

Evaluating Teachers' Assessment Literacy in Enacting Cefr-Aligned Classroom-Based Assessment in Malaysian Secondary Schools ESL Classroom

Anwar Farhan Mohamad Marzaini¹, Wan Nurul Elia Haslee Sharil², Kaarthiyainy Supramaniam³, Shahazwan Mat Yusoff⁴

^{1,2,3}Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Puncak Alam Campus, 42300, Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, ⁴Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50603, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Corresponding Author Email: areanwar73@gmail.com

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Abstract

This past five years has seen a drastic reform in the Malaysian education system. The reform prompts significant changes in teaching and learning and the assessment system. The emphasis on high-stakes examinations were revised and a new assessment system is introduced. In 2021, many high-stake examinations like *Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah* (UPSR) and *Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3* (PT3) were abolished due to the reason of being ineffective tools to measure students' learning capability. Since the abolishment, the government paved the way by introducing a more progressive and continuous assessment system known as Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) which gives full autonomy to teachers to assess students by introducing formative assessments. In the context of English Language Education, the CBA is aligned with CEFR. CEFR breathes new ways for teachers to assess students' language progression across a standard international descriptor. This change has resorted in a huge transformation in the teachers' role as CEFR-aligned CBA demands teachers to plan, design, implement, and report the new assessment system in their teaching practices. Hence, a mixed-method study was conducted to explore the teacher's assessment literacy in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA at the micro level. The findings of this study reported that teachers posit a low assessment literacy level which has influenced their practices to enact the new assessment system. Several challenges like the time constraint, lack of training, teachers' unfamiliarity, and tedious process of CBA raised the concern for the government to reduce these deficiencies in enacting the change in education.

Keywords: Common European Framework of References, Classroom-Based Assessment, English Language Teaching.

Introduction

Malaysia's education was infamously known for being highly dependent on the exam-oriented culture. The high-stake examinations like *Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah* (UPSR), *Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3* (PT3), and *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) were conducted at both primary and secondary school levels which emphasized on summative testing. This nature has sparked a heated debate among educational scholars who perceive the exam-oriented culture has neglected teachers to unleash the real students' capability in learning (Chin et al., 2019). Therefore, many efforts have been done by the government to revamp the current education by relooking the assessment system in the country. Starting in 2021, the government began a reform plan which saw the end of summative high-stake examinations like UPSR and PT3 (Rethinasamy et al., 2021) in the Malaysian education system. Replacing these high-stake examinations, the government has introduced the Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) as a way of uprooting education toward a more progressive and continuous assessment system (MOE, 2019). CBA is perceived to be a more holistic assessment where it emphasizes the combination of the formative and summative context under the umbrella of School-Based Assessment (SBA).

In the context of English Language education, the CBA was aligned with the Common European Framework of References (CEFR). This framework aims to provide a common and standardize framework for developing the language syllabuses, curriculum guidance, exams and textbooks (Council of Europe, 2011). Through the integration of CEFR in CBA system, the government paved the ways of producing a more progressive language assessment system where teachers can monitor and chart their student's language progression from time to time based on a standard international descriptor (Sidhu, Kaur & Chi, 2018 and Singh et al., 2021) through the formative context. This reform is considered as a synergistic movement done by the government in enhancing the standard of English Language education in Malaysia to an international level (Azman, 2016). As far as this reform is concerned, teachers who are the micro implementers of new policy in the classroom have to take a drastic action in adapting to the new climate of assessment system.

Teachers' roles in CEFR-aligned CBA covers all levels starting from planning, implementing, assessing, evaluating, reporting, and making follow-up actions according to the guidelines stated by the policymakers (Isa et al., 2020). According to Taneri (2016), this educational change has a big implication where it demands the teachers to understand the changes so that suitable action can be taken to effectively implement the educational reform. Azli and Akmar (2020) affirmed it is very crucial for the teachers to develop and explore new methods to evaluate and enhance the students' interest in mastering the language for both inside and outside of the classroom. Through the implementation of the CEFR-aligned CBA, it will require teachers to assess the students' language development in four main language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (Hopfenbeck, 2018). Pellegrino, DiBello and Goldman (2016) suggested that teachers need to be able to design the assessment instrument that is suitable to engage the students exuding their language knowledge by aligning it with CEFR principles. To note, the classroom-based assessment which was recently introduced into the Malaysian education requires teachers to be literate in its assessment system, because they were given a full autonomy to assess the students' language progression. Literacy in assessment is a crucial factor in assuring the quality implementation (Khatab, 2012) of CEFR-aligned classroom-based assessment. Hence, this study was conducted to determine the secondary schools ESL teachers' competency in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA. This study will also be shading the light into the challenges that teachers have to face upon enacting the

new assessment reform in their teaching and learning process and this will give a concern to the Ministry of Education by looking into several consideration that they need to pay attention to whenever the new curriculum change is being enacted.

The implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA does not solely relate to putting the practice in the most recent policies. But this reform has also led to changes in teachers' practices of teaching and learning in the classroom. At times, many studies claimed the CBA was implemented differently from its intended objectives (Arumugham, 2020; Suppian et al., 2020; Yeh, 2021). Ulas and Aksu (2015) further explained that this problem happened due to the differences in autonomy between the policy planning and policy implementation. Many teachers were found to be inclined toward the exam-oriented assessment practices when assessing the students (Arumugham, 2020) because teachers were using the CBA just to fulfill the needs of their work conduct (Suppian et al., 2020). This situation has shown that teachers lack fundamental understanding of this new assessment policy. In addition, the implementation of CBA was found to be a drastic move taken by the government (Marnizam & Ali, 2021). The CBA was implemented right after the abolishment of PT3 in secondary school and with this short transition, the expectation for teachers to master the new assessment policy remains vague. Plus, the limited training provided to the teachers, leaves a great resistance among teachers to adapt to the change (Ghavifekr et al., 2016). This matter has led to the uncertainty for teachers to enact CEFR-aligned CBA. Balang et al (2021) found that most teachers resort to falsify their students' performances in order to meet the demand of their superiors and educational standards. This daunting problem has produced a contested site for this study to address the teachers' assessment literacy in the new CEFR-aligned CBA.

To date, there are many past literatures which have limit the discussion on the readiness and awareness of teachers adapting to CBA (Arumugham, 2020; Kanan et al., 2021; Marnizam & Ali, 2021). The study which discusses the teacher's competency in the new assessment system is still far and between which warrants further in-depth study. This present study will fill the knowledge gap by examining the teachers' assessment literacy in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA. In other aspects, this study will also elucidate several challenges that are halting teachers to implement the new assessment system based on the stipulated aims and objectives by the policymakers.

Classroom-Based Assessment

As has been stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, the good self-assessment score for the students' level in school has now led to the implementation of Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) in ensuring a more comprehensive assessment to be carried out by the students themselves and not only focused on the exam-oriented culture. CBA maintains all the concept of School Assessment where it involves determining the mastery level of students in each subject. CBA is conceptualized as one of the continuous assessment processes in teaching and learning to obtain information pertaining to the development, progress, abilities and mastery of the students in accordance to the intended curriculum goals. Additionally, CBA occurs via formative and summative context which many scholars perceive it is as a holistic assessment system. MOE (2019) highlights several objectives of implementing CBA in school system which to;

- Monitor the students' existing knowledge and learning progress.
- Rectify the students' strengths and weaknesses in learning process.
- Examine the effectiveness of the teaching process employed in the classroom.
- Design, modify and enhance the current teaching and learning methods.

- Carry out the appropriate follow-up plan immediately based on the assessment feedback.

Enacting CBA is grounded on the full autonomy of teachers to implement the change in school. CBA needs to be conducted three times in a year which is during the beginning, mid and year-end assessment. Teachers need to be able to design the assessment materials and decide on the students' mastery level during the CBA assessment. There are six mastery levels which shows the students' abilities in mastering the skills in each subject. Teachers need to be able to map the students' mastery level to progress through the six levels in order to ensure students are able to achieve the targeted and intended levels for them. Hence, the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective taxonomies serve as the basis for determining the students' mastery level in CBA (Kannan et al., 2021). According to MOE (2019), teachers need to facilitate students to progress until they reach for the minimum mastery level of 3. At this level, students are indicated as an independent learner where they can apply the knowledge acquired in the subjects they learned and perform the skills or tasks given in situation.

The Inception of CEFR into Classroom Based Assessment

The integration of CEFR in English Language education has breathes the new approach on how the students' language proficiency will be assessed. CEFR provides an international benchmarking in assessment system through establishing the descriptors as the reference for teachers to map the students' language progression (Abd Rahman et al., 2021). In the context of language assessment, the CBA was complied to the CEFR descriptors as the means of mapping students' language performance across four different skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The CEFR-aligned CBA uses the 'Can Do' descriptors to specify the students' language performance. Students will be categorized into six broad performance levels ranging from A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. These categories explain the students' capability of mastering the target language. According to Holzknicht et al (2018), instead of using general classifications like "beginners," "intermediate," or "advanced" in the former KSSM assessment system, this proficiency scale offers a more accurate and dependable manner of gauging the students' mastery level in language learning. The new CEFR-aligned CBA emphasizes the peer and self-assessment to develop the independent language learner (Zhao & Zhao, 2020). Teachers are responsible to guide the students to self-assess themselves by being responsible of their own language learning process. Sidhu et al (2018) stated that among of the main aims of CEFR-aligned CBA include;

- introducing the new assessment culture in teaching and learning which includes the combination of summative and formative assessment.
- sustaining a progressive assessment system which grounded on the basis of the action-oriented approach.
- Assisting and informing exploration using the grading criteria that are consistent with the reflective procedures used to investigate the implications of descriptors.

CEFR-aligned CBA emphasizes the authentic assessment system where the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are assessed through the real-world context tasks (Abidin & Hashim, 2021). This aspect has become the major focus in CEFR CBA as the government perceived the importance of mastering the communicative skills in the target language to prepare students to be proficient English Language users (Abidin & Hashim, 2021). This aspect cannot be found in the previous KSSM English assessment because Rashid et al (2017) claimed that the previous approach of ELT were far too structured in engaging students to learn the target language. It is because Rashid

et al (2017) posited that the use of teaching methods like Grammar Translation method, Direct method and Situational Language Teaching approaches were used, and it engaged students with the rote learning of the language structure. This matter has impeded the students' language development in mastering the skills in their target language.

Teachers' Assessment Literacy

Teachers' content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) have been linked to their ability to effectively employ the assessment for formative context (Khatab, 2012). Content knowledge (CK) refers to the body of knowledge and information that teachers teach and from which students are expected to learn in a particular subject or content area (Santos, 2021). Experience correlates weakly with teaching effectiveness and, in particular, content knowledge (Irvine, 2018), implying that years of preparation in college play an important role in building teachers' content knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), on the other hand, is known as the set of knowledge teachers need to teach their students (Santos & Castro, 2021). This involves the way teachers present and articulate subject matter knowledge in the context of promoting student learning (Ozden, 2008). Without a well-developed CK and PCK, teachers are likely to be less able to contingently apply assessment data to improve students' learning. Hence, in order for teachers to do this, they must be clear about the learning objectives that they expected to achieve during the teaching, learning and assessment process.

In implementing CEFR-aligned CBA, the teachers' content knowledge of utilizing the assessment data formatively is deemed to be an important element on determining the students' language development. As formative assessment is a dynamic process, setting the performance standard in students' language proficiency will depicts the actual English language progression about the ways students' thinking actually develops in interaction with the experience and instruction (Suskie, 2018). The performance descriptors in the performance standard provide the teacher on students' progression in learning English Language. In short, a combination of assessment that provide descriptions of the performance levels, which mapped to learning progression, could support teachers in increasing both CK and PCK to make effective use of assessment for formative purposes.

Methods

This study employs the use of a mixed-method approach which consists of qualitative and quantitative research design. The data retrieved for this study will be based on a survey and semi-structured interviews with ESL teachers who are directly involved in the overall enactment of the CEFR-aligned CBA at secondary school. Creswell (2014) affirmed that Survey is effective collection in studying a general phenomenon. It will help the researcher to better understand the teachers' assessment literacy level to enact CEFR-aligned CBA in their ESL classroom practices. 50 ESL teachers were involved in answering the survey. Among them, 10 ESL teachers were also chosen by the researchers to further undergo a semi-structured interview to get their extended views on the challenges they perceived in enacting the new CEFR-aligned CBA. According to Rahman (2014), the use of the semi-structured interview method is helpful for the researchers to probe more information pertaining to the studied phenomenon. To delve into this phenomenon, the population of ESL teachers in Pulau Pinang was given a central focus. A Purposive Sampling technique was used to disseminate 50 ESL teachers to represent the targeted population. These teachers were

chosen through the criterion-based selection method where they must have a minimum of a degree in English education and must currently be in service for more than 3 years of experience. This group of teachers also must be familiar with the CEFR principles and at least have attended the CEFR training or workshops conducted by the MOE through the Cascade Training Model.

This study involved the use of the Classroom Assessment Literacy Inventory (CALI) which was adapted from a similar instrument called the Teacher Assessment Literacy Questionnaire (Mertler, 2003). A Cronbach Alpha was done in the pilot study as a way of validating the CALI instrument used in this study. The coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha depicts a score of 0.82 which is categorized as a good reliability level. In order to rectify the teachers' assessment literacy level in CEFR-aligned CBA, seven assessment literacy standards were derived from CALI. These assessment literacy standards help researchers to clarify the capability of teachers in planning, designing, implementing, and reporting the CEFR-aligned CBA and hence will depict the whole picture of the teacher's literacy level in this new assessment system. Table 1 below depicts the standards and items used to measure the level of assessment literacy among secondary school ESL teachers in the implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA.

Table 1

The standards and the items to measure the standards

Section.	Assessment Literacy Standards	Items
1.	Choosing assessment methods for instructional decision.	1,2,3,4 and 5
2.	Developing assessment methods for instructional decision.	6,7,8,9 and 10
3.	Administering, scoring and interpreting the results of both externally produced and teacher-produced assessment method.	11,12,13,14 and 15
4.	Using assessment result when making decisions about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement.	16,17,18, and 19
5.	Developing valid students' grading procedures that use students' assessment.	20,21,22 and 23
6.	Communicating assessment results to students and parents.	24,25,26,27 and 28
7.	Recognizing unethical, illegal and otherwise inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information.	29,30,31 and 32

Six-point Likert scale ranging from 6= Strongly Agree, 5=Agree, 4=Slightly Agree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree was used to identify teachers' assessment literacy of CEFR-aligned CBA. The use of six-point Likert scales was helpful for the researchers to perceive a more higher and accurate Cronbach Alpha's result and hence to towards more valid and reliable findings (Lange and Soderlund, 2004). A substantive semi-structured interview was conducted after the survey was done to delve into the challenges that teachers face upon enacting CEFR-aligned CBA in their teaching practices.

Result and Discussion

The salient findings of the study are intended to answer two main research questions below:

- 1) What is the teachers' assessment literacy level in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA in Malaysian ESL classroom?
- 2) What are the challenges faces by ESL teachers in enacting CEFR-aligned CBA in Malaysian ESL classroom?

The findings of the study below are the excerpt from the SPSS analysis of the questionnaire. The result of the study is also being tabulated through the thematic analysis in order to describe the challenges for teacher to implement CEFR-aligned assessment.

Teachers' assessment literacy level in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA in Malaysian ESL classroom

This section tabulates the data pertaining to the teachers' assessment literacy of implementing CEFR-aligned CBA in their classroom practices. Data were analyzed through the comparison of the mean score gained from SPSS analysis and it is interpreted based on the Mean Score Interpretation Table 2 by Moidunny (2009) below.

Table 2

Mean Score Interpretation Table

Mean Score	Interpretation of Mean Score
1.00-2.00	Low
2.01-3.00	Moderately Low
3.01-4.00	Moderately High
4.01-5.00	High

In order to derive the teachers' assessment literacy level toward the changing climate of the assessment system, the data were tabulated through the SPSS and the mean score gained was compared to identify how teachers perceived CEFR-aligned CBA in their teaching practices especially in assessing the students' language proficiency. Table 3 below tabulates the mean scores value on the assessment literacy standard from CALI instruments.

Table 3

Teachers' assessment literacy level

Assessment literacy standards	N	Mean	Std.Dev
Choosing assessment methods for instructional decision	50	2.4167	1.31137
Developing assessment methods for instructional decision	50	2.3333	1.15470
Administering, scoring and interpreting the results of both externally produced and teacher-produced assessment method	50	2.6667	.77850
Using assessment result when making decisions about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement	50	3.0000	.85280
Developing valid students' grading procedures that use students' assessment.	50	2.5833	.99620
Communicating assessment results to students and parents.	50	3.0000	1.20605
Recognizing unethical, illegal and otherwise inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information.	50	2.4167	1.24011

Table 3 above depicts the mean score value on the assessment literacy standard among teachers to enact the CEFR-aligned CBA in their classroom practices. From the tabulation of mean score on the assessment literacy standard above, Item 2 (*Developing assessment methods for instructional decision*) depicts the lowest mean score value ($X=2.33$; $SD=1.154$). Teachers are found to be the least literate in designing and developing the assessment instrument to assess students in CBA ($X=2.33$; $SD=1.154$), which may suggest that the teachers could use some support in doing so. The highest mean score are tabulated in item 4 (*Using assessment result when making decision about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement*) and item 6 (*Communicating assessment results to students and parents*) with the mean score $X=3.00$; $SD=.852$ and $X=3.00$; $SD=1.206$ respectively. This suggest that although the mean score for these two items are the highest, it does not mean that they are clear in their decision making and communicating with the students and their parents about the assessment results, as the highest mean to be achieved is 5.00. To sum it up, all the mean score tabulated in each of the assessment literacy standard above can be described as 'moderately low' based on the Mean Interpretation Table. This matter has given a picture that teachers posit a low assessment literacy level to implement CEFR-aligned CBA in their classroom practices.

Challenges of Teachers adapting to CEFR-Aligned CBA

The data retrieved from the semi-structured interview were analysed through the thematic analysis procedures to build the typology on the aspect that are halting teachers to implement CEFR-aligned CBA in their classroom practices. The description of the themes emerged from the thematic analysis are described in the preceding section below.

- Time Constraint

Most teachers claimed that the implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA takes up a lot of their time to plan, design, report and record the data and evident retrieved from the assessment conducted. In order for the teachers to design the assessment instrument, they need to design the material that is suitable to the different needs and levels of students' proficiency hence, this process takes up a lot of time.

"I feel it is a challenge for me to design the assessment instrument that is tally with the students' proficiency. You know what, we only been given a week to design the assessment and I found it is ridiculous" (Teacher 4)

"I have always been caught in stress when designing the CBA instrument. Sometimes the school said they gave us a month to conduct the CBA. Out of sudden, they shorten the time up to only two weeks. It's a rush." (Teacher 1)

Teachers posit that they were just given only a limited amount of time for them to design and implement the CBA and this matter has impeded the quality of the instrument that they design to assess the students in the classroom. In addition, teachers also claimed that the process for them to update the data in the system took a lot of time due to unstable serve and they need to wait until the right time for the system to be handy for them to key in the student's data.

"...they keep asking us to be fast in tabulating the mark, but the system and serve is always down...." (Teacher 7)

"...I think we are still not ready for this change. Even the system is always problem, it takes a lot of my time...." (Teacher 2)

"...sometimes when there were too many teachers log in into the system, it caused the process of inserting the data became problematic then I have to wait for my turn..." (Teacher 8)

- Lack of Training

One of the stumbling blocks that leads to the inefficient implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA is the lack of training provided to teachers. The participants affirmed that the MOE was not able to propel an adequate support and training and hence led teachers to have the confusion in defining the CEFR-aligned CBA into their teaching practices. The excerpts below show the responses retrieved from the participants regarding the limited training employed to them.

"The lack of training and support that I received would be the biggest challenge for me to have a clarity in assessing students based on CEFR principles" (Teacher 6)

"... there's no proper cascade courses that I can get involved..." (Teacher 5)

"The Pro-ELT training given is not purposely aligned with CEFR" (Teacher 3)

"I need to receive more guidance especially in terms of the materials that I can refer to in order to me to adapt with these changes" (Teacher 10)

"Lack of training in using the descriptors especially for writing" (Teacher 1)

"...I think the training given to us is not enough. They only gave us one time training per year. The most problematic is not all teachers involved in the training. They expect teachers who attended that one time training can share the knowledge through PLC." (Teacher 2)

Based on the responses retrieved from the participants, teachers believed that that the existing training like Pro-ELT is not a proper cascading technique in helping them to assimilate the CEFR-aligned CBA especially in terms of assessing the students' language performances. Teachers feel that the existing training employed to them did not engage them with the current practices that they need to assimilate in implementing the new assessment system. This matter has impeded the transferring of knowledge on the new CEFR-aligned CBA among ESL teachers.

- Unfamiliarity

Moreover, the participants also affirmed that their 'unfamiliarity' toward the new policy change related to CEFR, and assessment can also become one of the challenges that hinder the process of enacting this policy. From the excerpts below, respondents affirmed that the context of CEFR is too much diverted towards foreign culture and hence pushing them to create a relationship on the content syllabus taught to the students in the local context. Due to the lack of training employed to them, respondents claimed that they only posit a surface comprehending towards using the CEFR descriptors in assessing the students' performance. This matter can be very daunting as it can neglect nature of language learning process in the local context (Shak et al., 2021)

"Since the syllabus is entirely foreign to them, though exposed to it, to grasp the culture is not an easy fit. In the end, teachers need to localise the content so it's nearer to students' own experience and lifestyle. While it's good to introduce the students to the culture of other countries (especially the UK), I think it's better to stick to what's tangible to them." (Teacher 5)

"...it's difficult to show in paper that the students are progressing but at their own pace." (Teacher 8)

"Only understand about the bands or levels so far..." (Teacher 9)

- Tedious assessment process

Based on the interview conducted, the participants also claimed that CEFR-aligned CBA is rather a tedious process. The full autonomy given for the teachers to implement the formative assessment has become an overlap amount of work that they have to deal with. The participants posited that the CEFR-aligned CBA is a tedious and complicated process due to many clerical works that they need to carry out in reporting and recording the data. For example,

"The job of keying in never ends as there is always something new to key in. I feel burdened when I have to deal with so much clerical work" (Teacher 7)

"I'm occupied with other things like being a mentor to my students during the intervention after CBA. Again, I need to do the report about the intervention that I carried out" (Teacher 4)

Teachers also need to repeat the lesson if the students did not reach the standard Band. Teachers claimed it had become a tedious procedure for the to redesign and build new assessment instrument to get the student reach the mastery level set by the superiors.

"...sometimes I took almost three times to repeat the same things and at the end of the day I couldn't finish my syllabus.."(Teacher 3)

"...as it is grounded on the classroom assessment, so it should be based on our own students progression. For instance, if I conducted the first assessment, and it turns out that my students couldn't reach the intended mastery level, so I have to find another initiative to build a new instrument so that I can help these students" (Teacher 10)

Discussion

The findings of this study have shown that teachers are still not ready for the implementation of the new assessment system. Teachers still posit a low level of assessment literacy as most of them are still unclear on how to design the assessment instrument that is aligned with CEFR in CBA. The low level of assessment literacy among teachers will relatively influence poor assessment practice when assessing the students (Ergul & Cetin, 2021). Due to the tedious process within limited time constraints in the implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA, this study has profoundly revealed that teachers have to implore the CBA within a tight procedure, and this has sparked a major question on the trustworthiness of this assessment system. A similar study conducted by Mertler (2004) further claimed that teachers' have an inadequate theoretical understanding of the new assessment policy, and this has impeded their practices in the formative assessment. In addition, a study conducted by Arrafii and Sumarni (2017) replicates roughly similar evidence which stated that teachers' knowledge of classroom assessment is insufficient, and they are not adequately prepared to assess the students' learning. Teachers' low level of assessment literacy in employing CEFR-aligned CBA can be explained by the lack of training on assessment literacy and practices provided to teachers. It is because the cascade training is mainly focusing on the pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning with lesser attention given to the assessment process for teachers. This matter has profoundly led to the unfamiliarity of teachers in defining the new assessment policy and it has led to unstandardized enactment of the CBA at the micro level. Thus, based on the analysis done in this study, two suggestions have been proposed to raise the attention for the policymakers on several aspects that they need to look upon when designing the new policy in education.

- Enhancing Teachers' Training

The cascading training given to teachers should be carried out more regularly. In fact, this periodic training serves as the most fundamental aspect in enhancing the professionalism of

teachers in implementing the new assessment system. Teachers need to be given regular training and workshops related to instrument designing, online data entry, filing systems, and other courses that can improve their competency of teachers as effective CBA implementers. The cascading training should be engaging for teachers to directly connect and communicate with the higher authority in education. This is very crucial to ensure the knowledge and information can be transferred to the micro implementers.

- Continuous Monitoring

Monitoring needs to be done continuously in order to ensure a standardized enactment of CEFR-aligned CBA. The top-down education providers from the macro and meso levels need to play active roles to monitor the practices of teachers implementing the CBA at the micro level. This is increasingly important to ensure the CBA can be implemented by aligning to the stipulated aims and objectives of this new assessment system was designed. For example, the District and Stated Education Officer who works at the macro level should come to the field more often to monitor the implementation of CBA in schools. In addition, at the meso level, the school administrators which includes the Principals, Senior Assistants, or Panel Heads need to have a standardized understanding of how the CEFR-aligned CBA can be implemented by suiting to the culture and ethos of their respective schools so that teachers will have guidance on what is expected by the superiors when they implement the CEFR-aligned CBA. Indirectly, continuous monitoring can help teachers to carry out their responsibilities as CBA implementers effectively.

- Providing supporting materials

As CEFR-aligned CBA is perceived to be a tedious and complex process, the educational agency at the macro and meso level needs to provide supporting materials as a guideline for teachers to design new assessment instruments that are suitable for the students to achieve the targeted minimum mastery level. The exemplary materials designed to support teachers may have an important role here. After all, the task of educational materials is not to determine, or even modify, the aims that teachers should adopt it for their teaching and assessment practices. This will set a milestone view for teachers on what is expected for them to do in implementing the new CEFR-aligned CBA.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has profoundly revealed that the implementation of CEFR-aligned CBA is still far and between of meeting the aims from MOE. The enactment of this new assessment system was considered as a drastic change compared to the previous policies have ever implemented. There were many issues that have yet to be addressed by the policymakers prior of transiting to this new assessment system. Hence, several implications were raised in accordance with the issues discovered in this study. These implications can be valuable for CEFR-aligned CBA implementation in the post-Covid-19 era. One the problem is the teachers' ideas about this assessment were unconnected from the notions of instruction and so deeply believed that this shift was not possible. This suggested that the language teachers' in CEFR CBA were underdeveloped. Future teachers' professional development program should include the content knowledge about CBA and offer related practical guidelines to teachers. It is because, engaging teachers to become competent assessor rely upon the connection between their knowledge of the new assessment system and pedagogy in teaching and learning which stand from a continuous professional development program employed to them. In addition, given the workload and time constraint in the enactment of CBA, educational administrators should provide full autonomy for teachers in planning and

scheduling their teaching and assessment practices. This can enable teachers to put new assessment ideas into their practices. Educational administrators especially at the school level were encouraged to foster collaborative professional community. Meetings and discussions can be held to convey the principles of CBA to all teachers. As teachers are perceived to be illiterate in implementing CEFR-aligned CBA, the reform process in education remains vague and ineffective to benefit the students. In fact, for the reform to be successful, the deficiency in the new assessment reform like lack of training, the unfamiliarity of teachers, tedious assessment process, and time constraint need to be addressed by the educational agency. These aspects have become a major concern that halts a proper enactment of CEFR-aligned CBA by the teachers at the micro level. Unless these issues are catered to at the macro level, the aims of transiting education toward a progressive assessment process are yet to be achieved.

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