

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the pivotal role played by English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in fostering writing proficiency within ESL classrooms, in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the secondary level. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study unfolds across five distinct chapters. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the research, encapsulating the background, rationale, objectives, research questions, conceptual framework, significance, limitations, and terminological definitions. Chapter 2 delves into a thorough examination of pertinent literature, explaining the connection between the study's focus and extant scholarship, particularly concerning CEFR-aligned assessment of writing skills within the ESL classrooms. Chapter 3 explains the research methodology, including the rationale behind opting for a qualitative paradigm, as well as expounding upon research design, procedures, data collection methods, instruments utilised, techniques for data analysis, reliability measures, and ethical considerations germane to the investigation. Subsequently, Chapter 4 embarks on a comprehensive analysis and discourse of the findings derived from the data. Finally, Chapter 5 furnishes conclusive insights drawn from the study's findings, concluding in recommendations informed by the research outcomes. Through this structured framework, the study endeavours to provide valuable insights into the

efficacy of ESL teachers in nurturing writing competencies aligned with CEFR standards in secondary education contexts.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Malaysia, historically a British colony, has embraced English as a secondary language since the late 19th century, primarily through its integration into missionary schools (Shanmugavelu et al., 2020). Collaboration between Malay and English-speaking educational institutions ensued, although it was not until 1971 that the government mandated Malay as the official language of instruction across all schools (Sidek, 2017).

Despite English's status as one of the most widely used languages globally being well-established (Crystal, 2020), its pedagogical emphasis in Malaysian schools declined during the 1970s due to burgeoning national pride and economic prosperity (Smith, 2020). However, the early 1990s witnessed a resurgence in its importance, spurred by globalisation and the nation's economic development (Michaud & Colpitts, 2015). Consequently, Malaysian students began to recognise the intrinsic value of acquiring English as a Second Language (ESL), a recognition underscored by Malaysia's official acknowledgement of English as a second language within its education system (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2022).

Notwithstanding this historical foundation, the current state of English proficiency among Malaysian students remains concerning. Despite an average exposure of 11 years to English language instruction in schools, its integration into society remains incomplete, evoking significant apprehension among teachers

regarding students' proficiency levels (Li & Razali, 2019). This deficiency is manifest in the substantial language gap observed among young Malaysians, even among individuals with equivalent educational backgrounds, many of whom struggle to articulate coherent English sentences.

Compounding this issue is the realisation that proficiency in English extends beyond mere communication, with ramifications for post-school employment and educational pursuits (Mohd Don & Abdullah, 2019). The Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development (MECD) underscores this concern, highlighting how inadequate English language skills have constrained the employability of a considerable number of graduates nationwide (Azreen Hani, 2021).

Recognising the imperative for educational reform, former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad advocates for a comprehensive overhaul of the education system to propel future generations towards progress (Wong, 2018). This vision is encapsulated within the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, which underscores the necessity of enhancing students' English language proficiency to cultivate cosmopolitan citizens for the 21st century. The MEB 2013-2025 delineates a multifaceted framework comprising eleven fundamental shifts, with the second shift mandating English instruction by proficient teachers for every student.

In order to operationalise these objectives, the English Language Standards and Quality Council produced the 'Roadmap 2015-2025 (Ministry of Education, 2015),' a comprehensive strategy that aims to modernise the English language and provide a future plan for moving the citizens of Malaysia to be proficient in the English language. This roadmap outlines proficiency targets based on the Common European Framework

of Reference (CEFR) for students, English teachers, and lecturers across different educational levels (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Targeted CEFR achievement levels specified within the Roadmap for various stages of education in Malaysia.

Stage of Education	CEFR Achievement Level
Option Lecturer	C2
Option teacher/officer	C1
University	B2/C1
Post Secondary	B2
Secondary	B1
Primary	A2
Preschool	Pre-A1 (working towards A1)

The Roadmap defines achievement level aspirations applicable to all components of English language proficiency, encompassing students, English option teachers, and lecturers. Notably, the complexity inherent in writing skills often surpasses that of reading, listening, and speaking, as highlighted by cognitive psychologists. This complexity stems from the multifaceted nature of writing, where writers must navigate between maintaining a formal tone and ensuring grammatical simplicity to facilitate clear communication and reader comprehension (Smith, 2018).

This study embarks on an exploration of the pivotal role ESL teachers play in cultivating writing proficiency within ESL classrooms, aligning with CEFR assessment standards while accommodating the diverse needs of students. Through a comprehensive analysis, this research aims to furnish recommendations for enhancing pedagogical approaches and fostering academic achievement within educational settings. Recognising the centrality of language acquisition in this endeavour, a

fundamental renewal of the Malaysian education system is deemed indispensable across all educational tiers. Consequently, the subsequent subsection briefly delves into the significance of ESL teachers within this broader educational reform discourse.

1.3 ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) TEACHERS

English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers play a crucial role in facilitating language acquisition and communication among non-native speakers within the classroom setting (Mutabak, 2018). By designing engaging lessons that encompass vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, ESL teachers foster academic and cultural proficiency among their students.

Educational institutions can optimise their curriculum, teaching methods, and external references for English language learning by employing and defining a language model. Freeman (2016) underscores that these elements, including curriculum design, instructional strategies, and external resources, all revolve around the central goal of fostering English language proficiency, thereby crucially shaping the effectiveness of English language education. Lee and VanPatten (2019) highlight the pivotal role of ESL teachers in both creating and executing lesson plans, leveraging their proficiency in English to create a positive learning environment conducive to student creativity and critical thinking.

The significance of ESL teachers within the educational system stems from their expertise, passion, and unwavering commitment to student success. Through active engagement in classroom discourse and continuous assessment of student progress, ESL teachers endeavour to meet the aspirational CEFR language proficiency targets set

forth by the Ministry of Education. Central to their role is the cultivation of well-rounded language proficiency across all language skills, including writing, which Zhu (2019) contends is increasingly indispensable in today's workforce.

Despite the undeniable importance of writing skills, ESL teachers encounter various challenges in their instructional endeavours. These hurdles range from grammatical issues among students to a lack of enthusiasm for writing, compounded by differences in academic ability within the classroom. Novice teachers, in particular, may struggle with managing diverse learning needs within the ESL context, worsened by time constraints inherent in the writing process.

Acknowledging these challenges, it becomes crucial to consider teachers' capabilities and constraints when devising strategies for teaching writing skills in ESL classrooms. Adherence to updated guidelines and frameworks, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) implemented by the Ministry of Education, can reinforce teachers' efficiency in imparting writing skills. Chapter 2 delves deeper into the nuances of teaching writing skills in ESL contexts, encompassing discussions on assessment practices, teacher competencies, limitations, and the alignment of teaching practices with CEFR standards within the Malaysian educational setting.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The effective teaching of writing skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms poses significant challenges for ESL teachers, primarily due to the numerous obstacles faced by ESL students in acquiring proficient writing abilities.

These challenges encompass a range of factors, including limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, a lack of preparation, and insufficient access to reading resources (Moses & Muhammad, 2019). Consequently, these impediments hinder teachers' efforts to effectively impart writing skills to their students, compounded by additional challenges such as varying levels of student enthusiasm, demanding materials, and time constraints. To address these challenges and ensure comprehensive language development, the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessments can provide a structured framework for evaluating students' writing proficiency levels and guiding instructional strategies tailored to their individual needs.

Moreover, the successful implementation of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)-aligned writing assessment in ESL classrooms is contingent upon teachers' attitudes and pedagogical competencies (Sidhu et al., 2018; Abd Aziz & Uri, 2017; Nawai & Said, 2020; Alih et al., 2020). Research indicates that teachers' reluctance and inadequate understanding of CEFR-aligned assessment methodologies significantly impact students' learning outcomes (Sidhu et al., 2018; Abd Aziz & Uri, 2017; Nawai & Said, 2020; Alih et al., 2020). Teachers' unfamiliarity with the CEFR standards and their reluctance to integrate them into instructional practices hinder the effective teaching, acquisition, and assessment of language skills across all four language domains (Alih et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the prevalent reliance on test-based assessments perpetuates a narrow educational approach that fails to foster independent cognitive skills among students (Sman, 2018; Adam et al., 2019). Despite the recognised importance of assessment in promoting student engagement and skill acquisition, many teachers

continue to utilise traditional textbook exercises due to perceived time constraints and resource limitations (Sidhu et al., 2018; Azli & Akmar, 2019). Consequently, there exists a critical need for ESL teachers to enhance their assessment techniques and align them with CEFR standards to effectively evaluate and improve students' writing proficiency.

However, comprehensive research on the assessment of writing abilities within the CEFR framework remains limited, particularly in the context of ESL instruction. This study aims to address this research gap by investigating ESL teachers' perceptions of the CEFR, its implementation challenges, and teachers' strategies for addressing them, with a specific focus on writing skills. By utilising the School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+) and the Head of English Language Panel as proxies, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the current state of CEFR-aligned assessment implements in ESL classrooms and propose recommendations for enhancing writing instruction in alignment with CEFR standards.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to delve into the perspectives and practices of ESL teachers regarding the implementation of writing assessments aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in ESL classrooms. Specifically, the research seeks to elucidate two key aspects: firstly, teachers' views, perceptions, and approaches concerning the integration of CEFR-aligned writing assessments; and secondly, the challenges encountered by teachers in this endeavour, along with the potential solutions they have devised.

The implementation of CEFR-aligned assessments holds significant implications for preparing students to meet international English language standards, thereby enhancing their language proficiency and competitiveness in a global context. By comprehensively examining ESL teachers' experiences and insights, this study aspires to enrich the existing research base pertaining to the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments in ESL classrooms. The findings derived from this investigation are anticipated to offer valuable insights and recommendations to inform and improve future practices, aligning with the objectives outlined in the 2015-2025 educational roadmap. Through this endeavour, the study attempts to contribute to the ongoing discourse and advancement of English language education within the Malaysian context.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research aims to investigate teachers' assessment practices in implementing CEFR-aligned assessment in ESL learning. There are four specific objectives, namely:

1. To investigate teachers' perceptions and views on the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms.
2. To explore teachers' practices in the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms.
3. To investigate challenges teachers encounter when implementing CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms.

4. To explore solutions used by teachers to address the challenges encountered during the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is: 'How do teachers conduct assessment activities for writing skills by implementing CEFR-aligned assessment in writing classrooms? In-depth interviews, reflective journals, and analysis of some related documents were conducted to answer the main research questions. A qualitative approach was adopted, focusing on these few questions:

1. How do teachers perceive and view the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms?
2. How do teachers implement CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter when implementing CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms?
4. How do teachers deal with the challenges they encounter during the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms?

1.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study implements a conceptual framework to operationalise its research methodology, aiming for a comprehensive and accurate approach. Recognising the complexity of the study objectives, the researcher employs a combination of models

and theories to guide the investigation effectively. Specifically, the conceptual framework integrates elements from the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) and the Social Cognitivism Theory (SCT), tailored to elucidate the study's focus on ESL teachers' integration of writing skills instruction with CEFR-aligned assessments.

The Social Cognitivism Theory (SCT), which is primarily associated with Albert Bandura (1977), also known as sociocultural theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978), underscores the significance of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. This theoretical framework posits that knowledge acquisition occurs through engagement within specific social and cultural contexts. In the context of this study, SCT provides a lens through which to explore teachers' perspectives on CEFR-aligned assessment, enlightening how their views, practices, and expectations shape their perceptions of this new assessment strategy, particularly concerning the teaching of writing skills.

Complementing SCT, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) emerges as a pragmatic framework for guiding the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments within ESL classrooms. CBAM is structured to assist teachers in navigating any apprehensions they may encounter when introducing new practices or technologies into their instructional setting. The model comprises three distinctive phases: assessing teachers' concerns, providing information and training, and assessing the implementation process.

In the first phase of CBAM, teachers' concerns regarding the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments are identified through methods such as interviews or focus groups. Subsequently, in the second phase, teachers are equipped with the

requisite knowledge and training to address these concerns and effectively implement the new assessment strategy. This phase may involve workshops, seminars, or online resources aimed at enhancing teachers' understanding and proficiency in implementing CEFR-aligned assessments. Finally, in the third phase, the implementation process is evaluated to gauge its efficacy and identify areas for refinement. By adopting CBAM, teachers can proactively address their concerns surrounding the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments in ESL classrooms, fostering a more effective and successful implementation process. This, in turn, holds the potential to enhance academic performance and cultivate greater success among students in their future endeavours.

Moreover, the conceptual framework aligns with the integration of assessment into teaching and learning practices advocated by scholars such as Black et al. (2003) and Hill and McNamara (2010). Drawing from Black et al. (2003), the framework encompasses various assessment practices, including verbal questioning, feedback, self-assessment, peer assessment, and summative assessment data, thereby enriching the study's assessment dimension. This comprehensive conceptual framework, depicted in Figure 1.1, serves as a roadmap for investigating the integration of CEFR-aligned writing assessments into ESL instruction, encapsulating the synergistic interplay between theory, practice, and assessment methodologies.

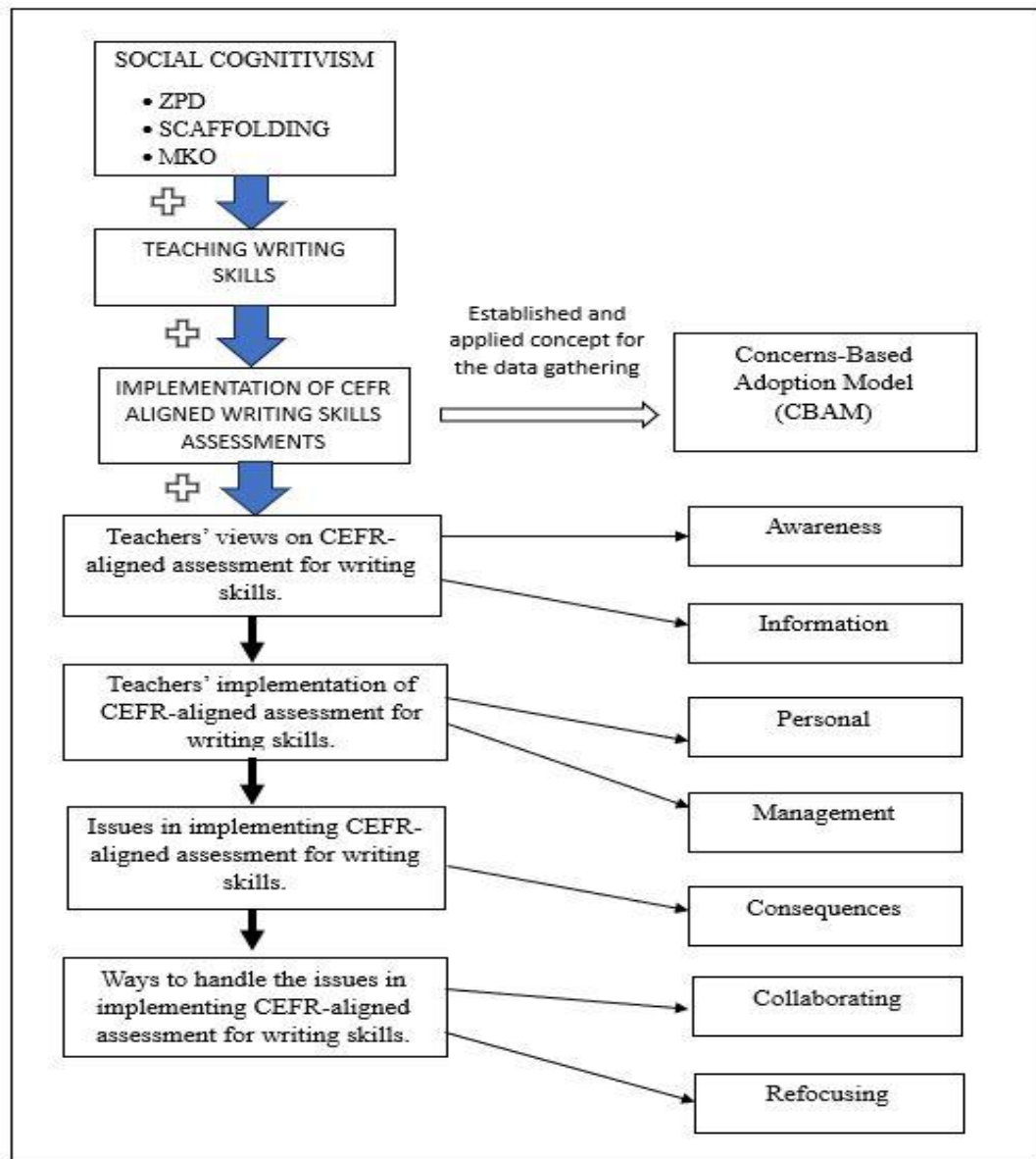


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 illustrates the utilisation of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) within the conceptual framework of this study, highlighting its seven distinct phases: awareness, information, personal, management, consequences, collaboration, and refocusing. Each phase of the CBAM framework holds significance in operationalising the study's objectives.

The first research objective, corresponding to the awareness and information stages, aims to explore teachers' initial awareness of the new practice, combined with their endeavours to seek information about its implementation in their classrooms. This entails investigating whether teachers are aware of the CEFR-aligned writing assessments and their implications for instruction. Subsequently, the second research question aligns with the personal and management stages of CBAM, focusing on teachers' personal reflections and professional considerations regarding the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments. This involves examining how teachers perceive the impact of the new practice on their personal and professional roles and their efforts in planning and preparing for its implementation.

Moving forward, the third research question delves into the consequences stage of CBAM, probing whether teachers are actively experimenting with the new practice and making necessary adjustments based on their experiences. This phase encompasses teachers' initial implementation efforts and their responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities. Lastly, the fourth research question corresponds to the collaboration and refocusing stages of CBAM, exploring the extent to which teachers engage in collaborative sharing of experiences and reflections on the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments. This involves investigating whether teachers collaborate with peers to exchange insights and collectively refine their instructional practices.

The CBAM framework serves as a systematic tool for collecting data on teachers' concerns and experiences at each stage of the adoption process. This data, in turn, informs targeted professional development initiatives aimed at supporting teachers in their implementation of CEFR-aligned writing assessments in ESL classrooms. The

imperative to elevate Malaysian standards and enhance English language proficiency underscores the significance of leveraging the CEFR framework and associated assessment methodologies. In order to delve deeper into the theoretical underpinnings and practical application of CBAM within the context of this study, Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive exploration of the theory and model, elucidating their relevance and utility in operationalising CEFR-aligned assessment practices for writing skills.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Creswell (2009) emphasises the importance of conveying the significance of a study to relevant stakeholders who stand to benefit from its findings. This research endeavours to address a key objective outlined in the Malaysian Education Plan (MEB) 2013-2025 and Roadmap 2015-2025, pertaining to the enhancement of English language proficiency among students. With the adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by Malaysian educational institutions in 2017, this framework serves as a pivotal tool in facilitating language proficiency assessment within the Malaysian education system.

The significance of this research lies in its examination of the assessment of English as a Second Language (ESL) writing skills in alignment with the CEFR. By bridging the gap between assessment practices and teaching and learning philosophies, this study aims to underscore the interrelation of these aspects, which are often perceived as distinct entities. Proficiency in writing transcends language boundaries, necessitating assessment methods that align with the CEFR to enhance writing assessment practices, ensure ongoing evaluation of student progress, and foster the development of writing abilities.

This study offers practical insights for English teachers tasked with conducting CEFR-aligned writing skills assessments in ESL classrooms. Through large-scale, semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers and leaders of the English Language Panel and the School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+), the integration of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment is examined from multiple perspectives, grounded in empirical data.

Moreover, the research contributes empirical evidence on the adoption and implementation of the CEFR framework in Malaysia, enriching the existing body of knowledge in this area. By advocating for the integration of CEFR-aligned writing assessments, the study advocates for a shift towards prioritising the writing process over outcome-based assessment measures. This approach not only enhances students' confidence and writing skills but also fosters a competitive classroom environment conducive to academic growth.

Furthermore, the study offers valuable insights for prospective teachers, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers. It informs instructional practices, data gathering methods, and assessment strategies pertinent to English language education. By equipping teacher training departments and curriculum development units with actionable insights, this research aids in the preparation and implementation of English language curriculum and assessments aligned with global standards, as advocated by the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (MES) and Ministry of Education.

In conclusion, this study underscores the imperative for English teachers and educational authorities to comprehend and effectively implement CEFR-aligned classroom assessment methods. By elucidating the associated challenges and proposing

viable solutions, this research seeks to contribute towards the advancement of English language education in Malaysia.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the utilisation of assessments aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for assessing writing skills in ESL classrooms, while also exploring how these assessments contribute to equipping students with the requisite English language proficiency as mandated by the Malaysian curriculum standards.

Despite achieving its objectives, the research encountered several inevitable limitations. Firstly, the study employs qualitative methods only, including semi-structured interviews and document analysis, as the primary means of data collection. The participant pool comprises ten individuals, including English language teachers, Heads of English Language Panels, and a School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+), selected from specific schools in the Seremban District, Negeri Sembilan. While the insights gained from this sample are valuable, they may not fully represent the diverse population of Malaysian teachers.

Furthermore, due to restrictions imposed by the Education Planning and Research Department (EPRD) of the Ministry of Education, classroom observations were not feasible, necessitating reliance on data collected by the Heads of English Language Panels and the SISC+. Additionally, changes in school timetables prompted a delay in data collection until March, aligning with the commencement of the new school year to facilitate the processing of students' reflective journals.

Moreover, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to data collection, necessitating a shift towards virtual interviews conducted via Google Meet. Furthermore, unforeseen circumstances, such as one participant's illness with COVID-19, resulted in the need for a replacement within the participant pool. However, despite these challenges, a suitable replacement was identified and selected by the relevant educational authorities.

In summary, while this study sheds light on the pivotal role of ESL teachers in shaping writing skills aligned with the CEFR in upper secondary school settings, it is imperative to acknowledge and address the inherent limitations encountered during the research process. Despite these constraints, the findings offer valuable insights into the integration of CEFR-aligned assessments in ESL classrooms, providing a foundation for further research and informing educational practices aimed at enhancing English language proficiency among Malaysian students.

1.11 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this chapter, detailed definitions of the terms employed in the study are elucidated to foster an unambiguous and consistent understanding of these terms across the research endeavour.

1.11.1 Assessment

Assessment, as defined in this study, serves as a mechanism to provide feedback indicative of knowledge acquisition and learning progression, rather than merely identifying gaps in understanding. Assessment is construed as a carefully considered opinion or judgement concerning someone or something. The assessments undertaken

in this research centre on eliciting teachers' perspectives regarding the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessments for writing skills in ESL classrooms. These assessments encompass a comprehensive evaluation of all activities and exercises aimed at aligning learning assessments with the CEFR framework in ESL contexts. This conceptualisation of assessment aligns with the perspectives of Black and William (1998) and Cheng and Fox (2017), who conceptualise assessment as encompassing self-assessment tasks conducted by both teachers and students, compliant data that can inform instructional modifications and enhance learning outcomes.

1.11.2 Teaching

Teaching encompasses a multifaceted process within the classroom environment, extending beyond the learner and encompassing a continuum of instructional events (Sequeira, 2012). Central to effective teaching is responsiveness to the diverse needs of each learner, the adaptation of curriculum to their individual characteristics, and the fostering of critical thinking alongside the cultivation of their interests and aspirations. Moreover, teaching endeavours to cultivate and enhance students' language proficiency (Talib, 2000). This study aims to improve teachers' understanding of strategies to boost their students' writing skills utilising the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), thereby fostering 21st-century learning practices and augmenting students' learning proficiencies. Through the implementation of classroom assessments aligned with the CEFR, teachers are empowered to provide guidance to students, affording them opportunities for language exploration and continual improvement in their language competencies.

1.11.3 Learning

Learning, as posited by Sequeira (2012), entails a transformative process characterised by the acquisition of new skills, the comprehension of specific rules, and the evolution of attitudes. Essentially, learning manifests as an alteration of behaviour as a result of experiential encounters. Within the context of this study, learning is conceptualised as occurring within a formal educational setting, where students engage in the process-driven approach facilitated by teachers to acquire writing skills. Through active engagement in the teaching process, students demonstrate progress towards their learning objectives, independently refining their writing abilities by internalising writing rules and subsequently adapting their attitudes towards English writing.

1.11.4 Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) aligned Assessments

The widely used Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes language proficiency. It comprises six levels of language competence, from A1 (beginner) to C2 (advanced). Examinations based on the CEFR assess language competence at these levels. The descriptors describe the skills and competencies expected at each proficiency level in listening, reading, speaking, production, and writing. The tasks simulate a real conversation, compare it with the CEFR levels, and show language competence. CEFR-aligned assessments are useful for academic, professional, and general language acquisition (Le, 2018). Internationally recognised assessments that align with the CEFR benefit learners and institutions. They help educational institutions and language programmes to communicate language competence. CEFR-aligned assessments allow for self-assessment, helping learners to recognise their strengths and weaknesses. It allows learners, teachers, and employers to assess language competence in a standardised and globally recognised way.

1.11.5 English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a Second Language (ESL) has equal or greater status than the mother tongue (Shu Dingfang, 1994). ESL refers to those who learn English in countries where English is a method of communication and is spoken formally (Iwai, 2011). ESL is the second language that students in Malaysia need to learn for learning, communication, and professional requirements. In this study, ESL learning focuses on improving writing skills using CEFR-aligned assessment to help teachers assess students' progress.

1.11.6 Writing skills

Writing skills are the ability to express thoughts, facts, or arguments in writing (Wafiya & Kheryadi, 2020). The writer's clear and coherent expression helps the reader understand the message. The writer uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation, which improves the readability of the text. The introduction, main body, and conclusion are logically organised. Well-structured paragraphs and wording make the content coherent. The writing style and tone are tailored to the formality, prior knowledge, and expectations of the audience. The author shows ingenuity and originality with clear points of view and thoughts. The writer supports his/her arguments with relevant and convincing evidence. The writer properly references sources. The writer revises and edits to improve clarity, coherence, and quality. The text follows style rules and formatting criteria, demonstrating attention to detail and professionalism. An author who is able to write well demonstrates these habits regularly.

1.11.7 English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher

English as a Second Language (ESL) classes help non-native speakers learn the language. The ESL teachers create and teach complete English classes based on

students' needs and competencies. They use interactive exercises, hands-on projects, and multimedia materials to create a lively learning environment (Ganapathy & Seetharam, 2016). ESL teachers constantly assess students' English comprehension and offer helpful critiques to help them progress. They recognise students' diverse cultural backgrounds and incorporate cultural components into the classroom to create an inclusive and respectful learning environment. ESL teachers recognise that students learn differently. They use a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles and provide an excellent education to all students. In order to successfully teach and connect with students, ESL teachers must have good English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Effective ESL teachers know how to teach, prepare, and assess ESL students. In addition, they must love language learning and want to help their students succeed.

1.11.8 Head of English Language Panel (HoELP)

The Head of English Language Panel (HoELP) oversees and supports English language teaching in the ESL classroom. They direct, guide, and train ESL teachers to ensure quality education for diverse learners. The HoELP establishes goals, policies, and initiatives to improve English language instruction. They work with ESL teachers and curriculum experts to develop and align ESL courses with state and national standards to ensure children receive a comprehensive and challenging English education. ESL teachers receive coaching from the HoELP, who observes, comments, and models good teaching practices. ESL teachers receive professional development from the HoELP on current trends, methods, and best practices. The HoELP should be familiar with ESL pedagogy, curriculum design, assessment methods, and current developments. Moreover, the HoELP should inspire, encourage, and help ESL teachers

achieve their professional goals. The HoELP should love language learning and help ESL students succeed.

1.11.9 School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+)

A School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+) helps ESL teachers and improves teaching in English. They work with ESL teachers to identify areas in need of development, provide individualised coaching, and apply techniques to improve student outcomes. SISC+ works with ESL teachers to analyse their needs, obstacles, and areas for development. They set defined goals for professional development and instructional improvement. ESL teachers receive individualised coaching from the SISC+, which observes, comments, and models good teaching. ESL teachers receive specialised professional development from the SISC+. They teach ESL techniques, assessment, language acquisition theories, and culturally relevant lessons. The SISC+ should be knowledgeable about ESL pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment methods, and current developments. The SISC+ should coach and mentor ESL teachers, provide constructive criticism, model best practices, and promote continuous progress. The SISC+ should love language learning and help ESL teachers and students succeed.

1.12 SUMMARY

This chapter serves as an introductory exposition of the study, wherein the researcher undertook an analysis of the multifaceted challenges associated with the teaching of writing skills. Additionally, the study explores the efficacy of employing the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as a robust method for assessing writing skills in ESL courses. Through this chapter, the rationale for further investigation into a recently established position within the ministry is elucidated,

setting the stage for the subsequent exploration. A comprehensive overview of the literature review pertinent to this research endeavour is elaborated upon in the subsequent chapter.

