

ESL Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of CEFR in Malaysian Primary Schools: Issues and Challenges

Aina Hartini Mohamad Khair*, Parilah Mohd Shah

Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia
Email: tinikhair85@gmail.com

Abstract. This study aims to investigate the English teachers' views on the CEFR-aligned curriculum adoption in Malaysian primary ESL classroom. This paper intends to investigate the challenges surrounding teachers' pedagogical practices on CEFR-based incorporated lesson. The study employs a quantitative approach where data were collected via survey questionnaires which is adapted and distributed to ESL primary school teachers in Malaysia via random purposive sampling. A descriptive statistic was used to analyse the quantitative data. The findings revealed that most of the teachers admitted having limited knowledge and minimum exposure on the CEFR implementation. Yet, they perceived positive perceptions on the revised CEFR-aligned curriculum adoption despite facing some difficulties and challenges. Teachers' perceptions are vital for the authorities and policy makers to review and provide measures to ensure that stakeholders are fully prepared and capable to incorporate CEFR successfully and effectively in English language education.

Keywords: teacher perceptions, Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), English language curriculum, education reforms, challenges

1 Introduction

Students' poor performance and low achievement in English language learning has been a longstanding debate among academicians and researchers worldwide. Various approaches and teaching strategies have been proposed by different experts to cater the need of English language learners in order to aid them in mastering the main skills of learning English and eventually becoming a proficient user of the said language. With that being said, the introduction of Common European of Framework of References (CEFR) has attracted many countries to adopt the well-known framework to be adapted in their language education program to elevate their English levels of proficiency according to international standard. To date, Malaysia has begun employing the CEFR-align curriculum as part of the current English language education reform in the country.

1.1 Background of the Study

As a world lingua franca, English language has held a high position in being a language that mostly become the preferred choice in communication across the span of many important fields. Moreover, English language has become a compulsory subject and part of the curriculum in many education institutions around the globe from primary school to tertiary level. In addition, the said language has also become the medium of instruction in some of the nations' education system to help increase English acquisition among their learners. This is because being proficient in English will bring enormous benefits to oneself personally as well as becoming an agent of change in terms of economic acceleration for that country's development. On that notion, having a good command of English is no longer an option but simply an obligation to survive and thrive in today's fast-paced world (Yee & Periasamy, 2019). However, there is a growing concern to establish standards for English language teaching based on international benchmarks among many countries in the world. Countries in Asia especially have implemented educational policies that are reinforcing on English language instruction. They constantly changing its national policies as communicative approach becomes more widespread to provide learners with opportunities to acquire English language successfully inside and outside of the classroom.

Frequently referred to 'heart' of any education system or reform, curriculum is described by the

research as vital components in education system. True to the words, many countries putting the emphasis on the curriculum reevaluation and revamp to meet their national education policy. In the case of improving the standard of English language, adopting or adapting existing international models and curriculum has been a norm in other countries to ensure the quality of education in general and language education in particular. Recently, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has taken the center of the stage. Since its released in 2001, CEFR has rapidly gained attention and respect to the point that it has dominating language education all over the Europe continent and more remarkably, due to its influence, has been used for the instruction and assessment in language education contexts in many countries around the world, notably in Asian countries such as Japan, China, Vietnam, Indonesia etc. (Nakatani, 2012; Byram & Parmenter, 2012; Runnels & Runnels, 2019; Sayski, 2019; Foley, 2019). Not surprising, Malaysia has joined the rank since 2016.

CEFR plays a vital role in setting up the standard of language proficiency. Since many language policy makers and second language education programs have shown great interest in adopting the CEFR document as a guideline to describe learners' achievement in learning a language in their programs (Faez et al., 2011). Malaysian education system through its language policy and planning has witnessed several education reforms and transformation in English language education due to low proficiency and competency level of English among the students. Apparently, experts and academicians have come into agreement that language grading, curriculum content, teaching methods and teachers' low language proficiency are parts of the reasons for the decline of the language. In line with the key pledge of Malaysia Education Blueprint, the government has decided to align Malaysia's English Language Education System with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) starting with primary one and secondary one in Malaysian schools in 2017 (Darmi et al., 2017; Sidhu et al., 2018; Krishnan & Yunus, 2019; Sabbir, 2019; James & Aziz, 2020). With the introduction of CEFR-align curriculum, no doubt that stakeholders have already anticipated the challenges that come with the implementation of this universal framework for teaching, learning, and assessing English.

1.2 Rational of the Study

Since its implementation in 2017, there are not enough studies being advocated to further delve into this matter at hand. Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring the success of the new curriculum implementation as they act as main providers in delivering the CEFR integrated lesson to the pupils effectively. Prior to this, it is with utmost important that English teachers' insights should be considered to make sure that the process of implementing that said framework goes smoothly without a hitch. Thus, this study is carried out in a manner that it would give more insights into teachers' knowledge, understanding and perceptions of the CEFR-aligned curriculum. Hopefully, the outcomes from this study will shed some lights that will benefits teachers or educators alike in terms of being more aware and acceptance towards the government's decision on aligning the existing curriculum with CEFR framework. This is because an understanding of the importance of the curriculum revamp in an effort to raise the standard of English proficiency in the country will help teachers and stakeholders to be more receptive and willing to embrace the new paradigm shift.

Despite the government effort of preparing a soft-landing for the teachers to get used to the new framework, it cannot be denied that a smooth-sailing curriculum reform is too good to be true. In fact, the bumps on the road of CEFR implementation is merely anticipated. As a proof, several past studies have revealed a few conundrums and issues surrounding the CEFR integration onto the education system (Uri & Aziz, 2018; Aziz & Uri, 2017; Lo, 2018; Kok & Aziz, 2019). Therefore, this paper is also trying to address the current situation of the status of CEFR in Malaysia by investigating the probable challenges encountered by the ESL teachers while adapting and adopting CEFR-aligned curriculum into the English syllabus. Apart from making teachers more conscious on the problems that they faced, with any luck the findings of this study might be relevant to be used as a guide to aid the stakeholders and authorities, mainly the policy makers, to review the impact of the CEFR implementation in the country. In other words, the results may help the authorities that involved in designing new language-in-education policy to think of different strategies to overcome the weak spot during the development and planning of curriculum transformation. By getting information on teachers' perceptions and challenges faced by them, policy makers will be able to do future planning and necessary improvements to ensure that the objectives of the curriculum change can be met.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Expectedly, the sudden shift of CEFR into the English language curriculum had caused some teachers to be aware and ready to implement the revised curriculum. Nevertheless, some teachers had voice out their concerns regarding some issues of competencies in integrating CEFR-align lessons and assessment into their current practices of teaching, learning, and assessing. Naturally, this type of reactions from the teachers is not unforeseen as changes in policy will often enough resulted into confusion and resistance for some of them encountered difficult times to embrace the changes. Therefore, teachers are advised to keep themselves updated and skilled to adopt and adapt changes in teaching and learning pedagogy from time to time (Jerald & Shah, 2018). On the other hand, interpreting a curriculum is a complex process where it does not only mere reading of the document and enact it but the process requires teachers to interpret it in which teachers' beliefs, thoughts, perceptions and other variables may affect the execution of the curriculum and its impact on the stakeholders.

Seeing that teachers' perceptions may affect their practices and lead to a bigger problem of affecting the teaching and learning of students' outcomes, it is only right to take immediate actions in investigating all the possibilities of the issues that arises where it is concerned. Hence, it is imperative for more studies being advocated to further discover the teachers' awareness and the challenges that associated with the execution of CEFR especially in primary schools. Obviously, there is a need to understand teachers' perceptions towards the new policy employment. Sadly, there are not enough research in local context that has been dedicated to this topic even though as implementers and important stakeholders, English teachers play a substantial role in facilitating and delivering knowledge to the learners. For these reasons, this study is a small attempt to explore on the teachers' perspectives on the adaptation of the CEFR-align curriculum in Malaysia to get a glimpse into the grass root of the conundrum.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore ESL teachers' perceptions towards the implementation of CEFR-aligned curriculum in primary schools. Besides that, this study intends to identify the issues and challenges faced by the English teachers while adopting and adapting the CEFR-integrated curriculum framework in ESL primary classrooms. Accordingly, the objectives of this study are to (1) Investigate the ESL teachers' perceptions on the implementation of CEFR-aligned curriculum in ESL primary classrooms and (2) Identify the issues and challenges that the teachers encountered during the CEFR implementation in primary schools' ESL classrooms.

To achieve the objectives of the study, two research questions are formulated, which are:

- 1) What are the ESL teachers' perceptions on the implementation of CEFR in Malaysian primary schools?
- 2) What are the challenges faced by the ESL teachers in implementing CEFR-aligned curriculum?

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Like any other research that has its limitation, this study is no exception. The limitation of this research is that the sample does not represents the whole population of ESL teachers in the country for it is rather an impossible feat to get each and every one of them to participate in this study. The sample of the respondents are relatively small compared to the actual number of English teachers nationwide. Therefore, findings in this research do not represent the overall perception of the Malaysian primary school English teachers' population. Results in this research can only be used as an exploratory finding for a broader research to be done in the future. Further studies can be conducted to find out the success or failure of the implementation by carrying out a more in-depth and extensive research using other variables. The outcome from this study is solely based on representation of the information gathered from the specific questionnaire distributed for this research. It definitely does not give any indication of how the MOE perceives the implementation of the CEFR into English language education.

2 Literature Review

The conceptual framework below is developed focusing on the factors that may contribute or influence the English teachers' perceptions towards the implementation of CEFR in the English language education. Teachers' knowledge and familiarity with the CEFR will serve as a foundation on how well they accept or resist to the reform for the awareness of it can affect their teaching practices whether they manage to execute it according to the aims and objectives of the CEFR in order to produce the desired outcomes. On the other hand, teachers with optimism and positive views will be more open to receive the new changes thus leads to more desire to acquire further in-depth knowledge on the CEFR-aligned curriculum. In other words, the underlying assumption of the current study assume that teachers' perceptions relate back to teachers' readiness and understanding to the application and vice versa. As the present study is concerned with investigating ESL teachers' opinions to the CEFR implementation, it is conceptualizing as an examination of the factors that may affect the teacher's awareness in both ways.

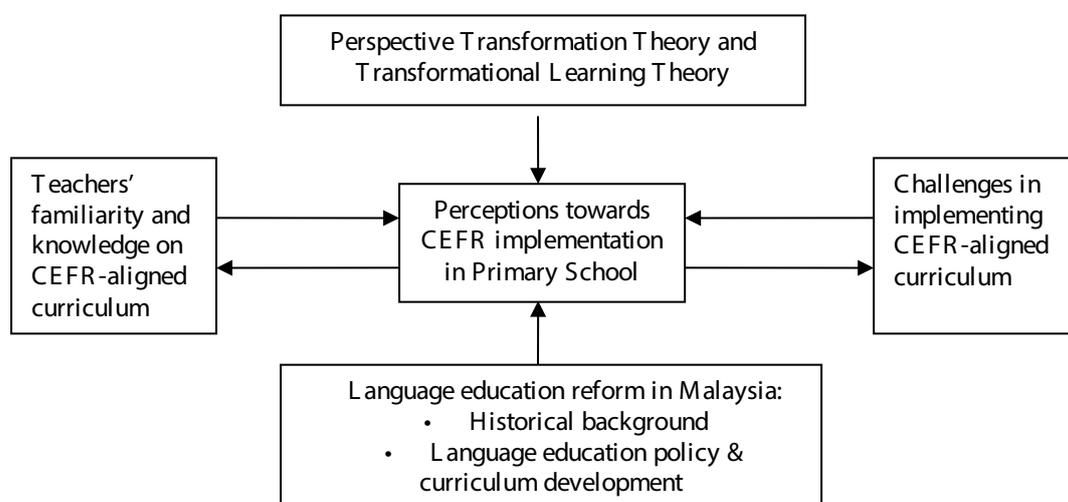


Figure 1. Framework of the study.

2.1 Language Education Reform in Malaysia

Malaysia is a post-colonial country, reigned under British colonist before gaining its independence back in 1957. Before independence, the official language of the country was English while the local languages including Malay, Chinese and Tamil are considered 'vernacular' (David & Manan, 2015). During pre-independence, British has established English-medium schools for the royals and elite groups whereas vernacular schools for other ethnics are established within their own community using their own respective languages and syllabus (Abdullah et al., 2012) due to British's practices of 'divide and rule' system. During post-colonial era, the 1957 Constitution Act declared Malay language as a national and official language for the purpose of national unity. English language had been demoted to be the second official language right behind Malay language (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014). Gradually since 1970, with the implementation of the National Education Policy, Malay language has replaced English language in all English-medium schools except for the vernacular schools (Zaaba et al., 2010; Selvadurai et al., 2017). Whereas the Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools can use their own respective languages as they have the right to preserve, maintain and develop their languages under the Constitution (Fei et al., 2012; Kaur & Shapii, 2018). In order to maintain educational standards, the National Language Act 1967 proposed that secondary schools shifted to Malay-medium only and English retained as a compulsory subject in all schools (Zaaba et al., 2011). As a result, all schools and universities have shifted from English to Malay-medium by the early of 1980s.

Despite the change of the medium of instruction in schools, English language remain as a compulsory subject to be taught in every schools due to its influence and not to mention that it is widely used in

business sectors as well as a tool of getting technological information (Shah & Ahmad, 2007). However, students' low proficiency level of English and the importance of English throughout globalization era has forced the government to make changes in education policy. Eventually, English is used for the teaching of Science and Mathematics in Malaysian schools starting from 2003. Nevertheless, due to many controversies surrounding the policy including objections from various stakeholders and communities, the government has no choice but to terminate the policy in 2012 (David & Manan, 2015). In 2011, the previous primary schools' curriculum has change into KSSR or the Primary School Standards-Based Curriculum. Specifically, with KSSR (for primary) and KSSM (for secondary) introduction, the English language subject was transformed to a new Standards-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) with certain changes in its documents and implementation. This curriculum is organized in modular structure with the addition of basic reading literacy, phonics, penmanship, and language arts into its content (Azman, 2016). Parallel with the emergence of KSSR, the significant change towards the Standards-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) is supposedly to help further developing students' proficiency in the English language.

As stated in Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MEB), the language goal for Malaysia's education system is to ensure that every child is proficient in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language while at the same time encouraging them to learn additional language. The Ministry of Education had cooperated with Cambridge English to form an English Language Standards and Quality Council in 2013 to focus on the foundation and structural changes in attempt to upgrade the standard of English in Malaysia (Shulgina & Gopal, 2017). In response to that, a new blueprint entitled "English Language Education Reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025" emerged as an extended of the MEB to provide "a systematic guide for English language teachers' development, benchmarked syllabus items and teaching materials, internationally standardized assessment, , and clearly defined language competency expectations and outcomes for all education levels" (Azman, 2016; Aziz et al., 2018). In this roadmap, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is being adopted to align with the revised KSSR curriculum for English language subject to develop learners' language competencies and boost the education level to be on par with the international standards.

2.2 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or commonly referred as CEFR is a document published by the Council of Europe in 2001 to address level of language proficiency based on international standards of language descriptors. Notably, CEFR has been widely recognized as a source of reference for the development of learning, teaching, language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, and assessment for learning a second or foreign language. Drawing from that document, the CEFR provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe and also stipulates levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis (Council of Europe, 2001). In addition, CEFR adopts an action-oriented approach where language learners are view as social agents who supposed to use appropriate strategies to communicate effectively. Basically, CEFR comes with a general framework which describes what language learners have to learn in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop to be able to act effectively (Yamat et al., 2014). Furthermore, CEFR is regarded as a language policy that promote comprehensive, transparent, and coherent basis for the elaboration of language curriculum, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of language proficiency in the learning and teaching of foreign languages (Sulu & Kir, 2014; Piccardo et al., 2019).

To this end, it is sufficed to associate CEFR with a set of international standards for foreign language that used for testing to define the learners' proficiency levels and performance in language teaching and learning. On top of that, this framework also used to describe learners' competency level in language skills comprises of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. During its first introduction, CEFR is published in only English and French but today, this document is available in 40 different languages due to its worldwide spread (North & Panthier, 2016). The prominent feature on CEFR framework is based on language concepts that are related to communicative approach and an action-oriented approach. The framework provides language users with a guideline on how language learners can use the target language in real life situations efficiently in various situations. Since CEFR views language as a medium

of communication, it stresses on the four modes of communication which are reception, production, interaction, and mediation based on the language communicative activities performed by language users. In another breath, CEFR is “action-oriented” and language independent where the framework is designed to be flexible and non-prescriptive so that it can be adopted and adapted to any curriculum syllabus and materials of all foreign languages (Ngo, 2017) while learners at the same time plays a ‘social agent’ role who partaking actively in communication and use language for real life purposes.

This document explains on the Common Reference Levels which consists of Breakthrough, Waystage, Threshold, Vantage, Effective Operational Proficiency and Mastery levels. As mentioned previously, CEFR is a ‘descriptive’ scheme that combines general competence such as knowledge, ability, and skills with communicative language competence to assist language learners to use the language productively. According to Yuniarti (2017), CEFR scales can be categorized into two types namely CEFR Global Scale and CEFR Can Do Scale. These scales attribute to determine language acquisition based on five communicative skills that is listening, spoken interaction, spoken production, reading, and writing. The CEFR global scale composed of six levels after being summarized from the thirty-four scales, which consists of A1 and A2 for Basic Users, B1 and B2 for Independent Users, and C1 and C2 for Proficient Users (Normand-Marconnet & Bianco, 2013). It appears to express a comprehensive progression in language learning from beginner to intermediate level and on to advanced proficiency by using means of statements of what learners can do at various levels in functional terms. These six proficiency levels describe a set of common reference points and the descriptors written matches with different language skills and competence that language learners should have and be able to perform (Tiep, 2017).

On different note, the CEFR can do scale is a self-assessment grid written in the first person and outline the learners’ roadmap progress with language learning based on the global scale which contains 54 supporting subscales presented as ‘can do’ statements (Yuniarti, 2017; Moser, 2015). Suffice to say that, the scale promotes autonomous learning through its action orientation. Referring to the Council of Europe (2002), the content of CEFR covers many broad aspects designed in systematic orders to meet various learning needs such as competences, general competences, communicative language competence, context, language activities, language process, text, domain, and strategy. It is important to note that CEFR is not only about assessment but also concern on the processes and goals of language teaching and learning in general. This can be seen from the document for it provides clear goals and measurable achievement of standardize language proficiency by reference to the levels as to help language users to become aware, stimulate reflection and improve communication in more dynamic way.

2.3 The Implementation of CEFR in Malaysia

CEFR is part of the MEB plan covering from 2013 to 2015 to cater for the new language education through three phases. Phase 1 (2013-2015) is focused on raising English teachers’ proficiency level by sending teachers to various trainings such as Professional Up-Skilling of English Language Teachers (Pro-ELT), the Native Speaker programme, Cambridge Placement Test and the Expanded Specialist Coach (SISC) role for English. During these two years span, CEFR descriptors was developed and CEFR level for each educational standard from pre-schools until tertiary level was finalized (Uri & Aziz, 2017; Uri & Aziz, 2018; Uri & Aziz, 2019). The following Phase 2 started on 2016 and end in 2020 where the CEFR was introduced to teachers and to be implemented in 2017. Meanwhile, the process of aligning is not only focusing on the English syllabus but also involving School Based Assessment (SBA). The new CEFR-align curriculum will also set to use new imported textbooks and other support materials from Cambridge English. Teachers have undergone cascade training so that they are equipped with the knowledge and prepared to start on the application by 2017 with Year 1 and Form 1. It is expected that, the CEFR will be embedded for the other grades as well following the subsequent years.

Next, Phase 3 (2021-2025), known as assessment phase, is design for ELSQC to evaluate, review, and revise the effectiveness of the CEFR implementation from all aspects. This investigation process will contain the evaluation and revision of the descriptors, teaching and learning materials and textbooks. This phase will also witness the probability of the development of CEFR-M based on the results of the abovementioned review and evaluation. Having said that, it is likely that the success or failure of CEFR adoption and adaption can only be determined after the year 2025 once the all three phases are complete (Uri & Aziz, 2017; Uri & Aziz, 2018; Uri & Aziz, 2019). Based on the target set by the MOE printed in the MEB, the progress for each stage can be achieved by the year 2025. In short, Malaysian

students are expected to attain the specific target of proficiency level according to their current stage throughout their school years so that the aim of the education systems can be accomplished following the CEFR standards.

As stated earlier, CEFR provides a general framework which indicates what language learners need to learn to enable them to use language effectively and defines the proficiency levels that allow learners progress to be measured at each stage of learning on life-long basis (Darmi et al., 2017). The CEFR distinguishes five communication skills, which are listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing (Darmi et al., 2017; Krishnan & Yunus, 2019). Language proficiency is measured using the CEFR framework into six levels beginning with the lowest scale A1, followed by A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 as the highest (Uri & Aziz, 2017; Ishak & Mohamad, 2018; Johar & Aziz, 2019). Moreover, the proficiency in each skill is being determined by the “can do” descriptor statements to specify learning outcomes, learning objectives or assessments (Uri & Aziz, 2018; Sidhu et al., 2018; Ismail, 2018). The statements play a vital role in giving comprehensive views of what learner can do with language by providing them with achievable functional goals to attain the language.

2.4 Teachers' Perceptions

Generally, the term ‘perception’ is often related to ‘belief’, ‘view’, ‘perspective’ and ‘opinion’. In other words, it refers to something that people experience and feel based on their surrounding and experiences which can be interpreted into conclusions that might be different from others (Jerald & Shah, 2018). According to Baron-Cohen (1995), as cited in Srakang (2014), perception can be defined from physical, psychological, and physiological perspectives. The author elaborates that from psychological point of view, perception means the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting input from receptors in which the inner capacity of a person, including their attitudes, feelings, points of view can be determined. Basically, perception is merely belief or opinion that held by individual based on how that person perceived certain things through their own interpretation despite looking at the same thing. To this end, perception can be assumed as ESL teachers’ understanding, view and action toward the adoption of CEFR-align curriculum. For this study, ‘ESL teachers’ perceptions’ is mainly used to refer to English teachers’ interpretation and understanding of the issues in implementing CEFR-align curriculum in their teaching and learning process in the ESL primary classroom. Their perceptions will be based on their experience, knowledge, and education which reflected their awareness and readiness to execute the application of the new CEFR-align curriculum following its objectives and expectations.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Despite popular belief, teachers are constantly learning since they need to ensure that they are always prepared with new knowledge and skills in order to facilitate their students in turn especially when there is curriculum reform involved. Without a doubt, learning is an active process whereby learners are required to change or elicit meaning from their experiences. Moreover, learners undergone various activities that lead to emergence of learning which consists of the consequences of the activities as well as through reflection, critical reflection, and self-reflection. This whole process is the gist of the Perspective Transformation Theory proposed by Mezirow. In general, perspective can be defined as belief, value, perception, and assumptions that arises due to the influences of one’s experiences. To add to this, Mezirow (1991) observes that the way teacher learns contributes on how the teachers view instruction and by doing critical reflection, teachers able to identify and construct the basis for their perspectives to form.

This Perspective Transformation Theory describes how adult learners revise the meaning structure to define meaning schemes in which learners are aware of how and why these interpretations have come to constrain the way one perceives, understands, and feels about the world (Mezirow, 1991). The interpretations of one’s experience comprise of specific knowledge, beliefs, value judgments, and feelings. The Transformational Learning Theory, which also developed by Mezirow, is being describe as constructivist, meaning that the way learners interpret and reinterpret their sense experience is central to making meaning and hence learning (Mezirow, 1997). The scholar further elaborates that the concept of transformation involves the way learners transform problematic frames of reference and sets of assumptions and expectations to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and

emotionally able to change. A person's type of learner depends mostly on their learning experiences that later cause a substantial impact on the future experiences.

2.6 Related Past Studies

There were some studies that have dedicated to the CEFR implementation and its impact on the English language education in Malaysia. One of the studies that highlighted the issues and challenges faced in implementing CEFR in Malaysia was developed by Uri and Aziz (2017). This study aims to discover some of the fundamental issues that Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) faced in executing CEFR. Among the challenges being highlighted were majority of English teachers are not proficient in English, English is students' weakest core subject in national assessments, lack of political will, teachers still not adequately trained, and lack of studies done on the implementation of CEFR in the Malaysian context. Uri and Aziz (2018) once again conducted a study on teachers' awareness and challenges on the implementation of CEFR focusing on the English secondary school teachers and Ministry of Education officials by using questionnaire and interview respectively. The study reported that most of the teachers had limited knowledge, minimum exposure, and low level of awareness about CEFR, yet optimistic and believe in its importance to improve English proficiency level. The officials were positive that with sufficient time and training provided, the adoption will be fruitful despite some obstacles, for instance teachers' resistance, lack of training, and negative conception.

Comprehensibly, teachers tend to show high levels of concern and anxiety towards the CEFR execution because they were unsure of their roles with lack of information and preparation about the new reform (Lo, 2018). Focusing on Form 1 and Form 2 English teachers' concern of CEFR adoption, the study revealed that the teachers expressed high concern with the new changes specifically on the aspect of awareness information, personal, management and consequences of the implementation. In the context of tertiary level, Darmie et al. (2017) studied on teachers' views on students' performance in English Language Proficiency course via CEFR descriptors. The findings indicated that teachers had varied views on the students' performance in English language proficiency courses offered in a public university in Malaysia. Two studies with respect on assessment worth mentioning belonged to Sidhu et al. (2018) and Sabbir (2019). The former study intends to investigate the implementation of the CEFR-aligned SBA in the primary ESL classroom whereas the later aims to examine investigate teachers' perception toward the CEFR-aligned Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3) (Form Three Assessment) English Language. Conclusion drawn from the two findings argued that teachers in general perceived rather positive opinions on CEFR-aligned assessment. Nevertheless, teachers faced some challenges comprised of lacked of full understanding of the method, limited knowledge on the CEFR-aligned ESL curriculum, lack of facilities and relevant materials, time constraints, classroom enrolment, heavy workload, and lack of training against the effectiveness of adapting the CEFR-align curriculum and assessment.

There has also been study which have addressed specifically on English language teachers' perceptions on the implementation of CEFR-aligned curriculum among primary schools in Malaysia (Kok & Aziz, 2019). The study discussed specifically on the teachers' insights, identify the challenges faced and provide workable solutions on the implementation of CEFR in the context of Standard 1 and Standard 2. The results stressed that a great deal of teachers had limited knowledge and minimum exposure about CEFR, yet they were optimistic and confidence in the importance of CEFR to elevate English proficiency and acquisition. To add to this, challenges like lack of training, non-local textbook, inadequate ICT support and resources were mentioned as well. Another local study was conducted by Jerald and Shah (2018) which aims to get insights from English teachers on the impact of CEFR-aligned Curriculum in the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL). It was found that teachers showed a remarkable feedback and these could serve as a springboard for the relevant authorities and stakeholders to review the CEFR-aligned curriculum as a valid and reliable platform.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research employs a descriptive and inferential quantitative research where a survey using a set of questionnaires is used to investigate the teachers' perceptions towards the CEFR-align curriculum application in primary schools. In order to answer the two research questions abovementioned, a questionnaire research method will be used to collect the data. All the collected data will be analysed to answer the research questions. Survey research is good at collecting data on a large group for a short period of time to generate numerical data that may later provide descriptive, inferential or explanatory information. Meanwhile, the present study will employ cross-sectional survey design since it is used to collect data about current attitudes, opinions or beliefs.

3.2 Research Setting

The study focused on ESL primary school teachers only. The location of the primary schools can be categorized into three which are urban, sub-urban, and rural schools. Since the research design chosen for this study is a survey research, it requires a setting with the allowance for the collection of representative and diversified population. Hence, the site for the current study does not only focus on specific location but randomly distributing the questionnaire all over the states in Malaysia. Aside from that, the respondents taken from the survey comprised of Malaysian English teachers who are teaching in primary schools in all over the country. The respondents have different background in terms of age, gender, education background, teaching experiences and academic qualifications. These respondents were selected through purposive random sampling.

3.3 Instruments

To gather the information on the perceptions of the primary school English teachers, this current study used a questionnaire as its instrument or data collection tool. The questionnaires were constructed using Google Form and were being distributed using social media to collect the data. This set of questionnaires was adapted from two survey research by Uri and Aziz (2018) and Kok and Aziz (2019). Some slight changes were made from the original questionnaires to fit the purpose of the study. The adapted questionnaires consist of five sections with the total of 46 questions in sum. The first section deals with the demography of the respondents followed by the second section of the questionnaires which is focusing on the teachers' familiarity with CEFR. The third section was on area of CEFR adoption onto English syllabus and assessment while the fourth section was related to teachers' perceptions on CEFR implementation. The last section was focusing on the challenges faced by teachers while adopting CEFR. A Likert scale questions were used for the second until fifth part of the questionnaires to get responses from the respondents about their perceptions and beliefs.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

In attempt to prevent the threats to internal reliability, all the items in the questionnaire were constructed in close-ended format using a five-Likert scale except for the first part on demographic background. The quantitative data later were transformed and analysed using SPSS, a software program that commonly used to assist researcher in attaining reliability. The Cronbach alpha (α) of all items was run to test the reliability of the questionnaire and the score was 0.848. In this study, a few measures have been considered to ensure the study's validity. Firstly, all the items and questions in the questionnaire had been revised by experts and a pilot study had also been conducted to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire. Secondly, the ethical rules and principles of the study were carefully observed throughout the process of conducting the current research.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

This study employed only one data collection method which was through questionnaire. To add on, the

questionnaire was administered using online Google Form to collect the main data to answer the question on this study. All the participants in this study were strictly voluntary. As mentioned before, this questionnaire were being distributed via online platform and applications seeing that it was constructed using online questionnaire form due to its advantages being instantly accessible for the respondents who can complete it at any time, any place, with any devices. After the collection period was closed, the data was then analysed to obtain the results.

3.6 Data Analysis

In this current study, the information from the questionnaires from the Google Form were exported to analyse using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23 in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics. For the first part of the questionnaire, the demographic background data were analysed by the percentage and frequency count. Meanwhile, to answer the research questions, the related items were analysed by using percentage, mean and standard deviation.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

The findings for this research were discussed based on the research objective to investigate the teachers' perceptions in the implementation of CEFR-align curriculum in primary schools. The data had been derived from the collected data from the questionnaires and later were analysed using SPSS software to answer the question that follow:

- 1) What are the ESL teachers' perceptions on the implementation of CEFR in Malaysian primary schools?
- 2) What are the challenges faced by the ESL teachers in implementing CEFR-aligned curriculum

4.2 Teachers' Demographic Background Information

Out of the 136 teachers who responded to the questionnaire, 34 (25%) were male and 102 (75%) were female. For their age range, 47 (34.6%) of the respondents were below 30 years old whereas 44 (32.3%) of them were between age 30 to 39. Teachers age between 40 to 49 were about 22.8% which consists of 31 teachers. The remaining 14 (10.3%) respondents were above the age of 50. In terms of school area, 41 (30.1%) teachers were teaching in rural area, followed by 55 (40.5%) teachers from sub-urban school while the remaining 40 (29.4%) were from urban school. Out of 136 respondents, 7 (5.2%) possessed a Diploma, 114 (83.8%) had a bachelor's degree, and 12 (8.8%) possesses a Master' postgraduate degree. Another 3 respondents of about 2.2% own a Doctorate degree. The result indicates that 32.4% out of 136 respondents had one to five years of teaching experience. Meanwhile, around 31 respondents (22.8%) had 6-10 years of teaching experience. The least percentage for about 8.1% consisted of teachers with 16-20 years followed by 17.6% respondents of 11-15 years in the teaching field. Adding to that, 26 out of 136 respondents had 20 years and above teaching experience. From the data, it is found that 27 (19.9%) had one year of teaching CEFR-aligned curriculum while 33 (24.3%) had 2 years of teaching experience on CEFR. Teachers with three years of teaching experience were about 26 people (19.1%) and the remaining 50 teachers had about four years of teaching experience on CEFR. Only 25 (18.4%) were non-optionist whereas 111 (81.6%) were English option teacher.

4.3 Teachers' Perceptions on the Adoption of CEFR onto English Syllabus and Assessment

The findings gathered below were taken from the survey in order to answer the first research questions on teachers' familiarity with CEFR and their perceptions on its application on English language education curriculum for primary school.

Table 1 shows the percentage and mean for each item for analysing English teachers' familiarity with CEFR-aligned curriculum. From the total number of 136 respondents, 39% ESL teachers with the mean

4.46 agreed that it is necessary to have a series of training and workshop on CEFR to ensure that teachers fully understand and familiar with the concept and usage of the CEFR framework. Furthermore, 54.4% of the respondents were strongly agreed with the statement whereas 5.1% were not sure whether the training was needed. Meanwhile, 44.9% of the respondents with the mean 4.24 agreed that they were aware that the Ministry of Education (MOE) has set CEFR level A2 as the target levels for Year 6 pupils to achieve upon the completion of primary school. In addition, 41.2% respondents strongly agreed with their awareness as put by the MOE with setting the target level at A2 for Year 6 pupils. The remaining respondents of 11.8% and 0.7% on the other hand stated that they were not sure and disagree about the said levels determined by the Ministry respectively.

Table 1. Teachers' familiarity with CEFR

Statement	Percentage					Mean	S.D.
	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Series of training and workshop on CEFR are necessary in order for teachers to fully understand and familiarize themselves with the concept and usage of this framework.	0.7	0.7	5.1	39.0	54.4	4.46	0.698
2. I am totally aware that the Ministry of Education has set CEFR level A2 as the target levels for Year 6 pupils to achieve upon the completion of primary school.	1.5	0.7	11.8	44.9	41.2	4.24	0.800
3. The CEFR familiarization workshop has helped me to understand and familiarize myself with this framework.	0.7	0.7	18.4	50.0	30.1	4.08	0.761
4. I am very familiar with CEFR.	2.2	4.4	27.9	52.9	12.5	3.69	0.830
5. I have read CEFR related documents (for instance: English language education reform in Malaysia: The roadmap 2015-2025)	2.9	0.7	21.3	61.8	13.2	3.82	0.781

*Note: 1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree, S.D. (Standard Deviation)

Table 2. Adoption of CEFR onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessment

Statement	Percentage					Mean	S.D.
	1	2	3	4	5		
6. The adoption of CEFR onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessments is part of globalization.	0.7	2.9	15.4	55.9	25.0	4.01	0.770
7. The adoption of CEFR level A2 onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessments is believed to prepare Year 6 pupils to be ready for secondary school.	0.7	1.5	15.4	53.7	28.7	4.08	0.751
8. Implementation of CEFR onto the English syllabus and assessments help to elevate English proficiency level among Malaysian and to compete economically with other countries.	0.7	2.2	18.4	56.6	22.1	3.97	0.750
9. CEFR provides a workable basis for comparing the standards of proficiency achieved in different countries against Year 6 English syllabus and assessments	0.7	1.5	21.3	58.1	18.4	3.92	0.721
10. The adoption of CEFR onto the English syllabus and assessments will produce school leavers who are able to work and compete at international level due to strong command of English.	1.5	2.2	22.1	52.9	21.3	3.90	0.806

*Note: 1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree, S.D. (Standard Deviation)

Among the 136 respondents, half of the respondents of about 50% with the mean 4.08 agreed that the CEFR familiarization workshop provided has helped them to understand and familiarize themselves with the framework. Besides that, another 30.1% of the respondents responded that they were fully agreed that the training and workshop that they had attended tremendously help them in better

understanding of the aforementioned framework. On a different note, 18.4 % respondents were uncertain whether the training or workshop had given them any help in making them familiarize with CEFR. Most of the respondents, 52.9% with the mean 3.69 agreed that they were very familiar with the align framework. A small number of respondents, 12.5% strongly agreed that they were familiar with CEFR while on the other hand 4.4% respondents disagreed on the statement. Nonetheless, 27.9% respondents unsure of the familiarization with the implementation of CEFR in language education. It is clear that 61.8% of the respondents agreed that they have read any related documents (for instance: English language education reform in Malaysia: The roadmap 2015-2025). On the contrary, 0.7% of respondents did not read any related documents on CEFR while 21.3% of respondents were reported of not sure.

Table 2 indicates on teachers' views on the adoption of CEFR onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessment. Based on the data collected, 55.9% of respondents with the mean 4.01 agreed that the adoption of CEFR onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessments is part of globalization. Another 25% of respondents expressed their strongly agreed towards the statement. Contrary, 2.9% disagree that CEFR adoption is the result of globalization. Moreover, 53.7% of respondents agreed the adoption of CEFR level A2 onto Year 6 English syllabus and assessments is believed to prepare Year 6 pupils to be ready for secondary school while 28.7% were strongly agreed on it. Aside from that, 15.4% respondents were not certain whether the CEFR level A2 onto Year 6 syllabus and assessment can prepare Year 6 pupils to enter secondary school. In another breath, 56.6% respondents agreed that implementation of CEFR onto the English syllabus and assessments help to elevate English proficiency level among Malaysian and to compete economically with other countries. Similarly, 52.9% respondents also agreed that the adoption of CEFR onto the English syllabus and assessments will produce school leavers who are able to work and compete at international level due to strong command of English.

Table 3. English language teachers' perceptions.

Statement	Percentage						S.D.
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	
11. I have a very limited knowledge on CEFR-aligned curriculum.	16.9	38.2	20.6	19.9	4.4	2.57	1.120
12. The CEFR is relevant to my work.	0.7	2.2	18.4	55.1	23.5	3.99	0.760
13. The CEFR-aligned curriculum helps me to plan lessons and set objectives.	1.5	2.2	16.2	56.6	23.5	3.99	0.789
14. The CEFR-aligned curriculum supports me to teach all four language skills equally (listening, speaking, reading, writing).	0.7	2.9	19.9	50.0	26.5	3.99	0.807
15. The CEFR-aligned curriculum has positive implication towards my teaching process.	0.7	2.9	16.2	56.6	23.5	3.99	0.765
16. The CEFR-aligned curriculum covers topic that are interesting and engaging to my pupils.	3.7	2.2	15.4	50.0	28.7	3.98	0.931
17. The CEFR-aligned curriculum covers language functions and uses that are appropriate and necessary for my pupils to learn.	2.9	4.4	16.2	56.6	19.9	3.86	0.888
18. The CEFR-aligned curriculum helps me to build pupils' early literacy skills.	1.5	4.4	17.6	57.4	19.1	3.88	0.817
19. The CEFR-aligned curriculum creates a positive, pupil-centered environment.	2.2	2.2	14.0	54.4	27.2	4.02	0.839
20. The CEFR-aligned curriculum has shown positive implication towards my pupils' learning process.	2.9	2.9	25.0	50.0	19.1	3.79	0.887
21. The CEFR-aligned curriculum helps my pupils develop an international outlook.	1.5	3.7	29.4	45.6	19.9	3.79	0.856
22. The CEFR-aligned curriculum helps my pupils learn how to be committed and responsible Malaysian citizens.	2.9	4.4	25.0	48.5	19.1	3.76	0.913
23. For most of my pupils, the English level of the new CEFR-aligned curriculum is easy.	8.8	11.0	41.9	29.4	8.8	3.18	1.041

24. I often used textbook (Super Minds & Get Smart) and CDs.	2.2	4.4	14.7	41.2	37.5	4.07	0.948
25. I have as much access as I need to the textbook (Super Minds & Get Smart) and CDs.	2.2	5.1	16.9	41.2	34.6	4.01	0.962

*Note: 1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree, S.D. (Standard Deviation)

Table 3 shows teachers had mixed responses regarding the question of whether they have a limited knowledge on CEFR-aligned curriculum. Regardless, those who admit that they have a limited knowledge are still less than the number of teachers who believed that they possessed the knowledge required for the adoption of the new curriculum.

Without a doubt, the teacher highly agreed that the CEFR is relevant to their work. They also approved that the CEFR-aligned curriculum helps them to plan lessons and set objectives. On that note, half of the total respondents mentioned that the new adopted curriculum helped them to teach the four main skills language teaching and learning. The respondents also highly rated that the CEFR-aligned curriculum has positive implication towards their teaching process. Even though only half of the respondents believed that the CEFR-aligned curriculum covers topic that are interesting and engaging to their pupils but another 28.7% of the teachers absolutely agreed that their pupils love the topics provided. Furthermore, the overall respondents' opinion toward the role of the curriculum covering the language functions and uses that are appropriate and necessary for their pupils to learn was positive.

Next, the table shows that a high percentage of teachers that supported the notion that the CEFR-aligned curriculum helps them to build pupils' early literacy skills. Apart from that, the adopted curriculum creates a positive, pupil-centered environment as many teachers placed a positive perception on this statement. Although half of the respondents agreed that the CEFR-aligned curriculum has shown positive implication towards their pupils' learning process, but a quarter of the total teachers were shown to be uncertain of the fact. When the teachers were asked whether the new adopted curriculum helps their pupils develop an international outlook, the response received were less than half which marked the 45.6% only. Again, more than a quarter (29.4%) had favoured on the side of unconfident whether the curriculum did contribute to the international stance for their pupils. Similar to that, less than half of the teachers felt that CEFR helps their pupils learn how to be committed and responsible Malaysian citizens while approximately one fourth of the total respondents were feeling unsure of it. Surprisingly, majority of the teachers also felt ambiguous whether the pupils thought the curriculum were easy for them. However, the teachers highly agreed that they still used the textbook and the CDs given while teaching the new curriculum.

4.4 The challenges of adopting CEFR in teaching and learning.

Challenges in adopting CEFR can be classified into teachers as challenges as well as the feasibility in integrating the CEFR-align into their teaching practices. Based on the responses from the respondents, it was found that 41.2% of the respondents with the mean of 3.45 agreed that they see themselves as one of challenges in the implementation of CEFR in Malaysia. On the other hand, about 16.9% respondents did not agree that they themselves were the challenge. At the same time, 22.8% were uncertain on whether they considered themselves as a challenge or not. Additionally, 38.2% with the mean of 2.39 did not agree that they were not in favour of using CEFR in their class as it reduces their autonomy as a teacher. Similarly, another 22.8% of respondents strongly disagree on the statement. Meanwhile, about 20.6% of respondents were unsure and the remaining 4.4% respondents agreed that they did not prefer of implementing CEFR in their classrooms. When the respondents were asked if it is challenging for them to design class activities based on CEFR descriptors, 27.2% and 9.6% agreed and strongly agreed to the statement respectively. On the opposite site, 25.7% did not agree as they did not see it as challenging for them personally. Apart from that, respondents were also asked whether they were reluctant to accept CEFR because this framework emphasizes on student-centered approach in which they believe is less appropriate in Malaysian classrooms. As a result, only 10.3% agreed with the statements while majority of the respondents of 35.3% disagree towards the statement. Finally, 39% of respondents seems to agree that teachers' limited understanding of CEFR and a teaching approach based on "can do" tasks will be a challenge for teachers.

Additionally, teachers seemed to accept that their training helps prepare them well to implement the CEFR-aligned curriculum although a quarter of the respondents were undecided. In a similar note, a

high number of teachers also stated that they feel confident about using the CEFR-aligned curriculum to prepare a sequence of lesson plans and write lesson objectives for each lesson. More than half of the respondents also felt confident about using CEFR-aligned curriculum and teaching materials while only 2.9% of the teachers were not confident about it. Nonetheless, 41.2% of the teachers thought that extra training on the KSSR English Language CEFR-aligned curriculum was needed regardless of their confidence. The teachers highly rated that they agreed upon how the CEFR helps develop pupils' English language skills. Majority of the respondents of about 55.1% with the mean score of 3.65 decided that it is easy to work across the new CEFR-aligned curriculum documents. In addition, most of the teachers admit that they know how to differentiate pupils' performances and plan to support their needs within the CEFR-aligned curriculum. In term of assessment, 58.1% with the mean of 3.70 stated that they know how to monitor and evaluate pupils' progression within the CEFR-aligned curriculum while promoting a positive, pupil-centered learning environment. Despite 19.1% of the respondents did not receive sufficient infrastructural and ICT support to carry out the CEFR aligned curriculum in school, a number of 38.2% of the teachers did agree with the statement.

Table 4. The challenges of adopting CEFR in teaching and learning.

Statement	Percentage					Mean	S.D.
	1	2	3	4	5		
26. I see myself as one of the challenges in the implementation of CEFR in Malaysia.	4.4	16.9	22.8	41.2	14.7	3.45	1.074
27. I am not in favour of using CEFR in my class as it reduces my autonomy as teacher.	22.8	38.2	20.6	14.0	4.4	2.39	1.117
28. It will be challenging for me to design class activities based on CEFR descriptors.	10.3	25.7	27.2	27.2	9.6	3.00	1.155
29. I am reluctant to accept CEFR because this framework emphasizes on student-centered approach in which I believe is less appropriate in Malaysian classrooms.	20.6	35.3	25.0	10.3	8.8	2.51	1.186
30. Teachers' limited understanding of CEFR and a teaching approach based on "can do" tasks will be a challenge for teachers.	4.4	10.3	26.5	39.0	19.9	3.60	1.057
31. My training prepares me well to implement the CEFR-aligned curriculum.	2.9	6.6	25.0	46.3	19.1	3.72	0.948
32. I feel confident about using the CEFR-aligned curriculum to prepare a sequence of lesson plans and write lesson objectives for each lesson.	2.2	1.5	23.5	57.4	15.4	3.82	0.788
33. I feel confident about using CEFR-aligned curriculum and teaching materials.	1.5	2.9	20.6	57.4	17.6	3.87	0.787
34. I need to receive extra training on the KSSR English Language CEFR-aligned curriculum.	2.2	6.6	27.2	41.2	22.8	3.76	0.954
35. I understand how the CEFR helps develop pupils' English language skills.	0.7	2.2	16.2	64.0	16.9	3.94	0.697
36. It is easy to work across the new CEFR-aligned curriculum documents.	2.9	4.4	27.2	55.1	10.3	3.65	0.838
37. I know how to differentiate pupils' performances and plan to support their needs within the CEFR-aligned curriculum.	2.2	5.1	20.6	61.0	11.0	3.74	0.810
38. I know how to monitor and evaluate pupils' progression within the CEFR-aligned curriculum while promoting a positive, pupil-centered learning environment.	2.2	4.4	25.0	58.1	10.3	3.70	0.801
39. I received sufficient infrastructural and ICT support to carry out the CEFR aligned curriculum in school.	6.6	19.1	31.6	38.2	4.4	3.15	1.000

*Note: 1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree, S.D. (Standard Deviation)

4.5 Discussion

Based on the findings, it can be summarized that majority of the teachers shows positive views and perceptions towards the implementation of CEFR-align curriculum into English language subject in primary school in Malaysia. Although some of them are still in doubts and uncertain in regards of few aspects on the adoption of the CEFR-integrated curriculum, they were optimistic and believed that there were many benefits of CEFR implementation towards improving students' proficiency and competency in English language. Obviously, teachers agreed upon lack of training and workshop provided by the MOE, thus more workshops and trainings are required in order to ensure better understanding and sufficient skills in adapting the new curriculum. Nevertheless, teachers were made aware of the program regardless of inadequate workshops and training in the field. Even though the CEFR familiarization workshop conducted by the ministry of education is aimed to provide teachers with more exposure, not many teachers strongly agreed that the workshop might help them to understand the framework better. This is probably because they themselves were not familiar enough with the CEFR content and therefore, it is pivotal that more series of related workshop should be available for the teachers. Most of the teachers are believed to at least knew this framework on a basis level, hence the result from the questionnaire appear as it is. However, not many teachers were strongly agreed that they were familiar with the CEFR because most of them were not really an expert in this new reform of curriculum due to many reasons.

While exploring on the challenges faced by the teachers, most of them agreed that they see themselves as part of the obstacle. This is because they might feel that they were not adequate enough to be able to implement the CEFR according to the objectives with expectation from the authorities. They also did not oppose of seeing that it will be challenging for them to design class activities based on CEFR descriptors. This may be because the teachers are not really familiar with the framework and did not undergo any related training on CEFR-integrated based lesson and activities. On the other hand, teachers perceived to be positive in terms of giving more freedom towards the students on their learning. Majority of the teachers did not have any problem in giving up their full authority and believed that autonomous learning and student-centered learning is beneficial. Furthermore, teachers also agreed that teachers' limited understanding on CEFR and a teaching approach based on the "can do" statements will be a problem in adopting the CEFR-align effectively. Undeniably, teachers play an important role as teachers are the implementers and the success or failure of this framework will depend mostly on teachers' readiness and perceptions towards the said policy.

5 Conclusion

As a conclusion, teachers' perceptions towards the implementation of CEFR-align curriculum perceived to be positive. Most of the teachers are optimistic and show positive attitudes towards its adoption and adaptation. The teachers also believe that CEFR is important in elevating the nations' English language standard especially the proficiency levels among the students so that it will be on par with the international standards. However, there are a small number of teachers who does not seem to favour the application of CEFR in the curriculum. They show some resistance and quite reluctant to accept the new policy for the time being. This might happen due to the challenges and obstacle that they faced during its implementation. Overall, the new CEFR-align curriculum has been generally accepted as part of the language education system regardless of the limitation involved.

6 Recommendations

This study is only focusing on the teachers' perceptions on the CEFR-align curriculum implementation in primary schools in Malaysia. There are many other aspects and areas of research that can be carried out in the future in order to explore and investigate further in-depth about the adoption of CEFR and its impact on the language education system. For instance, students' views or beliefs are also worth being taken into consideration as they are the end results of the CEFR execution in order to determine its success or failure. Another aspect aside from curriculum that can be examine are consist of assessment, materials, and textbooks. Other than that, this study employs only survey research design.

It is imperatives that other studies can use other research design and methodology to do different research by using different approach. The more studies on CEFR being done locally, the better it is for the implementation of this framework to take into its shape.

References

1. Abdullah, A. N., Talif, R., & Jan, J. M. (2012). Flowers in the garden: A glance on multilingualism in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Languages and Linguistics (MJLL)*, 1(1): 45-51. <https://doi.org/10.24200/mjll.volliss1pp45-51>
2. Aziz, A. H. A. A., Ab Rashid, R., & Zainudin, W. Z. W. (2018). The enactment of the Malaysian common European framework of reference (CEFR): National master trainer's reflection. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2): 409-417.
3. Aziz, M. S. A., & Uri, N. F. M. (2017). CEFR in Malaysia: Current Issues and Challenges in the Implementation of the Framework. In 3rd International Conference on Language Testing and Assessment and the 5th British Council New Directions in Language Assessment Conference, Shanghai, China.
4. Azman, H. (2016). Implementation and challenges of English language education reform in Malaysian primary schools. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature®*, 22(3). <http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2016-2203-05>
5. Byram, M., & Parmenter, L. (2012). *ELT Journal Advance Access published August 16, 2013. Multilingual Matters*, 270: 34-95.
6. Council of Europe. (2001). *The Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
7. Curriculum Development Division. (2011). *Standard Document of Primary School Curriculum: Basic Core Module of English Language for National Schools*. Putrajaya: Author.
8. Darmi, R., Saad, N. S. M., Abdullah, N., Puteh-Behak, F., Zakaria, Z. A., & Adnan, J. N. I. A. (2017). Teachers' views on students' performance in English language proficiency courses via CEFR descriptors. *International E-Journal of Advances in Education*, 3(8): 363-370. <http://ijaedu.ocerintjournals.org/en/download/article-file/338673>
9. David, M. K., & Manan, S. A. (2015). Language ideology and the linguistic landscape: A study in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia. *Linguistics & The Human Sciences*, 11(1): 51-66.
10. Devi Krishnan, P., & Md Yumus, M. (2019). Blended CEFR in Enhancing Vocabulary among Low Proficiency Students. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL*, (5). <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3431755>
11. Faez, F., Taylor, S., Majhanovich, S., Brown, P., & Smith, M. (2011). Teachers' reactions to CEFR's task-based approach for FSL classrooms. *Synergies Europe*, 6: 109-120. <https://gerflint.fr/Base/Europe6/faez.pdf>
12. Fei, W. F., Siong, L. K., Kim, L. S., & Yaacob, A. (2012). English use as an identity marker among Malaysian undergraduates. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature®*, 18(1). <http://ejournal.ukm.my/3l/article/view/956>
13. Foley, J. A. (2019). Adapting CEFR for English language education in ASEAN, Japan and China. *The New English Teacher*, 13(2): 101. <http://www.assumptionjournal.au.edu/index.php/newEnglishTeacher/article/view/3879>
14. Ishak, W. I. W., & Mohamad, M. (2018). The Implementation of Common European Framework of References (CEFR): What Are the Effects Towards LINUS Students' Achievements? *Creative Education*, 9(16), 2714-2731. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2018.916205>
15. Ismail, A. A. M. (2018). Content analysis on CEFR English textbooks for advanced Malaysian ESL Learners.
16. James, P. R., & Aziz, A. A. (2020). Perceptions and Expectancies of Malaysian Students on Cultural Elements in Foreign Textbooks. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES*, 10(4).
17. Jerald, G. G., & Shah, P. M. (2019). The Impact of CEFR-Aligned Curriculum in the Teaching of ESL in Julau District: English Teachers' Perspectives. In *International Journal of Innovative Research and Creative Technology*, 4 (6). <http://www.ijirct.org/papers/IJIRCT1801023.pdf>
18. Johar, N. A., & Aziz, A. A. (2019). Teachers' Perceptions on Using the Pulse 2 textbook. https://cdn-cms.f-static.com/uploads/1759562/normal_5d7c40da6128a.pdf
19. Kaur, P., & Shapii, A. (2018). Language and Nationalism in Malaysia: A Language policy Perspective. *International Journal*, 3(7): 1-10. <http://www.ijlgc.com/PDF/IJLGC-2018-07-03-01.pdf>

20. Kok, N. M. & Aziz, A. A. (2019). English Language Teachers' Perceptions on The Implementation Of CEFR-Aligned Curriculum Among Primary Schools in Malaysia. Seminar Wacana Pendidikan 2019 M (SWAPEN 2.0).
21. Lo, Y. Y. (2018). English teachers' concern on Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR): An application of CBAM. *JuKu: Jurnal Kurikulum & Pengajaran Asia Pasifik*, 6(1): 46-58. <https://juku.um.edu.my/article/view/11174>
22. Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
23. Mezirow, Jack (1997). *Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice*. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 74(1): 5–12.
24. Ministry of Education. (2013). *Malaysia education blueprint 2013–2025 (Preschool to Post-Secondary Education)*. Putrajaya, Malaysia: Ministry of Education.
25. Moser, J. (2015). From a knowledge-based language curriculum to a competency-based one: The CEFR in action in Asia. *Asian EFL Journal*, 88: 1-29.
26. Nakatani, Y. (2012). Exploring the implementation of the CEFR in Asian contexts: Focus on communication strategies. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46: 771-775. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.196>
27. Ngo, X. M. (2017). Diffusion of the CEFR among Vietnamese teachers: A mixed methods investigation. *Asian EFL Journal*, 19(1): 7-32.
28. Normand-Marconnet, N., & Bianco, J. L. (2013). *The European Conference on Language Learning 2013, Official Conference Proceedings*. The International Academic Forum (IAFOR) 2013 Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution Non-Commercial International. *Proceedings ISSN*, 2188, 002X.
29. North, B., & Panthier, J. (2016). Updating the CEFR descriptors: The context. *Research Notes*, 63: 16-23. <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/301971-research-notes-63.pdf#page=18>
30. Piccardo, E. (2012). Multidimensionality of assessment in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). *OLBI Working Papers*, 4. <https://uottawa.scholarsportal.info/ottawa/index.php/ILOB-OLBI/article/view/1106/958>
31. Rashid, R. A., Abdul Rahman, S. B., & Yunus, K. (2017). Reforms in the policy of English language teaching in Malaysia. *Policy Futures in Education*, 15(1): 100-112. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1478210316679069>
32. Runnels, J., & Runnels, V. (2019). Impact of the Common European Framework of Reference—A bibliometric analysis of research from 1990-2017. *CEFR Journal*, 18.
33. Sabbir, F. (2019). Perceived View Of Teachers Towards Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3) (Form Three Assessment) English Language: A Case Study. https://education.uitm.edu.my/ajue/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/MEDC-4.-Fatima_binti_Sabbir.pdf
34. Savski, K. (2019). Putting the plurilingual/pluricultural back into CEFR: Reflecting on policy reform in Thailand and Malaysia. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 16(2): 644.
35. Selvadurai, S., Liu, O. P., Radzi, M. M., Hoon, O. P., Tee, O. P., & Saibeh, B. (2017). Debating education for nation building in Malaysia: National school persistence or vernacular school resistance? *Geografia-Malaysian Journal of Society and Space*, 11(13). <http://ejournal.ukm.my/gmjss/article/view/19111>
36. Shah, P. M., & Ahmad, F. (2007). A comparative account of the bilingual education programs in Malaysia and the United States. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 7(2). <http://ejournal.ukm.my/gema/article/view/180>
37. Shulgina, T., & Sagarin, G. (2017). A Survey of English Language Teaching in Higher Institutions of Learning in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. doi:10.20944/preprints201711.0013.v1
38. Sidhu, G. K., Kaur, S., & Chi, L. J. (2018). CEFR-aligned school-based assessment in the Malaysian primary ESL classroom. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2): 452-463. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v8i2.13311>
39. Srakang, L. (2014). *A study of teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks: A case study of 10th grade English teachers in Maha Sarakham Province (Doctoral dissertation)*.
40. Subramaniam, G. (2007). The changing tenor of English in multicultural postcolonial Malaysia. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature®*, 13. <http://ejournals.ukm.my/3l/article/view/1029>
41. Sülü, A. & Kir, E. (2014). Language teachers' views on CEFR. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET)*, 1(5): 358-364. <http://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/69/97>
42. Thirusanku, J., & Yunus, M. M. (2014). Status of English in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, 10(14): 254.
43. Tiep, N. N. (2017). EFL Teachers' Perceptions Towards the use of CEFR-V. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*. <https://oapub.org/edu/index.php/ejel/article/view/856>
44. Uri, N. F. M., & Abd Aziz, M. S. (2018). Implementation of CEFR in Malaysia: Teachers' awareness and the Challenges. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature®*, 24(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.17576/3L-2018-2403-13>

45. Uri, N. F. M., & Aziz, M. S. A. (2019). Teachers' Evaluation of The Suitability of Reading Syllabus Specifications to the CEFR.
46. Yamat, H., Umar, N. F. M., & Mahmood, M. I. (2014). Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening the English Language Policy: An Education Reform. *International Education Studies*, 7(13): 197-205. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1071266>
47. Yee, B. C., & Periasamy, V. (2019). English Language Teachers' Perceptions Towards Malaysian University English Test (MUET) as a measure to test teachers' language proficiency.
48. Yuniarti, Y. (2017). Developing speaking materials based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for increasing the students' speaking skill. *Pedagogy: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 4(2): 143-156. <https://doi.org/10.32332/pedagogy.v4i2.384>
49. Zaaba, Z., Aning, I., Gunggut, H., Ramadan, F., & Umemoto, K. (2010). English as a medium of instruction in the public higher education institution: A case study of language-in-education policy in Malaysia. *International Journal of Education and Information Technologies*, 2(5): 157-165.
50. Zaaba, Z., Ramadan, F. I., Anning, I. N. A., Gunggut, H., & Umemoto, K. (2011). Language-in-education policy: A study of policy adjustment strategy in Malaysia. *International Journal of Education*. <http://hdl.handle.net/10119/9488>