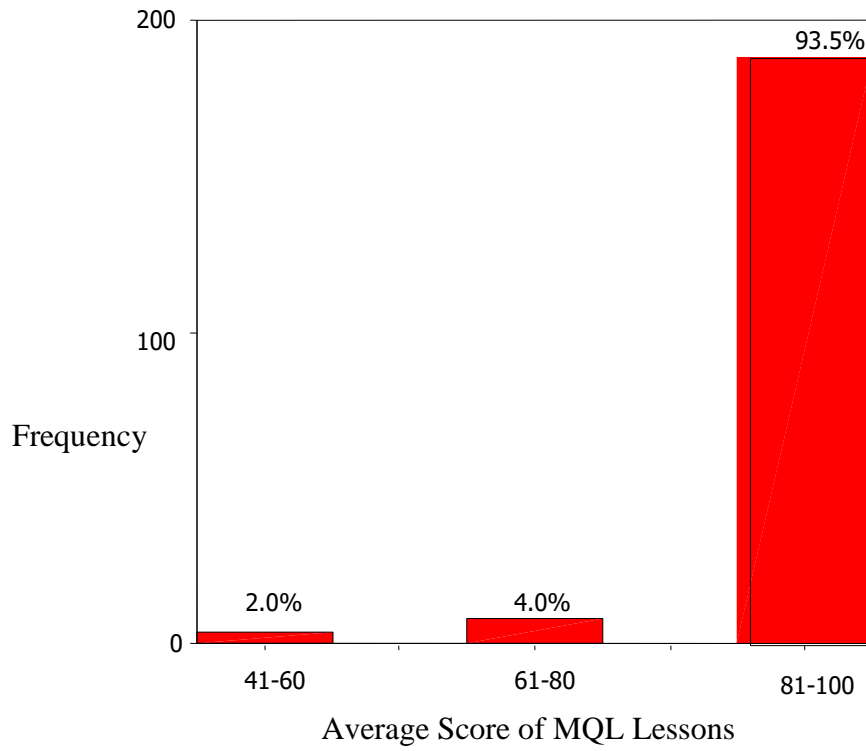
#### 4.3.4 Self Evaluation

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
9.	I am now more confident to speak in English with my friends and teachers.	7.5	20.6	33.7	31.2	7.0
10.	My Spoken English has improved with the implementation of Activity Lessons.	5.5	19.0	39.0	31.0	5.5

The findings show 38.2% of the students are now more confident to speak in English with their friends and teachers whereas 36.5% of them agree or strongly agree that their spoken English has improved with the implementation of Activity Lessons. It reveals that teachers have carried out their responsibilities and good work in creating lessons. However, students still need to build their confidence in their speaking skill.

#### 4.4 Students' Perception towards Multi-media Laboratory Lessons

##### 4.4.1 Performance



These two charts—each represents the total average of four tests that give the same picture/shape of graph—show our students’ results of MQL lessons and eClass lessons. According to the MQL results, 97.5% of the students scored more than the passing rate (60%) while 93.5% of them achieved 81-100%. MQL platform—which encourages students to keep trying until they get the correct answers themselves—shows that our students actually have the tendency to explore the language and achieve better results through the process of trial and error.

On the other hand, according to the eClass results, 73.7% of the students scored more than the passing rate (60%) while 25.9% of them achieved 81-100%. In comparison with the MQL results, the eClass results reveal our students’ real command of English because our teachers have chosen not to allow our students to submit their assignments more than once.

#### 4.4.2 Teachers

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
1	My teacher gives positive guidance during MML Lessons.	2.0	7.0	30.5	48.5	12

The survey on **Multi-media Laboratory Lessons** shows that 60.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that their teacher gives positive guidance during MML lessons. Despite the unsure percentage (30.5%), only 9% of the students disagree or strongly disagree with that statement. This is undoubtedly a very positive and heartening phenomenon to the teachers.

On the basis of the characteristics and elements of MML lessons which aim at fostering students’ Reading, Listening and Writing skills, teachers have paid more attention to every aspect of the teaching process and taken the role as a designer, researcher, organizer, integrator, collaborator, facilitator, partner, evaluator and educator.

#### 4.4.3 Lessons

##### a) Knowledge:

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
2.	MML lessons provide a lot of information about life, people, countries and culture not found in my English textbooks.	1.5	8.0	19.0	49.5	22.0
3.	I enjoy MML lessons because they are informative and educational.	2.5	10.5	34.0	44.0	9.0
4.	I have gained more	1.0	12.5	19.5	57.5	9.5



knowledge about people and countries via the MML lessons.						
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71.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that MML lessons provide a lot of information about life, people, countries and culture not found in their English textbooks. Besides, 53.0% of the students agree or strongly agree that they enjoy MML lessons because they are informative and educational. Moreover, 67.0% of the students agree or strongly agree that they have gained more knowledge about people and countries via the MML lessons.

The students' positive response has shown that they appreciate and enjoy the MML lessons which could broaden their horizons. In addition, a fun and stimulating way to put knowledge into practice is undeniably an essential part of language learning. More precisely, our students' right-scaled Quartet and eClass results have proved that the MML lessons which are more interesting and vivid if compared with the conventional lessons have successfully sparked their interest in learning the target language. In line with the education reform, MML lessons can be construed as a good kick start to autonomous learning which illuminates the importance of student-centred learning.

#### b) Receptive Skills:

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
5.	MML lessons give me opportunities to listen to English spoken by native speakers.	1.5	13.0	29.5	41.5	14.5
6.	I have learnt new vocabulary from the MML Lessons.	1.0	11.5	36.0	41.5	10.0
7.	I am able to read silently and understand English passages on my own.	1.5	24.0	26.0	40.5	8.0
8.	I can now better understand English spoken by native speakers.	4.5	19.0	33.0	38.0	5.5

56.0% of the students agree or strongly agree that MML lessons give them opportunities to listen to English spoken by native speakers while 14.5% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. 51.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that they have learnt new vocabulary from the MML lessons while 12.5% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. 48.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that they are able to read silently and understand English passages on their own while 25.5% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. 43.5% of the students agree or strongly agree that they can now better understand English spoken by native speakers while 23.5% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

These results show that our students are good at rote learning which eschews comprehension and is an ineffective tool in mastering any complex subject at an advanced level. However, when our students are asked about their in-depth comprehension of English, the disagreement comprises 24%.

### c) Productive Skills:

	Description	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither Disagree nor Agree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
9.	The eClass component gives me opportunities to write in English.	3.5	15.5	38.0	37.5	5.5
10.	I am now more confident to use the English Language with my friends and teachers.	7.5	19.0	36.5	30.5	6.5

43.0% of the students agree or strongly agree that the eClass component gives them opportunities to write in English while 19% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. 37.0% of the students agree or strongly agree that they are now more confident to use the English language with their friends and teachers while 26.5% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

The survey reveals that our students have not learnt to grasp the gist of applying the language. Most of the students from traditional Chinese education background tend to be passive and lack confidence in English. Hence, they seldom take the initiative to use the target language.

## 5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

Learning English as a second language is a great challenge for students from a non-English background. Students have to depend on various learning resources to improve their English. The survey shows that our effort in advocating a paradigm shift in the English Language teaching and learning which started in 2006 has not been in vain. The blending of Conventional Lessons with Activity and MML lessons allows three different forms of transfer of skills and knowledge. In Conventional Lessons, a teacher instructs a class of between 40-50 students, in Activity Lessons the move is towards group or pair work and where discussions and peer-teaching amongst students are encouraged. In MML lessons, a student faces a computer where there is autonomous learning. Independent learning where students study at their own paces takes place.

The bringing in of MML lessons and Activity lessons allow lessons to be student-centred rather than teacher-centred. Teachers play the role of facilitator to develop both receptive and productive skills.

From the survey, the actual results reveal that our students seem to be better at Passive Skills (Listening & Reading). They have scored better at the MML lessons as compared to Activity Lessons. They lack confidence in the Active Skills (Speaking & Writing). There is still a gap between students' performances at the MML Lessons and the Activity Lessons and we need to narrow that gap as students' proficiency in the English Language will highly depend on their Productive / Active Skills. Students' confidence is still much lacking despite teachers putting in much effort in creating a positive learning environment.

## 6.0 Suggestions

Often in the process of learning a new language, learners begin with receptive understanding of the new items, then later move on to **productive** use. The relationship between receptive and productive skills is a complex one, with one set of skills naturally supporting the other.

As facilitators/teachers, we need to create interesting lessons to gain students' attention. This can be accomplished by redefining creative teaching strategies.

Active participation during lessons must be encouraged. On seeing a purpose in improving their communication skills in the target language, students will strive to accomplish. A sense of accomplishment will affect both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Successful communication using the English Language will result in students feeling some sense of accomplishment. This will further lead to a sense of confidence which will in turn ensure achievement in competency of the English Language.

Teachers need to be diligent and passionate about our mission and be brave to try out new methods. Our students should be given the best support in their pursuit for education. If our students fail to be competent in the English Language, how can they then compete with the millions in Asia not to say the world?

'Rome was not built in a day'. Let's not lose heart even if our results have not shown significant improvement but let's renew our fervour and commitment to shape our students and put them on the right footing to language competency.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1

Dear Students of Senior Middle Two,  
July, 2010

We would like to conduct a survey to find out more about you and your family, your general interest towards English and your response towards our Activity Lessons and Multi-media lessons. The information acquired will only serve for the development of our school curriculum. The information you provide will be kept confidential.

Please answer all the questions.

#### Part A: Demographic Information of Students.

**Instructions:** Please tick the box which corresponds to your answer.

1. Your Gender:

Male

Female

2. Your father's occupation:

Professional

White-collar

Business

Blue-Collar

Unemployed

Self-employed

House-husband

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Your mother's occupation:

Professional

White-collar

Business

Blue-Collar

Unemployed

Self-employed

House-wife

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Language spoken at home by your family members:

- Mandarin  English Language  Bahasa Malaysia
- Tamil  Others: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Dialect spoken at home by your family members:

- Cantonese  Hakka   
Hokkein
- Teochew  Hainanese  Others:  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Does your family spend their leisure time together every weekend?

- A. Never  B. Seldom  C. Sometimes
- D. Often  E. Always

7. Answer question 7, if you have ticked B, C, D, or E for Question 6.

How does your family spend your leisure together every weekend?

- Going for movies  Shopping  Sight-seeing
- Library  Visiting relatives   
Eating out together

8. What is your main reason for learning English?

I like English.

Learning English will help me improve in my command of the language.

It is part of the School syllabus.

It will help me find a better job in future.

It will enable me to study at colleges or universities overseas.

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you satisfied with your command of English?

- Very satisfied  Satisfied   
Not sure



	strangers outside school?					
10.	Do you write emails and letters to your friends in English?					

### Part 3: Student's response towards Activity and Multi-media Lessons.

**Instructions:** Please rate the following statements accordingly. Answer each question as spontaneously as possible. (A. Strongly Disagree; B. Disagree; C. Neither Agree or Disagree; D. Agree E. Strongly Agree). Tick only one response for each statement.

#### Activity Lessons:

	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	My teacher gives clear instructions during Activity Lessons.					
2.	My teacher encourages us to speak English during our Activity Lessons.					
3.	My teacher creates lessons to make learning fun and interesting.					
4.	There are a variety of activities during Activity Lessons. (e.g. Ice-breaker, Role-play and Presentation)					
5.	Activity Lessons are easy to follow and understand.					
6.	Activity Lessons are fun and interesting when the students participate.					
7.	I enjoy the power-point clips and video clips during Activity Lessons.					
8.	Activity Lessons give me opportunities to communicate in English.					
9.	I am now more confident to speak in English with my friends and teachers.					
10.	My Spoken English has improved with the implementation of Activity Lessons.					

**Multi-media Laboratory Lessons:**

	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	My teacher gives positive guidance during MML Lessons.					
2.	MML lessons provide a lot of information about life, people, countries and culture not found in my English textbooks.					
3.	I enjoy MML lessons because they are informative and educational.					
4.	I have gained more knowledge about people and countries via the MML lessons.					
5.	MML lessons give me opportunities to listen to English spoken by native speakers.					
6.	I have learnt new vocabulary from the MML Lessons.					
7.	I am able to read silently and understand English passages on my own.					
8.	I can now better understand English spoken by native speakers.					
9.	The E-Class component gives me opportunities to write in English.					
10.	I am now more confident to use the English Language with my friends and teachers.					

Thank you for your time and co-operation.



## Appendix 2

**CONFUCIAN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL, KUALA LUMPUR**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORAL ASSESSMENTS**

**Criteria for Assessment**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Construct</b>	<b>Criteria / Description</b>
<b>Excellent</b>  <b>5 marks</b>	1. Converse on a topic effectively / Give appropriate response	Excellent ability to speak / converse / hold a discussion on a topic effectively.
	2. Speak coherently using correct and acceptable pronunciation	Effective and smooth flow of well-organized ideas. Very fluent and clear speech. Correct and clear pronunciation with excellent articulation, intonation, word stress and rhythm.
	3. Speak the language using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary within context	Excellent use of language. Interesting expressions used appropriately and effectively.
	4. Speak using correct grammar	Excellent sentence structure and grammatically correct sentences
<b>Good</b>  <b>4 marks</b>	1. Converse on a topic effectively / Give appropriate response	Good ability to speak / converse / hold a discussion on a topic effectively.
	2. Speak coherently using correct and acceptable pronunciation	Effective and smooth flow of well-organized ideas. Fluent and clear speech. Correct and clear pronunciation with good articulation, intonation, word stress and rhythm.
	3. Speak the language using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary within context	Good use of language. Interesting expressions used appropriately and effectively
	4. Speak using correct grammar	Good sentence structure and grammatically correct sentences.
<b>Satisfactory</b>  <b>3 marks</b>	1. Converse on a topic effectively / Give appropriate response	Satisfactory ability to speak / converse / hold a discussion on a topic.
	2. Speak coherently using correct and acceptable pronunciation	Satisfactory flow of well-organized ideas. Fairly fluent and clear speech. Generally satisfactory pronunciation, intonation, word stress and rhythm with frequent lapses.
	3. Speak the language using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary within	Satisfactory use of language. Fair range of vocabulary

	context	
	4. Speak using correct grammar	Satisfactory sentence structure with some grammatical errors but meaning is fairly clear.
<b>Weak</b>  <b>2 marks</b>	1. Converse on a topic effectively / Give appropriate response	Limited ability to speak / converse / hold a discussion on a topic effectively.
	2. Speak coherently using correct and acceptable pronunciation	Minimal flow and organization of ideas. Fluency is interrupted by consistent halting and long pauses. Frequent errors in pronunciation, intonation, word stress and rhythm.
	3. Speak the language using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary within context	Minimal use of language. Limited vocabulary.
	4. Speak using correct grammar	Poor sentence structure with consistent grammatically errors which disrupt meaning
<b>Very Weak</b>  <b>1 mark</b>	1. Converse on a topic effectively / Give appropriate response	Limited ability to speak / converse / hold a discussion on a topic effectively. Hardly any response
	2. Speak coherently using correct and acceptable pronunciation	Hardly any flow and organization of ideas. Poor pronunciation and intonation.
	3. Speak the language using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary within context	Hardly any use of language.
	4. Speak using correct grammar	Excessive grammatical errors