



# **32ND MELTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024**

**CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

**BRICKFIELDS ASIA COLLEGE  
21-22 September 2024**

**From Promise to Practice :**  
Delivering Quality English Language  
Education

# PROCEEDINGS OF 32ND MELTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024



**Disclaimer:** All materials published in this e-proceedings have been reviewed to ensure relevance to this conference's sub-themes. MELTA and the editors, while taking every effort to ensure accuracy of content and language use, are not to be held responsible for any errors or omissions in this publication. The responsibility rests solely with the authors.

## **EDITORS**

**Dr Ilyana binti Jalaluddin**

**Universiti Putra Malaysia**

**Dr Steffi Tan Shih May**

**Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed)**

**Dr Ramiza binti Darmi**

**Universiti Putra Malaysia**

**Dr Warid bin Mihat**

**Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM),**

**Kelantan Campus**

**Dr Muhamad Izzat bin Rahim**

**Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor,**

**Dengkil Campus**

**Noor Azlinda binti Zainal Abidin**

**Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah**

**Nur Haziq Fikri bin Ahmad**

**Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor,**

**Dengkil Campus**

# CONTENT

NO.1	PAPER	PAGE NUMBER
1	<b>NURTURING A SENSE OF COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE SDGs IN ENGLISH CLASSES</b> Rie Sugiura and Noriko Imai Tokai University, Kochi University	1
2	<b>REFLECTION ON REFLECTIVE TEACHING OF TRAINEE TEACHERS: A METAMORPHOSIS</b> Mohammad Golam Mohiuddin Green University of Bangladesh	5
3	<b>NAVIGATING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY: THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL AND CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES</b> Nor Hidayah Md Nor and Fatiha Senom University Malaya	9
4	<b>ENGLISH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TERTIARY TRANSITION PROGRAM</b> M.A., Foo, G.E.L., Law and N.H., Safarudin Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus	15
5	<b>EXAMINING THE REPRESENTATIONS OF ENGLISH PRESENT TENSE IN THE CEFR-ALIGNED MALAYSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS</b> Patrick Duffy Bayuong and Angela Felix Arip Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah Belaga, Belaga, Sarawak, Malaysia	19
6	<b>VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH MODEL ORIENTED TO LEFT AND RIGHT BRAINS ACCOMMODATION IN DAERAH ISTIMEWA YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA</b> Bunga Putri Maulia, Margana and Linda Fitri Pertiwi Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta	25
7	<b>UNDERSTANDING TEACHERS' LEARNING CYCLE OF CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY</b> Malini Devi Paramesvaran, Lim Jia Wei and Madhyazhagan Ganesan University of Malaya	30
8	<b>ORAL HISTORIES OF MALAYSIAN FRONT-LINERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: CREATING GRAPHIC STORIES</b> Azlina Abdul Aziz and Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	37
9	<b>A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b> Yuan Jiang, Melinda Kong Lian Fah, Christina Amanda Yin Chueh Ping and Wendy Goff Swinburne University of Technology	41
10	<b>I COME WITH TRANSFORMATION (ICT) – TRANSFORMING THE DEEPEST ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE VIA E-LEARNING</b> Kristen Priya Krishnan Qosmo International School	45
11	<b>INFLUENCE OF ODL TOWARDS IN-SERVICE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: A MALAYSIAN PERSPECTIVE</b> Li Hsien Ooi and Juliana Othman University of Malaya	50

12	<b>BOOSTING SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH CANVA DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN THE PRIMARY ESL CLASSROOM</b> Frecylla May Gidor, Noraini Said and Anna Lyn Abu Bakar Universiti Malaysia Sabah	54
13	<b>THE INFLUENCE OF JOB DEMANDS ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN PERAK STATE</b> Anita Kalimuthu SMK Tarcisian Convent, Ipoh	59
14	<b>L2 SPEAKING ANXIETY AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE AMONG MALAYSIAN ESL UNDERGRADUATES</b> Iz 'an Rosmani and Nur Syasya Qistina Mazeree Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kelantan, Malaysia University of Szeged, Hungary	63
15	<b>GORGEOUS BATHROOM AND THE KANJI TATTOO: ENGLISH IN JAPANESE MUSIC GROUP NAMES</b> Christian Misuro Asia University	68
16	<b>FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: MICRO-TEACHING CHALLENGES AMONG MALAYSIAN ENGLISH EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES</b> Darshnee Muniandy and Shasmita Magentiran Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman	72
17	<b>CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIODRAMATIC PLAY IN CHILDREN'S ENGLISH PHONEMIC AWARENESS THROUGH LANGUAGE OUTPUT: AN ACTION RESEARCH</b> Evon Wong Yee Wan Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia	76
18	<b>BEYOND THE RED PEN: RETHINKING HOW WE ASSESS STUDENT WRITING</b> Gurmit Kaur Labh Singh and M Kamala Palaniappa Manickam INTI International College Subang	80
19	<b>COMPARING NOVICE AND EXPERIENCED ENGLISH TEACHERS' ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW KNOWLEDGE FOR CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE CHANGE: THE CASE OF TWO TEACHER COMMUNITIES IN HIGH NEEDS SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SELANGOR</b> Ngee Derk, Tiong and Nicholas Boon Kheng, Lee University of Nottingham, Malaysia Sunway University, Malaysia	84
20	<b>SPIN THE BICYCLE WHEELS: AN INNOVATIVE IDEA TO HELP SENTENCE FORMATION FOR HEARING IMPAIRED PUPILS</b> Siti Ummaizah bt Meor Musa, Gloria Stephanie anak Griffin and Rosmalily binti Salleh Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman SK Pendidikan Khas Selangor Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia	88

21	<b>A STUDY ON THE USAGE OF TEXTISM THROUGH WHATSAPP AND THE INFLUENCE IT HAS ON ONE’S WRITING SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATES</b> Yashvini Mathilda, Geetha Veerappan and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Prashanth Beleya HIS International School, Subang Jaya	93
22	<b>GENERATIVE AI IN ACADEMIA: CHALLENGES AND FOR ACADEMIC WRITING SUCCESS</b> Steffi Tan Shih May Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed)	97
23	<b>THE IMPACT OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION IN TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN TEACHERS OF MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (NGO’S IMPACT ON TPD IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY)</b> Thurairaja Sunmokasudram SMK Toh Indera Wangsa Ahmad, Perak	101
24	<b>SYMPTOMS OF VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOUR OF ESL LEARNERS DURING ONLINE ORAL PRESENTATIONS</b> Ayu Rita Mohamad Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)	105

## **NURTURING A SENSE OF COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE SDGs IN ENGLISH CLASSES**

**Rie Sugiura<sup>1</sup> and Noriko Imai<sup>2</sup>**

**Tokai University, Kochi University**

**[r.sugiura0330@gmail.com](mailto:r.sugiura0330@gmail.com)**

### **Abstract**

The Japanese National Curriculum Standards by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) clearly state that educating students to be responsible for the realisation of a sustainable society is a vital objective (MEXT, 2018). In accordance with the curriculum, government-authorised English textbooks in Japan often incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, as learning topics. This study explored the effective use of textbooks to nurture students' sense of commitment towards the SDGs in English classes by conducting a series of lessons focusing on the SDGs in an upper secondary school. Questionnaires were administered before and after the lessons, alongside class observations and analysis of student writing. The findings indicated that the lessons raised students' confidence in speaking English, generating positive feedback from students.

### **Key Words**

SDGs, Textbooks, CLIL, Upper Secondary School in Japan

### **1. Background of Study**

Equipping students with skills to thrive in a global society is an urgent goal in the field of education. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are considered valuable educational topics for developing student skills. The Japanese National Curriculum Standards explicitly state that educating each student to be responsible for the realisation of a sustainable society is crucial in the constantly changing global world (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology [MEXT], 2018). Accordingly, the SDGs are frequently used as learning resources. In government-authorised English textbooks for upper secondary schools, the SDGs are explicitly addressed in 16 out of 24 English textbooks for first graders (Sugiura & Imai, 2023) and 14 out of 24 textbooks for second graders (Sugiura & Imai, 2024). These findings indicate that the SDG concepts are widespread in English education in Japan. As for English education, approaches such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2003) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Coyle et al., 2010) have attracted considerable attention from teachers, as they provide students with opportunities to learn not only English but also the content and skills applicable in real society.



## **2. Statement of Problem**

While concepts of the SDGs are prevalent in Japan, it remains uncertain whether individuals genuinely integrate these goals into their daily lives. Furthermore, there is a lack of comprehensive discussion on how to effectively develop a sense of commitment towards the SDGs among students. When different approaches such as TBLT and CLIL are introduced in English language teaching, teachers face the challenge of finding effective strategies to actively engage students in meaningful activities (Sugiura et al., 2022). Devising active engagement activities involves Cognitive dimensions such as lower-order thinking skills (LOTS: remembering, understanding and applying) and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS: analysing, evaluating and creating) (Coyle et al., 2010). This study proposes a useful and practical approach for developing HOTS in class.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The significance of this study lies in exploring an effective approach for nurturing students' sense of commitment towards the SDGs based on government-authorised textbooks in English classes. Considering that textbook plays an important role as a compulsory element of Japanese school education, this study aims to provide insights into their effective usage. In this study, when CLIL was applied to English classes, cognitive dimensions such as LOTS and HOTS (Coyle et al., 2010) were considered. It is necessary to incorporate and allocate language activities or tasks that require different levels of cognition into the curriculum. These findings contribute to classroom practice and curriculum development aimed at enhancing students' HOTS.

## **4. Research Questions**

The research questions for this study are as follows:

- (i) Does engaging in a series of lessons on the SDGs improve students' interest in them?
- (ii) Does engaging in a series of the SDG-focused lessons improve students' attitudes towards English learning?
- (iii) What features of effective lessons enhance student engagement in English classes?

## **5. Method**

A series of lessons on the SDGs were conducted with first-grade students at an upper secondary school. Forty-seven students participated in at least one lesson. However, the analysis was conducted only on data from students who attended all the lessons required for this study and appropriately answered all the closed question items of the questionnaires. Data from 34 students were analysed.

The lessons were designed based on a government-authorised textbook used by the students and divided into three periods: 50 minutes for the first and second periods and 15 minutes for the third period. The final task for students of the lessons was to propose actions that could be taken to create a better world. This task aimed at engaging students in HOTS.

To determine the usefulness of the lessons, questionnaires with 14 closed questions were administered before and after the lessons to enquire about students' attitudes towards English



and their interest in the SDGs. An open-ended question, ‘What skills do you think improved in the lessons?’ was included in the post-lesson questionnaire.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

Regarding the first research question, the questionnaire data did not yield any significant differences in students’ interest in the SDGs. However, comments after the lessons suggested that the students’ interest in the SDGs had improved. Concerning the second question, the results of the questionnaires indicated that students’ confidence in speaking English improved significantly, while their confidence in other skills, such as listening, reading and writing, remained unchanged. When asked what skills improved in the lessons, 21 out of 34 students mentioned that the lessons were helpful in improving their writing or expression skills in English. Comments in the post-lesson questionnaire suggested that the lessons were received positively by the students, motivating them to view the SDGs as their own issues. It is worth noting that writing their own research results and ideas in English was beneficial for improving their English skills. The answers to the third research question can be inferred from the students’ comments. It was found that students engage deeply in class when required to express their ideas.

## **7. Limitations**

One limitation of this study is the small number of participants, which made it difficult to draw general conclusions. In addition, the class time spent on lessons was not sufficiently long because of the time constraints of the school curriculum. Although the students proposed their own ideas to achieve the SDGs, they did not have the time to do so in the real world. If project-based lessons could be incorporated into a year’s curriculum, students would have the chance to perform what they proposed in class and engage in HOTS more actively. However, further longitudinal studies are warranted.

## **8. Conclusion**

This case study attempted to explore a practical approach to nurturing students’ commitment to the SDGs in English classes, in particular, using government-authorised textbooks. The questionnaire results showed that students developed greater confidence in speaking English. Moreover, the study suggests that expressing their own ideas in English, supported by step-by-step instruction with concrete examples, can actively engage students in class. This study contributes to English teachers and curriculum developers by providing insights into incorporating the concepts of the SDGs in class.

## **Acknowledgement**

This study was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (C) (JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP 22K00824).

## References

- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2018). *Kotogakko gakushu shido yoryo (heisei 30nen kokujii) kaisetsu gaikokugo hen eigo hen*. [Commentary on the National Curriculum Standards for upper secondary school (Notified in 2018): Foreign languages and English]. [https://www.mext.go.jp/content/1407073\\_09\\_1\\_2.pdf](https://www.mext.go.jp/content/1407073_09_1_2.pdf)
- Sugiura, R., Imai, N., Ashcroft, R., Dean, E., & Hamilton, M. (2022) Developing materials based on high school English textbooks in Japan: Focusing on cognition demand and learners' perspectives, *SPELT Journal*, 11, 2-21.
- Sugiura, R. & Imai, N. (2023) The Sustainable Development Goals as learning resources for English language education in Japanese upper-secondary education, *SPELT Journal*, 12, 3-16.
- Sugiura, R. & Imai, N. (2024, January 26-27) *The SDGs and higher-order thinking skills in government-authorized English textbooks in Japan* [Paper presentation]. 43rd Thailand TESOL International Conference 2024, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

## REFLECTION ON REFLECTIVE TEACHING OF TRAINEE TEACHERS: A METAMORPHOSIS

Mohammad Golam Mohiuddin

Department of English

Green University of Bangladesh

[mohiuddin@eng.green.edu.bd](mailto:mohiuddin@eng.green.edu.bd)

[m.uddin2611@gmail.com](mailto:m.uddin2611@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The study focuses on the reflection of reflective teaching of two trainee teachers who maintain a checklist and a diary of their reflective practices at a university for five months for their professional development. After conducting the classes, each teacher-respondent work on the checklist to see what went well and why, what partially went well and why, and what did not go well and why. They then exchanged their diary to explore and internalize what happened during their own teaching-learning and with their fellows. The findings of the qualitative data received from the diary and interview reveal that reflection on the reflective teaching of the self and the fellow immensely help the reflective teachers to bring necessary and multidimensional changes in the teaching pedagogy and classroom materials. The practice ultimately results in teacher development leading to the development of students.

### Key Words

Reflective teaching, professional development, trainee teachers

### 1. Background of Study

Reflective teaching has been a prominent area in teacher education, especially in the growth and training of trainee-teachers. This approach nurtures teachers to develop their teaching methods, decision-making processes, and interactions with students. The practice enhances their comprehension of the educational contexts and their responsibilities as well. Therefore, it is an approach that promotes ongoing professional development, flexibility, and a dedication to enhancing students' learnings. The practice of reflective teaching is based on the beliefs of Dewey (1933), who highlighted the significance of reflection in education as a way to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience. Schön (1983) has expanded upon Dewey's views by introducing the concept of the "reflective practitioner." This concept emphasizes the importance of reflection in professional practice. According to Zeichner and Liston (2014), reflective practice is considered essential, in teacher education, for teachers to develop their teaching strategies and adjust their abilities to varied requirements of their students. The objective of this study is to investigate the experiences of trainee teachers while they participate in reflective practices. It will analyse the elements that either support or impede their reflective journey and assess the influence of this process on their professional development.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

The application of reflective teaching practices in teacher training programs is widely acknowledged as an important element in the professional growth of aspiring teachers. Reflective teaching promotes the development of trainee teachers' ability to analyse their instructional methods, classroom management practices, and interactions with students in a critical manner. This process enhances the comprehension of their professional duties and responsibilities. As Farrell (2016) says, "Teachers who engage in reflective practice can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching." Nevertheless, although the significance of reflection in teacher education is recognized, there is still a notable lack of information regarding the efficacy of these practices in transforming trainee teachers into effective reflective practitioners. The researcher feels that it is necessary to investigate the impact of reflective teaching techniques on the professional development of trainee teachers, the metamorphosis from inexperienced beginners to skilled and introspective professionals. Therefore, the researcher adopted a reflection on reflective teaching practices of two trainee and novice teachers in a university context in Bangladesh.

## **3. Significance of Study**

Reflective teaching helps teachers understand how students can learn better and how teachers can be responsible for students' progress. It helps teachers assess the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching and develop a sense of responsiveness among them to teach better. This study emphasises the significance of reflection of reflective teaching into teacher education programs in a systematic and relevant manner so that both students and teachers can leverage the advantages of this practice. The research explores a comparative analysis of the reflection of reflective teaching of two novice teachers who experienced their reflective teaching during their in-service training. Both the teachers maintained their diaries to write reflections on what went well and why, what partially went well and why, and what did not go well and why. The trainee and novice teachers then exchanged their diaries and therefore created a new avenue to learn from the reflections of the self and of the fellow colleague.

## **4. Research Questions**

The study aims at investigating the answers to the following questions:

- (i) What is the perception of trainee teachers regarding the significance of reflective teaching in their professional growth?
- (ii) How can reflective teaching help trainee teachers transform into reflective practitioners?

## **5. Method**

This study adopts a qualitative method to investigate the experiences and perspectives of trainee teachers in relation to reflective teaching and its impact on their professional growth. The study examines the reflection of reflective teaching practices of two trainee teachers in a select private university in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The select university recruited these participant-teachers and arranged five-month long training for them. While teaching and receiving training over a period of five months, the trainee teachers used a checklist to mark what elements of their instruction went either partially well, completely well, or poorly and to find the causes of these results. They then recorded their thoughts in a diary, which they subsequently shared with their peer to receive

new ideas and improve their self-awareness and learning. Data were collected through reflective diaries and semi-structured interviews carried out at the end of the five-month research period. The diaries gave in-depth insights into the reflective practices, while the interviews documented the participants' perceptions, values and experiences of their reflective teaching. The researcher analysed the data thematically to find key issues and themes related to the influence of reflective teaching on professional development.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The findings expose the perspectives of trainee teachers on the importance of reflective teaching in their professional development and the ways in which reflective teaching might transform them into reflective practitioners. Regarding the perception of reflective teaching in professional growth, the trainee teachers considered reflective teaching to be very significant and inevitable. Both participants observed that the formation of a checklist and a reflective journal facilitated a critical assessment of their teaching methodologies. The teachers argue that engaging in reflection on the aspects of success, partial success, and failure following each lesson allowed them to pinpoint areas that needed further development. This, in turn, resulted in the implementation of more efficient teaching techniques and classroom management. Moreover, the research revealed that the implementation of reflective teaching methods effectively enabled the trainee teachers to acquire the skills and attitudes necessary to become reflective practitioners. The sharing of diaries facilitated peer learning, enabling individuals to acquire valuable insights from the experiences of their professional peers. The exercise of collaborative reflection facilitated the development of adaptability, inventiveness, and a more profound comprehension of various teaching methodologies. Consequently, both teachers expressed a higher level of adaptability in their instructional approaches as well as ongoing professional development.

## **7. Limitations**

The study's findings are constrained by its modest sample size, which may not comprehensively reflect the varied experiences of trainee teachers across different educational settings. Qualitative methods offer detailed insights but have limited applicability to larger populations. The study's concentration on a solitary institution imposes additional limitations on the generalizability of the findings to other teacher preparation programs that possess distinct structures and support systems.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study highlights the crucial importance of reflective teaching in the professional transformation of trainee teachers. Research has shown that engaging in reflective practices can boost self-awareness, build pedagogical skills, and cultivate critical thinking abilities, all of which are essential for the development of effective teachers. Although trainee teachers faced difficulties such as limited time and the requirement for clear supervision, engaging in reflection had a profound impact on their professional identities, reinforcing their confidence, and fostering a dedication to continuous learning. The results indicate that teacher education programs should give high importance to reflective teaching by offering comprehensive support systems, such as mentorship and structured reflection opportunities. By implementing these programs, trainee teachers can be better prepared to handle the intricacies of the teaching profession and develop into thoughtful practitioners. In order to cultivate teachers who possess both skill and a

commitment to ongoing professional development, it is essential to prioritize the promotion of thoughtful teaching approaches.

## References

- Dewey, J. (1933). *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process*. D.C. Heath and Company.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2016). *Promoting Teacher Reflection in Second Language Education: A Framework for TESOL Professionals*. Routledge.
- Larrivee, B. (2000). *Transforming Teaching Practice: Becoming the Critically Reflective Teacher*. *Reflective Practice*, 1(3), 293-307.
- Schön, D. A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Basic
- Zeichner, K., & Liston, D. (2014). *Reflective Teaching: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

**NAVIGATING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY: THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL AND  
CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES**

**Nor Hidayah Md Nor<sup>1</sup> and Fatiha Senom<sup>2</sup>**

**University of Malaya**

**[edayah\\_black85@yahoo.com](mailto:edayah_black85@yahoo.com)**

**Abstract**

Writing anxiety is a common challenge for second language learners, significantly impacting them if left unaddressed. This issue is particularly acute among Malaysian pre-university students, who often struggle with fear, discomfort, and pessimism about writing in English. This study investigated the factors contributing to second language writing anxiety among these students. In this study, the experiences of six Form Six students with varying levels of writing anxiety were explored through a qualitative approach. The findings revealed that both individual differences, notably prior learning experiences and language proficiency, and contextual factors that include task complexity, genre, and the writing process play crucial roles in the development of this phenomenon. The findings suggest that future research should focus on targeted interventions to address specific writing challenges; hence, it will be less daunting for second language learners, enabling them to write more confidently and competently.

**Key Words**

Second language writing anxiety; pre-university learners; individual differences; contextual factors

**1. Background of Study**

Writing requires a multitude of cognitive abilities, especially for individuals who are writing in a second language (Algburi & Abu Bakar Razali, 2022; AlMarwani, 2020; Lin & Morrison, 2021; Singh, 2019). These expectations might potentially result in second language writing anxiety (SLWA) in learners as they develop apprehension about the challenges associated with writing (Fang, 2021; Rubina Akhtar et al., 2020), particularly when their writing is subjected to evaluation (Daly & Miller, 1975). From a contextual perspective, SLWA is a prevalent problem experienced by Malaysian pre-tertiary learners (Kumuthini Jagabalan et al., 2016; Sabariah Abd Rahim & Kasma Mohd Hayas, 2014; Termit Kaur & Saravana Kumar Rajalingam, 2012), as writing is regarded as a difficult task (Jabali, 2018; Kumuthini Jagabalan et al., 2016). Learners who struggle with writing might experience unease, resulting in writing-related anxiety marked by feelings of apprehension, doubt, or concern when using the target language (Cheng, 2002). They may also experience fear and develop pessimism about writing, preventing them from initiating or completing writing tasks (Baskan, 2021; Cheng, 2004). The experience, however, may differ depending on the individual's circumstances (Nazari et al., 2019).



## **2. Statement of Problem**

SLWA varies among learners based on individual circumstances, making it a situational-specific anxiety (Gardner et al., 1992; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Sun, 2022). Linguistic factors, especially limited proficiency, play a significant role (Aslim Yetis, 2017; Noor Hanim Rahmat, 2019; Rabadi & Rabadi, 2020; Saffari, 2019; Toba & Noor, 2019). Additional contributors include a lack of cognitive strategies for writing (Muhammad Fareed et al., 2016), insufficient practice (Alfiansyah et al., 2017), and cultural differences in communication (Jawas, 2019). Emotional factors, such as attitudes toward writing, significantly influence SLWA (Contreras-Soto et al., 2019; Daly & Miller, 1975; Howard, 2020). Other critical factors include genre (Zabihi, 2017), task complexity (Lee, 2020; Muhammad Rahimi & Zhang, 2019), teachers (Abdullah et al., 2018; Jawas, 2019), evaluation (Kumuthini Jagabalan et al., 2016; Syed Shahid Nawaz, 2021; Toh & Noor Hanim Rahmat, 2021) and the complexity of the writing process (Genç & Yayli, 2019; Yu, 2020). Given SLWA's context-specific nature, it is crucial to investigate these factors to understand learners' personal experiences and better address SLWA. Hence, this study aims to explore the experiences of Malaysian pre-university students concerning SLWA from their emic perspectives.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The findings of this study contribute significantly to advancing English language education by highlighting the specific challenges and anxiety-related factors Malaysian pre-university students face in English writing. Understanding these factors can lead to the development of more effective teaching strategies that address both the cognitive and emotional aspects of writing. Educators can implement tailored approaches to reduce SLWA, such as providing targeted practice and creating a supportive classroom environment. Furthermore, curriculum planners and policymakers can utilize this information to develop materials and policies that effectively address the disparity between secondary and higher education, so enhancing students' writing proficiency and confidence.

## **4. Research Questions**

This study attempts to answer the following question:

What are the contributing factors to the experience of second language writing anxiety among Malaysian pre-university students in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) writing component?

## **5. Method**

To ensure the representativeness of the cases, six participants were selected through a two-stage purposeful sampling procedure (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The chosen participants represented the varying levels of SLWA and had various levels of English language proficiency. This selection resulted in a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences to understand the phenomenon better (Campbell et al., 2020). Over 26 weeks, the participants engaged in six interview sessions to reflect on their experiences with SLWA and MUET writing. Classroom observations and audio journals were also used to document participants' SLWA experiences. Ultimately, the identification of recurring situations described across various data sources provided more compelling insights into the cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Noble & Heale, 2019). Subsequently, thematic analysis was employed to analyse patterns within and across cases, allowing for

drawing conclusions, proposing implications for advancing knowledge, theory, and instructional practices in teaching second language writing, and suggesting directions for future research. Several strategies were implemented to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, including member-checking, providing thick and comprehensive descriptions, and prolonged engagement (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The thematic analysis revealed that SLWA is influenced by both individual and contextual factors. A prominent finding is the influence of prior learning experiences on SLWA. For instance, one participant who had negative experiences in secondary school English classes developed a persistent aversion to the subject, illustrating how past experiences can shape current attitudes. The experiences cause trauma that results in a dislike and fear of English writing. Notably, the study found that both high and low-proficiency learners experienced SLWA, contradicting the common findings that only low-proficiency learners are affected (Aslim Yetis, 2017; David et al., 2018; Quvanch & Si Na, 2022; Rabadi & Rabadi, 2020; Salikin, 2019). High-proficiency learners reported anxiety stemming from high self-expectations and fear of making mistakes, while low-proficiency learners were apprehensive about their lack of vocabulary.

Contextual factors, such as the difficulty of the MUET writing component, particularly Section B, which requires extensive general knowledge, were also significant contributors to SLWA. The lack of reading on current issues led to difficulty in generating ideas and content. However, genre preference may differ according to individual learners as one participant mentioned being less anxious when writing Section B, as compared to Section A (the emails). Additionally, the complexity of the writing process, especially in composing the introduction, heightened anxiety levels. Four participants reported experiencing the most anxiety when writing the introduction, sometimes encountering a mental block on how to begin. This suggests that individual differences, shaped by cognitive processes and environmental interactions (Kidd et al., 2018), can lead to diverse manifestations of writing anxiety.

## **7. Limitations**

This study explores the learning experiences of Malaysian pre-tertiary students in second language writing, focusing on the unique challenges they face. The purposeful sampling of Form Six students in Kuala Lumpur limits generalizability but provides deep insights into specific issues within this context. The findings highlight the importance of addressing both cognitive and emotional aspects of writing anxiety. To improve generalisability, future research should consider increasing the sample size and demographic diversity.

## **8. Conclusion**

To conclude, the study reveals that SLWA among Malaysian pre-university students is influenced by both individual and contextual factors. Key contributors include prior negative experiences, high self-expectations, vocabulary limitations, task difficulty in the MUET writing component, and the complexity of the writing process itself. High-proficiency learners often face anxiety due to perfectionism, while low-proficiency learners struggle with limited vocabulary. Addressing SLWA requires targeted interventions that focus on specific writing challenges and equip students with effective strategies to manage their anxiety. Educators should foster supportive classroom environments and provide regular practice with constructive feedback. Future research should

explore additional instructional strategies and broader demographics to build on these findings and further enhance the understanding and management of SLWA.

## References

- Abdullah, M. Y., Hussin, S., & Shakir, M. (2018). The effect of peers' and teacher's e-feedback on writing anxiety level through CMC applications. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 13(11), 196-207. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i11.8448>
- Alfiansyah, F., Jaufillaili, J., & Hendriwanto, H. (2017). The analysis of students' anxiety in learning writing at the 10th grade of vocational high school. *LESIKA*, 11(2), 12. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234097457.pdf>
- Algburi, E. A., & Abu Bakar Razali. (2022). Role of feedback on English academic writing skills of tertiary level Iraqi English as a foreign language (EFL) students: A review of literature. *Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(1), 689-702. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i1/12168>
- AlMarwani, M. (2020). Academic writing: Challenges and potential solutions. *Arab World English Journal, Special Issue on CALL*(6), 114-121. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/call6.8>
- Aslim Yetis, V. (2017). Sources of writing anxiety: A study on French language teaching students. *International Education Studies*, 10(6), 72-86. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v10n6p72>
- Baskan, A. (2021). The relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of students learning Turkish as a foreign language. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 10(4), 70-77. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v10n4p70>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: Complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25(8), 652-661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Cheng, Y.-s. (2002). Factors associated with foreign language writing anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals* 35(6), 647-656. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2002.tb01903.x>
- Cheng, Y.-s. (2004). A measure of second language writing anxiety: Scale development and preliminary validation. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(4), 313-335. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.07.001>
- Contreras-Soto, A., Véliz-Campos, M., & Véliz, L. (2019). Portfolios as a strategy to lower English language test anxiety: The case of Chile. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 181-198. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12112a>
- Daly, J. A., & Miller, M. D. (1975). Apprehension of writing as a predictor of message intensity. *The Journal of Psychology* 89(2), 175-177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1975.9915748>
- David, A. R., Hazita Azman, & Thang, S. M. (2018). Investigating online dialogue journal writing impacts on low proficiency students' writing anxiety. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*, 8(2), 71-81. <https://journal.ump.edu.my/ijleal/article/view/1051/243>
- Fang, Z. (2021). *Demystifying academic writing: Genres, moves, skills, and strategies*. Routledge.
- Gardner, R. C., Day, J. B., & MacIntyre, P. D. (1992). Integrative motivation, induced anxiety, and language learning in a controlled environment. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14(2), 197-214. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100010822>
- Gardner, R. C., & MacIntyre, P. D. (1993). A student's contributions to second-language learning. Part II: Affective variables. *Language Teaching* 26(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800000045>
- Genç, E., & Yayli, D. (2019). The second language writing anxiety: The perceived sources and consequences. *İkinci Dilde Yazma Kaygısı: Algılanan Sebepleri ve Sonuçları* (45), 235-251. <https://doi.org/10.9779/PUJE.2018.231>

- Howard, E. (2020). *A review of the literature concerning anxiety for educational assessments*. Ofqual.  
[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/35045/1/A\\_review\\_of\\_the\\_literature\\_concerning\\_anxiety\\_for\\_educational\\_assessment.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/35045/1/A_review_of_the_literature_concerning_anxiety_for_educational_assessment.pdf)
- Jabali, O. (2018). Students' attitudes towards EFL university writing: A case study at An-Najah National University, Palestine. *Heliyon*, 4(11), e00896.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2018.e00896>
- Jawas, U. (2019). Writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL students: Factors and strategies. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(4), 733-746.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2017.1366440>
- Kumuthini Jagabalan, J. D., Tan, H., & Vahid Nimehchisalem. (2016). ESL pre-university learners' writing apprehension levels in argumentative writing. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 1(2), 54-62. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v1i2.12>
- Lee, J. (2020). Task closure and task complexity effects on L2 written performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 50, 100777. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2020.100777>
- Lin, L. H. F., & Morrison, B. (2021). Challenges in academic writing: Perspectives of Engineering faculty and L2 postgraduate research students. *English for Specific Purposes*, 63, 59-70.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2021.03.004>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. sage.  
[https://books.google.com.my/books?hl=en&lr=&id=2oA9aWlNeooC&oi=fnd&pg=PA7&dq=Lincoln,+Y.+S.,+%26+Guba,+E.+G.+\(1985\).+Naturalistic+inquiry.+Sage&ots=0uqtYfU7Bk&sig=MLkw5q0dOpDaMcTWGUKoDN9-OU&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Lincoln%2C%20Y.%20S.%2C%20%26%20Guba%2C%20E.%20G.%20\(1985\).%20Naturalistic%20inquiry.%20Sage&f=false](https://books.google.com.my/books?hl=en&lr=&id=2oA9aWlNeooC&oi=fnd&pg=PA7&dq=Lincoln,+Y.+S.,+%26+Guba,+E.+G.+(1985).+Naturalistic+inquiry.+Sage&ots=0uqtYfU7Bk&sig=MLkw5q0dOpDaMcTWGUKoDN9-OU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Lincoln%2C%20Y.%20S.%2C%20%26%20Guba%2C%20E.%20G.%20(1985).%20Naturalistic%20inquiry.%20Sage&f=false)
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4 ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Muhammad Fareed, Almas Ashraf, & Muhammad Bilal. (2016). ESL learners' writing skills: Problems, factors and suggestions. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 4(2), 81-92.  
<https://doi.org/10.20547/jess0421604201>
- Muhammad Rahimi, & Zhang, L. J. (2019). Writing task complexity, students' motivational beliefs, anxiety and their writing production in English as a second language. *Reading & Writing*, 32(3), 761-786. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-018-9887-9>
- Nazari, M., Farnia, M., Ghonsooly, B., & Jafarigohar, M. (2019). Contradictions in writing anxiety: A qualitative case study of expansive learning among Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 9(1), 33-49. <https://dorl.net/dor/20.1001.1.20088590.2019.9.1.3.1>
- Noble, H., & Heale, R. (2019). Triangulation in research, with examples. *Evid Based Nurs*, 22(3), 67-68. <https://doi.org/10.1136/ebnurs-2019-103145>
- Noor Hanim Rahmat. (2019). Problems with rhetorical problems among academic writers. *American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(4), 506-515.  
<https://doi.org/10.20448/801.44.506.515>
- Quvanch, Z., & Si Na, K. (2022). Evaluating Afghanistan university students' writing anxiety in English class: An empirical research. *Cogent Education*, 9(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2040697>
- Rabadi, R. I., & Rabadi, A. D. (2020). Do medical students experience writing anxiety while learning English as a foreign language? *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 13, 883-893. <https://doi.org/10.2147/prbm.S276448>
- Rubina Akhtar, Hanita Hassan, & Saidalvi, A. (2020). The effects of ESL student's attitude on academic writing apprehensions and academic writing challenges. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(05), 5404-5412.  
<https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I5/PR2020247>

- Sabariah Abd Rahim, & Kasma Mohd Hayas. (2014). *Investigating student's second language writing anxiety: A case study*. Persidangan MICELT 2014 Hotel Palace Of Golden Horses, Kuala Lumpur. <http://discol.umk.edu.my/id/eprint/9101/>
- Saffari, N. (2019). Metacognitive knowledge and its effect on second language writing: Students' perceptions of writing task. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8(5), 221-232. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v8n5p221>
- Salikin, H. (2019). Factors affecting male and female Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 316-323. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v9i2.20229>
- Singh, M. K. M. (2019). Academic reading and writing challenges among international EFL Master's students in a Malaysian university: The voice of lecturers. *Journal of International Students*, 9(4), 972-992. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i3.934>
- Sun, R. (2022). Influencing factors and coping strategies of English learning anxiety among Chinese non-English major students. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 664, 2843-2847. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220504.516>
- Syed Shahid Nawaz. (2021). The role of anxiety in English language writing skill at secondary level students. *UC Journal: ELT, Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 2(2), 58-73. <https://doi.org/10.24071/uc.v2i2.3443>
- Termit Kaur, R. S., & Saravana Kumar Rajalingam. (2012). The relationship of writing apprehension level and self-efficacy beliefs on writing proficiency level among pre-university students. *English Language Teaching*, 5(7), 42-52. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n7p42>
- Toba, R., & Noor, W. N. (2019). The current issues of Indonesian EFL students' writing skills: Ability, problem, and reason in writing comparison and contrast essay. *Dinamika Ilmu*, 57-73. <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v19i1.1506>
- Toh, C. W., & Noor Hanim Rahmat. (2021). An investigative study on the types and causes of ESL writing anxiety: A case study of learners from a Chinese independent middle school. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 6(3), 19-36. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejel.v6i3.3553>
- Yu, M. (2020). Analysis on the sources of L2 writing anxiety. *4th International Conference on Culture, Education and Economic Development of Modern Society*, 416, 862-865. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200316.189>
- Zabihi, R. (2017). The role of cognitive and affective factors in measures of L2 writing. *Written Communication*, 35(1), 32-57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088317735836>

**ENGLISH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TERTIARY  
TRANSITION PROGRAM**

**M.A., Foo<sup>1</sup>, G.E.L., Law<sup>2</sup> and N.H., Safarudin<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Learning and Teaching Unit, Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus

<sup>2</sup> School of Foundation Studies, Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus

<sup>1</sup>[mfoo@swinburne.edu.my](mailto:mfoo@swinburne.edu.my), <sup>2</sup>[gelaw@swinburne.edu.my](mailto:gelaw@swinburne.edu.my), <sup>2</sup>[nsafarudin@swinburne.edu.my](mailto:nsafarudin@swinburne.edu.my)

**Abstract**

The transitioning from secondary school to tertiary education is crucial for Malaysian students, setting the foundation for future success. To support this, funded by Yayasan Sarawak, our institution developed a four-week English Enhancement Program (EEP) with campus immersion activities to help students adapt academically and socially. This study evaluated the program's effectiveness, focusing on the 20-hour weekly academic English sessions and 'uni-life experience' activities. A qualitative case study was conducted, involving interviews with ten former EEP students, selected through convenience and random sampling. Findings reveal that the EEP significantly facilitated the transition to university, with participants noting substantial improvements in academic English skills, such as research writing, presentations, and referencing. Additionally, the program enhanced students' leadership, decision-making, and cross-cultural interactions. This study highlights the effectiveness of structured transition programs and calls for further research to optimize support for students during this critical educational phase.

**Key Words**

Tertiary transition program, student readiness, program effectiveness, academic English, uni-life experience.

**1. Background of Study**

The transition from secondary education to tertiary institutions represents a pivotal stage, often marked by significant challenges for Malaysian students due to heightened academic demands and novel social environments (Mahmud et al., 2020; Rahman & Lee, 2018). This critical period necessitates a rapid adjustment to university-level expectations, including developing academic English proficiency, autonomous learning, and social integration (Lim, 2017). To address these challenges, the English Enhancement Program (EEP) was implemented, integrating intensive language instruction with campus immersion activities to facilitate a smoother transition. Previous research underscores the significance of early support in bolstering student preparedness and reducing attrition rates (Tan & Wong, 2019). However, there is a need for studies investigating the specific impact of structured programs like EEP on students' readiness for university life. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of EEP in enhancing academic English competencies and promoting personal development among pre-university students.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

While existing research emphasizes the importance of transition programs in preparing students for higher education, there is a notable gap in studies explicitly examining the effectiveness of these programs in the Malaysian context (Wong & Lee, 2021). Most literature focuses on general readiness without delving into how targeted interventions, such as intensive English programs, impact students' ability to cope with university-level demands. Moreover, previous studies often overlook the role of social and personal development in the transition process, which are critical components of a successful adjustment to university life. This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the English Enhancement Program's (EEP) effectiveness, focusing on its academic and social components. By doing so, it contributes to the limited body of research on tertiary transition programs in Malaysia and offers insights into improving student readiness for higher education.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The findings of this study significantly contribute to the advancement of English language education by providing strong empirical evidence on the effectiveness of targeted transition programs, such as the English Enhancement Program (EEP), in improving academic English proficiency and facilitating social integration (Smith & Johnson, 2021). These insights are crucial for educators and university administrators, aiming to design and implement comprehensive programs and support systems that address the multifaceted challenges students face during this critical transitional period. The study underscores the necessity of integrating language instruction with social development activities to foster a holistic support environment for students. Moreover, the results have the potential to influence classroom practices by encouraging the inclusion of immersive and supportive elements in English language curricula across tertiary institutions.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) How effective is the English Enhancement Program (EEP) in improving students' academic English proficiency for university-level education?
- (ii) In what ways does the EEP facilitate personal development among pre-university students?
- (iii) What are the perceived challenges and benefits of the EEP from the perspective of participating students?

## **5. Method**

This study adopted a qualitative case study methodology to investigate the effectiveness of the English Enhancement Program (EEP). Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with ten former EEP participants from previous intakes, selected via a combination of convenience and random sampling (Gill et al., 2008). The interviews were designed to elicit detailed accounts of the participants' experiences with both the academic English instruction and campus immersion components of the program. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis, which was employed to uncover recurring themes related to academic preparedness, personal development, and the perceived challenges and benefits of the program. This approach facilitated a comprehensive exploration



of the participants' perspectives, offering rich, contextualized insights into the EEP's impact. Furthermore, the study considers the broader implications of these findings for the design and implementation of similar transition programs in tertiary education.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The analysis of the interviews indicated that the English Enhancement Program (EEP) was highly effective in equipping students to meet the academic demands of university, especially in areas such as research writing, presentations, and proper referencing (Johnson & Smith, 2020). Participants reported that the structured academic English activities markedly improved their confidence and proficiency in using English for academic purposes. Moreover, the campus immersion activities were deemed crucial in fostering students' social skills and personal development, with particular emphasis on leadership and decision-making abilities. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which underscores the significance of early intervention programs in alleviating the challenges associated with transitioning to higher education (Tan & Wong, 2019; Lee & Chang, 2021). Nonetheless, the study also identified areas for enhancement, including the need for more individualized support to address the varied needs of students effectively.

## **7. Limitations**

This study is constrained by its small sample size, which may not capture the full range of student experiences with the English Enhancement Program (EEP). The limited number of participants might not represent the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of all EEP students. Furthermore, the study relies on self-reported data, which can be subject to bias. Participants' recollections and evaluations of their experiences may be influenced by personal perceptions and external factors, potentially affecting the accuracy and generalizability of the findings (Simmons et al., 2018).

## **8. Conclusion**

The study concludes that the English Enhancement Program (EEP) is an effective tool for facilitating the transition from secondary to tertiary education, particularly in improving academic English proficiency and fostering social integration. However, further research with larger, more diverse samples is recommended to explore the long-term impact of such programs on student success in higher education. This ongoing project has the potential to contribute significantly to English Language Education by providing a model for comprehensive transition programs that address both academic and social aspects of student readiness.

## **References**

- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). *Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups*. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291-295.  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/bdj.2008.192>
- Johnson, R., & Smith, L. (2020). *Enhancing academic performance through targeted language programs*. *Journal of Educational Development*, 34(3), 211-225.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/12345678.2020.1756789>

- Lee, A., & Chang, M. (2021). *Social integration and academic success: Evaluating transitional support programs*. *Higher Education Review*, 56(1), 45-60. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12345-021-01234-5>
- Lim, S. Y. (2017). *Challenges in transitioning to university: A Malaysian perspective*. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, 12(3), 145-162.
- Mahmud, Z., Rosli, M. S., & Hashim, H. (2020). Transitioning from school to university: Issues and challenges faced by first-year students. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 9(3), 25-36.
- Rahman, M. Z., & Lee, C. W. (2018). *Adapting to tertiary education: A study on Malaysian students*. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 7(4), 123-132.
- Simmons, B., Thompson, H., & Williams, L. (2018). *The limitations of self-reported data in qualitative research: A critical review*. *Journal of Qualitative Research*, 22(4), 304-318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01234567.2018.1234567>
- Smith, A., & Johnson, B. (2021). The role of targeted transition programs in enhancing academic English proficiency and social integration. *Journal of Language and Education Research*, 14(2), 85-101.
- Tan, J. S., & Wong, K. (2019). Enhancing student readiness through university transition programs: A review of current practices. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8(2), 13-28.
- Tan, M., & Wong, K. Y. (2019). *Early support interventions in higher education: Impact on student readiness and retention*. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 63, 56-64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2018.08.003>.
- Wong, K. L., & Lee, C. K. (2021). Bridging the gap: The role of pre-university programs in preparing students for higher education. *Asian Education Studies*, 6(1), 45-57.

**EXAMINING THE REPRESENTATIONS OF ENGLISH PRESENT TENSE IN THE CEFR-ALIGNED MALAYSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS****Patrick Duffy Bayuong<sup>1</sup> and Angela Felix Arip<sup>2</sup>****Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah Belaga, Jalan Dian Ding, 96900 Belaga, Sarawak, Malaysia****<sup>1</sup>[g-79278130@moe-dl.edu.my](mailto:g-79278130@moe-dl.edu.my)****Abstract**

English verb tenses are fundamental in conveying the time of actions or events, which are crucial for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners learning in Malaysian primary schools. This study examined the representations of the English present tense in four CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School's English Language Textbooks: Get Smart Plus 3 Student's Book, Get Smart Plus 4 Student's Book, English Plus 1 Second Edition Year 5 Student's Book, and Academy Stars 5 Year 6 Pupil's Book. Employing qualitative document analysis, seven aspects of the representations of the present tense were identified, with particular attention to the contextual variations and concurrent use of two aspects within sentences. The findings provided valuable insights for English language teachers, enhancing their understanding of how the present tense is presented and contextualized in educational materials. Moreover, the study highlighted three major points of importance of verb tenses in ESL learning, underscoring their direct relevance to the representations of the English present tense. This contributes to more effective teaching strategies, ultimately empowering learners' practical use of English verbs in context.

**Key Words**

English Present Tense, ESL Learners, Malaysian Primary Schools' English Language Textbooks, Representations, Verb Tenses

**1. Background of Study**

In Malaysia's Education Curriculum, English is taught as a second language alongside the national language, Bahasa Melayu (Gill, 2002; Sidhu et al., 2018; Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014). This instruction begins in preschool and continues through primary education, progressively teaching grammar and vocabulary (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015, 2019a). English verb tenses are the critical aspects of English grammar, thus essential for ESL learners to accurately convey actions, events, or states in both written and spoken English. English grammar is used to channel meanings (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014), thus making it a component that plays a significant role in learners' language learning (Bayuong & Arip, 2023). Wang (2010) highlighted that mastering grammar improves learners' writing and comprehension skills, while Nijat et al. (2020) addressed the importance of clear and effective language use.

Textbooks are central in primary education since the 19th century (Kovac & Alenka, 2022). They serve as primary sources of knowledge (Lawyer, 2024). The Standards-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) in Malaysia has been CEFR-aligned to meet international standards while contextualising materials for Malaysian learners (Shak et al., 2021). These CEFR-aligned

textbooks have been adapted to suit Malaysian ESL learners, improving grammar instruction, including English verb tenses, and enhancing language education outcomes (Aziz, 2017; Bayuiong & Hashim, 2023).

## **2. Statement of Problem**

English verb tenses are a pivotal component of the ESL curriculum in Malaysian Primary Schools. However, challenges continue in effectively representing and understanding these tenses. English verb tenses comprise three primary types (past, present, and future) and their respective aspects. According to Bukit (2020), they are crucial for expressing time, duration, and completion of actions. Effective learning of these tenses enables learners to convey precise information and adhere to grammatical rules (Declerck et al., 2006; Javed & Ahmad, 2013). However, the complexity of tense and aspect combinations can be challenging for ESL learners (Listia & Febriyanti, 2020), necessitating clear instructional methods.

Current CEFR-aligned textbooks aim to address these needs by representing verb tenses in contextually relevant ways. Nevertheless, there is limited research on how effectively these materials represent and teach the present tense, a crucial component of the ESL curriculum. This study examined the representations of English present tense in four CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary Schools' English Language Textbooks: Get Smart Plus 3 Student's Book (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2018), Get Smart Plus 4 Student's Book (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2019b), English Plus 1 Second Edition Year 5 Student's Book (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2021b), and Academy Stars 5 Year 6 Pupil's Book (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2021a). In addition, it sought to identify the importance of English verb tenses in ESL learners' language learning. Understanding how these tenses are taught to the learners and their impact on learners' proficiency is essential for enhancing instructional strategies and support effective language learning.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The study contributed to English language teachers' understanding of present tense representations and to the acquisition of these tenses among ESL learners. By thoroughly analysing primary school textbooks, the study illuminated how these foundational texts introduce and reinforce this crucial grammatical concept. The findings offered valuable insights into the appropriateness of textbook content for ESL learners and identified areas where textbooks excel in representing the present tense. This knowledge can inform the development of more effective teaching materials and methodologies. Furthermore, the study's focus on the link between mastery of the present tense and improved communication, expression, and writing accuracy highlighted the importance of this grammatical aspect. These findings will guide English language teachers in prioritising the teaching of the present tense and tailoring their instruction to enhance learners' overall language proficiency.

## **4. Research Questions**

The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

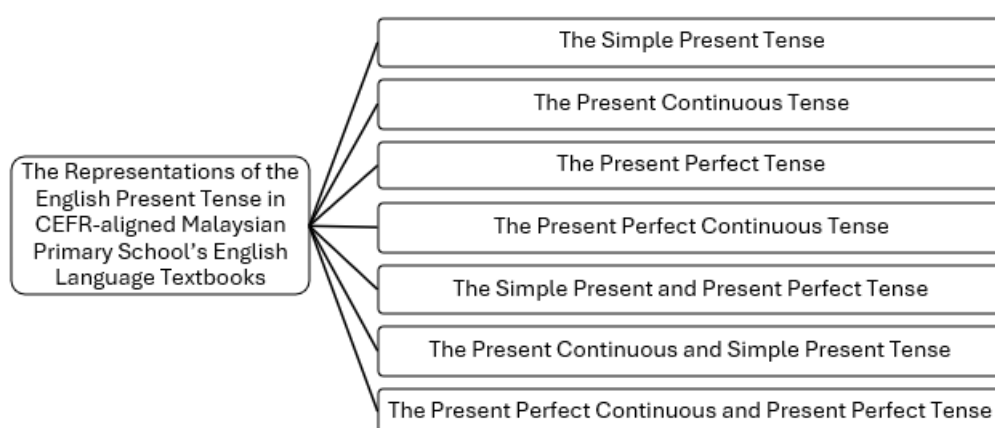
- (i) How is the English present tense represented in CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School's English Language Textbooks?
- (ii) What is the importance of English verb tenses in ESL learners' language learning?

## 5. Method

This study employed a qualitative method, focusing on document analysis of four CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School's English Language Textbooks: Get Smart Plus 3 Student's Book, Get Smart Plus 4 Student's Book, English Plus 1 Second Edition Year 5 Student's Book, and Academy Stars 5 Year 6 Pupil's Book. The selection of these documents was based on factors recommended by Bowen (2009): authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning. A thematic analysis was conducted through a data coding process to identify recurring ideas or patterns within the texts. The thematic analysis allowed the researcher to discern patterns within the data, thereby eliciting emergent themes (Bowen, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Ochrane, 2006). The thematic analysis was performed manually to ensure a thorough examination of the data texts. This method provided a robust framework for understanding the representations of the English present tense and the importance of verb tenses in the language learning of ESL learners in Malaysia.

## 6. Findings and Discussion

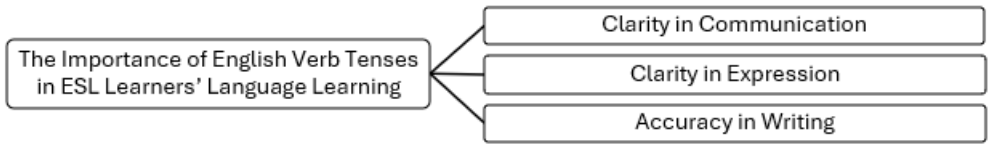
The findings presented in Figure 1 reflected the representations of the English present tense and its aspects in CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School's English Language Textbooks, and interpretations were made based on the data analysis. The representations are age-appropriate for ESL learners and meet their communicative needs through the use of suitable vocabulary for formal learning contexts.



**Figure 1:** The Representations of the English Present Tense in CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School's English Language Textbooks

One strength of this document analysis was its ability to identify sentences encompassing all aspects and combinations of the present tense. This reflects the comprehensive learning content designed for different primary school levels. The study identified sub-themes representing various aspects and combinations of the present tense, demonstrating a thorough integration of these elements in the textbooks. This ensures learners encounter a wide range of present tense uses, facilitating a deeper understanding of English grammar. Previous research by Listia & Febriyanti (2020) highlighted that combinations of tenses and aspects can be grammatically complex and challenging for learners, thus requiring additional explanation. However, these combinations also enable ESL learners to explore the grammatical system more thoroughly, fostering clear grammar knowledge and enhancing their effectiveness in using English. The study's insights provided valuable guidance for English language teachers in planning and designing lessons that cater to the evolving needs of ESL learners.

This study provided a novel understanding and interpretation of the importance of the English verb tenses in ESL learners’ language learning, precisely focusing on the aspects of the present tense. The findings, as illustrated in Figure 2, provided new insights into how learning the present tense by ESL learners improves clarity in communication, clarity in expression, and accuracy in writing.



**Figure 2:** The Importance of English Verb Tenses in ESL Learners' Language Learning

For instance, accuracy in writing prevails ESL learners’ mastery, as noted by Taylor (2016), the key to mastering grammar is being able to remember and use the rules accurately. Most importantly, these three emerging sub-themes addressed how important and influential the present tense and its aspects are for ESL learners to convey information correctly, express themselves clearly, and write accurately. These benefits highlighted the influential role of the present tense in improving ESL learners' overall language proficiency and effectiveness in communication. The study’s insights offer valuable guidance for English language teachers in planning and designing lessons that cater to the evolving needs of ESL learners.

**7. Limitations**

Some limitations of this study include the small size of sentences in the affirmative and negative, and regular and irregular verbs, thus causing a lack of examples to express a wide range of ideas. Other than that, this study is further limited by the researcher examining only the representations of English present tense.

**8. Conclusion**

The study examined the representations of the English present tense in four CEFR-aligned Malaysian Primary School’s English Language Textbooks, identifying seven aspects: simple present, present continuous, present perfect, present perfect continuous, and their combinations. The analysis uncovered a variety of sentence structures and patterns, aiding ESL learners in mastering grammar rules and verb conjugation. The study spotlighted the importance of clearly addressing the simple present and present continuous tenses at the primary level before introducing more complex tenses and their combinations. These insights offered valuable guidance for English language teachers, providing a framework to plan and design effective present-tense instruction.

Beyond grammar, the study also demonstrated how mastering the present tense enhances communication clarity, expression, and writing accuracy. By emphasising the influential role of the present tense in overall language proficiency, this study emphasised the need for teachers to focus on its various aspects to ensure learners develop a comprehensive understanding and application of these grammatical rules. The findings revealed the role of textbooks in representing English grammar in an age-appropriate, contextually rich manner, enhancing ESL learners' understanding and use of the language. Overall, the findings could improve English language

learning, particularly for ESL learners in Malaysian Primary Schools who require more support and opportunities to learn and use the language.

## References

- Aziz, H. (December 6, 2017). Textbooks Do Not Make the Teachers. *New Straits Times*.  
<https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/columnists/2017/12/311230/textbooks-do-not-make-teacher>
- Bayuong, P. D. & Arip, A. F. (2023). Using MYTT To Enhance Rural Primary School Pupils' Learning on Simple Past Tense. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development (IJARPED)*, 12(2), 2503-2518. DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i2/17641
- Bayuong, P. D. & Hashim, H. (2023). CEFR-aligned Primary Curriculum Framework: Rural National Primary School English Language Teachers' Attitudes and Slants. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 20(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.52696/TTAZ3243>
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. DOI:10.3316/QRJ0902027
- Bukit, H. (2020). The Error Analysis in Using Tenses Made by Students in English Teaching and Learning Process. *JETLi Journal of English Teaching and Linguistics*, 1(2), 92-101. DOI:10.55616/jetli.v1i2.21
- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., & Snow, M. A. (2014). *Teaching English as A Second or Foreign Language* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). National Geographic Learning.
- Declerck, R., Reed, S. & Cappelle, B. (2006). The Grammar of the English Verb Phrase. Volume 1: The Grammar of the English Tense System, A Comprehensive Analysis. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Fereday, J. & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1): 80–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107>
- Gill, S. K. (2002). *International Communication: English Language Challenges for Malaysia* Universiti Putra Malaysia Press.
- Javed, M. & Ahmad, A. (2013). Investigating ESL Students' Academic Performance in Tenses. *i-manager's Journal on English Language Teaching*, 3(4), 21-26. DOI:10.26634/JELT.3.4.2518
- Kovac, M. & Alenka, K. M. (2022). The Changing Role of Textbooks in Primary Education in the Digital Era: What Can We Learn from Reading Research? *CEPS Journal*, 12(2), 11-27. doi: 10.26529/cepsj.1290
- Lawyer, H. (January 9, 2024). The Pros and Cons of Digital Textbooks vs. Traditional Textbooks. *Maranatha Baptist University*. <https://www.mbu.edu/blog/student-interests/pros-cons-digital-traditional-textbooks/>
- Listia, R. & Febriyanti, E. R. (2020). EFL Learners' Problems in Using Tenses: An Insight for Grammar Teaching. *Indonesian Journal of English Teaching*, 9(1), 86-95. DOI:10.15642/ijet2.2020.9.1.86-95
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2015). *English Language Education Reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025*. English Language Standards and Quality Council.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2018). *Get Smart Plus 3 Student's Book (Malaysian Edition)*. Ministry of Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2019a). *English Language Management Guidebook: Primary and Secondary School*. The Inspectorate, Ministry of Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2019b). *Get Smart Plus 4 Student's Book (Malaysian Edition)*. Ministry of Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2021a). *Academy Stars Year 6 Pupil's Book (Malaysian Edition)*. Ministry of Education Malaysia.



- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2021b). *English Plus 1 Second Edition Year 5 Student's Book (Malaysian Edition)*. Ministry of Education Malaysia.
- Nijat, N., Karimi, A. Q., Monib, W. K., Hisham, M. H. M. & Rahman, N. F. A. (2020). Enhancing Learners' Grammar Knowledge of Tenses and Voice Through "Tense and Voice Structured Wheel". *International Journal of Mechanical and Production Engineering Research and Development (IJMPERD)*, 10(3): 14381-14396.
- Shak, M. S. Y., Albakari, I. S. M. A., Tahir, M. H. M. & Adam, M. H. M. (2021). The Use of Imported CEFR-aligned English Language Textbooks in Malaysian Schools: Issues and Concerns. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(9), 954-963. DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v11-i9/10875
- Sidhu, G. K., Kaur, S., & Chi, L. J. (2018). CEFR-Aligned School-Based Assessment in the Malaysian Primary ESL Classroom. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8, 452-463.
- Taylor, T. (2016). *Teaching Grammar in Context. Part 1: Basic Principles and Concepts – "Doing Grammar"* [Seminar Series]. Saturday Seminar Series in Grammar, Certificate in PDP for Primary and Secondary (Department of English Language Education, The Education University of Hong Kong, 23rd April).  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/515355567/Teaching-Grammar-in-ContextSeminar-Series-2016>
- Thirusanku, J. & Yunus, M. M. (2014). Status of English in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, 10(1), 254-260. doi:10.5539/ass.v10n14p254.
- Wang, S. (2010). The Significance of English Grammar to Middle School Students in China. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(3), 313-319. DOI:10.4304/jltr.1.3.313-319

**VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH MODEL ORIENTED TO  
LEFT AND RIGHT BRAINS ACCOMMODATION IN DAERAH ISTIMEWA YOGYAKARTA,  
INDONESIA**

**Bunga Putri Maulia<sup>1</sup>, Margana<sup>2</sup> and Linda Fitri Pertiwi<sup>3</sup>**

**Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

**<sup>1</sup>[Bungaputri.2023@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:Bungaputri.2023@student.uny.ac.id), <sup>2</sup>[Margana@uny.ac.id](mailto:Margana@uny.ac.id)**

**<sup>3</sup>[lindafitri.2022@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:lindafitri.2022@student.uny.ac.id)**

**Abstract**

This study explores the perceptions of vocational high school students in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia, regarding an English language learning model designed to accommodate both left and right brain orientations. The study aims to understand how students from diverse vocational backgrounds respond to the English model oriented to left and right brain accommodation. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through surveys from 27 students and interviews with 3 students across various vocational disciplines in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The findings indicate that students perceive the integrated model as more engaging and effective in enhancing their language skills than traditional teaching methods. Furthermore, the model's dual approach appears to support a more balanced cognitive development, catering to the diverse learning needs of vocational students. The study concludes that accommodating both hemispheres in language instruction improves student engagement and fosters a deeper understanding and mastery of English, which is crucial for their future professional careers.

**Key Words**

English Model, Left Brain, Right Brain

**1. Background of Study**

English education at Vocational High Schools (SMK) has a crucial role in preparing students to enter an increasingly global world of work. Vocational High School (SMK) students are expected to be able to work immediately after completing their studies. Therefore, the applicable curriculum must be relevant to the major because the skills needed to enter the world of work, including English language skills. The application of curriculum and materials in vocational schools should have different characteristics from those applied in high schools. English curriculum and materials in vocational schools should include and produce aspects of work skills.

However, the lessons taught in vocational schools are still not relevant to students' English language needs (Puspitaloka et al, 2024). This is because the content of the curriculum and English language materials are like those taught in high schools, so they are not relevant to the needs of vocational school students to enter the world of work (Astuti & Nurjanah, 2023). Then, if we look at the needs, the material has not focused on students' needs, while English for certain purposes, must consider the material needs of vocational school students (Islam, 2023).

Therefore, teaching English in vocational schools requires the use of English language materials that are adapted to students' special needs (Abidah et al., 2023).

Seeing these problems, the school must develop an education system by considering the needs of vocational school students. In learning, the role of educators has great power to influence the direction of student learning by equipping themselves with the latest neuroscience knowledge in terms of learning (Fratagelo, 2015). Knowledge of neuroscience research can help teachers evaluate and implement effective classroom practices that support the way the brain best learns (Willis, 2008). Anything that has an influence on our physiological state, in turn, influences our ability to learn (Caine & Caine, 1990).

Educators can take advantage of classroom learning by implementing teaching methods into practice that appeal to different student learning styles (Fratagelo, 2015). By incorporating into practice teaching methods that appeal to students' diverse modalities and multiple intelligences, educators can maximize classroom learning (Armstrong, 2000; Gardner, 2004). Instructional practices that enhance learning include providing students with sufficient time and practice to fully acquire new skills, as well as integrating parts of them as a whole, within the instructional content.

Brain-based learning is a learning theory that states that educators must provide active learning strategies to attract students' interest and encourage them to achieve higher levels of cognition (Fratagelo, 2015). Brain-based teaching/instruction is also instruction that recognizes the brain's natural capacity to learn through problem solving and pattern creation and uses strategies to stimulate the brain. When children, adolescents, or adult students are exposed to a stimulating environment and positive relationships, neurodevelopment will increase (Wolfe & Brandt, 1998). The greatest difficulty that educators must overcome in terms of brain research is not understanding the function of the brain and its anatomical design but being able to understand the size, complexity and capabilities of the human brain (Caine & Caine, 1990). Brain-based learning can be accelerated and improved if educators focus on how and what they teach the science of learning itself as opposed to past educational practices, traditional methodologies, or assumptions about the learning process (Fratagelo, 2015).

The need to understand how students perceive such an integrated model of learning is crucial for developing effective educational strategies that can better support their language acquisition and overall academic success. This study aims to explore the perceptions of SMK students in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta regarding an English language learning model that is oriented towards accommodating both left and right brain functions. By examining these perceptions, the study seeks to provide insights into the effectiveness of such a model in enhancing language learning among vocational students and to contribute to the development of more inclusive and effective English teaching practices in vocational education.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of English proficiency for vocational high school students in Indonesia, particularly those in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, traditional language teaching methods often fail to engage students effectively. These methods tend to emphasize rote learning and grammar-focused instruction, which may not align with the diverse cognitive styles of students. As a result, many students struggle to achieve the level of English proficiency required for their future careers.

Moreover, the educational system frequently overlooks the need to address both left-brain and right-brain functions in language learning, potentially limiting students' ability to fully develop their language skills. While left-brain approaches, which focus on logic and analysis, are commonly used, they often neglect the creative and intuitive aspects of learning that are associated with the right brain. This imbalance may hinder students from realizing their full potential in mastering the English language.

The problem addressed in this study is the lack of understanding of how an English language learning model that accommodates both left and right brain functions can impact the perceptions and language acquisition of vocational high school students. Specifically, this research seeks to identify whether such a model can enhance students' engagement, comprehension, and overall proficiency in English, compared to traditional teaching methods. Understanding these perceptions is critical for developing more effective and inclusive language teaching strategies that cater to the needs of vocational students, ultimately improving their readiness for the workforce.

### **3. Significance of Study**

#### **(i) Theoretical Significance**

This research is the basis for developing a Vocational School English learning model in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, which is oriented towards a balance of the right brain and left brain, which will provide benefits and contribute to issues related to the English Language learning model in Vocational Schools.

#### **(ii) Practical Significance**

Practical benefits in this research include:

##### **a. For Teachers**

This research will be as a basic to develops an English language learning model for vocational schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta which is oriented towards balancing the right brain and the left brain, so this model will help bridge English teachers to create good and innovative English language learning.

##### **b. For Students**

After implementing a learning model oriented towards balancing the left and right brain, vocational school students will find it easier to learn and master English.

##### **c. For Researchers**

As a prospective English lecturer who is currently working in the academic field, this research can help researchers to enrich and improve their abilities in developing English language learning models.

##### **d. For Further Research**

This research can be used as a reference source for further research.

### **4. Research Questions**

- (i) What are vocational school students' perspectives on English learning model that is oriented towards the right brain and left brain?
- (ii) What is the description of the right brain and left brain oriented English learning model that students need?

## **5. Method**

This study employs a descriptive approach to understand the perceptions of Vocational High School (SMK) students in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) regarding an English language teaching model oriented towards accommodating both left and right brain accommodation. This design was chosen to provide an in-depth exploration of students' experiences with teaching methods that aim to optimize different cognitive potentials. This research combines quantitative data in the form of data from questionnaires and qualitative data in the form of interviews, which data were collected through surveys from 27 students and interviews with 3 students across various vocational disciplines in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the data were analysed carefully to obtain accurate research results.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The study revealed a positive perception of left and right brain dominance concept among students. Grammar and sentence structure practice were highly valued for improving speaking fluency. Activities stimulating analytical and logical thinking, such as presentations and debates, were deemed effective. Creative activities like storytelling and improvisation were also well-received. Listening practices, particularly with media like music and movies, were considered beneficial. Simultaneous speaking and listening activities, along with role-playing and drama, were highly evaluated. Additionally, the use of digital media like podcasts and videos was seen as supportive of cognitive development. Importantly, a combined left and right brain approach was preferred over traditional methods.

The results indicate a promising potential for implementing English models focused on left and right brain dominance in vocational high schools. Students' positive attitudes towards variety of activities suggest that a balanced approach incorporating both analytical and creative elements can be effective. However, further research is needed to understand the specific needs of different learning styles within this framework. Additionally, while the study shows preference for the combined approach, more in-depth research is required to measure its long-term impact on English proficiency.

## **7. Limitations**

This study is limited by its focus on students' perceptions, which were gathered through surveys from 27 students and interviews with 3 students across various vocational disciplines in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia to describe students' needs about the right brain and left brain oriented English learning model.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study unveiled positive perceptions among vocational high school students in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta towards an English language learning model that accommodates both left and right brain functions. The findings suggest that such an integrated model is more engaging and effective in enhancing language skills compared to traditional methods. The dual approach seems to foster a more balanced cognitive development, catering with the diverse learning needs of vocational students.

The study concludes that incorporating both left and right brain hemispheres in language instruction not only improves student engagement but also promotes a deeper understanding and mastery of English, a vital skill for their future professional endeavors. To further deepen the understanding of the impact of left and right brain-oriented English language learning on vocational students, future research could explore the following:

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct in-depth longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of the integrated model on students' English proficiency and academic performance.
2. **Neurocognitive Correlates:** Investigate the neurocognitive mechanisms underlying the integrated model to provide empirical evidence for its impact on brain function and language acquisition.

## References

- Abidah, L., Askangela, M. L., Berlianty, D., Herliana, N. A., Qomariah, N. N., Teladan, R. P., & Sabilah, F. A study on needs to design English teaching materials at vocational school. *Journal of English Language Teaching Innovations and Materials (Jeltim)*. 2023;5(1): 69-90.
- Armstrong, T. (2000). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom* (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Astuti, S., & Nurjanah, K. Teachers' perception on English Curriculum and Material in Vocational High School. *JOLADU: Journal of Language Education*. 2023;2(1):19-24.
- Caine, R. & Caine, G. (1990). Understanding a brain-based approach to learning and teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 48 (2), 66—70.
- Fratangelo, Lynn., *Brain-based Instruction: Teachers' Perceptions and Knowledge of Brain-based Learning Strategies*. A Dissertation, Texas Tech University. December 2015.
- Gardner, H. (2004). Audience for the theory of multiple intelligences. *Teachers College Record*, 106, 212-220.
- Islam, R. (2023). Teaching Material and Method toward English Students at Vocational High School. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 167-175.
- Puspitaloka, N., Ambarwati, E. K., Nurjanah, K. D., & Fauziah, D. N. English for Specific Purpose Needs Analysis at a Vocational High School. In 7th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2023). 2024 February, 337-342. Atlantis Press.
- Willis, J. (2008). Building a bridge from neuroscience to the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan* 89.6. Web retrieved 11 July 2013.

**UNDERSTANDING TEACHERS' LEARNING CYCLE OF CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT: A  
PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY**

**Malini Devi Paramesvaran<sup>1</sup>, Lim Jia Wei<sup>2</sup> and Madhyazhagan Ganesan<sup>3</sup>**

**Faculty of Education, University of Malaya,**

**50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**[1maliniparamesvaran@gmail.com](mailto:maliniparamesvaran@gmail.com)**

**Abstract**

Classroom-based assessment (CBA) is crucial in teaching and learning as it develops teachers' teaching skills and informs students' learning progress. In CBA, the teachers must equip themselves with sufficient knowledge to execute CBA effectively in their classrooms. Past studies have indicated the need to understand teachers' learning process of CBA as teachers' knowledge, understanding, and belief of CBA influence how they conduct CBA during lessons, which also explains why CBA is being conducted differently from one teacher to the other. As such, understanding teachers' learning cycle will reveal the gap in knowledge in the field of CBA among teachers. The personalised journey of each teacher's learning cycle is explained via the four stages of Kolb's Learning Cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. This phenomenological case study involves six English language teachers from three research sites. The data gathered via two interview sessions, classroom audio recordings, and documents were transcribed and analysed inductively through the codes that overlap in relation to past studies and literature. The findings revealed that teachers who complete each stage in the learning cycle could restructure and develop new CBA knowledge compared to teachers who skipped selected stage(s) or did not complete the cycle. This study contributes significantly to informing policymakers and educators on the importance of completing each stage in the learning cycle, as the experience gained from each stage contributes to new CBA knowledge and/or adds to their current CBA knowledge.

**Key Words**

Classroom-based Assessment, experience, learning cycle, knowledge

**1. Background of Study**

Classroom assessment contributes to the effectiveness of the education system and serves as a tool to inform students about their progress (Deluca & Johnson, 2017; Majid, 2011; Narinasamy, 2018; Reyneke, 2016; Sidhu et al., 2018). Classroom assessments are divided into assessment of learning and assessment for learning (Narinasamy, 2018). These assessments serve their purpose and are used as a yardstick for teaching and learning. The difference is that the former measures students' learning, and the latter assists students' learning (Jamal et al., 2016; Rezagah, 2022). Since Malaysia's National Philosophy of Education emphasises student-centred learning, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has taken a step to implement Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) in all schools in 2011.



## **2. Statement of Problem**

Based on the findings from past studies on CBA, there is a need to explore teachers' learning cycle of CBA (Arumugham & Abdullah, 2016; John, 2018; Jonglai, 2017; Khamis & Selamat, 2019; Khory et al., 2021; Latif, 2021; Lee et al., 2020). The findings from past studies illustrate that teachers in Malaysia still struggle to implement CBA effectively, especially in English Language classrooms due to lack of knowledge and skills in the field of CBA, albeit a specific circular on CBA was given to all schools by MOE, Malaysia in 2017 (Brown, 2004; Curriculum Development Centre, 2016; Hill & McNamara, 2012; Hock et al., 2022; Hsia & Nasri, 2022; Latif, 2021; Malakolunthu & Sim, 2011; Marzaini et al., 2023; Reyneke, 2016). Essentially, teachers in Malaysia seem to have low confidence to carry out CBA during English lessons and are unable to grade students accordingly due to poor interpretation of the marking scheme (Hasim, Di & Barnard, 2018; Narinasamy, 2018; Sidhu et al., 2018). Thus, a logical step to take is to understand teachers' learning cycle to identify the gap in knowledge of CBA, not only to understand what they know about CBA and what they need to know more about but also to understand how teachers construct their knowledge of CBA. Policymakers will be able to recognise the strengths and weaknesses in the current way teachers are supported through the CBA initiative. Policymakers and stakeholders would then be able to follow up with actions, solutions, and training to assist teachers in implementing CBA effectively in classrooms, again not by prescribing actions but by building an understanding of how teachers construct knowledge. Without understanding the teachers' learning cycle of CBA, the reasons behind teachers' lack of knowledge and issues pertaining to CBA will be challenging to address, resulting in CBA being practised ineffectively in classrooms. Although it is an accepted fact that CBA is a powerful instructional avenue, it cannot be achieved until and unless teachers understand the concepts of CBA and are equipped with the right knowledge, skills, and attitudes to practice it effectively (Chapman & Snyder, 2000; Stillman, 2001).

## **3. Significance of Study**

This study is significant in various aspects, especially in the field of CBA and English language teaching. Exploring the essence of teachers' learning cycle of CBA provides insights into the gap in CBA knowledge among these selected teachers. Essentially, teachers' voices on their knowledge of CBA will reveal their thoughts on the change in assessment policies, power dynamics, assessment criteria, resources and facilities for assessment development in English lessons. These insights will create awareness among policymakers to develop suitable professional developmental training in assessment, testing and evaluation, indirectly leading to the overall success and effective implementation of CBA in English lessons. Moreover, this study also creates awareness among the participants and readers on the importance of being assessment literate in order to incorporate CBA effectively during English lessons. If teachers can build on the CBA knowledge effectively through their experiences, they will be able to have a strong foundation and understanding of the concept of CBA, which leads to successful CBA implementation to ensure students' success in learning.

## **4. Research Questions**

This study aims to understand teachers' learning cycle of CBA through their individual experiences, leading to the following research questions:

- (i) What are the stages of teachers' learning cycle in CBA?
- (ii) How does the learning experience at each stage contribute to new CBA knowledge?

## **5. Method**

A qualitative research design using a phenomenology case-study approach is applied in this study. A phenomenological approach provides the opportunity to study the essence of an experience of an individual, which closely relates to the purpose of this study in exploring individual teachers' experiences of their understanding of CBA (Heidegger, 2010; Heidegger, 1995; Horigan-Kelly et al., 2016; Husserl, 2014; Khan, 2014; Moran, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Oiler-Boyd, 2001). Since there is a need to "fence in" the phenomenon being explored and to obtain thick and in-depth data on selected teacher's experiences on their knowledge and understanding of CBA within a "bounded system", the proposed method of this study is best termed as a phenomenological case-study approach, whereby case-study is used as a generic term, only to determine the boundary of the context being explored (Merriam, 2009, p. 40).

The research location of this study included three urban Malaysian primary schools because CBA is widely implemented in primary classrooms, specifically lower primary (Hock et al., 2022). For this study, six English language teachers were chosen based on a set of criteria, including CBA teaching experiences, academic qualifications, training, and courses attended pertaining to CBA and their availability and willingness to participate in this study. All the names of the participants are replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identity. The participants include Bob, Monna, Tina, Stephanie, Rose and Liza.

This study used interviews, observations and documents to gather data. Interview data play a main role in this phenomenological study as the two interview sessions unfolded meanings of the participants' 'experiences', thus allowing the 'essence' (the act of teachers' experiences) to emerge. The entire interview session with all the participants will be audio recorded, which is the most common way to preserve the insights provided by the participants (Merriam, 2009). Simultaneously, all the English language teachers' classes were audio-recorded to understand how CBA is conducted during teaching and learning. These audio recordings were conducted during different visits according to the teachers' availability and CBA practices conducted by the teacher (Berg, 2004; Kawulich, 2012; Stivers & Sidnell, 2005). All the audio recordings were transcribed for data analysis (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Apart from that, documents such as samples of activities, students' work, test papers, English panel reports, CBA meeting reports, students' scoring sheets, daily lesson plans, and teachers' reflective journals were used as sources of reference to understand how the teachers implemented CBA during lessons based on his/her experiences. The data collected for this study were processed inductively, exploring multiple realities of teachers' CBA learning cycle. With this, collective meanings of the participants' experiences were formed because it is "highly inductive, that is, the themes emerge from the data and are not imposed upon it by the researcher" (Rudolph, 2006, p. 10).

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

Among the six participants, Monna, Tina, Stephanie and Liza, completed the learning cycle by going through all the stages proposed by Kolb (1984): concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. The experiences gained at each stage have contributed to new CBA knowledge for these participants. Notably, Tina and Stephanie demonstrated comprehensive CBA knowledge as they sought additional CBA inputs besides the

ones provided by the school. These duos also reflect consistently, which allowed them to take note of their strengths and weaknesses while experimenting with their CBA practices. Mona and Liza experienced all four stages in the learning cycle but could not implement their ideas in some situations. Their inconsistent reflection practice hindered their opportunity to develop and improve their CBA practices. Bob and Rose could not complete the stages in the learning cycle, which was reflected in their insufficient CBA knowledge. Rose relied on minimal CBA inputs, which limit her from accessing additional CBA information. She also chose not to reflect when her CBA practices did not turn out as planned. Instead, she dropped her lesson and moved to the next. Dropping the lesson prevents Rose from reflecting, which could provide insights into improving her CBA practices in future situations.

## 7. Limitations

A phenomenological case study approach was used to obtain in-depth perspectives from teachers on their learning cycle. Since a comprehensive investigation is needed to explore teachers' experiences, it limits the number of participants in this study (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). As such, the findings of this study are based on views from six teachers. Hence, the limited number of teachers may not permit the researcher to generalise the findings obtained beyond these participants and context.

## 8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study is essential as CBA in the Malaysian context has yet to be explored in depth from many researchers' perspectives. Therefore, teachers' learning cycle of CBA should be given attention. This present approach, a phenomenological case study, was able to delve into teachers' essence of their understanding of CBA.

## References

- Arumugham, K. S., & Abdullah, S.S. (2016). Teachers' understanding of school-based assessment: A case study of Malaysian primary school teachers. *International Journal of Advanced Education and Research*, 1(6), 16-19.  
<http://repo.uum.edu.my/21597/1/IJAER%201%206%202016%2016%2019.pdf>
- Assessment Reform Group (2002). *Assessment for Learning: 10 Principles*. University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education.  
<https://www.aaia.org.uk/content/uploads/2010/06/Assessment-for-Learning-10principles.pdf>
- Berg, B. L. (2004). *Qualitative research methods: For the social Sciences* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. Longman.
- Chapman, D. W., & Snyder, C. W., Jr. (2000). Can high stakes national testing improve instruction: Re-examining conventional wisdom. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20(6), 457-474. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0738-0593\(00\)00020-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0738-0593(00)00020-1)
- Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (4th ed.). Pearson
- Curriculum Development Centre. (2016). *Panduan Pelaksanaan Pentaksiran Sekolah*. Putrajaya: Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

- <https://www.moe.gov.my/muat-turun/pentaksiran-berasaskan-sekolah/5505-panduan-pelaksanaan-pentaksiran-bilik-darjah-edisi-2-2019/file>
- Curriculum Development Centre. (2019). Panduan Pelaksanaan Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (2nd ed.). Putrajaya: Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. <https://www.moe.gov.my/muat-turun/pentaksiran-berasaskan-sekolah/5505-panduan-pelaksanaan-pentaksiran-bilik-darjah-edisi-2-2019/file>
- Davison, C. (2007). Views from the chalkface: English language school-based assessment in Hong Kong. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 4(1), 37-68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15434300701348359>
- DeLuca, C. & Johnson, S. (2017). Developing assessment capable teachers in this age of accountability. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 24(2), 121-126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2017.1297010>
- Hasim, Z. (2014). *The art of teaching English: A resource book*. University of Malaya Press.
- Hasim, Z., Di, S., & Barnard, R. (2018). Eliciting teachers' understanding and their reported practices on school-based assessment: Methodological challenges. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 158-166.   
file:///C:/Users/ACER/Downloads/Eliciting\_teachers\_understanding\_and\_their\_report.pdf
- Heidegger, M. (1995). The phenomenological movement: Implications for nursing research. *Leading Global Nursing Research*, 22(4), 791-799. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1995.22040791.x>
- Heidegger, M. (2010). Being and Time (D.J. Schmidt, Ed.). New York, NY: Harper & Row Publications. (Original work published in 1953).
- Hill, K., & McNamara, T. (2012). Developing a comprehensive, empirically based research framework for classroom-based assessment. *Language Testing*, 29(3), 395-420. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0265532211428317>
- Hock, T. T., Ayub, A. F. M., Shah, M. M., & Ahamed, A. B. (2022). Implementation of classroom-based assessment in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(4), 76-87. [https://hrmars.com/papers\\_submitted/14621/implementation-of-classroom-based-assessment-in-malaysia.pdf](https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/14621/implementation-of-classroom-based-assessment-in-malaysia.pdf)
- Horrigan-Kelly, M., Millar, M. and Dowling, M. (2016) Understanding the Key Tenets of Heidegger's Philosophy for Interpretive Phenomenological Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15, 1-8. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/1609406916680634>
- Hsia, P. C., & Nasri, N. M. (2022). Online Classroom-based Assessment (CBA): Primary school teacher readiness and challenges. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(2), 1392-1408. [https://hrmars.com/papers\\_submitted/13936/online-classroom-based-assessment-cba-primary-school-teacher-readiness-and-challenges.pdf](https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/13936/online-classroom-based-assessment-cba-primary-school-teacher-readiness-and-challenges.pdf)
- Husserl, E. (2014). Ideas for pure phenomenology and phenomenological philosophy (D. O. Dahlstrom, Ed.). Hackett Publishing Company. (Original work published 1913).
- Jamal, S. N., Rahman, S.N., Sujak, N.N., Maniam, S., Obeng, S. N. W., Tan, Y.C., Bathumalai, V. (2016). What is school-based assessment (SBA)? How SBA is implemented in classroom. [https://www.academia.edu/30356502/What\\_is\\_School\\_based\\_Assessment\\_SBA\\_How\\_SBA\\_is\\_implemented\\_in\\_classroom](https://www.academia.edu/30356502/What_is_School_based_Assessment_SBA_How_SBA_is_implemented_in_classroom)
- John, M. (2018). Assessment reform in Malaysia: Policy into practice in primary schools. [file:///C:/Users/ACER/Downloads/John\\_Marcelina\\_2018\\_Thesis%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/ACER/Downloads/John_Marcelina_2018_Thesis%20(1).pdf)
- Jonglai, S.A. (2017). From policy to practice: The effect of teachers' educational beliefs and values on their interpretation of school-based assessment reform in primary schools in Malaysia [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. The University of Leeds. <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/19197/1/Thesis%20for%20Leeds-3.pdf>

- Kawulich, B. B. (2012). Collecting data through observation.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257944783\\_Collecting\\_data\\_through\\_observation#fullTextFileContent](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257944783_Collecting_data_through_observation#fullTextFileContent)
- Khamis, S., & Selamat, A. (2019). The use of feedback in the classroom assessment: A case study. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 8(3), 325–334.  
[https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c338/ffd2f50c91f226a9c222e209f56fa5b9269d.pdf?\\_ga=2.200113646.1552873748.1672207163-251775596.1665195363](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c338/ffd2f50c91f226a9c222e209f56fa5b9269d.pdf?_ga=2.200113646.1552873748.1672207163-251775596.1665195363)
- Khan, S. N. (2014). Qualitative research method-Phenomenology. *Asian Social Science*, 10(21), 298-310. doi: 10.5539/ass.v10n21p298
- Khory, H. H. M., Rahman, M. N. A., & Zailani, M. A. (2021). Pengurusan pentaksiran bilik darjah mata pelajaran bahasa arab berasaskan keperluan pembelajaran murid. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan*, 8(2), 41–57.  
<https://jupidi.um.edu.my/index.php/JUPIDI/article/view/29946/13034>
- Latif, M. W. (2021). Exploring EFL practitioners' knowledgebase component assessment literacy: Implications for teacher professional development. *Language Testing in Asia*, 11(19), 1-22.  
<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s40468-021-00130-9.pdf>
- Lee, Y. (2006). The process-oriented ESL writing assessment: Promises and challenges. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15, 307-330. doi: 10.1016/j.jslw.2006.09.003
- Lee, T. A., Mahayudin, Z., Yuan, O. S., Mooi, O. Y., & Teng, N. L. (2020). Pengalaman pembimbing instruksional dan guru dalam proses bimbingan instruksional pentaksiran bilik darjah di sebuah sekolah rendah. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Dedikasi*, 18(2), 60–73.  
<https://anyflip.com/cgupw/lias/basic/101-139>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Majid, F.A. (2011) School-based assessment in Malaysian schools: the concerns of the English teachers. *US-China Education Review B* 3, 393–402.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED524802.pdf>
- Malakolunthu, S., & Sim, K. H. (2010). Teachers' perspectives of school-based assessment in a secondary school in Kuala Lumpur. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 1170-1176.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042810024079>
- Marzaini, A. F. M., Sharil, W. N. E. H., Supramaniam, K., & Yusoff, S. M. (2023). Evaluating teachers' assessment literacy in enacting CEFR-aligned Classroom-based Assessment in Malaysian secondary schools ESL classrooms. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 12(1), 661-675.  
[https://hrmars.com/papers\\_submitted/15691/evaluating-teachers-assessment-literacy-in-enacting-cefr-aligned-classroom-based-assessment-in-malaysian-secondary-schools-esl-classroom.pdf](https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/15691/evaluating-teachers-assessment-literacy-in-enacting-cefr-aligned-classroom-based-assessment-in-malaysian-secondary-schools-esl-classroom.pdf)
- Mavrommatis, Y. (1997). Understanding assessment in the classroom: Phases of the assessment process-The assessment episode. *Assessment in Education*, 4(3), 381-400.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594970040305>
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2003). *English Language: Sekolah Kebangsaan Year 6*. Ministry of Education Malaysia.
- Moran, D. (2013). 'Let's Look at It Objectively': Why Phenomenology Cannot be Naturalized. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements*, 72, 89-115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1358246113000064>
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Narinasamy, I. (2018). Implementing classroom assessment in Malaysia: An investigation.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/IlhavenilNarinasamy/publication/348355621\\_Implementing\\_Classroom\\_Assessment\\_In\\_Malaysia\\_An\\_Investigation/links/5ff9b17a45851553a02f](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/IlhavenilNarinasamy/publication/348355621_Implementing_Classroom_Assessment_In_Malaysia_An_Investigation/links/5ff9b17a45851553a02f)

[006f/Implementing-Classroom-Assessment-In-Malaysia-An-Investigation.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](#)

- Nunan, D., & Bailey, K. M. (2009). *Exploring second language classroom research*. Boston, MA: Heinle Cengage Learning.
- Oiler-Boyd, C. (2001). Phenomenology: The method. In P.L. Munhall (Ed.), *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective* (3rd ed.) (pp. 93-122). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett.
- Reyeneke, M. (2016). School-based assessment in English language teaching: Weighing the cow will not fatten it. *Per Linguam*, 32(2), 1-14.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308093541\\_Schoolbased\\_Assessment\\_in\\_English\\_Language\\_Teaching\\_Weighing\\_the\\_cow\\_will\\_not\\_fatten\\_it#fullTextFileContent](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308093541_Schoolbased_Assessment_in_English_Language_Teaching_Weighing_the_cow_will_not_fatten_it#fullTextFileContent)
- Rezagh, K. (2022). Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy knowledge: The impact of the educational system on teachers' classroom assessment practices. *International Journal of Language Testing*, 12(2), 76-94.  
[https://www.ijlt.ir/article\\_157126\\_3eb43896444f39cdb7b113c5c0c96250.pdf](https://www.ijlt.ir/article_157126_3eb43896444f39cdb7b113c5c0c96250.pdf)
- Sidhu, G.K., Kaur, S., & Chi, L.J. (2018). CEFR-aligned school-based assessment in the Malaysian primary ESL classroom. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2), 452-463.  
<https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v8i2.13311>
- Stillman, G. (2001). The impact of school-based assessment on the implementation of a modelling/applications-based curriculum: an Australian example. *Teaching Mathematics and Its Applications*, 20(3), 101-107. <https://doi.org/10.1093/teamat/20.3.101>
- Stivers, T., & Sidnell, J. (2005). Introduction: Multimodal interaction. *Semiotica*, 156(1/4), 1-20.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249934667\\_Introduction\\_Multimodal\\_interaction](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249934667_Introduction_Multimodal_interaction)
- Talib, R., Kamsa, M. Z., Naim, H. A., & Latif, A. A. (2014). From principle to practice: Assessment for learning in Malaysian School-based Assessment classroom. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 4(4). 850-857.  
<http://ijsse.com/sites/default/files/issues/2014/v4-i4-2014-1/Paper-11.pdf>

## ORAL HISTORIES OF MALAYSIAN FRONT-LINERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: CREATING GRAPHIC STORIES

Azlina Abdul Aziz<sup>1</sup> and Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim<sup>2</sup>  
Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi  
[1azlina1@ukm.edu.my](mailto:1azlina1@ukm.edu.my)

### Abstract

Oral history accounts of Malaysian front-liners who are battling against the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia should be collected as part of our historical preservation. One of the strengths of Oral History, from a historical perspective, is that it provides multiple perspectives from people who have experienced an event or phenomenon. The construction of history is not solely dependent on the interpretation of people in authority such as the government or the historian but rather it recognises the fallacy of truth as being derived from a single narrative. In this project, we worked with a group of 48 TESL in-service teachers to create 20 Oral History materials in graphic forms based on the front-liners' COVID-19 pandemic historical accounts. The compilation of graphic stories will be published as an eBook. One of the materials produced were then turned into a 2D animation for public and educational consumption.

### Key Words

Oral History, Graphic Story, ESL Materials, COVID-19 Pandemic

### 1. Background of Study

Today's English language classroom requires proficient teachers who possess creativity and the requisite knowledge and skills to address their students' needs, along with innovative teaching materials that align with contemporary pedagogical trends. Therefore, to ensure providing English language learners with high-quality English language education, both effective teachers and quality materials must be taken into consideration. However, in Malaysia, the government has opted to reform English Language Teaching (ELT) in public schools by discontinuing the usage of local ELT coursebooks and instead importing commercially produced global ELT coursebooks developed in the United Kingdom for primary and secondary schools. This decision, as highlighted by Abdul Aziz and Makhtar (2021), Abdul Aziz et al. (2019), and Abdul Rahim and Daghigh (2019), is predicated on the supposition that the imported coursebooks, created by native English language speakers, would provide Malaysian English language learners with trustworthy content composed in impeccable English, surpassing what local resources offer. Even though the Malaysian government's move may be perceived as a positive development in ELT, the researchers agree with many of the opponents to that move and argues that it is a setback.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Educators in Malaysia must actively engage in the decolonization of ELT materials by developing locally relevant ELT materials that capture the richness of Malaysia's multicultural landscape. According to Tomlinson (2014), language materials should be created by teachers, through a creative process catering to the real classroom setting. Non-native English language teachers possess the capacity to create efficient teaching resources if they receive the necessary training and framework (Edwards & Burns 2016; Kumaravadivelu 2016). As highlighted by McGrath (2013), a meticulously designed approach to teacher training in materials development, one catering to the local setting and emphasizing practical application, can make a substantial difference in this regard. Hence, it is crucial to prioritize training in materials development as a central component of any English language teacher development program. The goal is to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to become practitioners who can not only create ELT materials but also embrace local and effective ELT pedagogies. By focusing on the teachers, their development as a practical way to disrupt the problematic hegemonic approach to ELT practices, this research considers teachers as "agents of change" who are, once 'enabled', capable of bringing about the desired change in ELT in Malaysia.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The project is designed to be an enriching experience that engages Malaysian teachers in materials development and raises their awareness of innovative pedagogies. It is a training module where in-service English language teachers are equipped to produce not only local content but also to present it through multimodal media. Non-native English language teachers have often been marginalized (Kumaravadivelu 2016), relegated to being consumers of knowledge and commercial materials and implementers of recommended techniques and practices. It is time to empower them as creators through a bottom-up approach to ELT materials development. This approach allows teachers to develop practical knowledge for generating effective ELT materials, seek innovative pedagogical approaches, explore their local contexts and culture, and take charge of their own personal and professional growth.

## **4. Research Questions**

How does the training module contribute to the in-service English language teachers' professional development?

## **5. Method**

Since this research study sought to explore the experiences of the in-service English language teachers in the module, the researcher adopted the qualitative approach; this enabled the researcher to gain deeper understanding of the teachers' perspectives (Creswell 2009; Yin 2014) with their module training experience including their views, their knowledge/skills building, and the challenges they have encountered throughout their module experience. The research participants were a purposive sample of 48 Malaysian (3 males and 45 females aged between 24 and 37) TESL Executive Master's students enrolled in the course 'Current Trends in Language Teaching Research' at the Faculty of Education, the National University of Malaysia (UKM). All participants were in-service English language teachers with varying teaching experiences (between 1 and 14 years), and they all successfully completed their training in the module. In



collecting the qualitative data, the researcher utilized multiple instruments including post-module interviews, and written reflections.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

In addition to helping teachers to develop innovative ELT materials, the module contributed to the teachers' professional knowledge/skills in five areas: digital knowledge, ELT materials development knowledge, oral history knowledge, narrative writing knowledge, and graphic design knowledge. The module significantly improved the in-service English language teachers' digital knowledge and skills, which was the most prominent professional benefit reported. Creating the graphic oral history ELT materials involved editing, sound effects, background music, and the use of various apps and tools like PowerPoint, Canva, Photoshop, and many more. Through enhancing their digital literacy, teachers gain increased confidence and competence in effectively incorporating technology into their teaching methods. As they develop their proficiency with digital tools, teachers become more adept at leveraging technology to enhance their instructional strategies, engage students, and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. The module also improved teachers' knowledge of materials design and development principles; the module helped the teachers understand the principles of ELT materials development, especially in relation to meeting their learners' needs. This heightened understanding of ELT materials development principles enables them to create resources that are better aligned with their students' needs, preferences, and learning styles.

## **7. Limitations**

While the study makes a valuable contribution to ELT materials development and English language teacher training in Malaysia, the researcher identified some potential limitations. First, the sample size of the study was relatively small and was limited to the 48 in-service English language teachers doing their Master's at the Faculty of Education, UKM and were enrolled in the course 'Current Trends in Language Teaching Research.' Therefore, the research participants might not be representative of the entire populations of English language teachers and TESL experts in Malaysia. Second, the generalizability of the study's findings is limited to the Malaysian context.

## **8. Conclusion**

This project sought to address the shortcomings of commercial global ELT coursebooks and materials, by providing a professional development opportunity for servicing Malaysian English language teachers in materials development. The training module serves as an effective satisfactory training tool, offering hands-on activities, innovative methods, and valuable support to teachers through instructional materials, group collaboration, and the facilitator's guidance. Additionally, the module brings substantial professional advantages to the teachers. Not only does it enable them to create innovative materials that cater to their students' language learning needs, but it also enhances their expertise in various areas while bolstering their motivation, confidence, creativity, and ability to collaborate. Consequently, the module has the potential to act as a catalyst in empowering Malaysian English language teachers professionally; it equips them to become influential agents of change who can develop effective local ELT materials and shape the ELT landscape in Malaysia.

## References

- Abdul Aziz, A. & Makhtar, R. (2021). TESL in-service teachers' experiences when evaluating an oral history workbook. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*, 27(3), 56–72.  
<https://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2021-2703-04>
- Abdul Aziz, A., Narayanasamy, J.A.P., Mohamad, M. & Hameed, H.A. (2019). Student-teachers' experiences in creating oral history texts. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*, 25(3), 79–89.  
<https://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2019-2503-06>
- Abdul Rahim, H. & Jalalian Daghigh, A. (2019). Locally-developed vs. global textbooks: An evaluation of cultural content in textbooks used in ELT in Malaysia. *Asian Englishes*, 22(3), 317–331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2019.1669301>
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Edwards, E. & Burns, A. (2016). Action research to support teachers' classroom materials development. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 10(2), 106–120.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2015.1090995>
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2016). The decolonial option in English teaching: Can the subaltern act? *TESOL Quarterly*, 50(1), 66–85. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.202>
- McGrath, I. (2013). Introduction: Materials, the Roles of Teachers and Learners, and Teacher Education. In McGrath, I. (2013). *Teaching Materials and the Roles of EFL/ESL Teachers: Practice and Theory* (pp. 1–26). London: Bloomsbury Academic.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781472542076.ch-001>
- Tomlinson, B. (2016). The importance of materials development for language learning. In M. Azarnoosh, M. Zeraatpishe, A. Favarani, & H. Kargozari (Eds.), (2016) *Issues in materials development* (pp. 1-9). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Yin, R.K. (2014). *Case Study Research Design and Methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.  
<https://doi.org/10.3138/cjpe.30.1.108>

## A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Yuan Jiang<sup>1</sup>, Melinda Kong Lian Fah<sup>2</sup>, Christina Amanda Yin Chueh Ping<sup>3</sup> and Wendy Goff<sup>4</sup>

Swinburne University of Technology

[104226321@students.swinburne.edu.my](mailto:104226321@students.swinburne.edu.my)

### Abstract

This study reviews the literature of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) research with a focus on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching. Despite its extensive study in mathematics and science education, PCK research in EFL and ESL contexts remains limited. Utilizing a systematic review methodology, this study evaluates existing literature from four databases: ERIC, PsycInfo, Web of Science, and Scopus. This study identifies key issues in current research and highlights significant gaps, including a lack of cross-cultural studies, cross-subject research, large-scale assessment tools, and longitudinal studies, and research on the interactions among PCK components and the development of these interactions in EFL and ESL contexts. The findings of this study may offer valuable insights into improving teacher education programs and classroom practices by addressing these gaps, with the potential to enhance teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes in language education.

**Key Words :** Teacher knowledge, Pedagogical content knowledge, EFL/ESL teaching, Systematic review

### 1. Background of Study

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is crucial for effective teaching, integrating subject matter expertise with pedagogical strategies (Şen et al., 2022). Introduced by Lee Shulman in the 1980s, PCK is defined as “the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners and presented for instruction” (Shulman, 1987). It emphasizes what should be taught and how it should be taught, and it is a unique knowledge necessary for teaching (Shulman, 1987). While PCK research has extensively covered mathematics and science (Melo, 2020), there is a significant gap in studies focusing on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) (Reza Adel & Noughabi, 2023; Li et al., 2021). Literature reviews by Evens (2016) reveal a significant gap, with only 17 relevant empirical studies identified compared to extensive reviews in other subjects (Yıldırım, 2023; Galimova et al., 2023; Montoya, 2023). EFL classrooms present unique challenges as language serves both as content and medium of instruction, underscoring the need for more research in this area to enhance teaching practices and teacher training programs (König et al., 2017).

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is crucial for effective teaching, integrating subject matter expertise with pedagogical strategies to enhance instructional quality. Despite its established importance, PCK research in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts remains underdeveloped compared to mathematics and science (Melo, 2020). This limitation results in an inadequate understanding of how PCK specifically applies to EFL and ESL teaching contexts (Li et al., 2021; Saifullah et al., 2024). Effective PCK is vital for creating engaging learning environments and significantly affects student achievement (Aguye & Berlie, 2024; Jacob et al., 2020). However, the lack of PCK research in EFL and ESL settings impedes teachers' ability to integrate content and pedagogical strategies effectively, which negatively impacts student outcomes (Husna, 2021). Recent literature (Saifullah et al., 2024) highlights a significant gap in the PCK research landscape for EFL and ESL contexts. This critical review aims to systematically address these deficiencies by identifying how researchers investigate EFL and ESL teachers' PCK, key research gaps and proposing suggestions for future research to enhance teacher education and classroom practices in EFL and ESL contexts.

## **3. Significance of Study**

This study may significantly advance English Language Education by emphasizing the importance of PCK in EFL and ESL contexts. By identifying the status quo of research and gaps in the current research, this study aims to highlight the potential need for further investigation into how PCK can be effectively integrated into EFL and ESL teaching. The insights gained could inform future research directions and potentially lead to improvements in teacher education programs and classroom practices. Understanding PCK's role in language teaching might contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies, enhance teacher effectiveness, and improve student learning outcomes. This study's findings are expected to provide a foundation for future research efforts, guiding policymakers and educators in addressing the unique challenges faced in EFL and ESL teaching contexts.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) How is PCK investigated in PCK research within EFL and ESL contexts?
- (ii) What potential gaps exist in PCK research within EFL and ESL contexts?
- (iii) How can future research address these gaps?

## **5. Method**

This study conducts a systematic review of literature on PCK in EFL and (ESL contexts. The review utilizes four key databases - ERIC, PsycInfo, Web of Science and Scopus - to identify empirical studies and articles focused on PCK in EFL and ESL teaching. Search terms included combinations such as "pedagogical content knowledge AND second language" and "pedagogical content knowledge AND foreign language." The review focuses on peer-reviewed journal articles, systematic reviews, and empirical studies related to PCK in EFL and ESL teaching published after 2010. Data extraction involves identifying and organizing key elements such as research goals, methodologies, and findings. Analysis methods include thematic analysis to identify and categorize common themes and patterns related to PCK in EFL and ESL contexts. Additionally,

the review also involves a cross-disciplinary comparison with studies from mathematics and science to identify common methodologies and research gaps.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The review highlights a significant gap in PCK research within English as EFL and ESL contexts compared to science and mathematics. Notably, the volume of PCK research in EFL is much smaller. Evens (2016) identified only 17 studies on EFL and ESL fields across major databases, while extensive literature exists for science and mathematics, with numerous reviews and studies by Yıldırım (2023), Galimova et al. (2023), and others. This disparity underscores the urgent need for more EFL and ESL-focused research. In this study, the search yielded only 40 relevant articles, with just one being a literature review by Evens (2016). This limited number of studies emphasizes the necessity for more comprehensive research to address the gaps in PCK research in EFL and ESL fields to develop a deeper understanding of its applications and implications in teaching contexts.

Current PCK research in ESL and EFL primarily focuses on exploring the nature of PCK, the development of PCK measurement tools, PCK development, and the relationship between PCK and other variables. However, there are notable issues: a lack of standardization in PCK concepts and elements, the use of multiple self-report data collection methods, a predominant reliance on qualitative methods, and a focus on individual PCK components in studies of PCK development.

Furthermore, there are notable gaps in the literature, including a lack of cross-cultural studies, cross-subject research, large-scale assessment tools, and longitudinal studies and research on the interactions among PCK components and the development of these interactions in EFL and ESL contexts. Addressing these gaps could enhance our understanding of PCK in language teaching and inform more effective teacher education and professional development.

## **7. Limitations**

This study, while aiming to provide a comprehensive review of PCK research in EFL and (ESL contexts), has several limitations. First, the reliance on existing literature from four major databases—ERIC, PsycInfo, Web of Science, and Scopus—may limit the scope of the review, potentially overlooking relevant studies published in other databases or sources not indexed in these platforms. Second, this study only included articles published in English, which may have impacted the results.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study reveals how researchers investigate EFL and ESL teachers' PCK and identifies significant gaps in PCK research within these contexts. Although research on PCK in EFL and ESL settings has increased in recent years, exploration remains insufficient. To address these research gaps, future studies should focus on several key areas:

- Conducting large-scale comparative studies to examine teachers' PCK across different countries and cultural contexts.
- Expanding interdisciplinary PCK research between EFL, ESL, and other subjects.

- Developing valid and reliable measurement instruments to facilitate large-scale investigations of PCK.
- Undertaking longitudinal studies to track the evolution of PCK throughout teachers' careers.
- Conducting research on the interactions among PCK components and the development of these interactions.

Addressing these gaps will enhance the effectiveness of teacher education and classroom practices, ultimately improving the quality of EFL and ESL teaching.

## References

- Aguye, A. S., & Berlie, A. D. (2024). English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in Teaching Reading Skills in Secondary Schools. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*. 23(2), 510-527.
- Evens, M., Elen, J., & Depaepe, F. (2016). Pedagogical content knowledge in the context of foreign and second language teaching: A review of the research literature. *Porta Linguarum: revista internacional de didáctica de las lenguas extranjeras*. (26), 187-200.
- Galimova, E. G., Zakharishcheva, M. A., Kolomoets, E. N., Chistyakov, A. A., Prokopyev, A. I., Beloborodova, A. V., & Ilaeva, R. A. (2023). A review of research on pedagogical content knowledge in science and mathematics education in the last five years. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*. 19(2), em2223.
- Husna, N. (2021). Exploring Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of The English Teachers in Senior High School of Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Ar-raniry).
- Jacob, F. I. L. G. O. N. A., John, S. A. K. I. Y. O., & Gwany, D. M. (2020). Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' academic achievement: A theoretical overview. *Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Science*. 14(2), 14-44.
- König, J., Tachtsoglou, S., Lammerding, S., Strauß, S., Nold, G., & Rohde, A. (2017). The role of opportunities to learn in teacher preparation for EFL teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. *The Modern Language Journal*. 101(1), 109-127.
- Li, S., Liu, L., & Jiang, A. L. (2021). Understanding the development of Chinese EFL student-teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 12, 627728.
- Melo, L., Cañada-Cañada, F., González-Gómez, D., & Jeong, J. S. (2020). Exploring pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of physics teachers in a Colombian secondary school. *Education Sciences*. 10(12), 362.
- Montoya, N. E. (2023). Pedagogical Content Knowledge in the Physical Education Field. A systematic review of the literature 2011-2022. *Retos*. 50, 1240-1250.
- Reza Adel, S. M., & Azari Noughabi, M. (2023). Developing Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) through an enriched teacher education program: cases of four Iranian pre-service EFL teachers. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*. 18(3), 352-373.
- Saifullah, M., Mufaridah, F., & Nurkamilah, N. (2024). The Ability of Pre-service English Teacher Using Pedagogical Content Knowledge in English Language Classroom. *International Social Sciences and Humanities*. 3(2), 146-155.
- Şen, M., Demirdöğen, B., & Öztekin, C. (2022). Interactions among topic-specific pedagogical content knowledge components for science teachers: The impact of content knowledge. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*. 33(8), 860-887.
- Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*. 57(1), 1-23.
- Yıldırım, Ş. U. (2023). Review of Researches on Pedagogical Content Knowledge Published in ESERA (2009-2019) Conference Books. *International Journal of Progressive Education*. 19(2).

**I COME WITH TRANSFORMATION (ICT) – TRANSFORMING THE DEEPEST ASPECTS OF  
LANGUAGE VIA E-LEARNING**

**Kristen Priya Krishnan**  
**Qosmo International School**  
[kristenpriya@gmail.com](mailto:kristenpriya@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

Using ICT and collaborating with language teaching and learning has resulted in disparate findings especially in quality and complexity. Technology has indeed allowed students to enhance language learning using multiple modalities through interactive effects of the sound, animation, narration, video, and gamification. These practices signal potentially dramatic changes in assessment; putting more focus on creating electronic presentations than on attending to the content of the paper. In this paper, it is described that students using computers in a collaborative context demonstrated superior depth of understanding and reflection, as well as improved their language scores. With this, it is construed that effective technology-rich environments allow for active student learning collaborative environments, immediate feedback, and authentic information. Thus, this serves as a vital function of not only helping students but also teachers to learn more about their own teaching.

**Key Words**

Value-added learning, Technology enhanced learning, Proactive and reactive engagement, Empowering students with generative AI, Enhancing student performance.

**1. Background of Study**

The acceleration of technology increases the pace of change. Information and communications technology (ICT) and artificial intelligence (AI) play a vital role in education towards effective teaching and learning experiences to both teachers and students in the English language education. Machine learning and artificial intelligence can be utilized in various phases of the educational process – from planning and scheduling to knowledge delivery and assessment. These technologies have improved the creation of global learning experiences, web-based learning materials to promote the English language, and enhanced resources that make learning fun and effective. The adoption of artificial intelligence-driven methods powered with information communication technology techniques could be used in classroom environments. A continued focus on wireless communication, data storage, computational resource development and ongoing progress will therefore utilize AI-driven tools to support students, teachers and policymakers towards English education teaching and learning.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most significant social disruptions globally in recent history. With the outbreak of the virus, many brick-and-mortar educational institutions had to switch to alternate methods of delivering knowledge to students, including English language education. This in some situations necessitated creative thinking by the administration, teachers, and students, which in turn accelerated the adoption and use of ICT including artificial intelligence for English language education. These advancements are also beneficial for those who choose hybrid learning or e-learning, especially students from nations in conflict.

## **3. Significance of Study**

As teachers learn about the potential of technology, they restructure their physical classroom environments to allow presentation space, group-work space, and flexible space for multiple activities. Effective technology-rich environments allow for value-added learning, technology enhanced learning, proactive and reactive engagement, empowering students with generative AI, and enhancing student performance. One practical consideration that arises as teachers contemplate ways to use ICT in their teaching is whether teachers instead need to draft plans for completely new lessons. They do not have to do so. Interactive whiteboards have become increasingly popular in recent years, thanks to their ability to engage students and facilitate collaborative learning. In addition to whiteboards, other visual aids such as flashcards, pictures, and wall charts can also help make lessons more engaging and interactive. What more with the adoption of AI, these aids can be used to present new vocabulary, practice spelling and structures, or facilitate discussions and group activities.

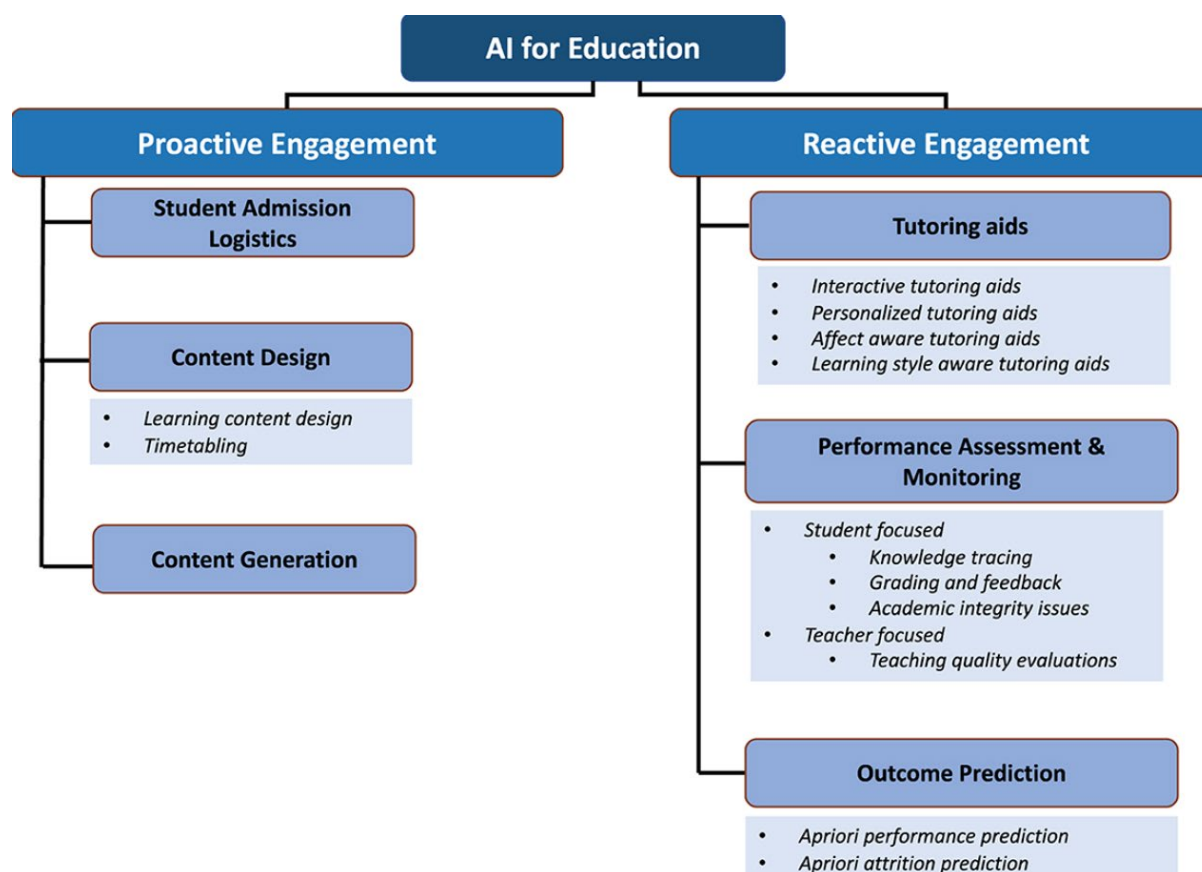
## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) What were the prominent research directions in involvement of ICT and AI in the end-to-end English education process in the past two decades?
- (ii) How did the COVID-19 pandemic influence the education landscape and how AI in particular can drive future developments for educational technologies in English?
- (iii) Does use of AI-driven methodologies for English education widen or bridge the gap in access to quality education among different population groups?

## **5. Method**

This is library research accompanied by some online research. It is research carried out through collecting data or scientific writing aimed at the object of research or collection of bibliographic data, or a study carried out to solve a problem that is based on a critical and in-depth study of relevant library and online materials. To understand the role that ICT and AI might play in measuring student progress is it is first helpful to understand what type of measurement one would like to make. Engaging artificial intelligence driven methods in stages of English education is one of them. This would consist of Proactive vs Reactive engagement of AI. The process of educating a student begins much before the student starts attending lessons and parsing lesson materials. In a traditional English education setup, firstly students acquire the basics of learning the language for conversational purpose rather than going much in-depth into studying the English language structure to serve the academic purpose.





**Figure 1:** Overview of the categorization introduced in this review article.

Through this review article, I aim to address the following questions:

What were the widely studied applications of artificial intelligence in the end-to-end English education process in the past two decades? How did the 2020 outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic influence the landscape of research in this domain? Over the past two decades in retrospective view, has the usage of AI for English education widened or bridged the gap between population groups with respect to quality education?

## 6. Findings and Discussion

### Relationship between Artificial Intelligence and English Language Teaching

With the advances in AI via the help of ICT, English language teachers can reduce course preparation time and deliver targeted, effective instruction. Access to authentic material and multimedia provides students with authentic language learning and cultural exposure from around the world. Enhanced learning experience is embedded via ICT and AI tools such as interactive whiteboards, digital textbooks, and multimedia presentations which cater to different learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic, ensuring all students can benefit.

AI-assisted devices are a sub-section of computer-assisted language learning for foreign language learning (CALL). AI provides a wide variety of developments in foreign language education with the exponential development in natural language processing and technologies to

cope with big data (Li, 2020). English language teaching (ELT) is considered an integral educational aim in terms of improving the potential of students to interact internationally. (Mukhallafi, 2020). Artificial intelligence (AI) is a challenging and creative field in teaching English. AI technologies may help make world classrooms open for all, including those who speak various languages or may have a vision or auditory impairment. Gawate (2019) states that as an additional support system, AI will play a critical function for both students and teachers of the English language.

## 7. Limitations

When humans communicate with others by using a language, they may employ, almost effortlessly or extremely complex structures, and still little understood process is visible. Hence, a computer system capable of producing and interpreting fragments of the English language has been very difficult to create. One cause of the challenge is that language has risen within intelligent beings as a means of communication.

## 8. Conclusion

The benefits of using ICT and AI tools in English language learning are AI can do things that cannot be achieved by individuals, such as evaluating English down to the phonemes and understanding how your language skills have progressed almost immediately over time. AI tools for learning spoken English are a more accessible and successful alternative. They can accelerate learning by an increased level of instruction. For those who lack trust in their speech capacity, AI instruments have a pressure-free learning environment. Thus, learning English has become easier with the development of digital platforms. Computer and mobile phone technology offer opportunities to expand capabilities to more people around the world and also expand the use of AI. Personalized content is also key to digital learning technology. We can determine the right way of learning English according to the needs and schedules of each user.

## References

- Florin-Valeriu Pantelimon, Razvan Bologa, Andrei Toma, and Bogdan-Stefan Posedaru. The Evolution of AI-Driven Educational Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Sustainability*, 13(23),13501, 2021
- Gawate, S. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence (AI) Based Instructional Programs in Teaching-Learning of English Language*. <https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.64.69>
- Jiahui Huang, Salmiza Saleh, and Yufei Liu. A Review on Artificial Intelligence in Education. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10(3), 206-206, 2021.
- Li, R. (2020). Using Artificial Intelligence in Learning English as a Foreign Language: An Examination of IELTS LIULISHUO as an Online Platform. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, 1. <https://doi.org/10.32629/jher.v1i2.178>
- Mukhallafi, T. R. A. (2020). Using Artificial Intelligence for Developing English Language *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(6), 40. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n6p40>
- Riberio, R. (2020, March 9). *Artificial Intelligence in English Language Learning*. Cambridge.Org. <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/03/09/qartificial-intelligence-english-language-learning/>

- Shin, M. H. (2018). How to use Artificial Intelligence in the English language Learning Classroom. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*, 9(9), 557. <https://doi.org/10.5958/0976-5506.2018.01058.6>
- Zilberman, A. (2019, December 31). *AI and Learning: The Latest Learning Methodology*. eLearning Industry. <https://elearningindustry.com/artificail-intelligence-best-tool-learning-english>

**INFLUENCE OF ODL TOWARDS IN-SERVICE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY:  
A MALAYSIAN PERSPECTIVE**

**Li Hsien Ooi<sup>2</sup> and Juliana Othman<sup>1</sup>**

**Faculty of Education, University of Malaya**

**[<sup>1</sup>juliana@um.edu.my](mailto:juliana@um.edu.my), [<sup>2</sup>lhooi@wou.edu.my](mailto:lhooi@wou.edu.my)**

**Abstract**

This qualitative study explores the impact of teacher professional development (TPD) delivered through open distance learning (ODL) on the professional identity of in-service English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Malaysia, for which literature currently lacks insights. Semi-structured interviews with four in-service ESL teachers in Malaysia revealed four key themes. Firstly, TPD via ODL increased self-confidence as teachers felt more confident. Secondly, the programme improved their self-efficacy as they became motivated to explore new pedagogic approaches and implement them in their classrooms. However, the teacher's sense of compassion and sense of responsibility were not influenced by the TPD via ODL but rather by their work environment in school, their colleagues and their work experience, as well as intrinsically by their own empathy and learning experiences. These findings hold significant value for ODL providers and stakeholders in teacher professional development and have implications for educational authorities and teacher educators in ODL.

**Key Words**

Open Distance Learning, Teachers Professional Identity, In-service teachers, ESL

**1. Background of Study**

Teachers' professional identity is a fluid and evolving self-perception shaped by their engagement in diverse communities, interactions with others, and their positioning within various social contexts (Yazan, 2018). This identity is continuously negotiated and transformed through experiences in professional development, classroom practices, and participation in a Community of Practice (Pennington & Richards, 2016; Richards, 2023; Sang, 2022). These multifaceted experiences collectively contribute to the development of their professional teacher identity. Research (Aziz et al., 2022; Aris, 2020; Richards, 2023) posited that commitment, self-esteem, agency, and self-efficacy significantly impact teacher identity. These factors shape how English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers address challenges in the classroom and navigate their teacher professional development (TPD). Studies also show that teachers' confidence in themselves and their classroom practices increases during TPD via open distance learning (ODL) (Baroudi, 2023; Meda et al., 2023; Richards, 2023). A teacher's professional identity is a complex and dynamic construct. For ESL teachers, this identity is further influenced by factors like cultural context, student needs, and evolving ESL pedagogical approaches.

## 2. Statement of Problem

The demand for TPD has increased due to the demand for qualified and highly trained teachers, including ESL teachers. This surge is caused by the mushrooming of private schools and international schools in the last two decades, which saw the number of primary and secondary schools in the private sector increase to 550 compared to only 262 in 2003 following the report by Malaysia Educational Statistics 2023 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2023). Many in-service teachers undertake teacher education as professional development to upgrade their qualifications (Alfaidi & Elhassan, 2020). Whether these teacher education programmes are offered via the conventional mode or ODL, these in-service teachers' pedagogical competency is enhanced, subsequently impacting their professional identity.

## 3. Significance of Study

TPD, conducted conventionally or via ODL, affects how in-service teachers perceive themselves as educators and their interactions with peers and colleagues. Many studies (Guilbaud et al., 2021; Körkkö et al., 2020; Lynch et al., 2021) have reported that TPD is conducted conventionally or with novice or teacher trainees outside Malaysia. However, the literature still lacks knowledge about the influences of TPD delivered through ODL on teacher professional identity, especially within the Malaysian context. This study aims to address that gap.

## 4. Research Questions

This qualitative case study aimed to uncover the complexities surrounding the identity of in-service ESL teachers. It was guided by the research question: “How does teacher education via ODL impact the professional identity of in-service teachers?”

## 5. Method

Through a qualitative case study research design, individual semi-structured interviews recorded via Microsoft Teams with four in-service ESL teachers currently teaching in private institutions in Malaysia while undergoing a teacher education programme in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) via ODL were recruited to participate in this research. The study received approval from the university's Ethics Committee and adhered to its ethical guidelines. Pseudonyms were assigned to all participants to ensure anonymity. The demographics of the participants are listed in the table below:

Pseudonym	Age	Years of ODL Study Experience	Years of Teaching Experience
Dawn	37	3 years	5 years
Meryl	48	4 years	4 years
Sunny	44	5 years	12 years
Vicky	45	6 years	23 years

The researcher then generated and reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and authenticity before sharing them with the participants for member checking. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the transcripts, where initial codes were developed by identifying relevant data from each participant's transcript before they were cross-referenced with the transcripts of other participants to identify similarities. These similarities were then revised and organised according to themes that addressed the research question.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The findings reveal several key themes. Firstly, all four participants valued the TPD via ODL's ability to increase their self-confidence as they perceived themselves as better teachers. This perception made them confident when carrying out their lessons and classroom duties. They felt more assured, empowered and confident about themselves in the profession. This finding supports previous studies (Baroudi, 2023; Meda et al., 2023; Richards, 2023), which affirmed that professional development programmes could influence teachers' professional identity by increasing their self-esteem and confidence. Secondly, the programme also improved their self-efficacy. The ODL teacher education programme increased the self-efficacy of all four in-service teachers as they perceived themselves to be better teachers. They all believed that they improved as ESL teachers in different ways. However, they all agreed they were motivated to improve their pedagogical skills by exploring new pedagogic approaches and implementing them in their classrooms. This finding supported previous research studies (Aziz et al., 2022; Aris, 2020; Richards, 2023) and showed that TPD via ODL could influence teachers' professional identity by increasing their self-efficacy.

However, the findings also revealed that the TPD did not influence the in-service teacher's sense of compassion and sense of responsibility via ODL but rather by external factors like their work environment in school, their colleagues and their work experience, as well as intrinsically by their empathy for their students and from their own learning experiences. All four participants reported that their compassion for students was influenced by their personal desire or personal perceptions of themselves rather than the ODL teacher education programme. Similarly, all four participants reported being more influenced by their convictions as teachers than by the ODL teacher education programme. These findings support the explanation by Richards (2023), who explained that the teachers' professional identity is multidimensional and that teachers' commitment towards the professional is negotiated through their own experience and how they make sense of that experience.

## **7. Limitations**

Although the sample size in this study is small, it provides a glimpse of the impact TPD via ODL can have on in-service teachers and their identities. It is also a coincidence that all four participants were females, which gender biases may appear.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study explored the influence of ODL on the professional identity of in-service ESL teachers in Malaysia through the lens of a case study. The findings revealed that although TPD via ODL can increase in-service teachers' confidence and self-efficacy, their sense of compassion and responsibility is deeply rooted in their identity as teachers. These findings highlight the need for teacher education providers to consider increasing the opportunity for interactions between

these in-service teachers to build a sense of community. This is to encourage the passion within them to continue to grow and stay for the benefit of their learners and the education profession. A bigger sample size and a quantitative approach could be considered for future research.

## References

- Alfaidi, S. D. A., & Elhassan, F. A. M. (2020). The Role of In-Service Training Programs in Teachers Development. *International Journal of Learning*, 6(3), 191–195. <https://doi.org/10.18178/IJLT.6.3.191-195>
- Aris, H. Z. (2020). *Pre-Service Teacher Cognition and Practices in Malaysian Secondary School Teacher Education: How Trainee ESL Teachers Experiment with Multiliteracies Pedagogy*. University of Southampton.
- Aziz, A. A., Aziz, A. A. A., Norwahi, N. A., Nordin, N. A., Zaini, N., Shaidin, S., & Azhar, S. B. H. J. (2022). TPACK Readiness among English-Language Lecturers for Open Distance Learning (ODL) Adoption in a Malaysian Public University. *MDPI*, 82, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.3390/proceedings2022082012>
- Baroudi, S. (2023). Exploring Teacher Education for Sustainable Development in the UAE. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 15(3), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15031981>
- Guilbaud, T. C., Martin, F., & Newton, X. (2021). Faculty perceptions on accessibility in online learning: Knowledge, practice and professional development. *Online Learning Journal*, 25(2), 6–35. <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v25i2.2233>
- Harreveld, R. E. (2010). A Capability Approach to Open and Distance Learning for In-Service Teacher Education. In P. A. Danaher & U. Abdurrahman (Eds.), *Perspectives on Distance Education: Teacher Education through Open and Distance Learning* (pp. 47–60). Commonwealth of Learning.
- Körkkö, M., Kotilainen, M. R., Toljamo, S., & Turunen, T. (2020). Developing teacher in-service education through a professional development plan: modelling the process. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1827393>
- Lynch, J., Irby, B. J., Tong, F., Lara-Alecio, R., Zhou, Z., & Singer, E. (2021). Massive Open Online Professional Individualized Learning: Building Teachers' Instructional Capacity for English Learners The Call for Virtual Professional Development for Teachers of English Learners. *Teaching English as a Second Language Electronic Journal (TESL-EJ)*, 25(2), 1–25.
- Meda, L., ElSayary, A., & Mohebi, L. (2023). Exploration of In-Service Teachers' Preparedness and Perceived Challenges about Inclusive Education in the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 13(1), 22–31. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2023-0003>
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2023). Malaysian Educational Statistics 2023. In *Malaysian Educational Statistics 2023*. Ministry of Education Malaysia. [http://repo.iain-tulungagung.ac.id/5510/5/BAB 2.pdf](http://repo.iain-tulungagung.ac.id/5510/5/BAB%202.pdf)
- Pennington, M. C., & Richards, J. C. (2016). Teacher Identity in Language Teaching: Integrating Personal, Contextual, and Professional Factors. *RELC Journal*, 47(1), 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688216631219>
- Richards, J. C. (2023). Teacher, Learner and Student-Teacher Identity in TESOL. *RELC Journal*, 54(1), 252–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688221991308>
- Sang, Y. (2022). Research of Language Teacher Identity: Status Quo and Future Directions. *RELC Journal*, 53(3), 731–738. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220961567>
- Yazan, B. (2018). A Conceptual Framework to Understand Language Teacher Identities. *Journal of Second Language Teacher Education*, 1(1), 21–48.

**BOOSTING SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH CANVA DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN THE PRIMARY  
ESL CLASSROOM****Frecylla May Gidor<sup>1</sup>, Noraini Said<sup>2</sup> and Anna Lyn Abu Bakar<sup>3</sup>****Universiti Malaysia Sabah****[<sup>1</sup>frecyllamay91@gmail.com](mailto:frecyllamay91@gmail.com)****Abstract**

Developing strong speaking skill is fundamental for successful English language acquisition. This conceptual paper aims to investigate the potential of Canva Digital Storytelling (DST) in enhancing speaking skill among Year 5 primary pupils. By employing a constructivist approach, Canva DST empowers learners to actively construct knowledge through digital narrative creation. A Canva DST module was developed by the researcher based on ADDIE instructional designs to guide teacher in the implementation process. Utilizing quasi-experimental research design, this study will evaluate the impact of Canva DST on the pupils' speaking performance using pre- and post-tests analysed through statistical software. Findings are anticipated to demonstrate the effectiveness of Canva DST on improving speaking skills and provide practical implementation guidelines in the classroom. By integrating technology and creative storytelling, this approach can empower primary ESL learners to become more confident and effective communicators.

**Key Words**

Canva, Digital Storytelling (DST), Primary ESL, Speaking Skill

**1. Background of Study**

Aligned with the goals of the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, every Malaysian students is expected to attain proficiency in both Malay and English by the end of twelve years of schooling. However, recent research suggests that English proficiency levels among school leavers remain below expectations (Abu Bakar et al., 2023; Hussan Sahib & Stapa, 2022). While many learners demonstrate success in written English exams, their ability to speak the language effectively often lags behind (Kaur et al., 2023). This issue is concerning as strong English proficiency and effective oral communication are increasingly essential for career success (Hana Naz Harun, 2023).

By combining storytelling with multimedia elements, Digital Storytelling (DST) has emerged as a promising pedagogical approach. Rooted in Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, DST fosters collaborative learning and language development (Kamisah Mat Said, 2023; Nair & Md Yunus, 2022). Canva, a widely accessible design tool, offers a platform for students to create digital stories. 'Canva for Education' is one of the apps subscribed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) for educators to gain access on the Pro version. In line with the Digital Education Policy, it would be an advantage to utilize Canva for enhancing speaking proficiency in the ESL classroom.



## **2. Statement of Problem**

The Malaysian primary English curriculum mandates that pupils achieve a basic user level (CEFR A2) in English before transitioning to secondary education (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, 2022). While the curriculum emphasizes communicative approaches and dynamic learning, practical implementation often deviates from these goals. Despite shifting away from exam-oriented practices, recent study by Adickalam & Yunus (2022) indicates that some educators still prioritize examination preparation over the development of speaking skill. Moreover, the recent Covid-19 pandemic had limited pupils' opportunities for real-time communication (Tan et al., 2024). The lack of early intervention can hinder speaking skill development and create challenges for future academic and career prospects.

Leveraging technology presents a promising avenue, particularly given the familiarity of younger generations with modern devices. Digital storytelling, a technology-based approach, offers potential platform for enhancing speaking skills among primary ESL learners (Lustenberger, 2021; Ramalingam et al., 2022). Despite the demonstrated potential of DST in English language learning, its efficacy in Malaysian primary classrooms has not been extensively researched (Rajendran & Md Yunus, 2021). Hence, this study aims to address the gap by investigating the effectiveness of Canva DST in enhancing the speaking proficiency of primary ESL learners.

## **3. Significance of Study**

This study contributes on the practical, empirical and methodological aspects in the English Language Education. Practically, this study will benefit the pupils as it is anticipated that the use of Canva DST will enhance their speaking proficiency in the English classroom. This study will also provide practical guidelines for teachers to conduct DST activities more efficiently. Empirically, the findings will serve as a focal point for policy makers to revise and implement impactful technology-based activities in English language classroom. Finally, it also aims to contribute methodologically by offering valuable insights into the effectiveness of Canva DST in developing speaking skill within the Malaysian primary ESL classroom context through the quasi-experiment research design.

## **4. Research Questions**

Is there any significant difference in the pupils' speaking achievement (mean scores) between the experimental and control groups?

## **5. Method**

Employing a quasi-experimental design, 60 Year 5 pupils, divided into Experimental Group (EG) and the Control Group (CG), will take part in this study for eight weeks. The EG will integrate Canva DST into their speaking tasks, while the CG continues with regular instruction. Prior to implementation, the experimental group's teacher will receive training on integrating DST, supported by a detailed Canva DST module which is developed by the researcher based on ADDIE instructional designs. This research will use a Speaking Test and Evaluation Rubric to gather data. Both instruments had been verified by panel of experts. The speaking test, created by the researcher based on the Year 5 textbook, will assess the pupils' speaking proficiency before and after the intervention.

The data collected will be analysed through SPSS statistical software. To compare the average scores of the pupils' pre-test and post-test, a t-test will be conducted. A significant difference between the tests will be determined if the p-value is less than 0.05. To determine if there is a significant difference in pre-test and post-test scores between the Experimental and Control groups, an ANOVA statistical test will be used. Descriptive and inferential statistics will be applied to analyse the data.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

Based on previous research by Lustenberger (2021) and Nair & Md Yunus (2022), participants in this study are anticipated to demonstrate significant improvements in their speaking proficiency. Moreover, in line with the findings by Fauziah & Diana (2023) and Kamisah Mat Said (2023), DST is expected to positively impact pupils' motivation. The interactive and creative nature of DST is likely to create a more engaging learning environment in the speaking activities. Additionally, the process of digital story creation is expected to enhance critical thinking skills, as the pupils are engaged in planning, organizing, and evaluating information (Misrulloh & Dewi, 2020).

Finally, teachers will find Canva to be a user-friendly and engaging tool for integrating DST into their English lesson (Meletiadou, 2022). This positive perception among educators is crucial for the widespread adoption and effective implementation of DST. By providing a platform for creative expression and collaborative learning, Canva DST can contribute to the development of innovative and effective language teaching practices that equip ESL learners with the skills necessary to navigate the digital age.

## **7. Limitations**

This study is subject to several limitations. Firstly, the study is confined to Year 5 pupils in a suburban school setting, potentially restricting the applicability of results to different educational contexts. Next, the intervention period of eight weeks may be insufficient to fully assess the long-term impact of Canva DST on pupils' speaking skills. Additionally, effective implementation of DST requires meticulous planning and execution to avoid time constraints and excessive demands on teachers and pupils. Lastly, the study primarily focuses on speaking skill, with limited exploration of other language competencies that may be influenced by Canva DST.

## **8. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative potential of Canva DST as a powerful tool for enhancing speaking skill among primary ESL learners in Malaysia. By integrating technology with language learning, DST creates a stimulating and interactive environment that not only improves speaking proficiency but also fosters greater engagement and motivation in the classroom. The anticipated findings are expected to provide compelling evidence of DST's effectiveness, contributing valuable insights to the field of ESL education. This study will not only inform future teaching practices but also offer practical guidelines for educators and policymakers to optimize language learning outcomes. Additionally, it opens avenues for further research into the long-term impact of DST, its applicability across diverse educational contexts, and its potential benefits for other language skills. Ultimately, Canva DST has the potential to

shape innovative teaching practices that prepare learners for the demands and opportunities of the digital age.

## References

- Abu Bakar, A. L., Din, W. A., Swanto, S., & Gabda, D. (2023). Employing Social Media Based Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Module in English Speaking Skill Instruction. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication*, 8(32), 161–177. <https://doi.org/10.35631/ijlgc.832014>
- Adickalam, E. R., & Yunus, M. M. (2022). Systematic Literature Review: Investigating Speaking Challenges Among ESL Learners During the Covid-19 Pandemic. In *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* (Vol. 12, Issue 6, pp. 1145–1156). Academy Publication. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1206.14>
- Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum. (2022). Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran: Bahasa Inggeris.
- Chen, X.-W., & Hashim, H. (2022). The Effect of Vlogging on Year 5 ESL Students' Speaking Performance. *Creative Education*, 13(02), 698–716. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2022.132044>
- Fauziah, & Diana, N. (2023). Digital Storytelling: Multimodal Resources for Supporting Students' L2 Motivation and Identities. 195–207. [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1\\_17](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1_17)
- Hana Naz Harun. (2023, December 14). DLP Extension Can Boost Students' English Mastery. *New Strait Times*. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2023/12/990260/dlp-extension-can-boost-students-english-mastery>
- Hussan Sahib, F., & Stapa, M. (2022). A Review of the Issues and Challenges to the English Language Reform at Malaysian Primary Education. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 19(1), 16–33. <https://doi.org/10.52696/RLZU4912>
- Kamisah Mat Said. (2023). A Case Study On the Adoption of Digital Storytelling in ESL Classrooms to Induce Learning Motivation Among School Children in Rural Kelantan. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 11(6), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijelt.13/vol1n6121>
- Kaur, S., Nalliah, M., & Aslam, S. (2023). Enhancing Public Speaking Confidence in Primary Students: Exploring the Impact of Game-Based Interventions on Anxiety Reduction. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v12-i3/19381>
- Lustenberger, A. (2021). An Investigation into Oral Digital Storytelling in Primary English in Switzerland.
- Meletiadou, E. (2022). Using Educational Digital Storytelling to Enhance Multilingual Students' Writing Skills in Higher Education. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 10(2), 111–130. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.10.2.06>
- Misrulloh, A., & Dewi, N. R. (2020). Influence of science digital storytelling against motivation of learning and critical thinking ability learners. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1567(4). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1567/4/042048>
- Nair, V., & Md Yunus, M. (2022). Using Digital Storytelling to Improve Pupils' Speaking Skills in the Age of COVID 19. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 14(15). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159215>
- Rajendran, V., & Md Yunus, M. (2021). Interactive Learning via Digital Storytelling in Teaching and Learning. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 9(3), 78. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.9n.3p.78>
- Ramalingam, K., Jiar, Y. K., & Mathiyazhagan, S. (2022). Speaking Skills Enhancement through Digital Storytelling among Primary School Students in Malaysia. *International Journal of*

*Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 21(3), 22–35.

<https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.3.2>

Santhanasamy, C., & Yunus, M. M. (2022). The Flipped Learning and Blendspace to Improve Pupils' Speaking Skills. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.866270>

Tan, K. H., Rajendran, A., Philip, B., Alias, J., Saad, S. M., & Mohamad, Z. (2024). Utilising Tiktok Features for Speech Communication. *World Journal of English Language*, 14(2), 65–73.

<https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n2p65>

**THE INFLUENCE OF JOB DEMANDS ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF SECONDARY SCHOOL  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN PERAK STATE**

**Anita Kalimuthu**  
**SMK Tarcisian Convent, Ipoh**  
[anita23skl@gmail.com](mailto:anita23skl@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

This study examines the influence of job demands on mental health, specifically stress and burnout, among English language teachers (ELTs) in secondary schools in the state of Perak. The study used the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model to measure the impact of job demands on the mental health of 302 ELTs in secondary schools across ten districts in Perak. This study adapted three instruments: the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), and the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ), using the JD-R model. A quantitative research approach was employed to investigate the relationship between job demands and the mental health of ELTs. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied for data analysis, including correlation and simple linear regression. The obtained data suggested that job demand is a significant predictor of mental health. The Spearman's rho correlation analysis revealed a strong negative connection between job demand and mental health.

**Key Words**

Job demands, Mental health, Stress, Burnout, English language teachers (ELT)

**1. Background of Study**

Teaching profession is ranked as the most stressful job worldwide (Diehl & Carlotto, 2014; as cited by Amzat et al., 2021). A study on psychological distress among teachers in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia, reveals that high job demands, poor job control, and limited or no social support from workplace organizations can lead to occupational stress and burnout, which often contribute to mental health problems among teachers (Ibrahim et al., 2020). The elements of job demand in this study are negative school climates, high workloads, and students' misbehaviour, whereas the elements of mental health are stress and burnout. According to Fadhlina Sidek (MOE, 2023), the Minister of Education reported a significant increase in early retirement, with 1,146 applications from English language teachers over the past two years. Teachers who face difficulties with a negative school environment, excessive workload, and students' misbehaviour may experience stress and burnout in the workplace (Zarin et al., 2021). These challenges can have detrimental effects on the employer, leading to consequences such as low motivation, reduced work quality, and missed deadlines. This can potentially result in severe physical and mental illnesses, along with notable changes in behaviour, reduced work productivity, and frequent absences from work.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

In general, English language teachers are expected to perform better compared to teachers of other subjects. According to Hassan et al. (2018), there is a great deal of pressure and elevated expectations from numerous stakeholders (Ministry of Education, state and district education departments, parents, school administration, and students) on teachers to ensure that students excel in their English language exams, particularly in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), also known as the Malaysian Certificate of Education, a national examination. According to Bas (2011; as cited by Hashem, 2024), teachers have multiple responsibilities beyond teaching, including curriculum development, student assessment, mentoring, fostering communication with parents, and engaging in community service and departmental activities. Additionally, English language teachers spend a lot of time grading students' essays and assignments outside working hours, training students for extracurricular academic competitions, and dealing with students with poor English proficiency, which increases stress for teachers. The Ministry of Education Malaysia reports that the incidence of stress-related illnesses among teachers increased from 6.8% in 2015 to 9.6% in 2019 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2020). The issue of high levels of stress and burnout among Malaysian teachers applies to both novice and experienced groups. Burnout occurs as a result of increased workload from preparing difficult subjects and non-teaching responsibilities (Agyapong et al., 2022). These job demand factors can negatively impact teachers' mental health, resulting in stress and burnout. According to Ujir et al. (2020), the productivity of teachers is directly impacted by the job demands placed upon them, and it is widely believed among educators that a heavier workload leads to less effective teaching.

## **3. Significance of Study**

Research has shown that teachers who struggle with their mental health may be less effective in the classroom, resulting in lower academic achievement, decreased student engagement, and increased behavioural problems among students. Often, teachers' mental health affects student outcomes, with stressed or burned-out teachers harming student academic achievement and behaviour. Therefore, it is vital to identify the specific elements of job demands—negative school climate, high workload, and student misbehaviour—that can lead to increased stress and burnout among English language teachers (ELTs). Schools can develop programs to improve mental health and enable teachers to deliver high-quality instruction to their students. This study has the potential to enhance the existing understanding of teachers' mental health, provide valuable insights into the factors that impact teachers' well-being, and raise awareness among policymakers and school administrators about the imperative to address teachers' mental health.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) What is the level of English language teachers' (ELT) mental health in term of stress and burnout?
- (ii) Is there any significant relationship between job demand and mental health of English language teachers (ELT) in terms of stress and burnout?
- (iii) Does job demand a significant predictor of English language teachers' (ELT) mental health in terms of stress and burnout?

## 5. Method

The researcher obtained permission from the Educational Planning and Policy Research Division (BPPP), Ministry of Education Malaysia, and the Perak State Education Department to conduct the survey among ELTs. The link to the Google Form questionnaire was directly shared with the targeted respondents through school principals via WhatsApp and Telegram applications. The researcher conducted a pilot study, as well as reliability and validity tests, prior to the actual research. The Cronbach's alpha values for the three scales of job stress and job burnout are 0.732, while it is 0.782 for job demand. The questionnaire comprises four sections with 47 Likert scale items: Section A (demographic information), Section B (job stress), Section C (job burnout), and Section D (job demand). The quantitative data collected through the Job Stress Scale, Burnout Scale, and Job Demand Scale were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation and simple linear regression. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data for research question 1, whereas inferential statistics were used to analyze the data for research questions 2 and 3. The values for mean and standard deviation were obtained to answer research question 1, while correlation analysis and simple linear regression were used to answer research questions 2 and 3, respectively.

## 6. Findings and Discussion

In response to Research Question 1, the findings suggest that the majority of teachers in Perak State have a moderate level of mental health and are effectively managing their stress and burnout levels. The mean, median, and mode values are almost in the center of the data distribution, at 67.97, 68.00, and 69.00, respectively. The variance and standard deviation values are 71.66 and 8.47, respectively. For Research Question 2, on the relationship between job demand and the mental health of secondary school English language teachers, the results from Spearman's rho indicate a significant strong negative correlation between job demand and mental health. The Spearman's rho correlation value of -0.997 was obtained from the correlation coefficient analysis, which means that 99.4% of the variance in the variable job demand is associated with the mental health of the respondents. The values of stress and burnout have an opposite correlation with mental health and a direct relationship with job demand. For Research Question 3, Simple Linear Regression based on ANOVA and coefficients show that 97% of the variance in mental health proves that job demand is a significant predictor of the mental health of public secondary school English language teachers. Furthermore, the result of a simple scatterplot formed a straight downward line to the right, proving that there is a strong negative impact on mental health by job demand. According to the findings of Ibrahim et al. (2020), teachers who face increased job demands, little control over their work, and inadequate social support are more likely to experience greater psychological distress.

## 7. Limitations

This study's limitations include a lack of adequate current studies on the correlation between job demands faced by ELTs and mental health issues in the Malaysian context. This restricts the ability to provide sufficient information for additional discourse regarding past research conducted among Malaysian teachers. Additionally, the study was more likely to attract English language teachers who were specifically dealing with mental health problems and workplace conflicts, resulting in an over-representation of individuals with genuine mental health concerns related to job demands. This study does not use qualitative methodologies, which limits the

opportunity to acquire a thorough understanding of the respondents' experiences through interviews.

## 8. Conclusion

The findings revealed a 99.4% negative relationship between job demands and English language teachers' mental health. A negative school environment, an excessive workload, and student misbehavior all contribute to teachers' high levels of stress and burnout. This frequently results in disengagement and exhaustion, with some teachers choosing early retirement or experiencing limited career advancement. Furthermore, research into the relationship between job resources and positive mental health outcomes, such as job satisfaction and engagement, could provide useful insights for future studies. Teachers are encouraged to use self-regulation skills to stay mentally healthy. Mindfulness practices, solid time management, and peer support are all effective coping strategies. The Ministry of Education should take steps to reduce teachers' job demands and workloads. Teachers, in turn, should seek help when necessary and prioritize their mental health alongside their professional responsibilities. Neglecting mental health can have a severe impact on job performance and negatively affect students.

## References

- Amzat, I. H., Kaur, A., Al-Ani, W., Mun, S., & Ahmadu, T. S. (2021). Teacher burnout and coping strategies to remain in teaching job in Malaysia: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 10(3), 1075-1088.
- Agyapong, B., Obuobi-Donkor, G., Burbach, L., & Wei, Y. (2022). Stress, burnout, anxiety and depression among teachers: A scoping review. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(17), 10706.
- Bas, G. (2011). Teacher-student control ideology and burnout: Their correlation. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(4), 84-94.
- Diehl, L., & Carlotto, M. S. (2014). Knowledge of teachers about the burnout syndrome: Process, risk factors and consequences. *Psychology in Study/ Psicologia em Estudo*, 19(4), 741-752.
- Hassan, R., Ahmad, J., & Boon, Y. (2018). Professional learning community in Malaysia. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*, 7(3.30), 433.
- Ibrahim, R. Z. A. R., Zalam, W. Z. M., Daganga, M. M., Omar, K., Bakar, A. A., & Ali, S. N. M. (2020). Psychological distress among teachers in Malaysia. *European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine*, 7(6), 505-516.
- Ujir, H., Salleh, S. F., Marzuki, A. S. W., Hashim, H. F., & Alias, A. A. (2020). Teaching Workload in 21st Century Higher Education Learning Setting. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 9(1), 221-227.
- Zarin, I., Kaur, K., Ismail, S., Choong, Y. V., & Chiong, C. S. (2021). Constructing a new stress index for teachers in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(7), 859-863.



## L2 SPEAKING ANXIETY AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE AMONG MALAYSIAN ESL UNDERGRADUATES

Iz 'an Rosmani<sup>1</sup> and Nur Syasya Qistina Mazeree<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kelantan, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Doctoral School of Linguistics, University of Szeged, Hungary

<sup>1</sup>[izanrosmani@uitm.edu.my](mailto:izanrosmani@uitm.edu.my)

### Abstract

Unsatisfactory English proficiency remains a challenge among Malaysian ESL undergraduates, with anxiety significantly affecting their willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. This study examined the relationship between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among 102 Malaysian ESL undergraduates using the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) and WTC Scale. The results indicated that most participants experienced moderate speaking anxiety, with Communication Apprehension (CA) being the most prominent factor. Similarly, students showed moderate WTC levels, preferring to speak English with friends rather than with acquaintances or strangers. A strong correlation ( $r = 0.718$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) was found between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC, confirming that higher anxiety correlates with lower WTC. The findings suggest that L2 speaking anxiety significantly impacts WTC, highlighting the need for targeted interventions by policymakers and educators to improve English communication skills and reduce anxiety among students.

### Key Words

Second language, speaking anxiety, willingness to communicate, undergraduates

### 1. Background of Study

Since Malaysia's independence in 1957, its education system has undergone significant changes, evolving from catering to communal needs to promoting unity and the importance of English as a second language. The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MEB) emphasises English proficiency alongside Bahasa Malaysia, aiming to produce bilingual individuals (Malaysia Education Blueprint, 2013). English, now a global lingua franca, plays a crucial role in education, technology, and the economy (McKay, 2018). Despite these efforts, factors like speaking anxiety continue to impact the performance of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners (Badrasawi, Solihu, & Ahmad, 2020). Intrapersonal traits such as anxiety and willingness to communicate (WTC) are significant barriers to achieving language proficiency and are often studied in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (Manipuspika, 2018; Bai, 2023) but not well explored in the ESL context. This study aims to address the research gap by exploring the relationship between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates, providing insights into improving language education strategies.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Despite the Malaysian government's efforts through policies like the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) to improve English language proficiency, many Malaysian ESL undergraduates still struggle with English communication. While the Malaysian school system successfully teaches students to write in English, speaking the language remains a challenge. Despite spending over a decade learning English throughout their education, many students struggle to communicate fluently outside of the classroom. This raises concerns about the English proficiency of fresh graduates (Malaysia Now, 2021) as many companies view strong English proficiency as a key factor in their hiring decisions. Moreover, the Malaysian Employers Federation's 2021 salary study, which surveyed both executives and non-executives, revealed that English is one of the top five skills employers seek. The importance and significance of English in the job market cannot be overstated (NST, 2022). Research suggests that anxiety and willingness to communicate (WTC) are significant factors affecting English-speaking performance (Bai, 2023). As such, this study aims to explore the relationship between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates. The findings are expected to provide insights for curriculum planners, language researchers, and educators to develop strategies that address oral communication challenges, ultimately enhancing employability and proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English.

## **3. Significance of Study**

Yashima et al. (2018) highlighted that anxiety negatively affects individuals' willingness to communicate (WTC), impacting speaking performance and communication frequency. This study aims to explore the correlation between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates. Given that anxiety is a key factor influencing EFL speakers, this research seeks to determine whether a similar correlation exists in the ESL context. The findings could be a reference in revising courses and syllabi, which currently emphasise writing over communication, to better promote English language use. The study's results may serve as a guideline for educators and language researchers in understanding the relationship between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC, aiding policymakers in achieving the Malaysia Education Blueprint's goal of producing a competent, English-proficient workforce. The insights gained could also act as a benchmark for future educational policy such as the Future of Malaysian Education 2026-2036 and strategies to enhance ESL undergraduates' language learning experiences.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) What are the levels of L2 speaking anxiety perceived by ESL undergraduates?
- (ii) What are the types of speaking anxiety factor perceived by ESL undergraduates?
- (iii) What are the ESL undergraduates' perceptions of their levels of WTC in English?
- (iv) Is there a significant correlation between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates?

## **5. Method**

This study is aiming to provide an in-depth insight on L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates as well as attempting to discover if there is a significant correlation between both variables or vice versa. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, a quantitative research design was selected as the preferred research design. Specifically, a

nonexperimental form of quantitative research – correlational design was chosen as it allows the researcher to utilise correlational statistics in the attempt to find the significance of a correlation between two variables (Cresswell, 2012). In the context of the study, L2 speaking anxiety and WTC were the studied variables. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, a purposive sampling method had been utilised. The sample of the study consists of 102 ESL undergraduates (46 males and 56 females) who are studying in public university, and they were selected to participate in the study through convenience sampling.

### **Data Collection**

In order to collect the data for the research, a questionnaire combining the FLSAS and WTC scale was distributed to participants via WhatsApp and university email. Prior to distribution, participants received detailed instructions and were given the option to participate. They were also informed about the confidentiality of their information and asked to provide consent. Responses were then collected and securely stored in Google Forms.

### **Data Analysis**

After collecting the data, the data were analysed through several steps. First, the data from the questionnaire, which included background information, the FLSAS, and the WTC scale, were inputted. The types of anxiety among undergraduates were identified, and their perceptions of both speaking anxiety and WTC levels were measured. The correlation between these two variables was computed using the bivariate Pearson Correlation method, with the sample correlation coefficient,  $r$ , calculated using IBM SPSS Statistics v24. The results of this correlation were then interpreted, and conclusions were drawn based on the analysis.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The study found that most respondents have moderate speaking anxiety, affecting their oral communication. This is in line with the findings of the previously previous conducted research on anxiety (Chin et. al, 2016; Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019). ESL language learners have moderate level of anxiety, and it is important to note that even at moderate level, it will affect their English language speaking performance. Communication apprehension (CA) was identified as the most significant factor contributing to anxiety, especially among those with moderate to high anxiety levels. In addition, Manipuspika (2018) discovered that the shyness trait which is related to communication apprehension could affect students' level of anxiety whether in ESL or EFL environment. In contrast, Malaysian ESL undergraduates with low level of speaking anxiety perceived the factor of test anxiety as the most prominent factor which affected their level of speaking anxiety. Similarly, in a study conducted by Miskam & Saidalvi (2019), they discovered that the language learners with lower level of anxiety have higher mean score in test anxiety factor compared to their moderate and high-level counterparts.

Regarding WTC, most respondents had moderate willingness, especially in group discussions and with friends, but were less willing in meetings or with strangers (Youssef, 2016). A strong positive correlation between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC was identified, with a calculated correlation coefficient value of  $r = 0.718$ , indicating that higher anxiety reduces willingness to communicate. In addition, the p-value of the aforementioned correlation was at 0.00 indicating that the correlation is significant. These findings align with previous research – Fujii (2021) and Bai (2023), highlighting the significant impact of anxiety on language learners' communication abilities.

## 7. Limitations

This study has limitations, including its small sample of 102 Malaysian ESL undergraduates from public university, which limits the generalisability of the findings to private institutions. The quantitative approach used may also miss deeper insights into the phenomenon studied. Additionally, the study did not consider other intrapersonal factors like motivation and perceived communication competence, which may impact willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. Future research should explore these factors and utilise qualitative methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding, aiding in the development of more effective curricula and policies for improving ESL communication skills.

## 8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study successfully addressed all the research questions, identifying the levels of L2 speaking anxiety and willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among Malaysian ESL undergraduates. Most respondents exhibited moderate levels of both speaking anxiety and WTC, with communication apprehension (CA) being the leading factor contributing to anxiety, especially among those with medium to high anxiety levels. Those with lower anxiety levels identified test anxiety as the primary contributor. The study also revealed that students were more willing to communicate in English with friends than with acquaintances or strangers. A strong, significant correlation between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC was found ( $r = 0.718$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the acceptance of the research hypothesis and the rejection of the null hypothesis. The findings are expected to benefit language educators, learners, researchers, and policymakers in better understanding and addressing the relationship between L2 speaking anxiety and WTC among Malaysian ESL undergraduates.

## References

- Badrasawi, K. J., Solihu, A., & Ahmad, T. B. (2020). Second Language Speaking Anxiety Among Malaysian Postgraduate Students at a Faculty of Education. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 8(2), 54.
- Bai, S. (2023). The predictive effects of foreign language anxiety and boredom on willingness to communicate among Chinese struggling EFL Learners. *Heliyon*, 9(9). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19610>
- Chin, V., Hie Ling, T. & Jiin Yih, Y. (2016). Investigating English Language Anxiety among UiTM Sarawak Undergraduates. *Journal of Creative Practices in Language Learning and Teaching (CPLT)*, 4(1), 50-62
- Creswell, J. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Fujii, S. (2021). Relationships between foreign language anxiety and willingness to communicate among Japanese EFL learners. *Journal of Management and Training for Industries*, 8(1), 1–12. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.782063087809961>
- MalaysiaNow (2021). Sorry, what? Speaking English still a struggle for many despite mandatory classes. MalaysiaNow. <https://www.malaysianow.com/news/2021/02/16/sorry-what-speaking-english-still-a-struggle-for-many-despite-mandatory-classes>
- McKay, S. L. (2018). English As an International Language: What It Is and What It Means for Pedagogy. *RELC Journal*, 49(1), 9–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217738817>
- Ministry of Education. (2013). *Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2013-2025*. Putrajaya.

- Miskam, N.N., & Saidalvi, A. (2019). Investigating English Language Speaking Anxiety among Malaysian Undergraduate Learners. *Asian Social Science*, 15, 1.
- New Straits Times (2022). English proficiency vital for employment. NST Online. <https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2022/06/805383/english-proficiency-vital-employment>
- Shanti Manipuspika, Y. (2018). Correlation between anxiety and willingness to communicate in the Indonesian EFL context. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(2), 200–217. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.14>
- Yashima, T., MacIntyre, P. D., & Ikeda, M. (2018). Situated willingness to communicate in an L2: Interplay of individual characteristics and context. *Language Teaching Research*, 22(1), 115–137. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168816657851>
- Youssef, M. A. F. (2016). Willingness to Communicate in English: Academic Motivation and using English outside the Classroom as Predictors. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 13(12), 1365–1376. <https://doi.org/10.3844/ajassp.2016.1365.1376>

**GORGEOUS BATHROOM AND THE KANJI TATTOO: ENGLISH IN JAPANESE MUSIC****GROUP NAMES****Christian Misuro****Asia University**[misuro\\_christian@asia-u.ac.jp](mailto:misuro_christian@asia-u.ac.jp)**Abstract**

Aside from being a source of loanwords to the Japanese language, English itself is a great source of creativity within Japanese culture serving various expressive and semiotic functions. The featured study centered around a project in which motives for use of English orthography in the names of Japanese music groups were analyzed based on the reactions to and interpretations of it by young Japanese people, presumably the intended audience. The English was found to be understood and valued in a Japanese communicative context. It was theorized that English orthography served to attribute a cultural value to the names which was independent to an extent of the literal meanings of the words themselves. This was found to be similar to ways in which the Japanese language is used in predominantly English-speaking cultures.

**Key Words**

World Englishes, Loanwords, English in Japan, Japanese English, J-pop English

**1. Background of Study**

Though fluency in English is not prevalent in Japan, the English language is a ubiquitous tool for communication in Japanese marketing and pop culture (Stanlaw, 2004). English is the most commonly employed foreign language in Japanese pop music lyrics (Takahashi et al., 2015), where it serves to identify artists with a global pop culture (Pennycook, 2003), while also providing a range of linguistic options to artists (Moody, 2006, Takahashi et al., 2015). English in Japan is often a symbol of modernity and sophistication (Takahashi, 1992) and can at times be devoid of referential meaning to the local audience (Sergeant, 2005), while also being incomprehensible to a native English speaker. 'Gorgeous Bathroom', is the name of a musical act in Japan. The contextual non-sequitur exemplifies the surprising (to a native speaker) use of English in Japanese pop culture which was the motivation for this study.

**2. Statement of Problem**

This is an analysis of the English orthography in the names of Japanese music groups as perceived and interpreted by young Japanese speakers. It was hoped that these participants, as presumable members of the same linguistic community as the artists as well as the intended audience of the music, could indicate the motives for use of English in these Japanese names. Though use of English in Japanese music has been studied extensively (Benson, 2013, Pennycook, 2003, Takahashi et al., 2015 among others), less analysis of the musical group names

themselves has been done. A critical look at these names shows ways in which English orthography is employed in identity creation.

### **3. Significance of Study**

This study addresses the lack of research into this particular use of English orthography in Japanese culture and society. The naming choices of these artists reflect their perceptions of the English language and may be indicative of those of the Japanese linguistic community in general. The responses of the participants in this study thus reveal the particular current perceptions and appeal of English in Japan, and the study results have applications in English lesson planning and student's motivation. The ways English is used in these names similarly reflects the ways in which English operates as a linguistic resource within Japanese society, which has applications in the study of world Englishes and global language interaction.

### **4. Research Questions**

- (i) What are the motives for the use of English in Japanese music group names as perceived by young Japanese people?
- (ii) How are the English words in the names understood or interpreted by young Japanese people?
- (iii) What creative choices would the study participants themselves make in this context?

### **5. Method**

Participants in the study were students at a private Japanese university, where the study was conducted over the course of three years. Approximately 200 students participated. Most were between the ages of 18 and 20 and roughly 85% were Japanese. The average level of English fluency of participants was low. The study took the form of a class session, in which a discussion was first held where participants speculated on the motives for the use of English orthography in the names of several well-known and successful Japanese music groups. Smaller groups were then invited to speculate on the motives for and the meanings behind the English orthography in the names of several Japanese music groups which were less well-known, as well as to report their reactions to the names. These less well-known groups were different for each year of the study. In the final part of the session, small groups were invited to create and name their own imaginary music groups, reporting the motives behind their naming choices.

### **6. Findings and Discussion**

Participant responses revealed several stylistic and pragmatic advantages of English which may have been motives for its use in the names. Most significant of these was the freedom it provided from the strictly referential function of Japanese orthography. It had been suspected that many of the English words in the names would not be understood by participants and this was confirmed, but the resulting vagueness of meaning was perceived to be a stylistic choice by the artists. Participants also overwhelmingly expressed the cultural appeal of English itself as a motive for its use, calling it "cool", for example. This was independent of any communicative function of the English words in the names and demonstrated what is believed to be a prime motive for the use of English there.

It was also shown that the names were understood and valued in a Japanese linguistic context, which sometimes overlapped with the perceptions of an English speaker but often did not. The participants interpreted the names independently of the odd word choices and connotations perceived by a native speaker of English. This appears to show that the names were intended for local consumption despite the use of English orthography.

## 7. Limitations

These results are not comprehensive due to the small size of the study and the limitations caused by the study setting, participant type and age range. A further factor affecting results is that the study was given primarily in English to students of English, thus eliciting a bias towards the language which could have affected participant responses. The results therefore could be confirmed in a larger study performed in different settings and with different types of participants, given in the Japanese language by local administrators.

## 8. Conclusion

The English in these group names was understood and valued by monolingual Japanese speakers in a local context independent of the perceptions of native English speakers, demonstrating its intended consumption by Japanese rather than foreign audiences. Attribution of the “cool, fashionable” value of English itself to the persona and music of the artists appeared to be an important motive for its use in names, irrespective of the referential meanings of the words. Similarities exist in Japanese advertising and marketing, where English conveys a “modern, sophisticated” image (Takahashi, 1992), and the text produced is often nonsensical or incomprehensible to a native speaker. This is similar also to uses of Japanese and Chinese orthography in English-speaking cultures. The popular *kanji* (Japanese orthography derived from Chinese) tattoo is illegible to most native English-speaking viewers and often incorrect from the point of view of a native speaker of Japanese or Chinese, but nonetheless conveys an atmosphere of “ancient wisdom” attributed to Asian cultures by those in the global West. Further research may include soliciting the artists themselves for their motives in name choice, confirming or contrasting the perceptions of the audience.

## References

- Benson, P. (2013). English and identity in East Asian popular music. *Popular Music*, 32(1), 23–33. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261143012000529>
- Moody, A. J. (2006). English in Japanese popular culture and J-Pop music. *World Englishes*, 25(2), 209–222. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0083-2919.2006.00460.x>
- Pennycook, A. (2003). Global Englishes, Rip Slyme, and performativity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 7(4), 513–533. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2003.00240.x>
- Seargeant, P. (2005). Globalisation and reconfigured English in Japan. *World Englishes*, 24(3), 309–319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0083-2919.2005.00412.x>
- Stanlaw, J. (2004). *Japanese English: Language and culture contact*. <http://muse.jhu.edu/chapter/131159>
- Takashi, K. (1992). Language and Desired Identity in Contemporary Japan. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 3(1), 133–44. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ459684>



Takahashi, M., Calica, D., & December, E. (2015b). The Significance of English in Japanese Popular Music: English as a Means of Message, Play, and Character. *Proceedings of the Conference of the Society for Natural Language Processing*, 21, 868–871.  
[https://www.anlp.jp/proceedings/annual\\_meeting/2015/pdf\\_dir/D6-4.pdf](https://www.anlp.jp/proceedings/annual_meeting/2015/pdf_dir/D6-4.pdf)

**FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: MICRO-TEACHING CHALLENGES AMONG MALAYSIAN  
ENGLISH EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES**

**Darshnee Muniandy<sup>1</sup> and Shasmita Magentiran<sup>2</sup>**

**University Tunku Abdul Rahman**

**[<sup>1</sup>darshneem@utar.edu.my](mailto:darshneem@utar.edu.my)**

**Abstract**

Micro-teaching is a training technique where student-teachers or teacher-trainers teach a short lesson to a few students for the enhancement of their teaching skills. This study aimed to identify the challenges faced by English Education undergraduates at a Malaysian private university when conducting micro-teaching and to analyse strategies to overcome these challenges, including recommendations from the undergraduates themselves. A mixed-method research design was utilised, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The sample consisted of 30 students from the English Education department, all of whom completed questionnaires, and 10 were selected for semi-structured interviews. A major finding was that participants felt discouraged during their first attempt at micro-teaching due to anxiety and the novelty of the experience. This study can be extended to include a larger sample size, providing more extensive data and enhancing understanding of the challenges and solutions. By identifying specific challenges faced during micro-teaching, this research aims to contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies, ultimately enhancing the pedagogical skills and confidence of future teachers in educational environments.

**Key Words**

Micro-teaching, Challenges, Pedagogical Skills, Undergraduates, Pre-Service Teachers, Strategies

**1. Background of Study**

Micro-teaching is a crucial component of teacher preparation that enhances the skills, knowledge, and teaching styles of both pre-service and in-service teachers (Popat, 2020). It provides a platform for educators to practice and refine specific teaching skills in a controlled environment, focusing on one skill at a time (Reddy, 2019). However, micro-teaching comes with its own set of challenges, for English Education undergraduates at a Malaysian private university. This study investigates these challenges and explores strategies to overcome them. One major issue is the anxiety and lack of confidence that students experience during their first micro-teaching session due to the novelty and artificial classroom settings. This initial disheartening experience often leads to reduced engagement and participation, impacting the effectiveness of the training. By identifying these challenges, the study aims to contribute to the development of improved teaching strategies and support mechanisms that can enhance the pedagogical skills, confidence, and overall professional readiness of future educators. Addressing these issues is vital for ensuring that teacher trainees are adequately prepared for the demands of real classroom teaching, ultimately enriching the educational experience for both teachers and students (Reddy, 2019).

## **2. Statement of Problem**

The study addresses a notable research gap by focusing on the challenges faced during face-to-face micro-teaching, particularly in a Malaysian private university context. Previous research has primarily concentrated on online micro-teaching challenges, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, where issues like ineffective communication and low interaction rates were prominent (Bahar, Wahab, & Ahmad, 2020). There is limited research on offline micro-teaching, despite its relevance in preparing educators for real-world classroom settings. This study specifically investigates the variety of challenges encountered during in-person micro-teaching sessions, utilising both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights. Moreover, while earlier studies focused primarily on identifying challenges, this research extends the inquiry to include potential solutions, exploring how these challenges can be mitigated effectively. The inclusion of semi-structured interviews allows for a richer understanding of participants' experiences, particularly regarding the role of lecturers' feedback and politeness in enhancing or hindering learning outcomes (Erlinda, 2022). This comprehensive approach aims to fill the existing gap in the literature by providing actionable insights that can enhance the pedagogical skills of future educators.

## **3. Significance of Study**

The findings of this study significantly contribute to advancing English Language Education by highlighting the specific challenges faced by undergraduates during micro-teaching. By identifying key obstacles such as psychological stress, managerial difficulties, and instructional complexities, the study provides a clearer understanding of the support needed for future English educators. These insights can directly impact classroom practices by informing teacher training programs to include more targeted interventions that address these challenges. Furthermore, the study's recommendations for overcoming these difficulties offer practical solutions that can be incorporated into educational policies, ensuring that new teachers are better equipped to manage classroom dynamics and deliver effective instruction. Ultimately, this research contributes to the development of more robust and supportive teaching environments, fostering better learning outcomes for students and improving the overall quality of English Language Education.

## **4. Research Objectives**

- (i) To identify the challenges that English Education undergraduates at a Malaysian private university faced when conducting micro-teaching.
- (ii) To critically analyse strategies to overcome these challenges, incorporating recommendations from the undergraduates themselves.

## **5. Method**

This study involved a mixed-method approach, utilising both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by English Education undergraduates during micro-teaching sessions. Thirty students participated by completing a structured questionnaire distributed via online platform, Whatsapp and Microsoft Teams. The items were adapted from Punia (2016) and designed to assess their attitudes, experiences, and opinions related to micro-teaching. This questionnaire gathered quantitative data, which was

analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean values and standard deviations using SPSS to identify common trends and challenges. For qualitative data, ten students were selected to participate in semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio-recorded to capture detailed responses, providing a deeper insight into specific challenges and potential solutions. Thematic analysis was applied to analyse the interview transcripts, using colour coding to identify recurring themes and significant patterns in the data. This method allowed for a significant analysis of students' experiences and the identification of key areas for improvement in micro-teaching practices.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The key findings from this study reveal that English Education undergraduates experience significant challenges during micro-teaching, primarily due to anxiety and the novelty of the experience. Most participants reported feeling discouraged during their first micro-teaching session, aligning with the findings of Bahar, Wahab, and Ahmad (2020), who noted that online micro-teaching challenges include reduced interaction and ineffective communication. This study highlights that even in face-to-face settings, lack of peer interaction and effective feedback from lecturers remain critical issues. Interestingly, contrary to some assumptions, continuous evaluation by lecturers did not contribute significantly to anxiety, suggesting that student's anxiety is more related to peer interactions and personal performance concerns than to formal evaluations. Furthermore, the study identifies the need for constructive feedback, as some participants felt their lecturers did not provide adequate guidance, echoing findings by Erlinda (2022) on the importance of respectful language and constructive feedback in maintaining student motivation. These findings suggest that while micro-teaching is effective for skill development, addressing these emotional and feedback-related challenges is crucial for optimizing the training experience.

## **7. Limitations**

There were a few limitations in this study. The primary constraint was time, as the research had to be completed within a short 14-week period, limiting the data collection and analysis phases. Due to this constraint, the researcher could not gather a more extensive range of responses that might have provided deeper insights into the challenges of micro-teaching. Additionally, the study was conducted in only one Malaysian private university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or institutions. The small sample size also restricted the breadth of the study, and future research with larger samples is recommended to validate these findings.

## **8. Conclusion**

The study concludes that micro-teaching presents several challenges for English Education undergraduates, primarily stemming from anxiety and lack of experience. This aligns with previous findings highlighting the emotional difficulties faced by students during initial teaching practices. Recommendations for future research include expanding the sample size to gain a broader understanding of these challenges and incorporating more diverse data collection methods, such as direct observations, to enrich the findings. Additionally, providing live demonstrations of micro-teaching before actual implementation could help reduce anxiety and enhance students' preparedness and confidence. Future studies should explore not only the challenges but also specific, practical solutions to further assist students in overcoming these obstacles.

## References

- Bahar, N., Wahab, S. N., & Ahmad, N. D. (2020). Understanding Challenges Faced in Online Teaching and Learning Among Malaysian Universities' Instructors During COVID 19 Pandemic. 2020 Sixth International Conference on e-Learning, Bahrain, pp.154-157. doi: 10.1109/econf51404.2020.9385474.
- Erlinda, R. (2022). Teachers' Impoliteness Strategies in Providing Feedback in a Microteaching Class. *Langkawi Journal of The Association for Arabic and English*, 8(2), 98-114.
- Punia, V. (2016). Perception of Pupil-Teachers' regarding Micro-Teaching sessions. *World Scientific News*, 26, 69-77.
- Reddy, K. R. (2019). Teaching How to Teach: Microteaching (A Way to Build up Teaching Skills). *Journal of Gandaki Medical College*, 12(1), 65–71.

**CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIODRAMATIC PLAY IN CHILDREN'S ENGLISH PHONEMIC  
AWARENESS THROUGH LANGUAGE OUTPUT: AN ACTION RESEARCH**

**Evon Wong Yee Wan<sup>1</sup>**

**Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia**

<sup>1</sup> [evonwongyw@1utar.my](mailto:evonwongyw@1utar.my)

**Abstract**

Under the construct of sociocultural theory (SCT), this action research aims to examine how sociodramatic play benefits Malaysian preschoolers' English phonemic awareness through language output - languaging. Play is seen as a robust "learning material" that promotes and facilitates children's learning of a language and its significance in early years learning. The interactive nature of play yields language output that co-constructs linguistic knowledge. To enhance children's learning, lessons integrated with play were planned to mediate children's English phonemic decoding skills by adopting sociodramatic play-based approach. Qualitative data were collected and analysed for the reflection of classroom teaching. Findings reveal that the structured interactive tasks during play stimulated children's language output that serves the functions in noticing, test hypotheses, and metalinguistic reflection. This study is deemed significant as it gives an insight for the design of developmentally appropriate pedagogy and learning material that cater young ESL learners' needs.

**Key Words**

Child second language learning, Language output, Learning material, Sociocultural theory, Play

**1. Background of Study**

Play-based learning is best known for its interactive learning approach that benefits young children vastly. From the view of sociocultural theory (SCT), in L2 learning, the collaborative activities and dialogues in play yield language input (listening) and output (speaking) where young children's L2 oral language (listening and speaking) development would be enhanced. Phonemic awareness (PA) is the precursor to children's reading and writing skills in later developmental stage. It is the ability to notice, hear, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. As it involves listening to the spoken word, it is notable that oral language is involved. Hence, an interactive learning context such as integration of play would benefit the young learners of which language output would facilitate internalisation of PA in them.

Developmentally appropriate integrated activities such as sociodramatic play are seen to be beneficial to early learning in terms of children's learning characteristics. Lessons done in isolation could lead a "very dry, boring and demotivating" to children (Cameron, 2018). It is optimal that lessons are planned in helping children to make connections between letters and sounds and direct their attention to letter-sound level features of English.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Though contrasting children's learning characteristics, the teaching and learning of phonemic awareness remain focusing on systematic and explicit instructions in school context which causes young learners lack interest and attention in learning. Realising the possibility of children's demotivation and declined standard in children's literacy could be due to teaching astray from the school's curriculum – Vygotsky's play-based approach, this action research aims to examine the contribution of sociodramatic play in children's English phonemic awareness through language output. Language output plays a role in mediating language learning and facilitates the internalization of a language knowledge via interactive classroom activities (Scotland, 2021). By integrating interactive sociodramatic play in young learners' language classroom, the interactive and language rich learning context enables them to communicate. It contributes to their receptive and productive language of which enhances and reinforce children's knowledge in phonemes during the structured play.

## **3. Significance of Study**

This action research aims to examine the contribution of sociodramatic play in children English phonemic awareness through language output. Conclusions of this action research are as followed:

- Through the integration of play in English phonemic lessons, young learners' learning motivation and engagement were enhanced.
- The interactive and language rich learning context enables children to communicate which contributes to their receptive and productive language. The production of language during the structured play activities enhanced and reinforced children's knowledge in phonemes through the functions of language output (Swain, 1985).

By understanding the advantages of integration of sociodramatic play in phonemic and phonics lessons towards young learners, it gives an in-sight to future pedagogical design and lesson planning in engaging young ESL learners' English learning and educators could scaffold their learning for better learning outcomes. More interactive activities should be employed as according to Swain (2000) based on the construct of SCT, language output as a socially constructed cognitive tool for mediating learning.

## **4. Research Questions**

This action research aims to examine how sociodramatic play benefits children's English phonemic awareness through language output in Malaysian multilingual preschool context.

## **5. Method**

This action research was conducted at a multicultural English-based kindergarten in Malaysia. Research subjects were 5-year-old simultaneous and sequential young bilinguals of the said kindergarten with total of 8 students in the class. Qualitative method such as classroom observation, and audio recording were conducted. Data were collected and analysed for the reflection of classroom teaching. The four stages of action research were scheduled for the English lesson, namely, plan, act, observed, and reflect.

At the planning stage, a modified English lesson plan that integrated sociodramatic play was first developed. The lesson plan was planned according to the school timetable, which 4 weeks of 45 minutes twice a week. Learning props such as food menu, food ordering sheet, picture cards, toy food, etc. were prepared. The structured play lessons included the following phonemic awareness tasks:

- Phoneme blending
- Phoneme segmentation
- Phoneme isolation

At the acting stage, to yield meaningful learning experiences, age-appropriate learning props were developed. The props were developed to stimulate children's phonemic awareness during the play. Audio-recording was used to record peer-peer and teacher-students conversations/ dialogues (including teacher's feedback) during the play and examined how play contributes to children's phonemic awareness through language output.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

Through the observation, the integration of sociodramatic play stimulates children's learning interest and engagement in the English classroom of which language rich context promotes children's oral language, which includes children's language input and output due to its interactive nature. Here, passive students took up the active role in participating in the lessons as it engages children's active conversation and stimulates active responses. During the play, the structured interactive tasks stimulate children's language output that serves the following functions according to Swain (1995):

- Noticing
- Test hypotheses
- Metalinguistic reflection

The modified lessons created an interactive language environment that stimulates children's listening (language input) and speaking (language output), which requires their phonological knowledge – phonemic awareness. During the play, children showed high engagement in the activities. The process reflected that the children were constantly 'testing' their knowledge of phonemes during the structured activities and expecting feedback from teacher. Due to the production of language, it enables children to 'notice' their mistakes and the lack of knowledge in phonemes. Through the production of language during play, children were given opportunity in solving the linguistic problem – phonemic awareness tasks with their peers and teacher. Consequently, it promotes children's metalinguistic awareness and contribute to their internalisation in the language.

## **7. Limitations**

This action research focuses only on a group of 5-year-old bilingual kindergarten students studying in an English based kindergarten from the high socioeconomic status (SES). As SES and family background serve as one of the variables influencing children language learning, future empirical studies may be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of play on phonemic awareness development among young learners from different backgrounds.



## 8. Conclusion

This action research has explored the contribution of sociodramatic play in young learners' English phonemic awareness through language output. Findings reveal that the interactive nature of sociodramatic play promoted young learners' learning engagement and the language output in the teacher-student and, meanwhile peer-to-peer communication enhanced their phonemic and phonic awareness and knowledge. This echoes Swain and Watanabe's (2013) study that language was used by the L2 learners as a cognitive tool to mediate their thinking and talking about how language mediates L2 learning and development. The learning engagement would be enhanced when developmentally appropriate approaches are integrated into lessons. However, pedagogical design and teaching should be performed cautiously in scaffolding and facilitating young learners' learning.

## References

- Scotland, J. (2021). Exploring the relationship between collaborative dialogue and the learning of L2 form. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 3(2022), 1-9.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100121>
- Swain, M. (1985). Communication competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Gass S. and Madden C. (eds.) *Input in second language acquisition* (pp.235-253). Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook and B. Seidelhofer (Eds), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics: Studies in honor of H.G Widdowson* (pp. 125-144). Oxford University Press
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In Lantoff, J. (ed.): *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*. Oxford University Press
- Swain, M. (2006). Languageing, agency and collaboration in advanced language proficiency. In H. Byrnes (ed.), *Advanced language learning: The contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95 – 108). Continuum
- Swain, M. & Watanabe, Y. (2013). *Languageing: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language learning*. The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistic (3218-3225). Wiley Blackwell

## BEYOND THE RED PEN: RETHINKING HOW WE ASSESS STUDENT WRITING

Gurmit Kaur Labh Singh<sup>1</sup> and M Kamala Palaniappa Manickam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>INTI International College Subang, INTI Language Center

<sup>1</sup>[gurmitk.lsingh@newinti.edu.my](mailto:gurmitk.lsingh@newinti.edu.my)

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown significantly impacted education systems globally, creating a complex set of challenges. As students moved from the structured school environment to a more self-directed college setting, they encountered considerable difficulties. The shift to online learning disrupted not only the content delivery but also affected the development of essential soft skills (Brennan et al., 2023, Huong, 2023). These skills—such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (the 4Cs of 21st-century learning)—along with time management, adaptability, and the ability to work under pressure, are crucial for success in both academics and future careers (Brennan et al, 2023).

As educators grappled with this, they encountered an additional challenge - the rapid adaptation of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by students, particularly in writing courses. AI Tools have become increasingly advanced, enabling students to produce polished writing with minimal effort. While these tools can be beneficial, their misuse by students has raised concerns about academic integrity and the authenticity of students' work (Perkins, 2023).

Writing is a skill that requires continuous and sustained practice, and writing assignments are meant to develop critical thinking and organisational skills (Hutson, 2024). It involves not only mastering language mechanics but also developing the ability to express complex ideas, engage in critical analysis, and present arguments convincingly (Hsiao, 2023). However, with the rise of AI, students are completing their assignments with impeccable language and grandiose ideas, often without fully engaging in the writing process. This trend threatens the development of writing skills as students may become overly dependent on AI and miss out on the critical thinking and creative processes that are crucial for effective writing (Hsiao, 2023).

Confronted with these dual challenges—the decline in soft skills and the advent of AI—writing instructors were prompted to reconsider their assessment methods (Olasina, 2023). The traditional approach to evaluating student writing, which often revolved around marking errors, correcting grammar, and providing feedback, was no longer adequate. It became evident that a more comprehensive and innovative approach, an approach that would encourage students to develop their writing skills, was necessary.

### 2. Research Questions

- (i) How best to engage students in meaningful writing experiences that will make them produce authentic assignments?
- (ii) How can AI tools be utilised to complement students' writing rather than 'writing' their assignments for them?

### 3. Reinventing Assessment Methods

In response to these challenges, the instructors began exploring new ways to assess student writing. The approach used was to integrate AI technology as a tool for generating writing ideas, and pair it with in-class timed writing assessments. This method combines the benefits of AI with the rigor of traditional assessment, providing students with the support they need while ensuring they actively engage in the writing process.

In-class timed writing provides a controlled environment where students generally rely on their own knowledge and skills to complete the task, ensuring that the work produced is genuinely their own rather than the output of an AI tool. Besides, these assessments also require students to think quickly and organise their thoughts under pressure, helping to develop critical thinking, organisation and time management skills – the skills that were particularly affected by the shift to online learning during the pandemic. However, for those who may struggle with generating ideas or organising their thoughts, AI tools can provide a useful starting point, ensuring that students build on these ideas independently, fostering deeper engagement with the material.

### 4. Methods used

Two strategies were used in incorporating AI tools in the writing class.

#### i) Controlled Use of AI Tools for Research and In-Class Writing

To integrate AI tools in a way that complements, rather than replace, students' writing efforts, a controlled approach was adopted. By providing specific research topics and requiring in-class writing, instructors enabled the students to benefit from AI tools without becoming overly dependent on them.

#### Steps Involved:

- **Pre-Class Research by Students:** Instructors assigned a set of predetermined topics for students to research using AI tools before class. This was done to ensure that students engaged with the material and gathered relevant information prior to the writing assignment.
- **In-Class Writing Assessment:** During class, two of the pre-researched topics were assigned for in-class writing, and the students had to choose one topic for their assignment which had to be completed within a specified time frame without the use of any gadgets like handphones, laptops or tablets. This setup tested the students' ability to use their researched ideas and articulate them under time constraints, reducing the likelihood of passing off AI-generated responses as their own.

#### ii) Instructor-Driven AI Information and Subsequent Writing Prompts

Another approach involved instructors, not the students, using AI and other sources to gather information on specific topics, then guiding students through a structured learning and writing process. This approach used AI's strengths to enhance the learning experience while still prioritising critical thinking and writing abilities.

#### Steps Involved:

- **Information Gathering and Sharing by Instructors:** Instructors used AI tools to generate ideas on a topic and shared them with the students at the start of the class. The students were also provided with other sources such as YouTube videos or guest lectures to understand the topic and the related issues better. This was done to ensure that the

information shared with students was up-to-date and comprehensive and included different perspectives.

- **In-class writing assessment:** Students were allocated time to discuss and clarify the information with their classmates and the instructor. By engaging with the content collaboratively, students deepened their understanding of the topic. Once the writing prompt was given, the students began working individually to complete the assignment.

## 5. Results and Discussion

Initially, many students were hesitant about this new assessment approach. Those who had been relying heavily on AI tools for their assignments were particularly resistant as they were used to producing excellent work with minimal effort. However, as students began to engage with the new assessment methods, they quickly recognised the benefits.

Student feedback indicated that in-class assessments helped them to retain course content more effectively, manage their time better, and enhance collaborative learning. This aligns with current research suggesting that active learning strategies, such as in-class writing exercises, are more effective in promoting long-term retention of information than passive methods like reading or listening to lectures (Sulaiman, 2024). Furthermore, timed in-class individual writing helped to develop their self-confidence in completing challenging assignments and managing their time effectively.

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, these methods shift the students from simply copying AI generated work and passing it off as their own to using AI generated ideas to write comprehensive and structured essays on their own. This helps to harness the benefits of AI while fostering independent thought and writing skills in students. By controlling AI usage and focusing on process-oriented learning, educators can better support students in developing their own voices and writing abilities.

## References

- Brennan, A., Dempsey, M., McAvoy, J., O'Dea, M., O'Leary, S., & Prendergast, M. (2023). How COVID-19 impacted soft skills development: The views of software engineering students. *Cogent Education*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2171621>
- Hsiao, Y. P., Klijn, N., & Chiu, M. S. (2023). Developing a framework to re-design writing assignment assessment for the era of Large Language Models. *Learning: Research and Practice*, 9(2), 148–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23735082.2023.2257234>
- Huong, L.N. (2024). Individual stories of agency: an exploratory study into the pandemic impact on students' employability skills. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 14(3), 529-544. <https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-05-2023-0111>
- Hutson, J. (2024). Rethinking plagiarism in the era of Generative AI. *Journal of Intelligent Communication*. 4(1), 20-31. <https://doi.org/10.54963/jic.v4i1.220>
- Olasina, G. (2023). Using new assessment tools during and post-COVID-19. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. [https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7902?utm\\_source=digitalcommons.unl.edu%2Flibphilprac%2F7902&utm\\_medium=PDF&utm\\_campaign=PDFCoverPages](https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7902?utm_source=digitalcommons.unl.edu%2Flibphilprac%2F7902&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

- Perkins, M. (2023). Academic Integrity considerations of AI Large Language Models in the post-pandemic era: ChatGPT and beyond. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.53761/1.20.02.07>
- Sulaiman, A.H. & Abdullah, S.A. (2024). The use of active learning strategies to foster effective teaching in higher education institutions. *Zanco Journal of Human Sciences*, 28(2), 140-157. <https://doi.org/10.21271/zjhs.28.2.11>

**COMPARING NOVICE AND EXPERIENCED ENGLISH TEACHERS' ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW KNOWLEDGE FOR CONTEXTUALLY-APPROPRIATE PRACTICE CHANGE: THE CASE OF TWO TEACHER COMMUNITIES IN HIGH NEEDS SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SELANGOR****Ngee Derk, Tiong<sup>1</sup> and Nicholas Boon Kheng, Lee<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>**School of Education, University of Nottingham, Malaysia**<sup>2</sup>**Centre for English Language Studies, Sunway University, Malaysia**<sup>1</sup>[NgeeDerk.Tiong@nottingham.edu.my](mailto:NgeeDerk.Tiong@nottingham.edu.my)**Abstract**

English teachers have to make constant improvements to their practice to meet their students' learning needs, however, improvements are partially dependent on how they engage with new knowledge through their professional learning practices. This study compares novices and experienced teachers' engagement with knowledge in a teachers' reading group programme, set in 2023. The reading group for teachers (RGfT) utilised Nation's (2013) classic teachers' manual for EFL learners. Through analysis of interviews, in-session dialogue and typed responses on a digital whiteboard, we propose a taxonomy of four modes of teachers' engagement with knowledge: additive, adaptive, dilemmatic, transformative. Results suggest that while there may be some between-group (experienced-novice) differences, within-group differences may be even more salient. The findings have implications for how to structure professional learning initiatives according to teacher profiles, rejecting a one-size-fits-all approach, and poses suggestions for creating better conditions for sustainable practice change.

**Key Words**

In-service teacher development, professional learning and development, communities of practice, teaching of English to speakers of other languages, reading groups for teachers (RGfTs).

**1. Background of Study**

This study investigates how novice and experienced teachers engage with professional learning and development (PLD) interventions, specifically within the context of a book club-based program. The problem lies in the diverse learning needs and experiences of teachers, which complicate the design and effectiveness of PLD programs. Current literature underscores that novice and experienced teachers have distinct professional development needs and preferences (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015; Nazari et al., 2019). Novices often require induction and practical guidance, while experienced teachers benefit from advanced topics and peer interactions (Kahlberg & Bezzina, 2022). Despite this, there is limited empirical evidence on how these differing needs impact engagement with new knowledge and subsequent practice changes. Existing studies have not sufficiently explored how these variations affect teachers' processing and application of professional knowledge (Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024). Addressing this gap is crucial as it impacts the effectiveness of PLD programs in fostering meaningful practice changes and improving educational outcomes. This research aims to provide insights into how different

experience levels interact with PLD content, contributing to more tailored and effective professional development strategies.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

This study addresses a critical gap in the literature on in-service teacher professional development (PLD) by focusing on the nuanced engagement of novice versus experienced teachers with professional knowledge. Existing research highlights that while novice and experienced teachers have distinct PLD needs and preferences, there is limited exploration of how these different experience levels impact their interaction with new knowledge. Prior studies have often treated teachers' experience as a broad category, overlooking the detailed variations in how they process and apply new information (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015; Nazari et al., 2019). Additionally, although literature acknowledges that effective PLD should foster critical reflection and adapt to individual learning needs (Timperley et al., 2007; Asterhan & Lefstein, 2024), there is scant empirical evidence on how these processes manifest differently between novice and experienced teachers. This study fills this gap by examining how different teacher profiles engage with knowledge through a book club-based intervention, providing insights into the efficacy of varied PLD approaches and highlighting the need for more tailored and reflective professional development strategies.

## **3. Significance of Study**

This study enhances English Language Education by revealing how novice and experienced teachers engage differently with professional learning. It identifies four modes of knowledge engagement—additive, adaptive, dilemmatic, and transformative—which can guide the design of PLD programs. Novice teachers benefit from collaborative, discussion-based settings, while experienced teachers need opportunities to refine and extend their existing knowledge. The findings suggest that differentiated PLD interventions tailored to teachers' experience levels can improve classroom practices and student outcomes. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of creating PLD structures that foster critical reflection and dialogue. Policymakers can use these insights to support varied PLD frameworks and address implementation challenges. Future research should explore effective strategies for advancing teachers through different engagement modes and overcoming barriers to practice change.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) How do novice and experienced English teachers report their engagement with new practice knowledge through a book club-based professional development program?
- (ii) What are the similarities and differences in how novice and experienced teachers engage with the professional knowledge encountered through this intervention?

## **5. Method**

This study examined the impact of a school-based reading group on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in two Malaysian secondary schools. The reading group used Nation's (2013) practitioner-friendly handbook, which is grounded in the Four Strands principle (Nation, 2007) and suited for practitioners due to its accessibility and practicality. Two independent reading groups met over two months, discussing chapters of their choice with the support of

researchers as facilitators (Blanton et al., 2020). Participants read chapters in advance, completed digital tasks on Padlet, and discussed application points during meetings.

The study took place in urban schools in Selangor, Malaysia, with 13 participating teachers (7 from one school, 6 from another) out of 17 eligible teachers. Participants were a mix of novice and experienced teachers, all trained in English. Data collection included semi-structured interviews before and after the project, Padlet responses, and recorded session discussions. Data were analysed using both inductive and deductive methods, focusing on themes related to engagement with new knowledge and changes in practice. Key findings included new knowledge acquisition, activation of prior knowledge, and reported changes in teaching practice (Yin, 2017; Charmaz, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The findings affirm Lloyd's (2019) and Wenger's (1998) arguments that teacher learning benefits from community engagement rather than solitary book reading. The data suggests that discussions within a book club setting, especially among mixed-experience groups, foster valuable learning experiences for novice teachers. This challenges Miquel et al.'s (2024) recommendations for experience-homogeneous groups and supports Romero's (2024) view on bridging theoretical and practical knowledge. Contrary to some literature, novice teachers were notably adept at fine-tuning practice, challenging assumptions about expertise being solely linked to experience. However, actual practice change was minimal, highlighting barriers such as time constraints and implementation challenges.

## **7. Limitations**

The study's limitations include its small, selective sample size and reliance on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect actual practice or knowledge application. The short implementation period of two months limits the assessment of long-term impact. Additionally, the study's context in Malaysian teacher communities may not be generalisable to other settings due to cultural and institutional differences. The study also does not explore deeper cultural dynamics or micropolitics within teacher communities, which could affect findings. These factors suggest that further research with larger, more diverse samples and longer observation periods is needed to validate and expand upon these results.

## **8. Conclusion**

Our analysis proposed a taxonomy of four modes of teacher engagement with knowledge in a professional development initiative. We observed that novice teachers more frequently engage with dilemmas, while experienced teachers are more adept at linking new content to their prior knowledge. Although these findings are specific to our small sample and the particular book-based program, they reveal significant within-group differences, especially in adaptive engagement. Future research should explore tools and methods to transition teachers from additive to adaptive or transformative engagement and examine how these modes impact practice change. Additionally, the preference of novice teachers for interactions with experienced colleagues underscores the value of professional development designs that promote sustained, mixed-experience dialogue.



## References

- Asterhan, C. S. C., & Lefstein, A. (2023). The search for evidence-based features of effective teacher professional development: A critical analysis of the literature. *Professional Development in Education*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2023.2283437>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage.
- Kahlberg, M., & Bezzina, C. (2022). The professional development needs of beginning and experienced teachers in four municipalities in Sweden. *Professional Development in Education*, 48(4), 624–641. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1712451>
- Lloyd, C. A. (2019). Exploring the real-world decision-making of novice and experienced teachers. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43(2), 166–182.
- Mahmoudi, F., & Özkan, Y. (2015). Exploring Experienced and Novice Teachers' Perceptions about Professional Development Activities. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 57–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.487>
- Miquel, E., Monguillot, M., Soler, M., & Duran, D. (2024). Reciprocal peer observation: A mechanism to identify professional learning goals. *Education Inquiry*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2024.2370116>
- Nation, P. (2007). The Four Strands. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 2–13. <https://doi.org/10.2167/illt039.0>
- Nation, P. (2013). *What should every EFL teacher know?* Compass Publishing.
- Nazari, N., Nafissi, Z., Estaji, M., & Marandi, S. S. (2019). Evaluating novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceived TPACK for their professional development. *Cogent Education*, 6(1), 1632010. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1632010>
- Romero, G. (2024). School and social educational vulnerability in Chile: Experiences and preparedness of novice teachers of English. *Teachers and Teaching*, 30(2), 195–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2022.2062718>
- Seidel, T., Schnitzler, K., Kosel, C., Stürmer, K., & Holzberger, D. (2021). Student Characteristics in the Eyes of Teachers: Differences Between Novice and Expert Teachers in Judgment Accuracy, Observed Behavioral Cues, and Gaze. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(1), 69–89. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09532-2>
- Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H., & Fung, I. (2007). *Teacher Professional Learning and Development. Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. University of Auckland. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-7984.2007.00116.x>
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Sage.

**SPIN THE BICYCLE WHEELS: AN INNOVATIVE IDEA TO HELP SENTENCE FORMATION FOR  
HEARING IMPAIRED PUPILS**

**Siti Ummaizah bt Meor Musa<sup>1</sup>, Gloria Stephanie anak Griffin<sup>2</sup>  
and Rosmalily binti Salleh<sup>3</sup>**

**<sup>1</sup>Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, <sup>2</sup>SK Pendidikan Khas Selangor**

**<sup>3</sup>Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia**

**[ummaizah@utar.edu.my](mailto:ummaizah@utar.edu.my)**

**Abstract**

The "Spin the Bicycle Wheels" method is an innovative approach to teaching sentence structure to pupils with hearing impairment. By spinning wheels labelled with the subject, verb, and object, pupils engage both visually and tangibly with sentence construction. This method effectively addresses the challenge these pupils face in forming coherent sentences without auditory input, as they often rely on sign language and struggle with proper sentence structure. By making grammar more concrete and interactive, it improves sentence construction skills and increases student motivation. Observations and interviews reveal that this method not only enhances language learning but also encourages active participation in lessons. The effectiveness of "Spin the Bicycle Wheels" in aiding sentence construction highlights its significant potential for broader educational application. This approach offers a valuable resource for teachers working with pupils with hearing impairment, combining educational benefits with practical, hands-on learning experiences.

**Key Words**

Sentence formation, Hearing impairment, Sign language, Subject-Verb-Object (SVO), Spin the Bicycle Wheels

**1. Background of Study**

Learning English is crucial as it serves as a global lingua franca, widely adopted by many communities as a second language (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). It plays a vital role in fostering social, economic, and intellectual growth worldwide (Tahang et al., 2023). The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013–2025 emphasises ensuring every child achieves proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English, requiring significant effort from teachers.

While lifelong learning is relatively straightforward for individuals without disabilities, allowing them to process information with ease, those with disabilities face greater challenges in acquiring knowledge and communicating effectively (Atar et al., 2021). These challenges stem from both their disabilities (Ristiani, 2018; Tahang et al., 2023) and external factors like teaching methods and curriculum design (Birinci & Soricoban, 2021; Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh, 2021; Tahang et al., 2023).

Education is crucial not only for typically developing children but also for those with special needs, such as children with hearing impairments (Nonci et al., 2022). Teaching English to pupils

with hearing impairment is particularly challenging (Nur Hamidah & Dede Nurdawati, 2021) because they struggle to process linguistic information through hearing. Without full access to spoken language, their acquisition process is often more laborious and slower than that of hearing learners (Berent, 2001).

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Hearing impaired pupils often face significant challenges with English sentence structures, particularly in grammar (Berent, 2001). Due to their lack of exposure to spoken language, they frequently struggle to construct even simple sentences without relying on signs and visual cues. This reliance on visual and tangible materials for comprehension and communication can be problematic, especially in environments dominated by spoken words (Ntinda et al., 2019).

In learning English, pupils with hearing impairment often prioritise conveying meaning through sign language, which may lead to neglecting proper sentence structure. English's strict SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT (SVO) word order is typically mastered quickly by hearing learners, but hearing impaired learners may overgeneralise this order, leading to difficulties with more complex sentences that deviate from the basic SVO structure. These challenges can impact both reading comprehension and written expression.

To address these issues, this research introduces the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel" method, an innovative approach aimed at enhancing hearing impaired pupils' ability to construct correct and coherent sentences. By spinning the wheel to form simple sentences, pupils can better categorise words into subject, verb, and object, thereby improving their sentence construction skills.

## **3. Significance of Study**

This study aims to enhance sentence construction skills, particularly the S-V-O structure, for pupils with hearing impairments who require additional support through tangible materials. It is especially beneficial in the context of English language learning, which presents unique challenges for pupils with disabilities.

The study also provides teachers with valuable insights and strategies for effectively teaching grammatical concepts to pupils with hearing impairments. It offers practical ideas for creating and utilising materials that can significantly improve the teaching and learning process, equipping educators with tools to better support language development.

Additionally, the study emphasises the importance of school administrators in supporting teachers who face challenges in educating pupils with disabilities. By highlighting the need for resources, particularly tangible materials, the study encourages administrators to take an active role in enhancing teaching methods and improving pupils' learning experiences.

## **4. Research Questions**

This study investigates the use of tangible items to aid sentence construction skills in pupils with hearing impairments. The research is guided by two key questions:

- (i) Does the use of "Spin the Bicycle Wheel" help pupils with hearing impairments form correct simple sentences?
- (ii) Does the use of "Spin the Bicycle Wheel" increase engagement and motivation in pupils with hearing impairments during lessons?

## 5. Method

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilising document analysis, an observation checklist, and interviews to collect data.

### Document Analysis

The pupils' performance in writing simple sentences using the correct S-V-O structure was assessed by teachers after using the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel." The pupils' work was checked and marked to evaluate their sentence construction skills.

### Observation

An observation checklist, adapted from Cassar & Jang's (2010) Student Engagement Observation Checklist (SEOC), was used to track pupils' engagement in learning and classroom behaviours. The SEOC utilised a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always), to observe the pupils' engagement and motivation during activities involving the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel."

### Interview

A focus group interview was conducted with the pupils after they had used the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel." They were asked three questions:

- I. Did you enjoy using the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel"?
- II. How do you feel after using the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel"?
- III. Do you believe you can write simple sentences better after using the "Spin the Bicycle Wheel"?

## 6. Findings and Discussion

Based on the data collected, the findings are categorised according to the research objectives (ROs).

### **RO1: Does the usage of Spin the Bicycle Wheel help pupils with hearing impairment form correct simple sentences?**

The findings show a significant improvement in pupils' ability to write simple sentences using the S-V-O structure after using the Spin the Bicycle Wheel. Teachers observed that pupils have become more adept at constructing sentences with the correct S-V-O order. Interview feedback supports this, with pupils reporting a clearer understanding of how to use the S-V-O structure in their writing. This suggests that the Spin the Bicycle Wheel is an effective tool for enhancing sentence construction skills in pupils with hearing impairments.

## **R02: Does the usage of Spin the Bicycle Wheel make pupils with hearing impairment more engaged and motivated in the lesson?**

The observation checklist and interviews indicate that pupils were more engaged and motivated during lessons involving the Spin the Bicycle Wheel. Pupils expressed that the activity made lessons more enjoyable and increased their enthusiasm for classroom tasks, particularly in writing sentences using the S-V-O structure. This feedback highlights the effectiveness of using tangible, interactive materials like the Spin the Bicycle Wheel to enhance engagement and motivation among pupils with hearing impairments.

## **7. Limitations**

This study focused on using tangible materials to improve pupils' skills in writing simple sentences with the S-V-O structure. The research was conducted with 10-year-old pupils with hearing impairments from a special needs school in Selangor, all with A1 proficiency levels. Due to this specific context, the study is limited to exploring sentence construction at the basic S-V-O level, without addressing more complex sentence structures or broader language skills.

## **8. Conclusion**

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that using tangible materials with pupils who have hearing impairments significantly enhances their understanding, engagement, and motivation to learn. Incorporating such materials benefits both teachers and pupils, leading to improved writing skills, particularly in constructing simple sentences with the correct S-V-O structure. Pupils were more engaged, motivated, and enjoyed lessons when using tangible tools like Spin the Bicycle Wheels. This highlights the importance of resourcefulness in providing meaningful learning experiences to support the teaching and learning process.

Future research should explore a broader range of tangible materials to further develop pupils' linguistic and language skills. Beyond teaching the S-V-O structure, grammatical elements such as tenses, prepositions, and adjectives could also be effectively taught using similar concepts. Additionally, the application of tangible materials like Spin the Bicycle Wheels could be extended to pupils with various learning disabilities and to those without.

## **References**

- Al-Sobhi, B. M. S., & Preece, A. S. (2018). Teaching English speaking skills to the Arab students in the Saudi school in Kuala Lumpur: Problems and solutions. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 6(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.6n.1p.1>
- Atar, C., Bağci, O.A., Bağci, H. (2021). Deaf Individuals and English Language Teaching. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology* 2(4), 23 – 28.
- Berent, G. P. (2001). English for deaf students: Assessing and addressing learners' grammar development. In D. Janáková (Ed.), *International Seminar on Teaching English to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students at Secondary and Tertiary Levels of Education: Proceedings* (pp. 124-134).
- Birinci, F. G., & Sarıçoban, A. (2021). The effectiveness of visual materials in teaching vocabulary to deaf students of EFL. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(1), 628-645. <https://doi.org/10.52462/jlls.43>

- Cassar, A. G & Jang, E.E. (2010). Investigating the effects of a game-based approach in teaching word recognition and spelling to pupils with reading disabilities and attention deficits. *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties*, 15(2), 193–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404151003796516>
- Khasawneh, Mohamad AS. (2021). Problems Teaching English to Deaf Students. *Indonesian Journal of Creative Counseling*, 1(1), 32-42. <https://doi.org/10.47679/ijcc.v1i2.107>
- Ntinda, K., Thwala, S., & Tfusi, B. (2019). Experiences of Teachers of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students' in a Special Needs School: An Exploratory Study. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 7(7), 79-89. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v7i7.4274>
- Nur Hamidah & Dede Nurdawati. (2021). Teacher's Strategy in Teaching English For Deaf Pupils at Slb Manunggal Slawi – Tegal. *Jurnal Dialektika Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 9(1), 34- 51. <https://doi.org/10.33751/jhss.v7i1.6825>
- Ristiani, A. (2018). Challenges in Teaching English for the Deaf Students. *Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 3(1), 16-20. <https://doi.org/10.32528/ellite.v3i1.1773>
- Tahang, H., Tapada, J.S., Uluelang, K., Umasugi & P.J., Wahab, I. (2023). Teacher's Strategies in Teaching English to Deaf Students in A Special School Sorong. *Journal of Literate English Education Study Program*, 4(2), 91 – 101. <https://doi.org/10.47435/jle.v1i2>

**A STUDY ON THE USAGE OF TEXTISM THROUGH WHATSAPP AND THE INFLUENCE IT HAS ON ONE'S WRITING SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATES****Yashvini Mathilda<sup>1</sup>, Geetha Veerappan<sup>2</sup> and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Prashanth Beleya<sup>3</sup>****HIS International School, Subang Jaya<sup>1</sup>****[yashvinimathilda21@gmail.com](mailto:yashvinimathilda21@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [geethav@utar.edu.my](mailto:geethav@utar.edu.my)<sup>2</sup>, [pbeleya@gmail.com](mailto:pbeleya@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>****Abstract**

The study aims to identify the types of textisms that could be found in online chats as well as knowing how textisms affects one's writing abilities. The study featured documentation analysis, which included semi-structured interviews with UTAR undergraduate students as well as screenshots of WhatsApp chats between students in the January 2021 trimester's Introduction to Psychology course. The findings of this study, which was entirely qualitative in nature, displayed that 5 different types of textisms were present. The analysis of the semi-structured interview showed that certain students tend to agree and also disagree that textisms has an impact on their writing abilities. Nevertheless, each one of them had their own justifications for their own answers.

**Key Words**

Textism, Writing skills, Undergraduates, Whatsapp.

**1. Background of Study**

Strong English language proficiency is crucial for effective communication, academic success, and daily interactions. However, the frequent misuse of grammar and language among Malaysians suggests widespread challenges with language skills (Thurairaj, 2015). One contributing factor is the use of instant messaging (IM), which encourages the creation of new phrases and "shortcut language," leading to a decline in students' spoken and written vocabulary and grammar (Gibson, 2022). Additionally, "Manglish," or "mangled English," commonly used in Malaysia, incorporates vocabulary from Malay, Chinese, and Tamil, along with slang terms such as "lah," "meh," and "ah". This non-standard form of English, often referred to as textism, involves the use of emoticons, acronyms, abbreviations, and omitted punctuation alongside standard English syntax (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008). A 2018 study by Pablo and Lasaten highlights concerns from teachers about the deteriorating quality of formal writing due to the prevalence of textisms. However, Waldrone et al. (2016) found that textisms could positively impact literacy by improving phonological awareness, spelling, and grammar, while also enhancing self-expression. This study aims to explore how textisms influence writing abilities, balancing their potential benefits and drawbacks.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

In the twenty-first century, technology significantly impacts all aspects of life, offering numerous benefits to students. However, educators have observed a notable decline in writing skills due to technological advancements (Bakeer, 2018). Features like spell check and grammar check, while useful, can lead students to undervalue the importance of mastering English grammar and writing conventions. As a result, students often rely on these tools and adopt non-standard forms of English in their written work, mirroring their texting habits (Salikin & Tahir, 2017). This reliance fosters the use of abbreviated and informal language, such as "coz" for "because" and "tq" for "thank you," resulting in misspellings and the creation of new, non-standard words.

The digital culture prioritizes speed and convenience over formal, well-articulated communication, contributing to the informal writing style known as textism. This phenomenon leads to habitual errors and impacts the quality of writing, as students often blend text language with formal academic writing. Consequently, these practices affect their performance in classwork, exams, and assignments, highlighting the need to address the influence of technology on writing skills.

## **3. Significance of Study**

Students today often do not value good writing, which presents a challenge for teachers whose curriculum places a strong emphasis on it. Technology has undoubtedly given students the perception that they can always take shortcuts and avoid fully understanding the writing process, preventing them from recognizing the importance of mastering the skills needed to produce high-quality written work. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to provide insight into how language is used and how it influences writing abilities.

## **4. Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

- (i) What types of textisms are prevalent in online chats?
- (ii) How does textism influence an undergraduate's writing abilities?

## **5. Method**

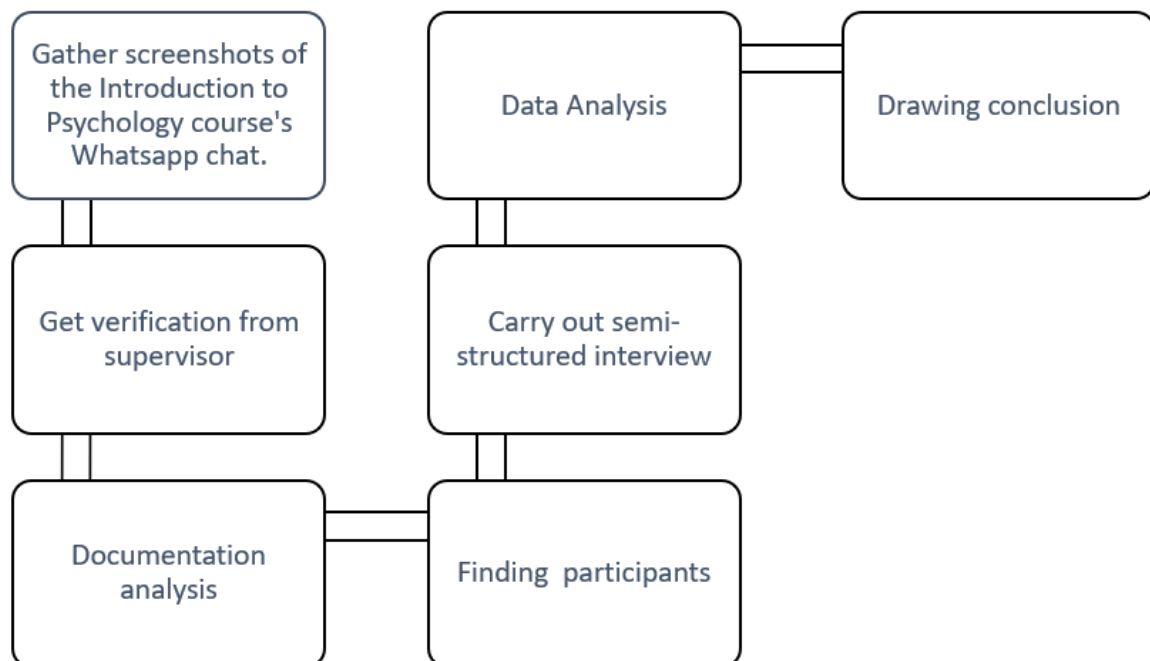
Data collection involved two primary methods: documentation analysis and semi-structured interviews. For the documentation analysis, text messages from a January 2021 Introduction to Psychology chat group were examined to identify and categorize instances of textism. The selected texts were validated by the supervisor to ensure relevance and reliability.

In the semi-structured interviews, five undergraduate students were purposively sampled and interviewed individually via Microsoft Teams. The interviews were recorded with consent and focused on the influence of textism on their writing skills. The interview protocol was refined through a pilot study, which highlighted the need for examples and adjustments in question sequencing.

For data analysis, the recorded interviews were manually transcribed, and the transcriptions underwent thematic analysis. This involved identifying recurring themes and patterns related to



textism's impact on writing. The thematic analysis was conducted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives and to effectively address the research questions.



## 6. Findings and Discussion

The study reveals significant insights into the impact of textism on undergraduate students' writing abilities. The documentation analysis identifies five types of textism: abbreviations, unconventional spelling, word shortening, lengthening, and sound substitution, with abbreviations and unconventional spelling being the most common. These findings highlight the prevalence and variety of textism in informal digital communication.

Interview data further illustrate that textism affects writing skills. Most participants (five out of ten) reported that their frequent use of abbreviations and unconventional spelling in texting leads to difficulties in maintaining correct spelling and grammar in formal writing. This finding confirms the assumption that textism can interfere with academic and professional writing by creating habits that conflict with conventional language standards.

However, the study also reveals a divergence in experiences. Four participants disagreed, arguing that their texting habits do not adversely affect their formal writing. They suggested that they consciously adapt their writing style based on context, distinguishing between informal and formal communication. This challenges the notion that texting habits inevitably degrade formal writing abilities and suggests that individual awareness and contextual adaptation play a significant role in mitigating these effects.

In summary, the study supports the view that textism can impact formal writing, while also acknowledging that individual differences in writing habits and context awareness can influence the extent of this impact.

## 7. Limitations

The study's limitations include a narrow participant pool, as it only involves UTAR undergraduates who use textism, which reduces the diversity of responses and may introduce bias. This restriction affects the ability to generalize the findings. The emerging nature of textism also means there is limited prior research, making it difficult to define and study effectively. Additionally, methodological challenges, such as obtaining consent and handling large volumes of data, complicate the research. While online interviews are convenient, they limit nonverbal communication and are prone to technical issues, impacting data quality and participant comfort. These factors restrict the overall scope and depth of the study.

## 8. Conclusion

This study underscores the influence of textism on writing abilities, revealing that frequent use of textisms in digital communication can negatively affect formal writing skills. Textisms, common on platforms like WhatsApp, often lead to informal language habits that may impair clarity and professionalism in academic and professional writing.

Future research should address these issues by including a more diverse participant pool to ensure broader applicability of the findings. Investigating the effects of textism across various cultures and languages could provide deeper insights into its impact on writing. Additionally, studies should explore strategies for mitigating the influence of textism in educational settings, focusing on how to balance informal and formal language use. Examining the role of digital tools in shaping writing habits and developing methods to promote formal language use online would also be valuable. Lastly, conducting in-person interviews could offer richer data by capturing non-verbal communication and allowing for more interactive engagement, thereby enhancing research outcomes.

## References

- Bakeer, A. M. (2018). Effects of information and communication technology and social media in developing students' writing skill: A case of Al-Quds Open University. *International Journal Humanities and Social Science*, 8(5), 45-53.
- Gibson, K. (2022). Bridging the digital divide: Reflections on using WhatsApp instant messenger interviews in youth research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 19(3), 611-631.
- Pablo, J. C. I., & Lasaten, R. C. S. (2018). Writing difficulties and quality of academic essays of senior high school students. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(4), 46-57.
- Salikin, H., & Tahir, S. B. (2017). The Social media-based approach in teaching writing at Jember University, Indonesia. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(3), 46.
- Tagliamonte, S. A., & Denis, D. (2008). Linguistic ruin? LOL! Instant messaging and teen language. *American speech*, 83(1), 3-34.
- Thurairaj, S., Hoon, E. P., Roy, S. S., & Fong, P. W. (2015). Reflections of Students Language Usage in Social Networking Sites: Making or Marring Academic English. *Electronic Journal of E-learning*, 13(4), 301-315.
- Waldron, S., Kemp, N., & Wood, C. (2016). Texting and language learning. *Routledge handbook of language and digital communication*, 180-193.



## GENERATIVE AI IN ACADEMIA: CHALLENGES AND FOR ACADEMIC WRITING SUCCESS

Steffi Tan Shih May

Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed)

[steffi.tan@newcastle.edu.my](mailto:steffi.tan@newcastle.edu.my)

### Abstract

As generative AI tools become increasingly embedded in academic environments, students encounter new challenges in maintaining the quality, integrity and ethics of their academic writing. This study investigates these challenges, focusing on the ethical dilemmas, cognitive dependencies and emotional responses that arise from AI usage in academic contexts. Key themes such as guilt, overreliance on AI and the need for improved AI literacy emerged through surveys and focus group interviews conducted after targeted training sessions. The findings highlight the critical importance of integrating AI literacy and ethical guidelines into educational frameworks, enabling students to use AI tools as aids rather than replacements for their scholarly efforts. With proper guidance and reflective practices, students can leverage AI to enhance their writing while upholding academic standards and integrity. This research highlights the urgent need for proactive education on responsible AI usage, advocating for curriculum reforms that promote both AI literacy and ethical decision-making in academic writing.

### Key Words

Generative AI, Academic Writing, AI Literacy, Student Empowerment, Ethical Scholarship.

### 1. Background of Study

The rapid integration of generative AI tools in academic settings has revolutionised how students approach writing tasks. These tools offer unprecedented support in generating ideas, organising content, and streamlining processes like referencing, making them highly appealing in the fast-paced environment of higher education. The promise of enhanced efficiency and reduced time for completing assignments positions AI as a valuable asset for students. However, this technological advancement has also sparked significant concerns regarding its impact on students' learning and development (Lee et al., 2024).

One of the primary concerns is the potential for students to become overly dependent on AI tools, which can lead to a reduction in critical engagement with academic material (Marzuki et al., 2023). This dependency risks diminishing the development of essential skills, such as critical thinking, originality, and the ability to construct coherent arguments independently (Marzuki et al., 2023). Additionally, the emotional implications of using AI are often overlooked, involving feelings arise from fears that relying on AI may compromise the authenticity of their work or infringe upon academic integrity standards (Stone, 2023).

## **2. Statement of Problem**

The concerns surrounding the use of generative AI in academic writing highlight a crucial gap in current research and educational practices. While the practical advantages of AI, such as increased efficiency and productivity, are well-documented, the cognitive and emotional challenges associated with its use remain underexplored. Without proper guidance and educational frameworks, students may struggle to navigate the ethical complexities of AI, potentially leading to a decline in the quality of their academic output and a loss of confidence in their abilities.

This study seeks to address these gaps by exploring the psychological and educational challenges students face when integrating AI into their academic writing. By investigating these issues, the research aims to develop strategies that can empower students to use AI tools responsibly, thereby enhancing their academic work while maintaining the integrity and authenticity of their scholarly contributions. Understanding these challenges is crucial for ensuring that AI serves as a tool for learning enhancement rather than a crutch that diminishes academic rigor and student confidence (Seo et al., 2021).

## **3. Significance of Study**

The findings of this study significantly contribute to advancing English Language Education by highlighting the need for tailored educational strategies that empower students to navigate AI tools responsibly. By focusing on student empowerment rather than relying solely on institutional policies, the study highlights the importance of integrating AI literacy into classroom practices. This approach not only enhances the quality of academic writing but also ensures that students develop the critical thinking and originality necessary to maintain the rigor of their work. These insights have practical implications for educators, who can incorporate AI-focused training sessions into their curricula, promoting a learning environment that supports ethical AI use. Moreover, the study's emphasis on reflective practices offers a pathway for policy decisions that prioritise student autonomy and integrity in the digital age, ultimately elevating the standards of English Language Education.

## **4. Research Questions**

- (i) How do students experience and perceive the use of generative AI in their academic writing?
- (ii) How can educational strategies be developed to empower students to use generative AI tools responsibly in academic writing?

## **5. Method**

The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data from surveys with qualitative insights from focus group interviews. Data collection began with a survey distributed to students, designed to capture a broad understanding of their experiences, challenges, and attitudes toward the use of generative AI in academic writing. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions, allowing for the collection of quantifiable data and initial qualitative insights.

Subsequently, focus group interviews were conducted to explore in greater depth the nuanced experiences and perspectives of the participants. These interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, providing a rich source of qualitative data. The qualitative data from the focus groups were then analysed using Thematic Analysis, a method that involves identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. This approach allowed for the systematic examination of recurring themes related to the emotional and cognitive challenges students face when using AI in their academic writing.

The training session on the ethical use of AI provided a critical foundation for the study, ensuring that all participants had a baseline understanding of AI's applications and potential ethical concerns. This informed both the survey responses and the focus group discussions, ensuring that the data collected was both informed and reflective. The combination of survey data and Thematic Analysis facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the issues, allowing for the identification of key themes that address the study's research questions.

## **6. Findings and Discussion**

The analysis revealed three primary themes: guilt and uncertainty, dependency on AI, and the necessity for improved AI literacy. The prevalence of guilt and uncertainty among students confirms the assumption that AI use can provoke anxiety regarding the authenticity of their work. This aligns with existing literature that suggests students often fear that AI might compromise their originality (Stone, 2023). However, this study contests the previously held assumption that AI is universally beneficial; instead, it highlights how dependency on AI can reduce critical engagement and diminish the development of analytical skills, as corroborated by Marzuki et al. (2023).

The study's findings on the need for enhanced AI literacy emphasise that while AI tools are integrated into academic practices, there remains a significant gap in students' ability to use these tools effectively. This aligns with Walter (2024), who stressed the importance of AI literacy in navigating the complexities of AI in academic contexts. The study further suggests that integrating reflective practices and ethical discussions in education can address these challenges, offering a pathway to responsible AI use that supports, rather than hinders, student learning.

## **7. Limitations**

This study is limited by its reliance on a specific student population, which may not fully represent the diverse experiences of students across different educational contexts. Additionally, the use of self-reported data in surveys and focus groups may introduce bias, as participants might not fully disclose their true feelings or behaviours regarding AI use. Furthermore, the study's focus on a single training session limits its ability to assess long-term impacts on AI literacy and academic writing practices.

## **8. Conclusion**

The findings of this study highlight the complexity of generative AI in academic writing. While AI tools offer significant benefits in enhancing productivity and aiding in content generation, they also pose risks of dependency, reduced critical thinking and ethical dilemmas. Students' feelings

of guilt and uncertainty suggest a need for more comprehensive AI literacy training that not only addresses the technical use of AI but also the ethical and cognitive implications.

Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of AI literacy interventions on students' academic practices. Additionally, expanding the research to include a more diverse student population across different educational settings will provide a broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by AI. Investigating the role of continuous reflective practices and integrating these into curricula could further enhance students' ability to use AI tools responsibly and effectively in their academic work.

## References

- Lee, D., Arnold, M., Srivastava, A., Plastow, K., Strelan, P., Ploeckl, F., Lekkas, D. & Palmer, E. (2024). The impact of generative AI on higher education learning and teaching: A study of educators' perspectives. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 6, 100221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2024.100221>
- Marzuki, , Widiati, U., Rusdin, D., Darwin & Indrawati, I. (2023). The impact of AI writing tools on the content and organisation of students' writing: EFL teachers' perspective. *Cogent Education*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2236469>
- Seo, K., Tang, J., Roll, I. et al. The impact of artificial intelligence on learner–instructor Seo, K., Tang, J., Roll, I., Fels, S. & Yoon, D. (2021). The impact of artificial intelligence on learner–instructor interaction in online learning. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 18, Article 54. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-021-00292-9>
- Stone A. (2022). Student Perceptions of Academic Integrity: A Qualitative Study of Understanding, Consequences, and Impact. *Journal of academic ethics*, 1–19. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-022-09461-5>

**THE IMPACT OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION IN TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN TEACHERS OF MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (NGO'S IMPACT ON TPD IN THE 21ST CENTURY)**

**Thuraija Sunmokasudram**  
**SMK Toh Indera Wangsa Ahmad, Perak**  
[thurai4042@gmail.com](mailto:thurai4042@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

Professional development is significant and vital for the education sector as it is the organized methods to catalyst change in teacher practices, attitudes, beliefs and student outcomes. There have been various means of teacher professional development (TPD) throughout the years with one upcoming trend in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is the emergence of educational non-governmental organizations (NGO) which provide avenues outside their working environment for teachers to professionally develop their skills. Besides, the platform contributes to teaching style development beyond the initial teacher training. This presentation explores the differences in teachers' 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching styles and perceptions between the teacher-members of non-governmental organization and the non-members of the non-governmental organization. The study was conducted by distributing comparative questionnaires among 60 teachers of both members and non-members of NGO equally and interviews with 5 teachers of NGO members to know the in-depth NGO impact. By analysing this, the research presents the impact of the non-governmental organization on teachers' styles in classroom teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching classroom. The research considers the insight of the Malaysian Education Blueprint where it promotes the development of teachers professionally via various means to keep abreast of the trending teacher skills and knowledge. The study concludes that teachers who are NGO members have more inclination towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching styles and they show positive teacher professional development towards the inclusion of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching criteria in comparison to the non-members.

**Key Words**

Teacher Professional Development, non-Governmental Organisation

**1. Introduction**

**Professional Development & Teacher Professional Development in Malaysia**

Guskey (1986) defined professional development as the process of enhancing and improving the competency of individuals and groups in an institution by different ways of trainings and practices. Meanwhile, he emphasized in 2002 that professional development is significant and vital for the education sector as it is the organized methods to catalyst change in teacher practices, attitudes, beliefs and student outcomes. As a consequence, teacher professional development today is considered imperative and essential due to the trend in education reformation for teachers' personal and professional attributes around the world. The Malaysian

Education Blueprint (2013-2025) emphasizes teacher professional development to be vital for Malaysian national schoolteachers. The blueprint promotes the development of teachers professionally to keep abreast of the trending skills and knowledge (The Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2012).

### **Non-Governmental Organisation**

Educational non-governmental organizations provide avenues outside their working environment for teachers who take initiatives to be members and to professionally develop their skills. Besides developing teachers' knowledge and skills, NGOs provides the platforms for teachers to shape and develop their teaching styles beyond what they have been initially trained.

## **2. Objective**

This study aims to investigate the impact of the non-governmental organization on teachers' styles in classroom teaching in the 21st century teaching classroom. Here, the research attempts to determine the difference in teachers' 21st century teaching styles and perceptions between the teachers of non-governmental organization members and the non-members of the non-governmental organization.

## **3. Research Questions**

The findings are separated according to the teachers of NGO members and non-members. The following research questions guided the data collection and the findings of this study:

Main Question: Does the non-governmental organization serve as an ideal teacher professional development to influence teachers' classroom teaching in the 21st Century?

Sub-Questions:

- 1) What are the different teaching styles of teachers who are members and non-members of NGO in relation to the 21st Century teaching criteria?
- 2) How does the NGO influence the teaching styles of teachers through professional development?

## **4. Findings and Discussion**

### **Different teaching style of teachers in relation to the 21st century teaching criteria**

This section is discussed according to the 5 major criteria of 21st century teaching criteria which are the critical thinking skills; collaboration skills; communication skills; creativity and innovation skills; and integration of technology as a tool of learning. This section analysed the different teaching styles of teachers who are members and non-members of NGO in relation to the 21st Century teaching criteria using the inference set prior to the study whereby the higher frequency of the stated teaching practices leans towards a higher classroom teaching practice of 21st century skills. Based on the findings, all 5 sections have revealed the teachers who are NGO members have more inclination towards the 21st century teaching criteria. A total of 19 of 25 questions gained response to deduce that teachers of NGO members are inclined to have greater teaching style which incorporates the 21st century teaching criteria.

### **NGO influence on teaching styles of teachers through professional development**

The second sub-question intended to understand the NGO's influence on the teaching styles as stated in the previous sub-question through professional development. After comprehending the difference of the two teachers' groups, it is essential to now understand in depth of the NGOs



impact and roles in professional development. This section discussed the teachers' needs that can be fulfilled through NGO's professional development programs whereby the respondents stated that the professional development programs through NGO fulfil major teachers' needs such as trainings for teaching techniques and on understanding the latest teachers' concepts and policies. This is parallel with the objectives to provide access and supplement teacher training and development besides the other ideas given. The following section deduces the relationship between NGO and the 21st century teacher criteria when the teachers were asked about how NGO relates to it. The teachers interviewed responded by stating these inputs were gained through the NGO programs such as the NGO conferences or the NGO colloquiums that were held regularly. This is parallel with the objectives to provide access for outside source of learning and teacher development. Others added that they can receive theoretical training via NGO journals and papers. Respondents also expressed that the NGO professional development programs and the 21st century teaching criteria were consistent with the current teaching policies in the school and the ministry of education.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestions

The research established that the findings from the first sub-question revealed the teachers, who are NGO members, have more inclination towards the 21st century teaching criteria. This is established as the majority of teachers of NGO members imply that they carry out greater classroom teaching practices which have inclusions of learners' critical thinking skills, collaboration skills, communication skills, creativity and innovation skills, and technology is integrated as a tool for students' learning. These discussions manage to distinguish the teaching style difference between the teachers of NGO members and non-NGO members in relation to the 21st century classroom teaching. Meanwhile, the following sub-question further elaborated the impact of the NGO in teacher professional development in the 21st century. Here, it was found that NGOs show positive teacher professional development as a whole, and especially towards the inclusion of 21st century teaching criteria through their agenda. This research concludes that educational non-governmental organization does have a great impact on teacher professional development especially in the 21st century. Therefore, the researcher would also make suggestions besides more research to be made in this NGO-TPD relationship areas, teachers are to be encouraged to further explore NGOs as means of professional development.

## References

- Asariah Mior Shaharudin (2009). The next generation of teachers: The Malaysian perspective. Deputy Director General of Education. Teacher professional Development Sector. Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1-13.
- Bayrakçı, M. (2009). In-service teacher training in Japan and Turkey: A comparative analysis of institutions and practices. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 34, 10-22.
- David, D. (2010). Employer characteristics and employee training outcomes in UK SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. 11(4), 449-457.
- Eden, L. (2004). A review of: Globalization, NGOs: Transforming business, government, and society. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 35, 564-566.
- Jamil, H., Abd. Razak, N., Raju, R., & Mohamed, A. R. (2011). *Teacher professional development in Malaysia: issues and challenges*. In Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development International Experience Sharing Seminar: Actual Status and Issues of Teacher Professional Development. CICE Publication Series 5. Hiroshima University: Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, 85-102.

Lewis, D. and Kanji, N. (2009). Non-Governmental Organizations and Development. Routledge.

McCoog, I. J. (2008). 21st Century Teaching and Learning. Online Submission.

MELTA (2017). Retrieved August 10, 2017, from <http://www.melta.org.my/>

Ministry of Education Malaysia (2001). Pembangunan Pendidikan 2001- 2010 [Education Development 2001-2010]. Ministry of Education.

MYT, J. 2. (2017). NGOs to support government in developing Malaysia. Retrieved August 10, 2017, from <http://english.astroawani.com/malaysia-news/pm-najib-wants-ngos-support-government-developing-malaysia-150451>.

Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2012). Malaysia Education Blue Print 2013-2025.

Newby, P. (2010). Research methods for education. Pearson Education Limited.

**SYMPTOMS OF VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOUR OF ESL LEARNERS DURING  
ONLINE ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

**Ayu Rita Mohamad**  
**Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)**  
[ayurita@utar.edu.my](mailto:ayurita@utar.edu.my)

**Abstract**

Effective communication skills are crucial in today's globalized world, with English playing a dominant role. This is especially true in Malaysia, where English proficiency is vital for academic and professional success. However, studies often overlook the impact of anxiety on verbal and non-verbal communication during presentations, particularly in online settings. This research addresses this gap by examining the most frequent verbal and non-verbal cues of anxiety exhibited by English as a Second Language (ESL) learners during online oral presentations. Using a structured observation instrument, the study analysed presentations done by 44 students at a private Malaysian university. The findings identified two key anxiety symptoms: verbal (speaking too fast, vocalized pauses) and non-verbal (facial activity – lack of eye contact, body movements – head (nodding/shaking). This descriptive analysis contributes to a better understanding of anxiety manifestations in online ESL presentations, paving the way for further research and improved support for students.

**Key Words**

Speaking Anxiety, Verbal cues, Non-verbal Cues, Online platform, Oral Presentation

**1. Background of Study**

Effective communication skills are crucial in today's globalized world, with English dominating. This is especially true in Malaysia, where English proficiency is vital for academic and professional success. However, as language learners, ESL learners may experience language anxiety (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019; Nazir et al., 2014). In this study, the researcher examined speaking anxiety among ESL learners in the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) program at a private Higher Learning Institution (HLI) in Selangor. The researcher observed that these ESL learners, who were pre-service teachers, often experienced anxiety while delivering oral presentations in the classroom, during practicum training in schools and online settings. Also, some research discovered the ESL learners' anxiety during oral presentations in the classroom (Hussein, 2021; Tajuddin et al., 2021) and also in online environments (Awaliyah and Irianti, 2022; Nur'Asifa et al., 2022). Furthermore, Sutarsyah (2017) stressed that among the four language skills, speaking has received the most attention in anxiety studies as speaking skills are considered the hardest skill and more complex compared to other skills (Hasibuan & Irzawati, 2020; Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Sutarsyah, 2017; Yacob & Mohamad, 2023). Despite being a well-known issue, however, studies often overlook the impact of anxiety on verbal and non-verbal communication during presentations, particularly in online settings. This research

addresses this gap by examining the most frequent verbal and non-verbal cues of anxiety exhibited by English as a Second Language (ESL) learners during online oral presentations.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

Naturally, everyone attaches great importance to the effect of expressing himself or herself in language, particularly during speaking or oral presentation. Still, studies were found to pay little attention to verbal and non-verbal communication symptoms or behaviours (Zhang, 2014) that would be an expected response to intense classroom anxiety. There is a methodological gap here as the existing research methodology was primarily focusing on the self-report surveys or observation in face-to-face setting to assess behavioural symptoms of speaking anxiety in oral presentation in ESL learners (Aeni et al., 2017; Cinkara, 2016; Wardani, 2018; Zhiping & Shamala, 2015). In addition, there was a lack of studies specifically assessing verbal and non-verbal behavioural symptoms of speaking anxiety in the context of online oral presentations among ESL learners (Aeni et al., 2017; Cinkara, 2016; Wardani, 2018; Zhiping & Shamala, 2015). In this study, therefore, the researcher aims to examine the most frequent verbal and non-verbal behaviours among ESL learners during online oral presentations.

## **3. Significance of Study**

In terms of methodology, this study investigates verbal and non-verbal behavioural symptoms of speaking anxiety among ESL learners during the oral presentation which helps in enriching in the perspective of the online environment. Furthermore, the respondents of this research were ESL learners in a higher learning institution setting, who were undergoing training to become ESL teachers. In addition, the instruments used in this study were online observations and individual interviews. The observation checklist was adapted from the Behavioural Assessment of Speech Anxiety (BASA) instrument by Mulac and Sherman (1974) Mulac and Sherman (1974) and Knapp and Hall (2001) and Gregersen (2005). The descriptive findings will help enrich and explain data contribution concerning verbal and non-verbal behavioural symptoms of speaking anxiety among ESL learners in online oral presentations environment and in a higher learning institution setting.

## **4. Research Questions**

What are the most frequent verbal and non-verbal behavioural symptoms of online oral presentation among ESL learners?

## **5. Method**

### **a) Research Design**

The research design of this study was a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research design.

### **b) Data collections**

#### **i) Participants**

There were 44 students at a private Malaysian university consisting of Malay and Indian students final-year TESL students involved in this study.

## ii) Instruments

Using a structured observation instrument that was adapted based on the verbal, Behavioural Assessment of Speech Anxiety (BASA) instrument by Mulac and Sherman (1974) and non-verbal behaviour adapted from Knapp & Hall (2001) and Gregerson (2005).

## iii) Procedure of Data Collection

Data were collected through structured online observation. They were observed once during their final research project presentation which was conducted in two different sessions due to the time constraints as the class hour per session was only 3 hours.

## d) Data Analysis

SPSS was used to calculate the mean frequency of the verbal and non-verbal behavioural symptoms of online oral presentations among ESL learners. As for the interview, the Atlas Ti. 22 version was used to analyse the interview data.

# 6. Findings and Discussion

The findings identified two key anxiety symptoms namely verbal and non-verbal anxiety symptoms. For verbal anxiety symptoms, the highest mean of the verbal symptoms is 2.6364, on “verbal fluency - non-fluencies; stammers; halting”. Then followed by “voice - too fast” with a mean of 2.3864. The third highest mean with a mean of 1.9773 is ‘verbal fluency - vocalized pauses). This is similar to Zhiping and Shamala’s (2015) study on the characteristics of non-verbal communication which found that keeping silent and being reticent with the instructor is a typical non-verbal reaction of anxious students. As for non-verbal anxiety symptoms, the highest mean of non-verbal symptoms is ‘Facial activity - lack of eye contact, with a mean of 3.5909 followed by non-verbal symptoms with a mean of 2.4773, on ‘Body movements - head (nodding/shaking). This is similar to Wardani (2018), and Cinkara (2016) revealed that the observable symptoms were trembling.

# 7. Limitations

The following are the limitations of this study. The study only studied final-year TESL university students. It did not include the learners of first and second-final-year students. Apart from that, most of the students were studying in a private higher learning institution. Therefore, not including them deprived the researchers from generalizing the findings to all the TESL university students. The verbal and non-verbal elements of ESL speaking anxiety investigated in this research are highly subjective and vary from time to time, person to person, and even within a person they tend to vary from time to time and also limited to the online environment. Therefore, the results of this study will remain valid for a specific context.

# 8. Conclusion

Overall, findings on verbal and non-verbal symptoms of online oral presentation among ESL learners reveal two key anxiety symptoms: For verbal anxiety symptoms, the highest mean of the verbal symptoms is 2.6364, on “verbal fluency - non-fluencies; stammers; halting”. Then followed by “voice - too fast” with a mean of 2.3864. The third highest mean is 1.9773 that is the ‘verbal fluency - vocalized pauses). As for non-verbal anxiety symptoms, the highest mean of non-verbal

symptoms is 'Facial activity - lack of eye contact, with a mean of 3.5909 and next followed by non-verbal symptoms with a mean of 2.4773, on 'Body movements - head (nodding/shaking).

## References

- Aeni, N., Jabu, B., Rahman, M. A., & Strid, J. E. (2017). English Oral Communication Apprehension in Students of Indonesian Maritime. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(4), 158. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v7n4p158>
- Awaliyah, F., & Irianti, L. (2022). Investigating students' speaking anxiety in classroom interaction through Zoom meeting. *Journal of English Education Program (JEEP)*, 9(1), 43. [https://doi.org/10.25157/\(jeep\).v9i1.7572](https://doi.org/10.25157/(jeep).v9i1.7572)
- Cinkara, E. (2016). Reflective practice and foreign language classroom anxiety: video-stimulated recall at work. *Reflective Practice*, 17(6), 694–707. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2016.1206880>
- Gregersen. (2005). Nonverbal cues: clues to the detection of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38(3).
- Hasibuan, A. R., & Irzawati, I. (2020). Students' speaking anxiety on their speaking performance: a study of EFL learners. 394(Icirad 2019), 101–106. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200115.017>
- Kashinathan, S., & Abdul Aziz, A. (2021). ESL Learners' Challenges in Speaking English in Malaysian Classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v10-i2/10355>
- Knapp, M. L., & Hall, Judith A. (2001). *Nonverbal communication in human interaction*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Miskam, N. N., & Saidalvi, A. (2019). Investigating English Language Speaking Anxiety among Malaysian Undergraduate Learners. *Asian Social Science*, 15(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v15n1p1>
- Mulac, A., & Sherman, A. R. (1974). Behavioral assessment of speech anxiety. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60(2), 134–143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335637409383219>
- Nazir, M., Bashir, S., & Raja, Z. B. (2014). A Study of Second Language Speaking-Anxiety among ESL Intermediate Pakistani Learners. *International Journal of English and Education*, 3(3).
- Nur'Asifa, I., Pahlevi, M. R., & Miftakh, F. (2022). Investigating secondary students' voice of speaking anxiety in online learning during covid-19 pandemic through zoom application. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(2), 11565–11571. <https://www.jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/4286%0Ahttps://www.jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/download/4286/3585>
- Sutarsyah, C. (2017). An Analysis of Student's Speaking Anxiety and its Effect on Speaking Performance. *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*, 1(2), 143. <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v1i2.14>
- Wardani, W. K. (2018). The characteristics of anxious students in speaking classroom. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, 3(2).
- Yacob, R. N. H. binti R., & Mohamad, M. M. binti. (2023). Investigating the levels and factors of English language speaking anxiety in online classroom. *Journal of Creative Practices in Language Learning and Teaching (CPLT)*, 11(1), 143–153.
- Zhang, D. (2014). The non-verbal communication in English classroom teaching the non-verbal communication in English classroom teaching. *International Conference on Informatization in Education, Management and Business (IEMB 2014)*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/iemb-14.2014.123>

Zhiping, D., & Shamala, P. (2015). Anxiety of Speaking English in Class Among International. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(7), 1–17.



MALAYSIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSOCIATION (MELTA)  
G-11-2, PUTRA WALK, JALAN PP 25,  
TAMAN PINGGIRAN PUTRA,  
BANDAR PUTRA PERMAI,  
43300 SERI KEMBANGAN, MALAYSIA.

+60176047490  
meltaconference2021@gmail.com  
[www.melta.org.my](http://www.melta.org.my)

eISSN 2716-6295

