

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 provides a thorough discussion encompassing the summaries of all research questions. This chapter is dedicated to considering possible recommendations for implementing the CEFR within the educational framework of Malaysia. Additionally, it deliberates on prospective avenues for further research and the pedagogical implications thence. The essential point of this study is the examination of CEFR-aligned assessment practices pertaining to writing skills within ESL classrooms, as explained in Chapter 4. Consequently, the following four research objectives are analysed in depth: explaining teachers' perspectives and views towards the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessment and its application in the context of writing skills, explaining the challenges encountered in its implementation, and proposing strategies to overcome challenges in fostering writing skills in ESL classrooms.

5.2 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1 (RQ1)

The objective of Research Question 1 (RQ1) is to investigate teachers' perspectives on the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessments for writing skills in ESL classes at secondary schools. Findings indicate a predominantly positive outlook among participants towards the implementation of the new curriculum, aligning with

the CEFR. Teachers collectively acknowledge the transformative and applicable nature of introducing writing skills assessments tied to CEFR standards, viewing it through the lens of policy implementation. Moreover, data suggests that CEFR-aligned assessment serves as a cohesive framework applicable across languages, impacting classroom assessment practices and teaching methodologies in the context of ESL instruction. Insights gleaned from various instruments, including semi-structured interviews and document analysis, underscore the importance of teachers' comprehensive understanding of assessment within the CEFR framework and its pedagogical rationale.

Teachers perceive CEFR-aligned assessments as facilitating the monitoring of student progress in writing skills, aligning with the standards outlined in the CEFR Roadmap (2015-2025). The Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM), discussed in section 2.2.1.3, highlights the subjective nature of educational reform and underscores the significant influence of individual reactions to change on outcomes. Accordingly, teachers adapt their teaching approaches and attitudes towards CEFR-aligned assessment, ultimately shaping its effectiveness in the classroom.

In summary, English teachers in Malaysia demonstrate awareness and knowledge corresponding to the first and second levels of CBAM, particularly at the awareness and information levels, regarding the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment in ESL classrooms. Drawing on their expertise in CEFR and prior teaching experience, they exhibit the capacity to identify and recommend appropriate CEFR proficiency levels, indicating successful implementation of the conceptual framework within this study.

5.3 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2 (RQ2)

Research Question 2 (RQ2) delves into the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment by teachers in ESL classrooms. Recognising teachers as important doers in implementing educational frameworks within institutions, understanding their implementation strategies is vital. This ensures alignment with the Malaysian Education Blueprint for the transformation of the English Curriculum, particularly as the country transitions from Phase 2 (Implementation and Monitoring of Structural Change, 2017-2021) to Phase 3. At this juncture, the imperative lies in rigorously implementing a comprehensive English language curriculum adhering strictly to CEFR standards across all secondary schools in Malaysia. Such a curriculum would significantly influence teaching and learning practices and student assessment. Rigorous monitoring becomes essential once structural changes are fully in place.

Three main practices highlighted by teachers are verbal questioning, CEFR assessment rubrics, and peer assessment. Verbal questioning emerges as a straightforward method for in-class student assessment. Teachers augment this with the provision of CEFR assessment rubrics to students before each class, emphasising requirements to aid in periodic recall. The CEFR serves as the principal reference for both teachers and learners during student assessment. Teachers delegate peer assessment tasks to student groups under their supervision, fostering student understanding of CEFR while engaging them in writing, with the teacher assuming a facilitative role. However, the achievement of this objective hinges on student participation, which, in turn, depends on overall student proficiency levels.

This study reveals that Malaysian English teachers have effectively progressed to the third and fourth levels of CBAM personality and management stages, as evidenced by their implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment in ESL lessons. They demonstrate proficiency in identifying and suggesting effective methods for integrating the CEFR into the writing education evaluation process in the classroom. Thus, the study successfully implements the conceptual framework by incorporating appropriate steps effectively.

5.4 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3 (RQ3)

Research Question 3 (RQ3) aimed to explore the challenges faced by English teachers in implementing writing skills assessments aligned with the CEFR. Through data analysis, two sub-themes emerged: 'insufficient time' reflecting teachers' challenges and 'poor time management' indicating students' difficulties. Employing Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach, the researcher delineated these sub-themes.

Teachers consistently faced the challenge of insufficient teaching time, with the allotted one-hour English class duration often proving inadequate for completing the writing phase and subsequent evaluation. This time constraint necessitated teachers to manage their time judiciously to align assessments with CEFR standards. Poor time management by students further compounded this challenge, as they sometimes had unrestricted time to complete tasks. Additionally, teachers encountered difficulties balancing other school activities or events during lessons, occasionally deviating from the intended curriculum and risking neglect of essential skills such as reading, speaking, and listening.

Overall, the study findings indicate that secondary English teachers' awareness and familiarity with CEFR, as well as their implementation strategies, align with CBAM's levels of awareness and information. This suggests that Malaysian teachers have navigated the initial phases of significant policy changes effectively, as they assess the success of new policies post-proposal and enactment. Insights from teacher feedback could aid the Ministry of Education in gauging the effectiveness of informing and familiarising teachers with CEFR descriptors.

The study also sheds light on the rationale behind integrating CEFR into the Malaysian education system, in-service training for teachers, the development of a local CEFR framework (CEFR-M), and the selection of CEFR-aligned textbooks by the Ministry of Education. Notably, this study contributes significant insights into the challenges faced by teachers, reflecting their genuine concerns. Consequently, the Ministry of Education could leverage these findings to address pertinent challenges effectively in the future. Moreover, the study's exploration of potential implementation problems of CEFR in Malaysia indicates successful operationalisation of the consequence stage of CBAM, capturing teachers' varied practices and perspectives.

5.5 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 4 (RQ4)

This study explains the thorough process undertaken by the Ministry of Education in Malaysia to implement CEFR-aligned assessment practices, with a specific focus on English language teachers. Despite the comprehensive dissemination of this crucial information to the public, it is evident that teachers are increasingly becoming aware of this systematic transformation and are actively engaging with it. Consequently, this

study has significantly enhanced understanding of the process among all Malaysians, particularly English language teachers.

While the current syllabus and assessments align with CEFR standards, it is imperative for the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Cambridge English, to note the recommendations of experienced teachers in this field. A comprehensive overhaul of the curriculum and assessments may not be required. Rather, the Ministry should undertake an investigation to identify assessment components that remain pertinent and can be aligned with the six levels of the CEFR global scale.

This study not only validates the Ministry of Education's concerns regarding anticipated challenges but also brings to light unforeseen obstacles identified by teachers. Despite many English teachers in Malaysia currently having limited understanding of their responsibilities and the trajectory of CEFR-aligned assessment, this study effectively highlights their overall positive and receptive attitude towards CEFR and its impending transformations. A notable discovery is that Malaysian English teachers, as a collective, demonstrate high levels of acceptance towards CEFR and its associated improvements, which is a significant accomplishment. Furthermore, they demonstrate the ability to devise solutions to overcome challenges encountered in the classroom.

The inclusion of the CBAM within the study's framework proves suitable and relevant, as it addresses all research objectives effectively. Particularly, the collaboration phase and realignment phase correspond with the fourth research objective, wherein teachers develop strategies to tackle specific implementation challenges.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This section provides the implication of the study in three aspects which are methodological, pedagogical and theoretical. These are discussed in the sections that follow.

Empirical evidence on the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessment in writing is also discussed in this section. Findings indicate that teachers generally hold positive views towards this approach. Interviews and document analysis support this, with teachers expressing increased confidence in their assessment practices and reporting improved pedagogical approaches. These results suggest that CEFR-aligned assessment can effectively enhance teachers' assessment capabilities and teaching practices. The following sections will discuss the implications of this study from methodological, pedagogical, and theoretical perspectives.

5.6.1 Methodological

One of the implications of the study can be seen in the methodological aspect. Using the qualitative research design, the study represents a wide range of implementation of the phenomenon of CEFR-aligned writing assessment that took place during the changes in the Ministry of Education. This holistic qualitative analysis complements the research already conducted as it reveals teachers' views or perspectives on the implementation of the CEFR, their practice, their successes, and challenges, as well as possible solutions and the extent to which they assess their students' progress in improving their writing skills.

Due to the wealth of data amassed, this study on the practical implementation of the CEFR constitutes not only a substantive empirical contribution but also an advancement in methodological approaches. Data collection involved a semi-structured interview conducted with English language teachers, Heads of English Language Panels, and representatives from the School Improvement Specialist Coaches (SISC+), facilitating a comprehensive exploration of perspectives and practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The use of semi-structured interview, involving ten diverse teachers from diverse background as participants, enabled the capture of nuanced insights into the implementation of CEFR-aligned practices in ESL classrooms (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, the integration of reflective journals, contributed by three primary English teachers, served to augment the data collection process, providing rich, qualitative insights into the assessment practices aligned with CEFR standards (Cresswell, 2014).

By employing a multi-method approach to qualitative design that combined semi-structured interviews, reflective journals, and examination of collected data, this study extends beyond mere empirical investigation to contribute methodologically to the field of educational research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Such methodological rigor enhances the credibility and validity of the study's findings, thereby advancing understanding and practice in CEFR implementation within ESL classrooms. of the relevant documents.

This study employed a consistent participant group for semi-structured interviews, complemented by document analysis of teachers' reflective journals and policy documents. This methodological approach enhanced data collection by allowing

for flexible interview adjustments based on participant knowledge and vocabulary (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Creswell, 2014).

By employing similar participants for interviews, the researcher ensures that pertinent information is effectively elicited from participants, aligning with the study's research objectives (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Moreover, the inclusion of document analysis, particularly teachers' reflective journals and policy documents, enhances the depth and breadth of data collection, offering valuable insights into the implementation of CEFR-aligned practices (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

The semi-structured interview enables exploration of various themes pertinent to the study objectives while ensuring that inquiries are directed towards specific responses conducive to interpreting the phenomenon within the study's context (Patton, 2015). By employing this approach alongside document analysis, the methodology used in the study maintains rigor and comprehensiveness, ultimately contributing to a robust understanding of CEFR implementation in ESL classrooms.

The implications of this study extend to its potential to offer an original literary contribution to the corpus of the CEFR, a novel aspect within the realm of CEFR research. Operating outside the confines of specific standards or regulations, any insights accurately reflecting the CEFR are deemed highly valuable. Given the Malaysian Ministry of Education's effort to further educational transformation through CEFR implementation, the findings of this study introduce fresh perspectives to the collective body of knowledge. By delving into the phenomenon of CEFR implementation and leveraging qualitative data sources throughout, this study not only

enriches scholarly discourse but also offers practical insights that can inform policy and practice within the Malaysian educational context.

In conclusion, this study makes several contributions to enhance existing research on the CEFR. By incorporating structured and standardised qualitative data that encompasses diverse participant perspectives, the study enhances the breadth and depth of existing case study research in the field of CEFR implementation. This approach fills a gap observed in previous studies and underscores the significance of considering varied viewpoints and expert insights in advancing CEFR-related research and practices.

5.6.2 Pedagogical

In the context of educational research, pedagogical implications encompass the potential influence of research findings on teaching and learning methods, as well as their outcomes. These implications are particularly significant for stakeholders such as curriculum and assessment developers, the Ministry of Education, and English language teachers.

5.6.2.1 Curriculum and Assessments

The implications of this study underscore the crucial role of English language syllabus writers, including the Department of Curriculum Development, the Ministry of Education, and the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (MES), in possessing a thorough understanding of CEFR-aligned assessments. Drawing from contemporary educational theories and frameworks, such as Constructivism and Assessment for Learning (AFL), syllabus developers can ensure that English syllabuses and writing skills assessments

are meticulously crafted to align with evolving pedagogical practices and educational standards (Vygotsky, 1978; Black & Wiliam, 1998).

By incorporating the latest theories, models, practices, and developments in the field, syllabus developers can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of English language education. This includes integrating insights from influential educational models like the CEFR, which emphasises communicative language learning and proficiency-based assessment (Council of Europe, 2001). In addition, by drawing on sociocultural theory, syllabus developers can create assessments that authentically reflect real-world language use, fostering meaningful learning experiences, (Brown & Hudson, 2008).

Ultimately, by grounding their work in current educational theories and frameworks, syllabus developers can ensure that English syllabuses and writing skills assessments are not only aligned with CEFR standards but also responsive to the evolving needs and contexts of English language learners in Malaysia. The findings of this study offer a novel perspective on the didactic strategy of implementing CEFR-aligned assessment of writing skills in English as a second language. These findings serve as both an empirical guide and a reinforcement of existing methods practiced by teachers. By embracing these insights, syllabus writers can enhance the effectiveness of writing skills assessments within the English language curriculum.

Furthermore, stakeholders must exhibit receptiveness to embrace changes that favor teachers who concurrently function as examiners for public examinations. As evidenced by the study, the integration of CEFR-aligned assessment within process-oriented writing classes substantially augments students' learning outcomes and

enhances their writing proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001). Consequently, there arises a necessity to refine the current curriculum by integrating efficacious assessment strategies tailored to teaching objectives.

This perspective aligns with the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL), which advocates for assessment practices that support and enhance student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). By implementing CEFR-aligned assessments, teachers can provide students with valuable feedback and opportunities for improvement, ultimately fostering a more conducive learning environment (Council of Europe, 2001). Moreover, this approach resonates with the concept of Formative Assessment, which emphasises the use of ongoing assessment to inform instruction and facilitate student progress (Wiliam, 2011). In essence, stakeholders' willingness to embrace change and adapt the curriculum to incorporate effective assessment methods can lead to enhanced learning experiences and improved outcomes for English language learners.

Overall, the implications of this study underscore the importance of aligning assessment practices with CEFR standards and adopting a balanced approach to assessment within the English language classroom. By incorporating these insights into curriculum development and assessment practices, stakeholders can promote meaningful learning experiences and enhance student outcomes in English language education.

5.6.2.2 Ministry of Education

Part of the invaluable insights for this study stemmed from the perspectives of English language teachers, who serve as pivotal participants in the implementation

process. Acknowledging and incorporating teachers' voices and viewpoints is essential for policymakers and members of the ELSQ Council involved in CEFR implementation (Fullan, 2013). The challenges identified in this study should serve as a roadmap for the Ministry of Education to anticipate and address future difficulties (Fullan, 2015).

One critical indicator for the Ministry to enhance school facilities, particularly internet connectivity, is the availability of CEFR-aligned resources that enable teachers to leverage online teaching tools and materials in alignment with 21st-century learning paradigms (OECD, 2019). By providing adequate resources and support, the Ministry can empower teachers to effectively utilise digital resources and enhance the quality of English language education.

The Department of Education can leverage solutions proposed by teachers, who are subject experts, in curriculum development and examination paper specifications (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Collaborating with Cambridge English, a recognised CEFR expert, can aid in determining the most appropriate CEFR levels for English examinations (Council of Europe, 2001). Engaging both subject experts and CEFR experts in this process ensures alignment with international standards while addressing local needs.

Furthermore, the study emphasises the importance of involving teachers, their subject areas, and their voices in program planning and implementation from the outset (Bryman, 2016). Excluding teachers and relying solely on top-down directives may have detrimental effects on implementation outcomes (Fullan, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative for the Ministry to recognise the significance of teacher involvement and foster collaboration throughout the implementation process.

Given teachers' readiness, acceptance, and understanding of the CEFR framework, postponing the implementation in classrooms and prioritising teacher training for a period of two to three years is recommended (Fullan, 2015). This approach ensures that teachers are adequately equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement the CEFR framework and navigate potential challenges (Council of Europe, 2001; Fullan, 2015).

These recommendations align with Sociocultural Theory (SCT), as they emphasise the importance of social interaction and collaborative learning in educational contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, they relate to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where teachers provide support and guidance to students as they work towards mastering new concepts and skills (Vygotsky, 1978). Moreover, the Concerns Based Adoption Theory (CBAM) underscores the significance of addressing teachers' concerns and promoting their active engagement in the adoption of new practices (Hall & Hord, 1987).

5.6.2.3 English Language Teachers

The detailed implementation plan for the CEFR, as presented by Ministry of Education representatives, serves as a vital source of enlightenment for teachers, particularly those who lack familiarity with the CEFR framework or have limited exposure to related training or workshops (Vygotsky, 1978). The credibility and reliability of information obtained from key informants in this study are paramount, ensuring that teachers receive accurate guidance and support (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Teachers are encouraged to reduce reliance on main CEFR-aligned textbooks and explore the plethora of online CEFR-aligned resources, activities, and exercises available. This shift in reliance was emphasised by members of the ELSQ Advisory Board, signaling a move towards more diversified and adaptable teaching practices (Vygotsky, 1978). This aligns with Sociocultural Theory, which underscores the importance of social interaction and collaborative learning in educational contexts (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Teachers are also urged to adopt a more creative approach and extend beyond textbook content, aligning with the principles of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to challenge students and promote optimal learning experiences (Vygotsky, 1978). The availability of online resources necessitates teachers to engage in continuous research and self-directed learning to develop their teaching materials (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). While textbooks still have a role, teachers are encouraged to adapt the content to local contexts, ensuring students' comprehension and engagement. This reflects the importance of considering students' cultural backgrounds and prior knowledge, an important aspect of Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

The findings of this study advocate for teachers to embrace systematic changes positively, positioning themselves as both subject experts and CEFR specialists. This aligns with the Concerns Based Adoption Theory (CBAM), which emphasises the importance of addressing teachers' concerns and promoting their active engagement in the adoption of new practices (Hall & Hord, 1987). Furthermore, continuous training and workshops on the CEFR are deemed essential for teachers to become proficient CEFR specialists, aligning with the Ministry of Education's goal of ensuring all English

teachers in Malaysia possess expertise in the framework within the specified timeframe (Fullan, 2013). This highlights the ongoing professional development required to navigate educational reforms effectively.

5.6.3 Theoretical

Theoretical implications are crucial for advancing a field by building, refining, and extending knowledge (Cresswell, 2014). In this study, the findings support the interrelation between pedagogical practice and empirical assessment, as highlighted by Black and Wiliam (2018). The integration of assessment strategies within the writing process extends the model proposed by White and Arnt (1991), demonstrating the potential for using assessment practices to enhance English language essay writing.

Drawing from Sociocultural Theory (SCT), which emphasises the role of social interaction and cultural context in learning, the findings suggest that classroom assessment, group discussion strategies, and teacher-student interactions contribute to student growth (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). By incorporating assessment strategies within the writing process, teachers create opportunities for students to engage in collaborative learning experiences, thereby fostering their development within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). Students benefit from scaffolded support provided by teachers, as they navigate the writing process and improve their skills over time.

Moreover, the Concerns Based Adoption Theory (CBAM) sheds light on the importance of addressing teachers' concerns and providing support during the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessment practices (Hall & Hord, 1987). By

acknowledging teachers' experiences as examiners and incorporating their insights into teaching and learning sessions, teachers can effectively integrate CEFR-aligned assessment strategies into their pedagogical practices.

In summary, the proposed conceptual model builds on existing theoretical frameworks, such as SCT, ZPD, and CBAM, to illustrate the dynamic interplay between pedagogical practice, assessment strategies, and student learning outcomes in the context of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment. By considering these theoretical implications, teachers can enhance their teaching practices and promote student success in English language education.

5.6.3.1 Factors influencing the implementation of CEFR-aligned Writing Skills Assessments

The novelty of the study lies in its exploration of the implementation of writing skills assessment aligned with the CEFR, uncovering four key factors: perspectives and views, practices, challenges, and solutions. This comprehensive analysis offers valuable insights into enhancing the effectiveness of CEFR-aligned assessment in ESL classrooms. It also emphasises on prioritising teachers' perspectives and views in curriculum development. Teachers, being at the forefront of imparting knowledge in the classroom, possess invaluable real-world insights into the dynamics of teaching and learning. By actively involving teachers in the curriculum creation process, the study ensures that the curriculum is not only theoretically sound but also pragmatic and customised to meet the specific needs of the classroom setting. This approach fosters teacher buy-in and commitment to successful curriculum implementation, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes (Vygotsky, 1978; Darling-Hammond, 2012).

Furthermore, the study highlights the parallelism between CEFR-aligned assessment and the Assessment for Learning (AfL) function in teaching writing skills. Teachers' feedback techniques and practices serve as guidance and benchmarks for students' writing skill development, aligning with AfL principles (Black & Wiliam, 1998). However, the study underscores the dynamic nature of assessment practices, emphasising the need for flexibility in allocating focus between assessment for learning and assessment of learning based on contextual factors such as student needs and available teaching time.

The findings of the study also support the Malaysian Education Plan 2013–2025, particularly Wave 2 and Wave 3, which focus on tracking developments, assessing initiatives' effects, and putting reforms into practice (Fullan, 2013). Moreover, the study proposes a final framework that integrates CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment with Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), highlighting the inseparability of assessment and teaching and learning. This framework, depicted in Figure 5.1, emphasises the integration and embedding of assessment practices within the teaching process, tailored to the specific context and considerations of the classroom (Fullan, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

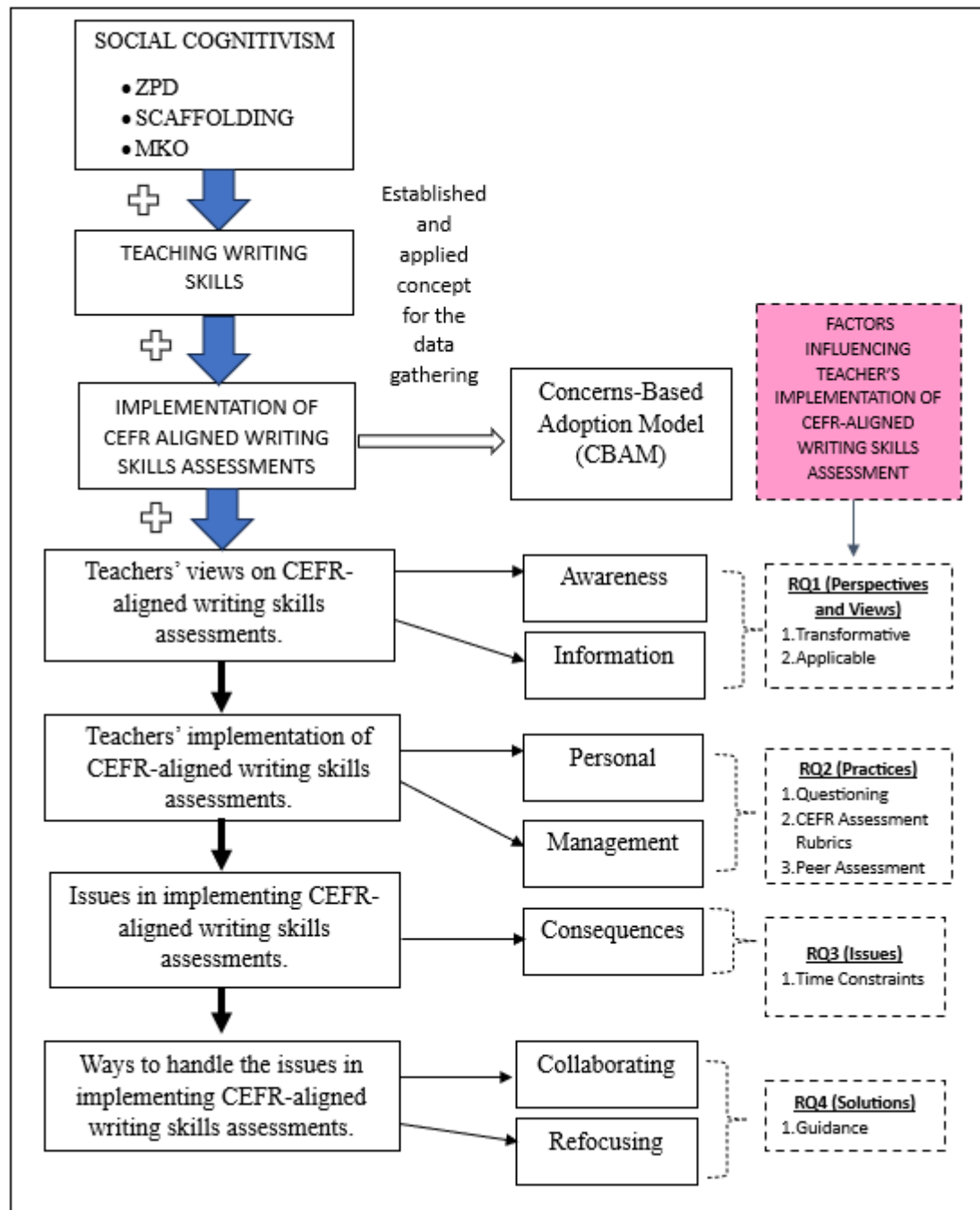


Figure 5.1: CEFR-aligned Assessment for Writing Skills Model Integrated CBAM

The framework depicted in Figure 5.1 provides a unique approach to implementing CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment by considering assessment preparation through the lens of the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). This

approach emphasises several key factors derived from the research questions addressed in the study.

Firstly, in line with RQ1, teachers must possess a comprehensive understanding of assessment, particularly writing assessment, within the context of their teaching theme. This entails being familiar with the CEFR standards and aligning assessment practices accordingly to ensure consistency and effectiveness. Secondly, as highlighted in RQ2, teachers should have the flexibility and autonomy to create assessment questions and rubrics that are aligned with CEFR standards. This allows teachers to tailor assessments to the specific needs and abilities of their students, ensuring that assessment tasks are relevant and meaningful.

Thirdly, when addressing themes related to RQ3, consideration should be given to time-related aspects in the development of writing assessments. Time constraints can significantly impact the quality and outcomes of assessments, making it crucial for teachers to manage time effectively and design assessments that are realistic and achievable within the given timeframe. Lastly, in addressing challenges identified in RQ4, collaborative efforts and a focus on intended assessments are essential. Teachers should collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders to overcome challenges and enhance assessment practices. Additionally, maintaining a clear focus on the intended learning outcomes and assessment objectives helps ensure that assessments are purposeful and aligned with educational goals.

By incorporating these factors into the assessment preparation process, teachers can create meaningful and effective CEFR-aligned writing assessments that support student learning and development. This approach fosters continuous improvement in

assessment practices and contributes to the overall success of English language education.

5.7 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study highlights the essential role of teachers' voices in the successful implementation of the CEFR. Hence, it is imperative that teachers are actively involved in decision-making processes and early stages of implementation planning by the Ministry of Education. Given that teachers and students are key stakeholders whose perspectives influence the outcome of implementation efforts, their inclusion in all aspects of the CEFR implementation process is topmost.

While the insights provided by the 10 English teachers in this study are valuable, it is crucial to expand the sample size and include a broader representation of teachers from various states, including rural areas, across Malaysia in future research endeavors. Additionally, future studies should encompass not only secondary English language teachers but also those from preschool and primary levels to comprehensively understand the impact of CEFR implementation across different educational stages.

Furthermore, involving students as primary respondents and conducting classroom observations would offer valuable insights into the realities, challenges, and successes of teaching and learning within the CEFR framework. By utilising the six levels of the CEFR descriptor, researchers can gauge the efficacy of teaching practices and assess the quality of students' English language skills, thereby informing pedagogical improvements.

Moreover, future studies should explore the necessity of completely revising the existing English curriculum in favor of a CEFR-aligned curriculum. Evaluating the utility of CEFR-aligned assessments and imported textbooks in conjunction with the CEFR, especially concerning students' language acquisition and writing skills, is essential. Additionally, once locally produced CEFR-aligned textbooks and resource books become available, their alignment with CEFR descriptors and international standards should be assessed promptly.

In order to enhance the reliability and validity of future research, employing larger sample sizes and involving local CEFR specialists as participants or experts in the validation process is recommended. These recommendations aim to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of CEFR implementation and ensure its efficacy in improving English language education in Malaysia.

5.8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the implementation of CEFR-aligned writing skills assessment in ESL classrooms in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Through a comprehensive case study involving ten teachers, including English language teachers, Heads of English Language Panel, and a SISC+, the research sheds light on the views, practices, challenges, and solutions related to CEFR-aligned assessment.

The findings highlight the importance of teachers' competence in understanding and implementing CEFR-aligned assessment practices. Teachers play a crucial role in translating curriculum changes into effective classroom practices, ultimately facilitating

student learning. Additionally, the development of a framework serves as a valuable tool for teachers to guide their assessment practices, ensuring alignment with CEFR standards and promoting consistency across classrooms.

The study underscores the critical role of ongoing professional development and collaborative networks in supporting teachers as they implement CEFR-aligned writing assessment. By providing teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills, professional learning opportunities can equip them to navigate curriculum changes and effectively assess student writing proficiency against CEFR standards. Furthermore, open communication channels between teachers, educational leaders, and policymakers are essential for clarifying expectations, addressing challenges, and ensuring that assessment practices align with broader educational goals.

Overall, this study contributes to Malaysia's efforts to transform its education system and achieve international English standards by focusing on the implementation of CEFR-aligned assessment practices, especially in writing skills. By recognising the importance of teachers' voices and providing them with the necessary support and resources, Malaysia can continue to progress towards its educational goals and ensure the success of its students in the global arena.