

## Does teachers' knowledge, skill and self-efficacy are important in the implementation of English Literacy?

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**Abstract.** This study was conducted to identify the skills among English teachers in teaching Literacy and Numeracy (LINUS) pupils in primary school. Their skills are being an interesting issue and major factor for pupils' achievement in the LINUS program at school. English Language proficiency has given effect on the pupils' achievement in early literacy. In line with the increasingly sophisticated educational technology era, teacher's skills are very important to improve the best achievement of the pupils. At the end of 2017, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) introduced a new program known as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for year 1 and year 2 pupils in primary schools. CEFR is used to measure the standard level of language proficiency among pupils. There are various problems identified at the beginning of the introduction of this program such as teachers are not competence in implementing the program and pupils are difficult to master the skills required, they also difficult to understand the new syllabus provided and finally, the Ministry's KPI will not be achieved. To achieve the objectives, this study uses the document analysis through the review of literature. Based on the results of the analysis, this study found that teachers faced the difficulties in implementing the new programs and facing the problematic pupils at the same time. Thus, they need time to adapt with the teaching aids that are supplied and require sufficient mental and physical preparedness to achieve the desired learning objectives. In addition, non-skilled teachers also face job stress as they have to face the on-going monitoring of the superior.

### Introduction

The English teachers' skill in planning the teaching and learning process in the classroom has become a major factor in the achievement of the pupils. Pupils in the early stages of learning need special attention to provide their ability before they enter a higher level. The mastery of basic reading and writing skills will in particular help these pupils to be more prepared in the face of various other skills in the classroom. In line with the advancement of education today, they must be more prepared to master various skills in order to compete with different background backgrounds. In producing human capital with diverse skills and knowledges, this responsibility is given to a teacher while they are in school.

However, there are still teachers who do not have the skills they should have to deal with special pupils such as learning problem-takers. Learning problem-solving pupils need the special skills of teacher to enable them to take good learning.

### Research Problem

Teacher skills play an important role in the impact of learning outcomes in the classroom. Proficient teachers in handling the teaching and learning process will succeed in providing their pupils with the best achievement. In a classroom with pupils from diverse backgrounds, the level of mastery of teachers should be more intelligent in handling them. Teachers should not generalize pupils by giving the same input to each pupil in the hope that they will be able to master everything they are taught. They must provide appropriate input for each student.

For mainstream pupils, they have no problem in accepting the content of the lessons. However, for pupils with learning difficulties they will face problems if the content of the learning is more difficult and complex for them. It is the teachers' responsibility to use their skills to modify the content of learning so that they are happy to receive the content of the lessons delivered.

### Literature Review

**Teachers' skill and knowledge.** All teachers have their hope that they can teach in a very good ways. But they also have their limitation because of many factors. Some of them did not have enough skills to teach pupils in the classroom because they do not have special skills for each lesson. Although they have not enough skills, they need to teach because of their responsibilities to the school and to the pupils as well. In the classroom, the pupils are not the same. They come from

different background, languages, and education profiles. Some read and write above grade level in their own language; others have had limited schooling. Some enter school highly motivated to learn because of family support or an innate drive to succeed; others have had negative school experiences that squelched their motivation. Many come from middle-class families with high levels of literacy; others live in poverty without books in their homes (Short & Echevarria, 2005).

Teachers nowadays need several of the skills so that they can solve pupil's problems. Teachers must also learn knowledge every day because learning to teach is an on-going process that begins from the pre-service teacher education programme and continues into the initial three years of teaching (Choy, L. Wong & Ming Lim, 2013). They must always update their knowledge so that it suits to their pupils. They also must be aware of current trends and take the initiative to implement all the new skill in the classroom (Mohani et al., 2017).

Teacher education has become an area of considerable interest in policymakers in many countries over recent years. Teacher's knowledge and skills in qualified teaching is of great importance (Tarasenkova & Akulenko, 2015). Teachers who are knowledgeable in their area will be more reliable by their pupils and they will be more comfortable in dealing with pupils' mobility (Eshtehardi, 2014). They can gain student's believes that they can teach them properly (Boateng & Sekyere, 2018).

Teachers must have knowledge in various fields to teach children with a variety of abilities (Epstein & Willhite, 2015). Pupils with multiple abilities will give different to respond to the learning process. For example, in a class that has a many of student backgrounds, the teacher must provide clear instructions so that weak pupils can also understand the instructions given (Muñoz, 2016). The failure of the teacher in providing clear directions will make the pupils difficult to understand the content of learning.

Teachers' perceptions of their level of knowledge, skills and experience have an important role in overcoming difficult situations effectively during their professional life (Savaş, Bozgeyik, & Eser, 2014). They have to know each of their pupils attitude, because different pupils have needed help in different ways (Mohani et al., 2017). Pupils with special needs require more attentions than mainstream pupils. They need special teacher that can teach them in the right technique so that they can understand well.

**Teacher's Self-efficacy.** Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in one's ability to effectively direct one's actions to achieve the set goals and succeed in completing a specific task (Bandura, 1993). Self-efficacy refers to a person's perceived capability, as distinct from functional ability, to perform a particular action or course of action (Malinauskas, 2017). Teachers must have high self-efficacy while teaching as they are an icon for the pupils to succeed in the lesson. High-confidence teachers will be able to deliver good learning content with all levels of pupils. Previous researchers found that experienced teacher have more confident to teach in their abilities to teach and manage their classrooms in ways that would even be beneficial to the most difficult-to-reach pupils (Mohani et al., 2017).

Efficacy includes teacher confidence in instructional, management and collaboration skills (Epstein & Willhite, 2015). While teaching as English as second language, teachers need to have high level of self-efficacy so that they have motivated and confidence to teach. Regularly, pupils are too embarrassed to communicate with English because their peers' factors are mocking them and are not convinced to speak properly (Corkett, Hatt, & Benevides, 2011). Pupils in special needs especially, they have low motivated to learn and also did not confident to compete with others. Teachers also play an important role in formation of student self-efficacy and achievement. While self-efficacy on the part of both teachers and pupils is thought to be related directly to teacher and student success (Mohani et al., 2017).

According to (Boateng & Sekyere, 2018) an early childhood teacher education programmes should focus more on equipping the teachers on how to engage pupils as individuals or group in range of educationally purposeful activities to help them become and remain involved, invested, or motivated for learning. This research shows that, teacher efficacy also relate to the pupils self-efficacy so that the pupils have high motivated to learn and finally they are success in their study.

### Research Methodology

This study uses qualitative methods by carrying out literature analysis of past studies. Qualitative research has different data forms that differ from quantitative research. Qualitative data is in the form of interviews, observations, and document analysis (Wach, Ward, & Jacimovic, 2013).

The literature analysis provides clearer information on ongoing research. The resources needed for this study are also valid and accessible (Sciences, 2014). This is because every analysed source such as journals, books, and scientific writing contains complete evidences to further reinforce the issue.

## Results

Through literature analysis, the study found that there were three major factors contributing to the implementation of English Literacy in primary schools.

The first factor is the teacher's skills. Teachers must have the appropriate skills to teach English subjects because these subjects are difficult to understand by some pupils (Boateng & Sekyere, 2018). Special needs pupils may be doing not to understand the topic, the task and the materials given the textbook. So, teacher needs an extra knowledge's to explain to them so that they can understand it clearly. Teachers who did not have skill in English Literacy and have no experience in handling special needs pupils will have problems with planning their teaching (Norfazila Ghazali & Mustafa Che Omar, 2017). In addition, English Literacy teachers also face difficult challenges in which they have to control the special needs of pupils in the same classroom. This situation did not occur to the teaching process of Bahasa Melayu and Mathematics because for both these subjects, special teachers were responsible for taking on teaching and focusing on this group of pupils.

Secondly, the factor of implementation of English Literacy is teacher's knowledge. Since the English literacy learner involves level one pupils, the teacher must have a special knowledge of attitudes and needs of level one pupils. Teachers need a specific knowledge in the provision of teaching aids to enable them to be compatible with the pupil's level (Biçer, 2016). Not every pupil has the ability to understand the lesson well. They need specific materials and specific instruction so that they can do the task perfectly. The implementation of this English literacy requires skilled teachers in various fields as it is the foundation of the success of students in the early stages of schooling. The introduction to CEFR program to further strengthens the LINUS program also requires teachers' knowledge in mastery of the English language (Luyee, Roselan, Anwardeen, & Mustafa, 2015). This is because the program is a new program and not all teachers have the expertise in handling this program. Knowledge is the important factors because in the classroom there are multiple ability of pupils. Teachers also need to do a principle of differentiation in the classroom to ensure that students have opportunities to learn material in a variety of ways (Tomlinson, 2015).

Finally, teachers also need high self-efficacy so that they can implement the English Literacy program successfully. School administrators play a big role in giving teachers the opportunity to attend courses, workshops and engagements in a professionalism enhancement program so that they have the greatest efficacy to teach (Malinauskas, 2017). Some headmasters stated that they understood the purpose of conducting LINUS in school, yet no additional courses or training was provided to them before the LINUS program started (Sani & Idris, 2013). Training is needed to enhance their understanding on the implementation of the LINUS program in schools. Without the required training, the headmasters carried out the LINUS program based on their discretion and creativity and this has influenced the achievement of LINUS program goals (Luyee et al., 2015). They also can be highly motivated to teach in the classroom (Seals, Mehta, Berzina-Pitcher, & Graves-Wolf, 2017). Thus, a teacher's confidence to perform specific tasks may be considered the very essence of teacher or teaching efficacy or self-efficacy, because the tasks of teaching are primarily concerned with facilitating pupils' learning (Filatov & Pill, 2015).

## Conclusion

This study has successfully identified the factors faced by teachers in the implementation of English Literacy in primary schools. Teachers' skill and knowledge are the important factors contributing to the successful completion of English Language Literacy in schools. In addition, efficacy also contributes to the issue of English Literacy in primary schools. Those factors should be addressed by MOE so that efforts to improve the achievement of English Literacy will be more successful in the future. More research should be conducted to provide valuable suggestions to improve the quality of the LINUS 2.0 early literacy program in Malaysia.

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