

**THE INFLUENCE OF PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND FOREIGN
LANGUAGE TEACHING ANXIETY TOWARDS
ENGLISH TEACHERS' LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**



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UMMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

**FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2023**

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UMS

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THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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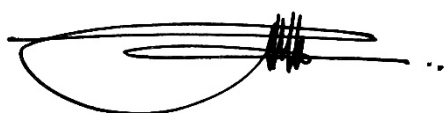
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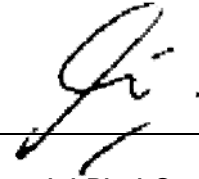
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this thesis is my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful.

Looking back, the saying "everything always seems impossible until it is done" perfectly manifests my entire postgraduate journey. In fact, 4/5 of the journey was utter confusion hence I am eternally thankful for the 1/5 that Allah eventually bestowed upon me a straight-mind and blessed me with strength to tidy up everything into this 258-pages thesis, in the final 6 months of my sabbatical leave.

No man is an island, I owe this to my pillar of strength, my better half; Mohd Alif Naquiddin Bin Romeli, my supporter and backbone who has always understood and shared my conviction. Through the ups and down, he remarkably persistent to love, motivate and inspire me to persevere and never lose faith in me even at the darkest moment where even I started to doubt myself. For that, I will always be grateful.

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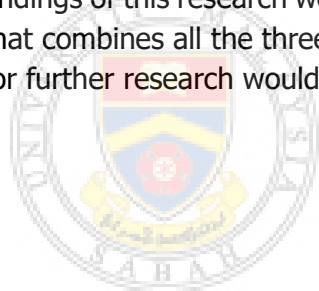
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17 January 2023

ABSTRACT

English teachers' language proficiency is one of the important factors in determining the quality of overall ESL classroom in any level of learning especially in the primary setting. This survey research aims to uncover the influence of English language teachers' proficiency and their perception on professional development programme's effectiveness. Furthermore, this research also wishes to shed light on the influence of proficiency and foreign language teaching anxiety. The questionnaire used in this research was adopted from Teachers Self-Assessment Survey created by Learning Forward (2012), and Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale developed by Kim and Kim in 2004. This research was administered on 162 primary school English teachers who have sat for the CEFR-aligned assessment test in the Northern West Coast of Sabah. The data gathered was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science, SPSS. The findings unearthed that, foreign language teaching anxiety exercises negative influence with both professional development programme and English language teachers' proficiency. Despite being an essential medium for in-service teachers' advancement, no significant correlation was found between professional development programme and ESL teachers' language proficiency. The findings of this research would add to the scarcity of literature especially on research that combines all the three variables. Furthermore, discussion as well as implication for further research would be discussed thoroughly in the thesis.



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ABSTRAK

PENGARUH PROGRAM PEMBANGUNAN PROFESSIONALISMA DAN KERISAUAN MENGAJAR BAHASA ASING TERHADAP KOMPETENSI BAHASA GURU BAHASA INGGERIS

Kompetensi Bahasa dalam kalangan guru Bahasa inggeris ialah salah satu faktor penentu kepada kualiti keseluruhan bilik darjah Bahasa inggeris terutamanya di sekolah rendah. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mendedahkan pengaruh kompetensi bahasa guru terhadap persepsi mereka terhadap keberkesanan program pembangunan professionalisma keguruan. Di samping itu, kajian ini juga berharap dapat mengetengahkan pengaruh serta hubungan di antara kerisauan mengajar bahasa inggeris, terhadap tahap kompetensi bahasa guru. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini, di garap dari pada ujian sendiri guru yang di cipta oleh Learning Forward (2012) dan juga FLTAS yang dibina oleh Kim dan Kim pada tahun 2004. Instrumen ini di tadbir ke atas 162 orang guru bahasa inggeris sekolah rendah yang telah menduduki ujian CEFR setara di Kawasan Pantai Barat Utara Sabah. Data yang di dapati di analisis menggunakan SPSS. Dapatan kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa terdapat pengaruh negatif yang signifikan di antara kerisauan mengajar bahasa Inggeris, terhadap program pembangunan professionalisma dan tahap kompetensi guru. Walaupun program professionalisma di katakan mempunyai peranan yang penting dalam pembelajaran guru dalam perkhidmatan, tidak terdapat sebarang hubungan di antara program pembangunan professionalisma dan tahap kompetensi bahasa guru. Dapatan kajian ini akan menambah kepada kurangnya sumber literatur yang menggabungkan ketiga-tiga pemboleh ubah. Kemudian, perbincangan dan juga implikasi untuk kajian seterusnya akan dibincangkan dengan lebih lanjut.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FLTA	- Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety
FLA	- Foreign Language Anxiety
TA	- Teaching Anxiety
FLTAS	- Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale
INSET	- In-service Training Programme
PDP	- Professional Development Programme
CEFR	- Common European Framework of Reference
SPSS	- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
KSSR	- Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah
MBMMBI	- Memartabatkan Bahasa Melayu, Memperkukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris
PPD	- Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah
SISC+	- School Intervention Specialist Coach
FL	- Foreign Language
SPLKPM	- Sistem Pengurusan Latihan Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
MEC	- Malaysian Examination Council

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The dawn of industrial revolution 4.0 has sparked the evolution of technology and hence changes many aspects of humans' life including the education sector. This phenomenon eventually shifts the way students nowadays think and learn due to the wide sources of knowledge available for them to explore. In other words, the advancement of technology has created a new era of learning. Therefore, adapting immediately to this revolution would serve us the upper hand on gaining as much benefit out of the utilization of automation and cyber technology.

In education sector, there is urgent need for teachers to master their content knowledge on top of the emerging necessary skills to respond to Education 4.0. This is to ensure that the communicative and collaborative language learning is prevalent in line with the 21st century classrooms aspiration. While there are many factors that may contribute to the success of English language learning in Malaysian educational setting, teacher ought to play the most catalytic role (Okmen & Kilic, 2021) and hence tremendous researches have been conducted on various perspectives regarding teachers and their teaching practices (Adi Badiozaman, 2020; Savski, 2020; Kalinowski *et al.*, 2019; Tsang, 2017).

It goes without saying that English teachers therefore must be well-equipped and eclectic in their teaching to accommodate students' growing needs as well as to stay up to the date with the current trend of education (Yang, 2019; Fillerup, 2016). Apart from having a proper mastery of language teaching pedagogy, English teachers have to also equip themselves with a firm grasp on the content knowledge; ability to read, write, listen, and speak fluently in the English language. Having a

good command of English would allow teachers to become a good role model of the language hence enabling them to be more adept in conducting a communicative language classroom well (Tsang, 2017).

Essentially, the level of English teachers' proficiency has brought grave concern to the nation (Kee & Hj Iksan, 2019; Council of Europe, 2018; Saiful Islam Ahmad Sukri, 2018) Many efforts have been channelled to leapfrog the quality of English teachers but to a little fruition (Saiful Islam Ahmad Sukri, 2018b). It is saddening to grapple with the fact that this has contributed to the deterioration of students' performance nationwide (Jones, 2019).

Based on recent report and literature, there are two elements that are closely related when it comes to developing teachers' language proficiency, and they are professional development programme, PDP (Rani, 2020), and foreign language teaching anxiety, FLTA (Aydin & Ustuk, 2020). According to the Chair of ELSQC, Prof Dr Zuraidah Mohd Don, English teachers must be provided with the world class education to develop both English proficiency and the content knowledge to endure excellent pedagogical skills (Abdul Hakim Ali Abdul Aziz *et al.*, 2018). In order to achieve the goal, ELTC has conducted 31 types of courses in which 3634 teachers and other ELT practitioners were trained at various levels (Roberts1 *et al.*, 2020; Kok & Azlina Abdul Aziz, 2019;). The ultimate purpose of such programmes is to provide teachers with support and guidance in order for them to achieve their full potential (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2016).

On the other hand, foreign language teaching anxiety is often described as fear of being judged or evaluated while speaking the language causing speakers to escape situation where applying the target language is necessary. As a result, learners' skills in conversing or utilizing the language is not able to be developed properly due to the lack of practice and exposure. Numerous research in the past have looked into the area of foreign language anxiety from the context of learners and tend to overlook the FLA among teachers. Understanding the existence of anxiety among teachers allow a careful tailoring of intervention that may benefit not only teachers but also Malaysian Education system.

1.2 Background Of Study

Essentially, there are several alarming issues in regard to professional development programme and anxiety in English language teaching. Critically, a series of meta-analysis research consistently claimed that the impact brought by teachers on students' advancement are greater than the impact caused by schools system and environment (Timperley, 2015;Sahlberg, 2010). Hence, the Ministry of Education, MOE has come up with various endeavors to increase the level of language teachers' proficiency in the country. Such endeavors are made to indirectly address the issues of language classroom quality in Malaysia. These initiatives have been clearly explained in the Malaysian Education Blueprint, MEB 2013-2025. Malaysian Education Blueprint, MEB is an important document that portrayed the government aspiration to achieve an excellent standard in education to compete in the global arena.

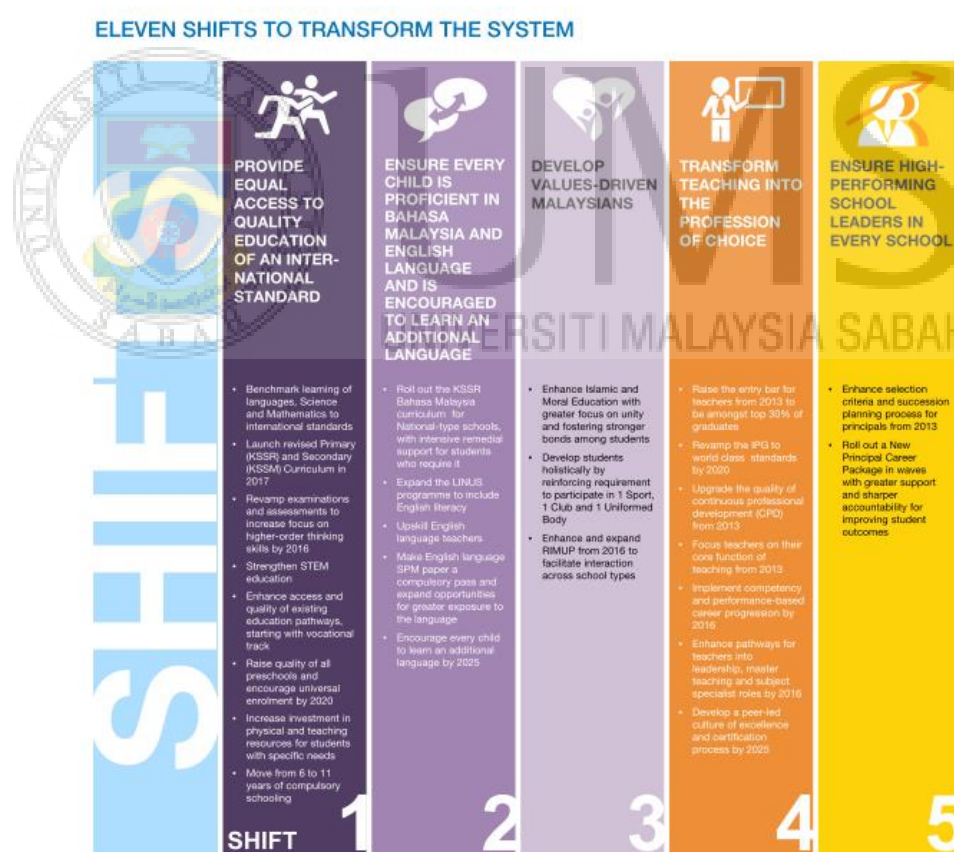


Figure 1.1 : Eleven Shifts to Transform the System

Source : KPM (2013)

Recently, Malaysia has just embarked into the critical period of the third wave (2021-2025). The focus of this wave is to move towards excellence with increased operational flexibility (KPM, 2013).

MEB emphasized eleven shifts that are vital key indicators that have to be achieved in order to transform the education system successfully. Based on figure 1.1, shift four of MEB accentuated the aim of the ministry to transform teaching into a profession of choice (KPM, 2013). Promoting teaching as a career of choice means lifting the quality of the teachers as an icon among the society who promotes moral values and virtues. Undeniably, teaching is a profession of choice in successful countries in terms of education such as Finland. In fact, in a national survey conducted among its youth, more young Finnish opt to be teacher compared to other professions such as entrepreneur, doctor, and engineer (Huang *et al.*, 2018; Sahlberg, 2010).

In line with the aim of MOE to elevate the quality of teaching profession, the quality of PDP for teachers have to be upgraded. This is to ensure that teachers receive adequate support in order to attain their highest potential (Zaini & Mansor, 2021). This is made possible by recruiting only the top 30% graduates and provide the best pre-service and in-service learning journey that is based on competency and performance. According to the document, teachers are going to be offered with exciting career development opportunity and there would be a 'peer-led culture of excellence whereas teachers mentor one-another in sharing the best practice' (KPM, 2013). Besides, upon embarking on teaching profession, teachers, along with their supervisors are going to develop personalized professional development programme that focuses on teachers' preference and needs.

Furthermore, to support teachers' professional development, teachers should focus upon their teaching practice as the central commitment. Teachers would enjoy reduction in administrative burden and seamless data collection and management process (KPM, 2013). Detailed elaboration on PDP can be found in Teacher Continuous Professional Development Blueprint, TCPDPB (2015-2025). All teachers have to fulfil 7 days equivalent to 42 contact hours of PDP consisting of PLC, mentoring, self-learning, training and so on in line with the educational reform

2015-2025 (KPM, 2013). Teacher's attendance on such programme has to be recorded in SPLKPM as an evident on their professional development program requirement.

PDP crafted for teachers utilize the network of peers including teachers' coaches, experienced senior teachers as well as the administrators to help them build the best practice. Unquestionably, such programmes would be a powerful tool in increasing the quality of teachers in helping them to master both the pedagogical and content knowledge essential for teaching (Zaini & Mansor, 2021). Besides, it will also ensure that teachers are provided with support and materials they need in order to grow professionally. In fact, many countries acknowledge the impact that PDP offers to support teachers' progress in ensuring the quality of education. One of the secrets shared by Finland on how the country manage to outnumber many others to be the world best education system is through the investment in effective in-service training system that eventually contributes to the empowerment of teachers (N. Saad & Sankaran, 2019).

Apart from general PDP mentioned earlier, selected English teachers across the country have to attend specific programme served as an intervention to increase their mastery of English language proficiency called the Professional Upskilling of the English language Teachers, Pro-ELT. This programme is also parallel with the Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia's commitment to improve the language competency of the English teachers through professional development programme that is more focused and effective, and consistent with the requirements of the MOE Malaysia to improve the quality of the entire education system. It is one of the programmes outlined by the government to properly and systematically address the issue of language deficiency among English teachers (Islam *et al.*, 2018). It was a partnership the ministry has invested with British Council with the hope of revitalising the quality of English teachers in Malaysia (Islam *et al.*, 2018).

The first cycle of Pro-ELT started in 2012 and lasted for 6 years. Pro-ELT is a 480 hours-blended learning approach with 50% of the session is face to face and the rest is through completing online courses. The first batch of 5,010 teachers participated in the programme for a year. The face-to-face training sessions were