

Faculty of Education, Language and Communication

An Evaluation of the Implementation of the School-Based Assessment as Perceived by the English Language Teachers in Sarawak

Hugh John Leong Yik Kuan

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An Evaluation of the Implementation of the School-Based Assessment as Perceived by the English Language Teachers in Sarawak

Hugh John Leong Yik Kuan

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.



……

Signature

Name: Hugh John Leong Yik Kuan

Matric No.: 18010018

Faculty of Education, Language and Communication

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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ABSTRACT

Given the pivotal role of assessments in shaping educational outcomes in Malaysia, the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) particularly in East Malaysia, is of interest, due to a dearth of research on this topic in this geographical context. This study aimed to evaluate the implementation of the SBA system as perceived by the English language teachers in Sarawak employing the Stake's (1967) countenance model. The study focused on evaluating the antecedents (pre-existing conditions), transactions (processes), and outcomes of the SBA system. The study adopted a mixed-methods design. Initially, a quantitative survey using a questionnaire developed from current literature was administered to a sample of 60 teachers across all 30 secondary schools in Kuching and Samarahan districts in Sarawak, with each school represented by two English teachers. This was complemented by semi-structured qualitative interviews involving 14 teachers from 14 different schools from both districts, who volunteered to provide deeper insights into their experiences with the implementation of the SBA. The quantitative data were statistically analysed using descriptive and correlational analysis while the interviews were transcribed, coded and thematically analysed to capture the teacher's experiences and viewpoints. The findings of the study revealed the following insights: Antecedents highlighted teachers' initial reservations about the SBA, mainly due to insufficient training during the early stages of its introduction and the lack of clarity in instructions from the Ministry of Education (MoE). In terms of transactions, subsequent centralised training sessions for the SBA were positively received and considered comprehensive. Yet, these sessions stood in contrast to in-house training, which was often seen as rushed and less effective. In terms of outcomes, teachers observed notable transformations in how students approached learning English. Instead of solely relying on memorisation, students engaged more actively in the classroom,

diminishing the reliance on traditional exams—a trend that aligns with broader educational research advocating for consistent classroom assessments. Additionally, SBA's formative feedback was identified as a pivotal tool for advancing student learning. While many teachers perceived the SBA as a means to alleviate assessment-related stress, some expressed concerns over potential biases and the intensity of regular informal assessments, thus underscoring the need for a balanced approach that ensures both authentic assessments and students' well-being. This study offers a generally optimistic view of SBA's potential in enhancing English education in Sarawak, Malaysia but it also underscores the importance of thoughtful implementation, recommendations for robust teacher training, and a sustained commitment to iterative refinement, seen through the evaluative lens of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes.

Keywords: School-based assessment (SBA), Stake's countenance model, continuous professional development, English language education, ESL teachers

Penilaian Pelaksanaan Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah dari Persepsi Guru-Guru Bahasa Inggeris di Sarawak.

ABSTRAK

Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah (SBA) memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk output pendidikan di Malaysia. Oleh itu, memahami bagaimana SBA telah dilaksanakan di Malaysia Timur adalah penting kerana tidak banyak kajian yang telah dilaksanakan berfokus pada SBA dalam konteks geografi ini. Kajian ini menyediakan penilaian komprehensif tentang pelaksanaan dan persepsi guru Bahasa Inggeris berkenaan dengan SBA di Daerah Kuching dan Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia. Dengan menggunakan 'Model Countenance Stake' sebagai kerangka teori, penyelidikan ini berfokus kepada menilai antesedens (keadaan yang sudah ada), transaksi (proses), dan impak dari sistem SBA. Model penilaian ini berfungsi sebagai lensa untuk memahami syarat asas yang membawa kepada penerimaan SBA, interaksi rumit antara pelbagai pihak semasa pelaksanaannya, dan kesannya selepas itu. Kajian ini mengambil pendekatan kaedah campuran. Pada mulanya, tinjauan kuantitatif dijalankan ke atas sampel 60 guru dari 30 sekolah, dengan setiap sekolah diwakili oleh dua guru Bahasa Inggeris. Ini dilengkapkan dengan temu bual kualitatif separa berstruktur yang melibatkan 14 guru, yang sukarela memberikan pandangan mendalam tentang pengalaman mereka tentang sistem SBA. Data kuantitatif kemudian dianalisis secara statistik menggunakan sementara temu bual ditranskripsikan, dikodkan dan dianalisis secara tematik untuk menangkap pengalaman dan pandangan guru. Kajian ini menunjukkan beberapa penemuan. Pertama, pembangunan profesional berterusan melalui Latihan bengkel berpusat SBA diterima dengan baik dan komprehensif, tetapi berbeza dengan latihan bengkel dalam sekolah - yang sering dilihat sebagai ringkas dan berpotensi kurang berkesan. Kedua, penemuan menunjukkan bahawa guru percaya

bahawa SBA telah mengubah cara pelajar belajar dan berinteraksi dengan Bahasa Inggeris. Pelajar telah beralih dari hanya menghafal kepada penggunaan bahasa yang lebih aktif, mengurangkan tumpuan pada peperiksaan tradisional. Ini menyokong kajian pendidikan yang lebih luas yang mendukung penilaian bilik darjah yang kerap.. Ketiga, maklum balas formatif dari SBA dilihat sebagai membantu pembelajaran pelajar, menyokong idea bahawa maklum balas yang kerap adalah kunci untuk kemajuan pelajar. Walaupun ramai yang berpendapat bahawa SBA boleh mengurangkan kebimbangan yang disebabkan oleh pentaksiran, sesetengah guru telah memberi amaran tentang potensi penilaian bias dan tekanan yang mungkin timbul dari penilaian yang kerap dan tidak formal, menyarankan pendekatan yang lebih berhati-hati mungkin optimal untuk memastikan pendekatan penilaian yang lebih seimbang antara keaslian penilaian dan kesejahteraan pelajar. Kajian ini menawarkan pandangan yang secara amnya optimistik tentang potensi SBA dalam meningkatkan pendidikan Bahasa Inggeris di Sarawak, Malaysia. Ia juga menekankan kepentingan pelaksanaan yang teliti, dan meberikan rekomendasi latihan guru yang kukuh, dan komitmen berterusan kepada penyempurnaan berulang-ulang, dilihat melalui lensa penilaian antesedens, transaksi, dan impak.

Kata kunci: *Pentaksiran berasaskan sekolah (SBA), model countenance Stake, Pembangunan professional berterusan, pendidikan Bahasa Inggeris*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Central Assessments
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
ETeMS	English for Teaching Mathematics and Science
ETS	Educational Testing Service
JPNS	State Education Department of Sarawak
KBSM	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menegah
KSSM	Secondary School Standards-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah)
KSSR	Primary School Standards-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah)
MBMMBI	Upholding the Malay language and strengthening the English language (Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Mengukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris)
MES	Malaysian Examinations Syndicate (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia)
MOE	Ministry of Education
NEAS	National Education Assessment System
PASCA	Physical Activities, Sports and Co-curricular Assessment
PBS	School Based Assessment (Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah)
PMR	Lower Secondary Education (Penilaian Menengah Rendah)
PPPM	Malaysia's Education Development Plan (Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia)

PT3	Pentasksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3)
PSD	Performance Standards Document
Psi	Psychometric Assessment
QA	Quality Assurance
SA	School Assessment
SBA	School Based Assessment
SBELC	Standard-Based English Language Curriculum for Secondary Schools
SPM	Malaysian Certificate of Education (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia)
SPPBS	Scholl-based Assessment Management System
UPSR	Primary School Achievement Test (Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendaah)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This study evaluates the implementation of the school-based assessment (SBA) system as perceived by English language teachers in public secondary schools in the state of Sarawak, Malaysia. The SBA system was rolled out into the Malaysian education system in 2011. The chapter begins with an introduction to the Malaysian education system, followed by the statement of the problem. It then delineates the research gaps and underscores this study's contributions to academic knowledge. Subsequently, the chapter elucidates the conceptual framework, before highlighting the research aims and objectives. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main chapters in this thesis.

1.2 An Overview of the Malaysian Education System

The Malaysian education system encompasses various stages: preschool, primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Children aged five to six may attend preschool, which, while optional, aims to develop basic communication skills, English proficiency, moral values, and critical thinking (Ismail, 2007). Compulsory education begins at seven years old with primary school, initiating an 11-year basic education journey mandated for all children in Malaysia (Lee, 1999). This phase includes six years of primary schooling followed by three years in lower secondary and two in upper secondary education. After completing upper secondary education, students have several options for post-secondary education, including matriculation, technical and vocational training, or Form Six, before potentially moving on to tertiary education.

Efforts towards ensuring universal primary and secondary education have been a key focus in Malaysia. Before 1992, basic education spanned only nine years, but the extension to include upper secondary education transformed the system from being elitist to more democratic, consequently increasing the demand for higher education. This led to a significant expansion of the higher education sector in the 1990s and beyond (Lee, 1999). Malaysian schools are predominantly public, with a national system that includes a unified language, curriculum, and examination policy. Bahasa Malaysia is the primary language of instruction in these schools, although Chinese and Tamil vernacular primary schools may use different languages while following a similar curriculum to the Malay medium national primary schools. In secondary education, only Malay medium schools are available, maintaining the same curriculum and assessment standards (Haris, 1990).

Before 2014, Malaysian students in both public and private schools that followed the national curriculum underwent several key examinations: the Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) in Primary 6, the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) in Form 3, the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) in Form 5, and the Sijil Pelajaran Tinggi Malaysia (STPM) in Upper 6. In 2011, the PMR was replaced with the Penilaian Tingkatan Tiga (PT3), which combined Central Assessments (CA) and SBA, marking a significant shift in the evaluation process.

Ibrahim (2007) notes that the Malaysian national education mission aims to enhance knowledge and innovation capabilities and cultivate a 'first class mentality' in students. This mission aligns with the objectives outlined in Malaysia’s National Philosophy of Education (1988), which emphasizes the development of well-rounded individuals - intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically - grounded in religious belief and devotion. The philosophy seeks to create citizens who are not only knowledgeable and skilled but also

morally upright, responsible, and able to contribute positively to their families, society, and the nation (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2017).

To realize these educational goals, the Malaysian government has reinforced its commitment through successive development plans: the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011 – 2015), the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (2016 – 2020), and the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021 – 2025). The Tenth Malaysia Plan emphasized enhancing education at all levels, reforming the education system to boost student performance, and increasing soft skills training to improve employability. Building on this, the Eleventh Malaysia Plan focused on providing better access to quality education and training for all Malaysians, including upskilling teachers and further educational reforms. These plans are driven by the aspiration that quality education will nurture new talents with the necessary knowledge, skills, ethics, and morality to excel in a globally competitive and dynamic world (Economic Planning Unit [EPU], 2016). This approach reflects a global trend of education reforms aimed at elevating student performance and providing a comprehensive educational experience (Fullan, 2011).

High-stakes national tests like the SPM may not effectively measure a student's comprehensive abilities. As noted in a 2017 article by a newspaper, the Independent, relying solely on exam results can be misleading. It often favors those with strong short-term memory and those not affected by emotional or health issues on the day of the exam. This issue is particularly pronounced in assessing the English proficiency of second language learners. Given the diverse factors affecting English language learners, standardized tests may not always provide a valid assessment (Educational Testing Service [ETS], 2009). School-Based Assessments (SBA) are thus crucial in English language learning, as they encompass a range of linguistic and communication skills. This approach is supported by

research highlighting the importance of developing varied skills in language learning (Davison, 2007; Lo & Hill, 2012; Reyneke, 2016).

In today's educational landscape, students need to not only understand disciplines deeply but also develop skills in analysis, synthesis, inference, critical thinking, and problem-solving. To foster these competencies, it's vital to revamp assessment methods at both school and classroom levels. This helps in nurturing students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, encouraging them to become lifelong learners (Assessment and Reporting Branch, 2005). Therefore, the integration and interaction of curriculum, instruction, and assessment are key, as these three components form the foundation of education (Young & Giebelhaus, 2005).

1.3 Challenges and Considerations in Assessment Practices

Educational systems around the world have traditionally relied heavily on memorization and public examinations to measure student achievement. These assessments, often rooted in long-standing traditions, are typically used for selection, certification, and benchmarking against set objectives (William, 2001; Caffrey, 2009). However, they are criticized for oversimplifying complex skills and favoring rote learning over true proficiency, especially in language assessment (Mercurio, 2008).

In Malaysia, the educational landscape has historically been dominated by an exam-centric approach. Public examinations have been pivotal not just in assessing student competency, but also as crucial thresholds for accessing higher education and job opportunities (Ong, 2010; Chiam, 1983). The importance placed on the results of these exams has been a major factor in educational success, acting as a gateway to further education and career paths (Chiam, 1983). This approach, common in countries like

Singapore (Lim & Tan, 1999) and Hong Kong (Choi, 1999), often leads to curriculums tailored more towards exam preparation than providing a well-rounded education. This focus can negatively affect students' emotional health, confidence, and engagement in learning (Stiggins, 2005; Buhagiar & Murphy, 2008).

In contrast, Nuthall (2007) suggests that teaching should primarily aim to enable students to apply their learning across different contexts. In this regard, School-Based Assessments (SBA) become critical, particularly in English language learning. SBA may offer a more comprehensive approach, focusing on the development of practical skills and understanding rather than mere memorization. This shift towards SBA in English language learning is significant, as it aligns more closely with the application of language in real-world contexts, thus fostering deeper learning and proficiency.

Black and William (2018) succinctly outline the key strategies in teacher assessment in the table below:

Table 1.1: Key Strategies in Teacher Assessment (Black & William, 2018)

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Where the learner is going</th><th>Where the learner is right now</th><th>How to get there</th></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher</td><td rowspan="3">1. Clarifying learning intentions and criteria for success

Understanding and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success

Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success</td><td>2 Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding</td><td>3 Providing feedback that moves learners forward</td></tr>
<tr><td>Peer</td><td colspan="2">4 Activating students as instructional resources for one another</td></tr>
<tr><td>Learner</td><td colspan="2">5 Activating students as the owners of their own learning</td></tr>
</table>

Assessing language skills presents unique challenges. Language assessment goes beyond measuring knowledge; it also involves evaluating the effective and contextual application of language skills (Hymes, 1972). Often, teacher training programs don't sufficiently bridge the gap between teaching language for knowledge and for practical application, which can impact the effectiveness of classroom language assessments (Green, 2014).

In response to these issues, Malaysia implemented School-Based Assessments (SBA) as part of its Malaysian National Education Blueprint (2012), following discussions at the 2006 Kuala Lumpur International Conference on Assessment (KLICA). By 2011, SBA was fully operational in secondary schools. This approach to English language assessment necessitated a significant shift from traditional teaching and learning methods, emphasizing active language usage rather than mere memorization, thus aligning more closely with the nature of language learning and how the language skills are subsequently assessed.

1.4 Statement of the Problem and Research Gap

Since its introduction, the effectiveness of the SBA system in Malaysia's education landscape has been widely debated in the media. Questions from various stakeholders, including parents and educators, have surfaced over the years. For instance, a parent commented on the lack of change in textbooks despite SBA's implementation (New Straits Times, 2015), and teachers have expressed concerns about coping with the new system, with some describing the PT3 as a "nightmare" (Lau, 2014). Concerns about motivation, effective implementation, and teacher training have also been frequently highlighted in the media (Aishah, 2014; Utusan Online, 2014). More recently, the ability for SBA to evaluate student performance have also come into question, with the Sarawak government planning to

introduce a UPSR like exam, in addition to SBA to better evaluate student performance (The Star, 2023).

This study aims to offer a comprehensive perspective on the implementation of SBA, particularly focusing on Sarawak. The significance of examining Sarawak lies in the fact that previous research has primarily concentrated on West Malaysia. Recent studies by Khamis and Selamat (2019) focused on the practice of giving feedback to students, while Salleh et al. (2019) examined teacher literacy in school-based assessment (SBA). Additionally, Talib, Ghafar, and Naim (2014) and Yuh and Kenayathulla (2020) explored various aspects of SBA implementation, including teachers' practices before, during, and after conducting assessment sessions with students. However, none of these studies comprehensively evaluated the overall implementation of SBA, nor did they use East Malaysia as a study site. Furthermore, these studies did not provide a holistic view of the system, for example factors that motivated the shift to SBA in the first instance. Some studies focused on teacher attitudes (Sidek & Mohamed Salleh, 2010), others on challenges faced by teachers (Malakolunthu & Hoon, 2010), and others on teacher readiness (Majid, 2011; Salmiah, 2013).

Other recent studies, such as those by Yusoff et al. (2016) on teacher training for SBA and Mansor et al. (2013) on the benefits of SBA, indicate a need for updated research. With no studies conducted in Sarawak since SBA's implementation seven years ago, it's crucial to investigate how it is functioning in this region. This study explored teachers' attitudes towards SBA, their understanding of the system, and their motivation in conducting it. It will also delve into the school context and practices surrounding SBA, aiming to identify areas for improvement.

Given that over a decade has passed since the introduction of SBA, a thorough evaluation of its implementation and impact, particularly in English language education, is crucial. This study incorporated the perspectives of educators and was grounded in established assessment theory to refine SBA and ensure its ongoing relevance in a dynamic educational environment.

Additionally, the study sheds light into potential differences in SBA implementation between West Malaysia and East Malaysia, specifically focusing on whether resources, training, and support provided to teachers were similar across different regions, as studies prior, focused only on the West Malaysian context. While existing research addressed teacher readiness and challenges, there was a lack of detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of teacher training programs related to SBA. This study aimed to assess whether current training programs adequately prepared teachers for SBA implementation and identified areas for improvement.

As Mitchem et al. (2003) emphasize, program evaluations are vital to prevent implementation failures. Stake (1977) emphasises the importance of a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of the factors influencing a program before, during, and after its implementation to fully understand its impact. This is especially relevant for SBA, as a detailed and rigorous evaluation can lead to improvements that enhance the educational experience for students (Gredler, 1996). Thus, focusing on teachers' perceptions of the SBA's implementation would provide valuable insights into its effectiveness and areas for improvement.

Additionally, with the ongoing pressure from various stakeholders for enhanced teaching and learning, understanding the challenges faced by educators in implementing

SBA is vital. This pressure is highlighted by the vigorous efforts made by governments worldwide to improve educational outcomes. This includes implementing national, state, and district standards; setting targets; enhancing internal and external testing and assessment programs; conducting surveys like NAEP and TIMSS and initiating improvements in school planning, management, and inspection. These reforms are driven by the desire to raise the standards of learning achieved through schooling, a priority for national development (Black and William, 1998b).

The findings of this study will be invaluable to schools, the Sarawak state education department, and the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, offering insights into the alignment between the government's intentions and the current application of SBA. This research will thus benefit a broad range of stakeholders by providing a nuanced evaluation of the SBA system in Sarawak.

To summarise, previous studies have not comprehensively evaluated the overall implementation of SBA, particularly in East Malaysia. This gap leaves a critical need for research that examines the full spectrum of SBA implementation, from initial conditions to outcomes. Previous studies have also focused on specific aspects of SBA, such as teacher attitudes or challenges, without providing a holistic view of the system. Finally, understanding the factors that motivated the shift to SBA and how these motivations align with current practices and outcomes is another critical gap that this study aims to address.

To address the identified research gaps, this study employed Stake's Countenance Model (1967) as its theoretical framework. Stake's Countenance Model provides a structured approach to evaluation by examining antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. This model

is particularly useful for comprehensive program evaluation as it allows for a detailed analysis of the context, process, and product of the SBA implementation.

1.5 Research Aims and Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to evaluate the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak from the perspective of English Language teachers using the Stake's Countenance model. This encompasses exploring the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes associated with the implementation and practice of the SBA.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the antecedents of the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak.
2. To explore the ESL teachers' perceptions of the transactions experienced during the implementation of SBA in Sarawak.
3. To determine the outcomes of the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak
4. To examine the relationship between the ESL teachers perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak

Based on the research objectives above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

RQ1: What were the antecedents of the introduction of SBA among the ESL teachers in Sarawak?

RQ2: How do ESL teachers perceive the transactions during the SBA implementation in Sarawak?

RQ3: How do the ESL teachers perceive the outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA among the ESL teachers in Sarawak?

1.6 Conceptual Framework

Miles, Huberman, and Saladana (2019) define a conceptual framework as a structure that outlines key factors, constructs, or variables and hypothesizes relationships among them. Jabareen (2009) describes it as a network or "plane" of interconnected concepts that collectively provide a thorough understanding of one or more phenomena. The components of a conceptual framework are mutually supportive, clarifying their respective phenomena and contributing to the specific philosophy of the framework.

This study utilizes an evaluation model as the foundation of its conceptual framework to address the research questions and objectives (Patton, 1990). Recognizing that no single evaluation design is flawless, the study adopts a 'fitness for purpose' approach in selecting a suitable evaluation model. After reviewing various evaluation frameworks and considering the study's goals, Stake's Countenance Model (1967) was chosen as the most appropriate. This model is particularly effective for studies with complex designs incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods (Wood, 2001).

Stake's Countenance Model emphasizes comprehensive evaluation by focusing on the links among antecedents (prior conditions), transactions (processes), and outcomes (results). It also highlights the importance of congruence, the relationship between intentions and observations. Unlike other evaluation models that primarily concentrate on outcomes,

Stake's model gives substantial weight to the context before and during a program's implementation (Mathison, 2005).

Stake (1967) notes that educational evaluation encompasses both formal and informal aspects. Informal evaluation, which can include casual observations and subjective judgments, may yield data that is occasionally insightful but at other times, may be superficial or distorted. These observations are often unquestioned, possibly because they align with everyday personal experiences and perspectives. On the contrary, formal evaluation typically relies on structured methods like checklists, peer evaluations, group comparisons, and standardized student testing. However, teachers often view formal evaluations negatively, fearing criticism and comparison. Stake suggests that to mitigate this, teachers should be educated on the benefits of formal evaluations and how they can contribute to the improvement of the programs they are involved in.

Moreover, Stake (1967) highlights a common shortfall in many evaluations: insufficient focus on defining antecedent conditions and classroom transactions, and the lack of effort in linking these with outcomes. He also points out the rarity of measuring the alignment between educators' intentions and their actions. Traditional educational outcome measurements, such as individual student scores and teachers' predictive validity, are often subjective and debatable. For instance, Reyneke (2016) observed in her study of SBA implementation in South Africa that teachers' success is often measured by students' performance in high-stakes exams. This approach leads teachers to prioritize grading and record-keeping over effective SBA implementation. When evaluating program implementation, it's crucial to consider teachers' experiences, school contexts, classroom activities, and academic outcomes. While some recent Malaysian SBA studies, like those by Dorin & Yasin (2019) and Salleh et al. (2019), have explored various aspects like level of

readiness towards implementation of classroom assessment, and teacher literacy levels on approaches to classroom assessment, they have not sufficiently emphasized the link between the program's antecedents, transactions, and outcomes.

Stake asserts that a program's evaluation is contingent on its comprehensive description and the subsequent judgement based on this description. He emphasizes that a full understanding of an educational program can only be achieved through its complete description and thorough judgement (Stake, 1967). Additionally, Stake highlights the necessity of evaluating a program's effectiveness; without judgement, there is no real evaluation. This viewpoint is supported by Cronbach (1963), who argues that withholding judgement on a program hinders its improvement. The evaluator, ideally an impartial researcher who remains objective yet engaged with the program, is responsible for making unbiased and responsible judgements about the educational practice. Scriven (1966) notes the rarity of individuals capable of judging complex programs and suggests that local evaluations can have broader applicability and provide valuable insights.

In evaluating a program, it's crucial for the researcher to collect various types of data. This includes antecedent data, or conditions existing before teaching and learning that may influence outcomes (Popham, 1993). Examples include previous assessment methods like the PMR, a teacher's experience, background, and willingness to adapt. Transactions involve dynamic instructional processes and interactions, such as classroom activities, assessments, and student-teacher interactions. These are in contrast to the more static antecedents and outcomes. Outcomes refer to the effects of instructional experiences, encompassing impacts on teachers, students, and other stakeholders. In this study, outcomes include teachers' perceptions of the impact of SBA on students and whether various aspects like activities and training have contributed to more holistic educational practices.

Stake's model divides descriptive acts into those referring to intended actions and those actually observed. In the judgement matrix, acts are categorized based on the standards used for judgement and the judgements themselves (Popham, 1993). Thus, the evaluator records the intentions of the program's developer (Ministry of Education), the observations of the implementers (teachers), and then evaluates the overall implementation of the program. Figure 1.1 depicts the layout of statements and data to be collected by the researcher.

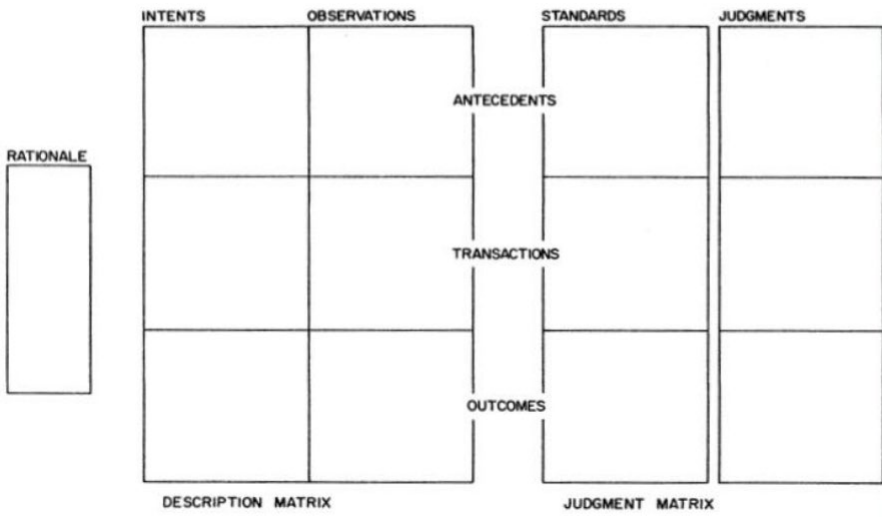


Figure 1.1: Stake's Countenance Model (Stake, 1967; Worthen & Sanders,1987)

The study will focus on these main factors through Stake's lens of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. The antecedents in this study include system issues prior to the SBA, which involve understanding the justification for the SBA. The school context is also considered, analyzing teacher practices, attitudes, beliefs, readiness, and understanding of the SBA. Additionally, teacher qualifications are evaluated, including materials and personal needs, physical infrastructure, and ICT.

The transactions involve teacher practices and classroom activities, focusing on school improvements and the importance of SBA. The study also assesses in-house training, as well as administration, moderation, and monitoring processes.The outcomes evaluated include the attitudes of teachers, administrators, and students towards SBA, their motivation towards learning, and their educational attainment. The study examines how these outcomes lead to better assessment practices and a deeper understanding of SBA among teachers.

The study employs Stake's model to comprehensively capture teachers' experiences and perspectives in the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA). The goal is to evaluate the effectiveness of the SBA program as a 'completed system,' providing a holistic understanding that includes teachers' perceptions and offering decision-makers concrete insights into the observed phenomena during implementation. A summary table is provided below.

Table 1.2: Conceptual Framework Outlining Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes of SBA Study

	Intents	**Observations**
Antecedents	Issues in system Prior to SBA Justification for SBA	School Context Teacher Practices Teacher attitudes: belief, feeling, readiness Teachers' understanding on SBA Materials and personal needs Teacher qualifications Physical infrastructure and ICT

Table 1.2 continued

Transactions	Teacher practices Classroom activities School improvement Importance of SBA In-house training Administration, Moderation and Monitoring processes	Teacher practices Classroom activities School improvement Importance of SBA In-house training Administration, Moderation and Monitoring processes
Outcomes	Teachers, Administrators & Student positive attitudes towards SBA Motivation towards learning Better educational attainment Better assessment practices	Teachers, Administrators & Student attitudes towards SBA Motivation towards learning Educational attainment Assessment practices Teachers knowledge on SBA

Incorporating this conceptual framework ensures a consistent link between the study's theoretical perspectives, design and methodology, and the conceptual relevance of the findings (Leshem & Trafford, 2007). Stake's approach involves continuous engagement in description and judgment throughout the instructional program, from start to finish (Popham, 1993). Hamm (1985) suggests that these data matrices help break down complex interactions into smaller, more manageable segments, aiding in determining appropriate moments and methods for data collection. An extensive review and comparison between evaluation models can be found in section 2.10 (pg. 111-123).

1.7 Operational Definitions for the Study

Based on the research objectives and research questions, as well as the conceptual framework of the study, operational definitions of the study are explained as below.

1. **School-Based Assessment (SBA)**: In the context of this study, the School-Based Assessment (SBA) refers to a continuous evaluation procedure conducted within schools, by educators, to assess students' academic performance over a specific duration. Unlike centralized examinations which are time-bound and often conducted at the end of a study period, SBA emphasizes regular and more holistic evaluations based on a variety of tools and methods such as classroom activities, projects, presentations, and quizzes. In Malaysia, the SBA system was introduced to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a student's capabilities, foster continuous learning, reduce the emphasis on rote memorization, and to align the assessment process more closely with everyday classroom activities and teaching methodologies.

2. **Evaluation of Implementation**: In the context of this study, "evaluation of implementation" refers to a systematic examination of the processes, strategies, and actions undertaken in introducing and establishing the SBA within Sarawak's English classrooms. This evaluation takes into account the initial conditions or antecedents that set the stage for SBA, the ongoing practices or transactions employed during its application, and the eventual outcomes or results perceived post-implementation. Through the lens of English Language teachers' perspectives in Sarawak, this evaluation seeks to understand the efficacy, challenges, and impact of the SBA system in its intended educational objectives and its real-world classroom effects.

3. **Antecedents**: These refer to the pre-existing conditions, settings, or circumstances that are present before the implementation of a program or initiative. It's about understanding the background and foundational elements that set the stage for the initiative to be introduced. In the case of the SBA in Sarawak, antecedents might involve the previous

assessment system, the perceived needs or challenges that called for a change, and the readiness or predispositions of schools and teachers toward a new system.

a. **Operational Definition**: Antecedents in this research context are the background conditions, prior assessment practices, and initial motivations or challenges that set the context for the introduction of the SBA system in Sarawak.

4. **Transactions**: Transactions represent the actual processes, activities, and interactions that take place during the implementation of the program or initiative. They encompass the experiences of stakeholders, the challenges faced during execution, adaptations made, and interactions between different elements of the system. For the SBA, transactions could include the training of teachers, actual assessment practices in the classroom, feedback mechanisms, and the dynamics between teachers, students, and possibly parents during the assessment process.

a. **Operational Definition**: Transactions, in this study, refer to the practical experiences, interactions, and challenges English teachers in Sarawak face during the execution and daily practice of the SBA system.

5. **Outcomes**: Outcomes involve the consequences or results that emerge after the program has been implemented. They can be both immediate and long-term and can include both intended and unintended consequences. In terms of the SBA, outcomes might encompass changes in student performance, shifts in teaching strategies, impacts on student well-being, or broader shifts in educational paradigms within the schools.

a. **Operational Definition**: Outcomes, within this research frame, are the perceived consequences, both positive and negative, observed by English teachers as a result of integrating the SBA system in Sarawak's schools.

6. **Teachers' Perspective**: In the context of this study, "teachers' perspective" refers to the viewpoints, experiences, beliefs, and interpretations of English Language teachers in Sarawak concerning the introduction, process, and outcomes of the SBA system. This perspective captures the nuances of their firsthand encounters with SBA, from preparation and training to its day-to-day implementation and observed student responses. By focusing on teachers' perspective, the study emphasizes the importance of understanding the SBA system through the eyes of those directly engaged in its enactment, offering insights into its practical challenges, benefits, and overall impact on teaching and learning in Sarawak's English classrooms.

1.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the fundamental aspects of the study. It began with an overview of the issues surrounding the implementation of SBA and then introduced the conceptual framework underpinning the study, highlighting the applicability of Stake's (1967) Countenance Model. The chapter also underlined the unique value and potential contribution of this study to the existing body of literature. A critical aspect of this research involves evaluating not only the SBA program itself but also the pre-existing conditions and the influence of the users' backgrounds and contexts on its implementation. The study aims to provide insights for teachers, the Ministry of Education, and other stakeholders, enhancing their understanding of SBA implementation and teachers' perceptions of the program. The findings are intended to assist stakeholders in managing and improving SBA implementation.

The thesis is organized into five main chapters. The first chapter sets the stage by detailing the background of SBA implementation, the researcher's personal interest in the

subject, the conceptual framework, research objectives, and questions. The second chapter offers an in-depth literature review covering the Malaysian education system, a thorough examination of SBA in schools, various assessment methods (particularly in English language teaching), perspectives on school efficacy and improvement, and theories on curriculum and program evaluation. The methodology of the study is explained in the third chapter, while the fourth chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative findings. The final chapter, chapter five, synthesizes the key findings, discussions, recommendations, implications, limitations of the study, proposes directions for future research and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with an overview of the Malaysian education and assessment systems, focusing on the evolution of assessment practices within the country's educational framework. It then examines the policy reforms specific to English language teaching in Malaysia. The literature review's second part investigates the global development of School-Based Assessment (SBA), its diverse definitions, and the different assessment types encompassed within SBA.

Following this, the chapter reviews various learning theories and their implications for both teaching and assessment, creating a link to different assessment models and their application in the teaching-learning context. A particular focus is given to language assessment practices and the characteristics of effective language assessment and testing systems. The fifth section delves into a comprehensive analysis of program evaluation literature, encompassing various evaluation models and the rationale behind the chosen framework for this study. The final section of the chapter discusses the three principal components of Stake's Countenance Model and their relevance to this research. Each of these sections collectively contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the study's subject matter.

2.2 Introduction to the Malaysian Education System

Malaysia's educational system has evolved under the influence of various colonial powers. The Portuguese, who took over Malacca in 1511, were the earliest European colonizers in the region, followed by the Dutch, as noted by Rashid et al. (2017). The British later dominated many parts of Malaysia (previously Malaya) in the 1700s, maintaining control until the country's independence in 1957. In 1963, Malaysia was formed, incorporating the Borneo island states of Sabah and Sarawak. As a result, Malaysia's modern education system is largely based on the British model. This system includes six years of primary education, three years of lower secondary, two years of upper secondary, and two years of pre-university education (Form Six or Matriculation). Since 1999, Malaysian children have been entitled to 11 years of free, compulsory education, with automatic promotion through each educational level (Ong, 2010).

Primary education in Malaysia starts at age seven and is offered through two types of government-funded schools: national primary schools using Malay as the medium of instruction and national-type primary schools (or vernacular schools) that teach in Mandarin or Tamil. Upon completing six years of primary education, students take the Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR), also known as the Primary School Achievement Test, at age 12 (Anton & Jordan, 2002). This summative assessment evaluates students' strengths and weaknesses at the primary level but does not affect their secondary school placement, although students struggling in Malay may need an additional year of study. In 2014, the UPSR was revised to include the Pentaksiran Bersasaskan Sekolah (PBS), a more comprehensive school-based assessment system, though its full implementation was delayed until 2017 due to resistance from various stakeholders (New Straits Times, 2016; Lembaga

Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2014). The Primary School Assessment Report (PSSR) under this system comprises academic, sports, physical and curriculum activities assessment, classroom assessment, and psychometric assessment, covering physical, emotional, and spiritual development (Aziz, 2017).

At the lower secondary level, Malay is the medium of instruction across national schools. This level offers a broad curriculum including core and elective subjects (Lee, 2002). Until 2014, students completed the PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) at the end of Form 3, which served as a summative assessment to stream students into arts or science tracks at the upper secondary level (Ong, 2010). The PMR, which included some school-based assessment components, was replaced in 2013 with the Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3), starting in 2014 (The Star, 2016). The PT3, part of the overall PBS system, is used for a holistic evaluation of students (Yusof, 2013).

In addition to the written and oral tests, assignments, practical exams, projects, field studies, and case studies of the PT3, the School-Based Assessment (PBS) system includes three other components: school assessments, physical assessments and co-curricular activities, and psychometric assessments, which will be elaborated in section 2.6. Unlike PMR, there is no centralized exam, allowing for a more diverse range of assessment methods. Upon completing Form 5, students face their third major national examination, the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), also known as the Malaysian Certificate of Education. The SPM mandates six core subjects: Malay, English, Mathematics, Science, History, and either Moral Education or Islamic Studies (Ong, 2010). Depending on their chosen streams, science or arts, students can opt for additional subjects. Post-secondary educational pathways, such as a two-year Form Six program, matriculation, or various college and polytechnic programs,

are available for students based on their SPM results, as provided by the Ministry of Education.

2.3 Changes in the Malaysian Education Curriculum

In 2011, Malaysia underwent a significant overhaul of its primary and secondary education systems, introducing the KSSR (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah) or Primary School Standards-Based Curriculum for the Year 1 cohort, as outlined by Sulaiman, Ayub & Sulaiman (2015). The KSSR primarily focuses on an integrated approach to curriculum delivery, blending knowledge, skills, and values to unify physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social development. This integration might occur within a single subject or across different subjects.

Following the KSSR, the KSSM (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah) or Secondary School Standards-Based Curriculum was introduced in 2014, starting with the Form 1 cohort. Prior to this, all national secondary schools had been following the KBSM (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah) curriculum since 1989, which emphasized communication, humanity and environment, and individual development. The KBSM was gradually replaced by the KSSM beginning in 2014, with full implementation across secondary schools completed by 2017.

According to Dr. Khair Mohammad Yusof, director general of the Ministry of Education, the KSSM aims to enhance teaching and learning processes to fulfill six aspirations: knowledge, critical thinking, leadership, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality, and national identity. This shift aligns with the Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia (PPPM) 2013 – 2015 or Malaysia's Education Development Plan. The KSSM introduces changes in eight fundamental areas, including content structure, pedagogy, time

allocation, assessment methods, curriculum materials, and organization and management, as stated by the Ministry of Education (2016a).

The curriculum framework for the KSSM English Language Curriculum, also known as the Standard-Based English Language Curriculum for Secondary Schools (SBELC), revolves around six strands: communication, spirituality, attitude and values, humanities, personal competence, physical development and aesthetics, and science and technology.

The Ministry of Education (2016b) states that the KSSM integrates knowledge, skills, and values into each strand, aiming to foster awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity, ultimately promoting unity in Malaysia's multicultural society. The curriculum also emphasizes developing perseverance, critical and creative thinking, innovation, and contemporary ICT skills to prepare students for 21st-century challenges. Nevertheless, the KSSM maintains the KBSM's core principles, including a seamless transition from primary to secondary education, universal general education, preservation of all disciplines from the KBSM, holistic development, moral values emphasis, reinforcement of the Malay language, and the cultivation of lifelong learning skills (Ministry of Education, 2016a).

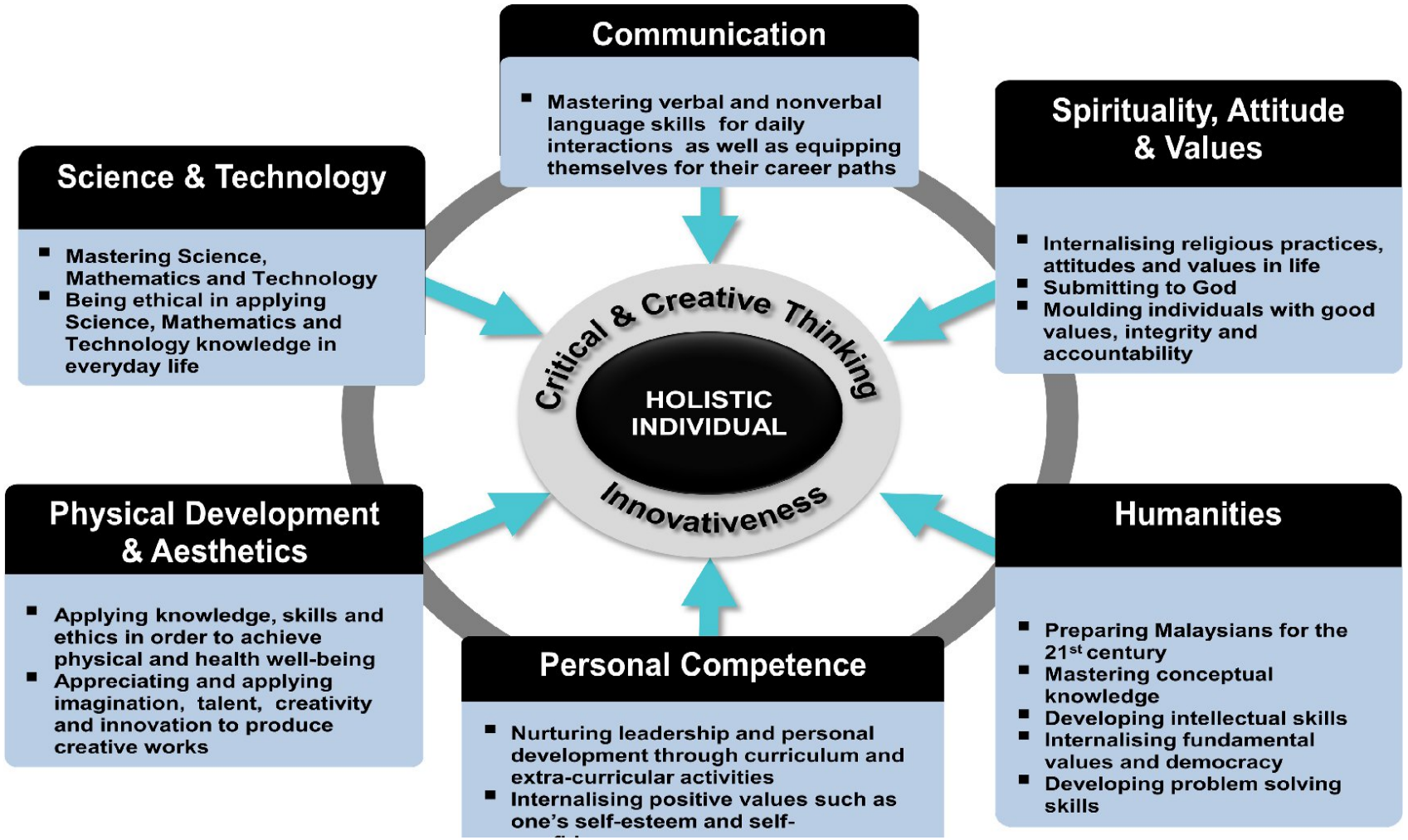


Figure 2.1: The Standard-Based English Language Curriculum for Secondary Schools Framework (Ministry of Education, 2016b)

2.4 KSSM in the English Language Classroom

The KSSM curriculum standards document outlines the objectives of the English curriculum for secondary schools, known as the Standard-Based English Language Curriculum for Secondary Schools (SBELC). The goal of the SBELC is to equip students with the ability to communicate effectively and confidently, to be culturally aware and literate in emerging forms of literacy, to think critically and analytically, and to work collaboratively to creatively solve problems in real-world contexts (Ministry of Education, 2016b). Recognizing the global significance of the English language as a tool that transcends cultural and linguistic barriers, the curriculum emphasizes the importance of English for lifelong learning, cultural understanding, and real-world readiness.

The SBELC is designed around five core principles to meet the challenges of the 21st century:

1. Preparing for the real world
2. Sustaining language use
3. Acquiring global competencies
4. Acknowledging pupil differences
5. Developing confident and competent communicators

The curriculum has set specific objectives to be achieved by students by the end of their secondary education:

1. Understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, and leisure.
2. Describe experiences, events, dreams, hopes and ambitions, and give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

3. Use appropriate language to make calculated decisions in situations likely to arise in real life.
4. Produce ideas and connected texts on various topics of interest.
5. Use a range of learning tools including multimedia to communicate in various modes.
6. Comprehend and appreciate a variety of literary and non-literary texts critically and creatively.
7. Understand and respect the perspectives of people who are of different cultural heritages and linguistic diversity.
8. Acquire lifelong interest and enjoyment of language learning through curiosity and enquiry.

The Ministry of Education (2016b) states that the English language curriculum in Malaysian primary and secondary schools is segmented into four key stages, structured through three phases: continuity, consolidation, and sustainability.

Table 2.1: Key Stages in SBELC

Stage One	Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 (Lower Primary)
Stage Two	Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 (Upper Primary)
Stage Three	Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3 (Lower Secondary)
Stage Four	Form 4 and Form 5 (Upper Secondary)

Phase one, continuity, represents stages 1 and 2 whereby the KSSM acts as a follow up to the KSSR that is being implemented in primary schools. Primary schooling is where students are first formally introduced to the English language and its focus is largely on literacy (Curriculum Development Division, 2014). This is because the best time to address literacy issues is at the foundation level of learning and that students should learn a second

language as early as possible before they reach puberty (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Phase two on the other hand, begins in lower secondary and its focus is on strengthening the students' mastery of the language skills learnt during their primary school education. In the second phase, pupils will consolidate the basics of the language and will learn how to apply the language skills in situations that emulate the real world in their curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2016b). In the third phase, students are provided pupil centered activities and real-world simulated contexts to ensure that students will gain mastery of the English language.

By the end their secondary education, it is hoped that all students will be able to communicate accurately, confidently, and effectively in the English language. The smooth transitions of these phases are important as Rashid (2011) points out there is always a gap between curriculum and student expectations prior to the implementation of the KSSR and KSSM. Many students have limited vocabulary despite spending six years of learning English in primary schools, yet according to the Ministry of Education "are expected to understand the grammar of the English language and be able to use it accurately and are also required to use it accurately, speak internationally intelligible English with correct pronunciation and intonation". This shows the importance of having a curriculum that transitions effectively between primary and secondary school education.

The SBELC is also enacted based on a Standard Curriculum consisting of content standards, learning standards and performance standards. The Standard Curriculum was developed by the Curriculum Development Division of the Ministry of Education (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011). Content standards are specific statements on what pupils should know, understand, and be able to do within a schooling period, encompassing aspects of knowledge, skills and values, work habits and personal character traits that are cultivated

in stages throughout the pupils' secondary education. The Content Standards are over-arching educational goals that should be achieved by the end of Form Five. Learning Standards on the other hand are concise educational objectives that pupils are expected to know and be able to do at a particular stage of their secondary education. It is a set of criteria or indicators for learning quality and achievements that can be measured for each Content Standard. These standards should be mastered by all pupils at the end of each Form. Lastly, Performance Standards are standards that expresses the degree or quality of proficiency that pupils are expected to display in relation to the Content and Learning Standards. These Standards allow pupils to reflect, think and act upon their learning strategies for self-improvement. In sum, it is an indicator of success.

The Standard Curriculum is important in ensuring that all students achieve the standards that have been set, with both teachers and students knowing the knowledge, skills and values that should be measured and how they should be measured. Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia (2014) hopes that all three key principles of assessment, i.e. Assessment as Learning, Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning can be used effectively in measuring students fairly and effectively.

2.5 Causes of Limited English Language Proficiency Among Students in Malaysia

Perhaps to better understand why it is necessary for Malaysia to implement a new curriculum for the English language subject, it would be best that we first explore some of the key issues and competing discourses confronting English language learning in the country. Up until 1961, English was the medium of instruction in all national public schools. This however, was changed to Bahasa Malaysia and the change was considered to produce an education system that was more 'nationalistic in nature' (Pandian, 2002).

However, studies have shown that pupils' proficiency have decreased in the last five decades since the change had been made (Hassan & Selamat, 2002; Mohamed et al., 2008). To date, various researchers have attributed various reasons to the decrease in proficiency. Aruna (2014) and Jalleh (2012) for example, attribute the decrease of standards to the poor quality of teachers. They argue that the teachers themselves do not possess the adequate proficiency nor the proper training to be good English teachers. A review by Azman (2016) suggest that the poor proficiency of students could be attributed to the teacher's lack of proficiency, inadequate trained and skilled teachers, limited language exposure of students and the perceived threat of English language towards multilingual plurality. The Ministry of Education also believes that the teachers' lack of proficiency is the main cause of students' poor command of the language (Taib, 2013). In 2012, all 61,000 English language teachers in Malaysia were asked to take the Cambridge Placement Test to evaluate their level of proficiency. While teachers did question the validity and reliability of the test (The Star, 2014), it is still a cause of concern that out of the 61,000, more than 40,000 teachers failed the test (Rashid et al., 2017). This led to the Ministry of Education identifying the less proficient students to be retrained by the British Council (Jalleh, 2012).

Jalaluddin et al. (2008) and Maros et al. (2007) on the other hand argue that the language interference from the Bahasa Malaysia language was a significant inhibiting factor in the acquisition of English literacy among students. Jalaluddin et al.'s (2008) research on the differences between morphological and syntactical differences of the two languages showed that linguistic differences between Bahasa Malaysia and English hampered students' ability to acquire English literacy. The differences in the syntactical structures contributed to the wrong use of copula 'be', subject-verb agreement and relative pronouns. They also found that the students' social surroundings, unenthusiastic attitude, lack of interest towards

the language, and other social environmental factors that do not encourage learners to learn and use the language also affects students' ability to acquire the language (Jalaluddin et al., 2008).

Other research findings point to students themselves not utilizing language learning strategies or tending to not use strategies that do not require them to be analytical or critical. Based on Ruli et al. (2018)'s study, they found that the psychology of both students teachers as well as peer influence can affect low speaking proficiency of students. According to Nambiar et al. (2008), students rarely or never use contextual or background knowledge to "guess the contents in a reading passage" and are highly dependent on the Malay language to help them comprehend a text in English. Koo (2008) on the other hand blames the high stakes testing culture in our education system for the lack of proficiency among our Malaysian students. He argues that the discourse of 'privileging examination' is dominant across our education system whereby it has been reported that teachers tend to concentrate on the teaching of grammar at the expense of communicative aspects of language learning instead. Certain language skills are also prioritized over others depending on whether they are tested in examinations. As an example, reading and writing skills together with grammar are often emphasized more as these are items that are tested in school examinations as well as nationwide high stakes testing (Abdul Rahman, 2005). She further explains that the English language is seen as a subject, in which teachers often focus on the mechanics of the language without making connections to how it is used in real life communication events.

Che Musa et al. (2012) therefore believes that these common classroom practices suggest that the teaching of English in the classroom has neglected sociocultural elements of language learning and has been isolated from its communicative use. This has been exacerbated by the fact that the KBSM syllabus focuses a lot on mastering and rote learning

skills and applying them in examinations. In an analysis of the KBSM syllabus, Pandian (2002) reports that students are required to learn too many grammatical skills. Teachers often resort to drilling using past-year questions, work sheets and exercises books in the class.

2.6 Recent English Language Policy Reforms in The Malaysian Education System

Language policy reforms have taken centre stage over the last decade in Malaysia's education system. In 2003, Tan Sri Musa Bin Mohammad, then Education Minister, proposed to change the medium of instruction for teaching Mathematics and Science from Bahasa Malaysia to English. The policy was implemented in stages beginning with Primary One and Form One students at both the primary and secondary level. The policy was fully implemented in all public secondary schools in 2007 and all public primary schools in 2008. ETeMS (English for Teaching Mathematics and Science) was meant to enable students to learn Mathematics and Science in its most significant and widely used language of English (Rashid et al., 2017). While its main aim was to not improve the mastery of the English language, the implementation of this policy also meant that students were required to have a minimum level of proficiency that would enable them to understand the content in these subjects. However, many stakeholders voiced out their concerns towards this policy. Many were worried that the less proficient students would perform badly in Mathematics and Science as they would find it difficult to understand the medium of instruction (Norfaizah & Marzilah, 2010). This fear was vindicated when in 2012, the new education minister at the time, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin abolished ETeMS citing that the policy had resulted in the lack of mastery of Mathematics and Science as there was a reduction in the number of students who had scored well for both subjects after the policy was implemented. According to the Ministry of Education (2015):

"Studies conducted by various parties found that the implementation of ETeMS was not carried out as desired. Pupils found it difficult to learn Mathematics and Science in English as they were not proficient. This has forced teachers to teach in both Bahasa Malaysia and English and the problem is prevalent in both rural and urban areas. If the policy were to continue, a large number of pupils will fail to master these subjects and will eventually be left behind."

As a consequence of the implementation of ETeMS, many stakeholders believed that there was a gap in the achievement of Science and Mathematics subjects between rural and urban schools (Ahmad et al., 2012). To bridge that gap, the Ministry of Education replaced ETeMS with a new policy known as MBMMBI (Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Mengukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris) or in English, upholding the Malay language and strengthening the English language (Rashid et al., 2017). Under this policy, schools were required to use Bahasa Malaysia as a medium of communication and it aimed to also ensure that each pupil could master both Malay and English languages well and fluently. Science and Mathematics were taught in Bahasa Malaysia, with extra contact hours being allocated for both the Malay and English subject. Also, English became a must-pass subject for the SPM examination. However, Rahim (2012) points out that under the MBMMBI policy, the English subject will only take up 21% of the total contact hours of students. Students would spend the rest of the time being taught other subjects in Bahasa Malaysia. In contrast, the PPSMI policy had 41% of subject contact hours in English and 59% in Malay which represents a more balanced time allocation between both languages.

As part of swooping changes to the education system in Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin also sought to reform the existing assessment system which was seen as too exam-oriented. This came in the form of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) system for both

primary and secondary education beginning in 2012. SBA was part of an overarching national education system that complemented the KSSR and KSSM which was known as the National Education Assessment System (NEAS). As mentioned before, the SBA was introduced in stages beginning with Primary One in primary schools and Form One in secondary schools in 2011. Under this system, students will no longer be assessed on a single summative high stakes nationwide examination but rather be assessed by a series of continuous assessments carried out during the teaching and learning process which are developed and also assessed by the students' teachers. The Ministry of Education (2015) states that the SBA policy will give autonomy and due recognition for teachers to carry out formative and summative school-based assessment at their discretion and has been effectively used in other countries such as Finland and Canada. Proponents of the policy such as Mansor et al. (2013) suggests that SBA encourages teachers' and learners' personal progress, and enhances learners' collaborative skills through different assessment methods. Raman and Yamat (2014) however, found that many teachers were unhappy with the implementation of the SBA as they felt it was burdensome to maintain all information pertaining to pupils' progress and had to key it in online with many teachers complaining about the online database server being slow and problematic. As this study evaluates the implementation of the SBA program in secondary schools, the SBA policy will be discussed in detail in section 2.5.

Perhaps one of the most interesting recent changes to English language education is the adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as a standardized reference for student proficiency and language attainment. As part of the recommendations made in the English Language Education Reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025 document (Ministry of Education, 2015), the document emphasizes the need for our

Malaysian English language programme to be aligned with international standards (Ministry of Education, 2016c). According to British Council Malaysia (n.d.):

"The CEFR is rapidly becoming the global standard for English language assessment. Opinions of language ability are largely subjective and labels such as "intermediate" or "advanced" are not standardised and do little to demonstrate one's ability at using language in a particular situation. The CEFR allows an objective, standardised indication of language level in each skill. These levels are based on the students' functional, communicative ability and are used by teachers, learners, governments and employers around the world."

A Cambridge Evaluation Study conducted in 2017 after the implementation of the CEFR showed that Form 3 and Form 5 students involved in the assessment recorded remarkable improvement as compared to findings in the previous assessment in 2013 (Zulkefli, 2017). Also, over 40 per cent of Year Six pupils who were involved in the evaluation study showed that they were meeting the Common European Reference of Framework (CEFR) standards. The English proficiency assessment was part of the Education Ministry initiative towards meeting the international CEFR standard among Malaysian students and teachers between 2016 to 2020, through a collaboration with the Cambridge English Language Assessment.

In summary, the language reforms have significantly impacted the assessment landscape in Malaysia. The shift from ETeMS to MBMMBI, and the focus on bilingual proficiency, have influenced how students are assessed. Under the SBA system, language proficiency plays a critical role in students' ability to engage with and perform in assessments, especially for subjects taught in English. The introduction of SBA was aligned

with these language policy reforms to ensure that students' progress and proficiency in both languages are continuously monitored and assessed. This linkage between language policy and SBA reflects an integrated approach to education reform, emphasizing the importance of language proficiency in overall student assessment and performance.

The CEFR Global Scale and Students' self-assessment scale is as shown below:

Table 2.2: CEFR Global Reference Scale

Proficient User	**C2**	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	**B2**	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
Independent User	**B1**	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

Table 2.2 continued

Basic User	**A2**	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Table 2.3: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - Self-assessment Grid

		A1 Basic User	**A2 Basic User**	**B1 Independent user**	**B2 Independent user**	**C1 Proficient user**	**C2 Proficient user**
Understanding	Listening	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.

Table 2.3 continued

Understanding	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job- related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works

Table 2.3 continued

Speaking	Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.

Table 2.3 continued

Speaking	Spoken production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
Writing	Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well- structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure

2.7 National Education Assessment System (NEAS)

In order to address claims of having a very exam-oriented system, the Ministry of Education sought to provide a more holistic education assessment system through introducing the National Education Assessment System (NEAS). NEAS was introduced in 2011 as part of Malaysia's national educational transformation plan where the government plans to achieve the aspirations set out in our National Philosophy of Education (NPE) (Yusof, 2013). The NPE seeks to develop learners holistically and comprehensively in the following aspects: physical, emotional, spiritual and intellect. Through NEAS, the idea of School-Based Assessment (SBA) was conceived. In SBA, assessments of students will be based on a set of indicators jointly conducted by the schools and the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate (MES).

According to the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate, the objectives of NEAS are;

1. To reduce the focus on public examinations

2. To strengthen School-Based Assessment practices

3. To improve students' learning in schools

4. To create a holistic and comprehensive assessment plan

5. To develop better human capital for Malaysia

2.8 School-Based Assessments

According to Yusof (2013), SBA is a form of assessment that is conducted in school. It follows a set of procedures as prescribed by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate (MES) that clearly outlines its planning, administration, scoring and reporting standards (Lembaga

Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011). School-based assessment is a continuous assessment process which is conducted by subject teachers formatively throughout the academic year as well as summatively at the end of the year. Ong (2010) explains that the school-based assessment consists of two major components: academic and non-academic components. Central Assessment (CA) and School Assessment (SA) form the academic component whereas Physical Activities, Sports and Co-curricular Assessment (PASCA) and Psychometric Assessment (Psi) form the non-academic components of the School-Based Assessment. Therefore, it is a holistic assessment that assesses students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects. The components are illustrated in figure 2.2 below.

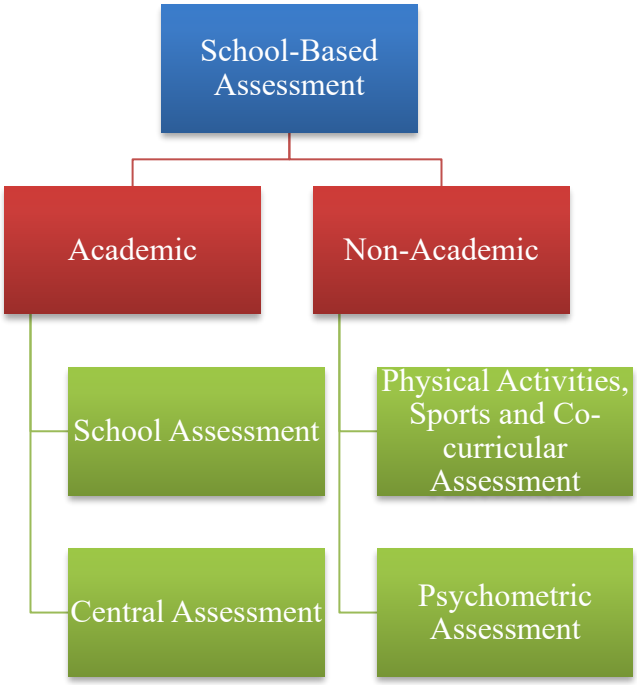


Figure 2.2: School-Based Assessment Components Breakdown

Overall, SBA aims to provide a holistic depiction of a student's potential; monitor students' individual development; and assist them in reaching their fullest potential as well as provide meaningful reporting on each and every student's learning progress (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2014). Furthermore, it is hoped that SBA will be able to enhance the

meaningfulness of assessments by focusing on guiding a student's learning through constant feedback rather than just providing grades to gauge achievement. It is also hoped that SBA will empower schools and teachers to conduct quality assessment through school assessments (Hashim et al., 2013). At the end of their PT3 assessment, students are given four exam result slips that indicate their performance in their School Assessment, Central Assessment, Psychometric Assessment as well as their Physical Activity and Co-curricular Assessment (Said, 2016). This allows the school and student to evaluate the best stream for the student to continue their studies in as well.

2.8.1 School Assessment

School assessments are assessments that are conducted in schools by the subject teachers. It emphasizes on collecting first-hand information about learners' learning based on the curriculum standard. Based on the curriculum standard, teachers will plan their assessment, prepare the instruments, administer the assessment, examine learners' responses and report on their progress (Yusof, 2013). There are two forms of assessments which the teachers can use to assess their students, i.e. formative or summative assessments. Formative assessments are grounded on an Assessment for Learning (AfL) principle whereby assessments take place during the teaching and learning process. The assessments can be in the form of worksheets, observations, quizzes, checklists, reports, and homework. Through these assessments, teachers will be able to provide constructive feedback and corrective measures to improve gaps in student knowledge. Summative assessments on the other hand are grounded in an Assessment of Learning (AoL) principle and is an assessment that is conducted at the end of a teaching unit, month, semester or year (Ministry of Education, 2011). According to Yusof (2013), teachers are encouraged to develop various forms of

assessment tasks that are authentic, contextualized and also those that could enhance learners' higher order thinking skills. Additional '21st century' skills such as creativity, innovativeness, and problem solving decision making are encouraged to be taught or embedded in the assessments as well.

While assessments are designed based on the standards-based curriculum, assessment of how well a student has done in these assessments is based on a set of performance standards. These performance standards are in reference to the Performance Standards Document (PSD) or Dokumen Prestasi in Bahasa Malaysia, is aligned with the Standards-based curriculum. According to Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia (2011), the Performance Standards Document stems from the principle that students should be assessed according to their capacity, ability, talent, skills, and potential by referring to a standard statement of achievement (criterion referenced) as opposed to comparing to other students (norm referenced). These performance standards will be used by teachers, parents and even the learners themselves to monitor, guide and inform the progress in learning. The PSD allows stakeholders to have a clear idea on the aims to achieve for each subject, what is being assessed and the expected quality of assessments that students have to submit. The PSD also allows stakeholders to evaluate whether the aim of a curriculum has been achieved by the student and also provide a good overview of student performance within a particular year. It can also be further used as Malaysia's benchmark to compare with varying countries' education standards (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011).

The PSD includes bands, statements of standards, descriptors and evidence with guidelines aligned to the curriculum standards document to assess and report students' achievement at different stages of learning (Ministry of Education, 2013). Statement of standards for each subject from Form 1 – Form 5 is based on the objectives of each individual

subject. It is a generic explanation about the level of learners' learning development and growth. The performance standards consist of descriptors and evidence for six bands that learners have to achieve. There are six bands in total for each subject and each year. Band 1 is the lowest performance indicator whereas Band 6 is the highest. Learners' performance is not marked by using marks or grades but instead by these bands that indicate the level of acquisition of knowledge and skills during teaching and learning (Yusof, 2013). Table 2.4 shows the generic framework of the Performance Standard according to the bands.

Table 2.4: Generic Band Descriptors for the Performance Standard Document

Band	**Standard**
1	Know
2	Know and understand
3	Know, understand and able to do
4	Know, understand and able to do in a systematic manner
5	Know, understand and able to do in an admirable manner
6	Know, understand and able to do in an exemplary manner

Table 2.5 shows an example of the performance standard of English language subject for Form 1 students.

Table 2.5: Framework of the Performance Standard of the Form 1 English

Band	**Standard**
1	Know fundamental skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
2	Understand meanings at word, phrase and sentence level
3	Use knowledge acquired through listening, speaking, reading and writing
4	Apply knowledge acquired in a variety of situations using some appropriate language conventions
5	Demonstrate the ability to use language in a variety of situations using largely appropriate language conventions

6	Appreciate literary works and present ideas critically in an exemplary manner

A detailed framework is also provided in the performance standards document. It is as shown below:

Table 2.6: Detailed framework of the Performance Standards Document

Band	Statements of standard	Descriptor	Evidence
1	Generic explanation about the level of learners' learning development and growth (based on objectives of the subject)	What learners have to know and are able to do (based on the curriculum standards of a particular subject for a particular year)	How learners demonstrate what they have acquired and what they are able to do
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

The following table shows the statement of standard, descriptors and evidence for Band 1 of the Performance Standards Document of the English Language Subject for Form 1.

Table 2.7: Band 1 statements of standard, descriptor and evidence for English Form 1

Band	Statements of standard	Descriptor	Evidence
1 (Know)	B1 Know fundamental skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing	B1 DL1 Introducing oneself	B1 DL1 E1 Able to introduce oneself using suggested sentence patterns
		B1 DL2 Listening and discriminating between initial and final consonants, long and short vowels, plural forms and contractions	B1 DL2 E1 Able to identify initial and final consonants, long and short vowels, plural forms and contractions
		B1 DB1 Presenting information by reading aloud written texts clearly and fluently	B1 DB1 E1 Able to read aloud with proper pronunciation and intonation
		B1 DT1 Writing short notes	B1 DT1 E1 Able to write greetings/wishes and a note of apology

B1 = Band 1
DL1 = Listening Descriptor 1

DB1 = Reading Descriptor 1
DT1 = Writing Descriptor 1
E1 = Evidence 1

2.8.2 Central Assessment (CA)

According to Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia (2014), the Central Assessment (CA) is used to assess the academic achievements of students with respect to their knowledge, skills and values. It is conducted and administered by teachers in schools using instruments, scoring rubrics, guidelines, timelines and procedures prepared by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate (MES). Schools on the other hand are responsible for preparing the instruments, administering the instruments, marking the answer scripts and producing reports on students' results. Schools are also in charge of preparing the examination schedule and are required to administer the exam within a period of time as stipulated by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate.

According to Yusof (2013), the assessment tasks for the CA must be authentic and are intended to gather sufficient and accurate information about a learners' ability and performance. The marking of students' scripts will be completed by the subject teachers and is moderated by an external assessor appointed by the examination board (Said, 2016). Final results of the exam are compiled by the teachers and verified by the head teacher before they are sent to the MES. The CA varies from the SA in that the CA is a summative assessment meant to assess students' overall knowledge, skills and values obtained over a period of three years, instead of summative assessments conducted throughout students' learning throughout the period. Interestingly however, the Malaysian Examination Board's Development and Policy Management Sector Head Dr Rahimah Adam in Said (2016)

mentioned that many parents and students still focus on the results of the central assessment, and ignore the importance of the results of the other assessments.

2.8.3 Physical Activities, Sports and Co-curricular Assessment (PAJSK)

Physical activities, sports and co-curricular assessment (PAJSK in Malay or PASCA in English) refers to the assessment which records learner's physical endurance, body mass index, learners' participation involvement and contribution in sports, co-curriculum and extra-curricular activities (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012). The Ministry of Education's sports division in (2011) implemented the One Student One Sport (1M1S) policy that required all students to participate in at least one sporting activity in school. This policy supports the implementation of the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) which focuses on developing students to become all round leaners who are good not only in terms of their intellect, but their spirituality, emotions and physical wellbeing. In the long term, 1M1S hopes to nurture students who will be active in sports and at the same time learn how to mingle and build friendly relationships with students from other races and backgrounds.

The policy is implemented in both primary and secondary schools where students beginning in Primary 4 of primary school are required to participated in at least one sport up until they complete their secondary education at either Form 5 or Form 6. Therefore, PAJSK complements 1M1S as it not only assesses students' performance in a particular sport, but rather gathers specific and pertinent information on their achievements outside the classroom. This is an acknowledgement and recognition of learners' participation in sports and outdoor activities as part of the learning process which enriches leaners' knowledge, soft skills, and experience. The instruments and assessment guides are prepared by the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011).

2.8.4 Psychometric Assessment (Psi)

According to Yusof (2013), the psychometric assessment is a profiling assessment which emphasizes on learners' learning inclinations, attitudes, aptitudes, interests and personality. The Form 3 Psi test covers a Career Interest Inventory based on 'Holland's Typology' and the Multiple Intelligences Inventory. The former measures the interest and career inclinations of a student while the latter measures students' abilities and intelligence on a detailed level (Said, 2016). Specifically, the tests measure several constructs that include thinking skills, problem solving skills, interest and inclination, music, creativity, interpersonal, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, naturalist, verbal, visual and mathematics logic (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Psi is handled by the school's counselling teachers through the instruments provided by the Malaysian Examination Syndicate and it can be used by parents and teachers to evaluate the best stream for a student. The school counsellors will provide the appropriate advice based on the results. The results of the aptitude test may be given to the class or subject teachers of the following year to help identify the needs of learners in their learning process. The results of the personality test however are confidential and will only be revealed to the student (Yusof, 2013). The results of the psychometric assessment are meant to be compared with the results of the other assessments to better assess the inclination of a student with his or her abilities. The results of the assessment will not affect their overall achievement or grades in their PT3 assessment.

2.8.5 Quality Assurance

According to Idris et al. (2015), quality assurance is a guideline which becomes the standard in determining the quality of SBA implementation. Without proper quality assurance processes, teachers may feel non-committed and lackadaisical in conducting the proper evaluation and assessment methods as required by the Ministry of Education (Tan, 2010). This in turn may lead to poor quality of teaching and learning within the classroom and can affect student performance (Shanusi, 2007). According to Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia (2012), the main indicators for quality assurance in assessment are validity, reliability, feasibility and fairness. Therefore, to ensure that its indicators are achieved, the examinations syndicate implemented a framework that includes four aspects, i.e. moderation, mentoring, monitoring and tracking. These aspects will be discussed in detail below.

Moderation is a QA process that ensures the standardized implementation of assignment and scoring to ensure fairness in evaluation to all students as well as ensuring validity and reliability of all assessment scores (Idris et al., 2015). Additionally, Galloway (2008) suggests that moderation is a method of comparing whether assessment instruments match the syllabus taught and it also demonstrates the transparency and accountability of the assessment system. The objectives of moderation within the SBA context is to standardise understanding towards assignment expectations and scoring criteria; standardise school assessment scores given by teachers based on the performance standard statements, descriptors and evidence as provided in the performance standard document (PSD); standardise centralised assessment scores given by teachers based on the scoring criteria prescribed for the assignment; standardise tools, materials and situations according to

prescribed scores in order to produce standard scores, ensure validity and reliability of scores in SBA implementation by school teachers; ensure that awarded scores match the students' ability and performance; and ensure that scores awarded are fair to all students (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012). There is a need to ensure that the scoring of assessments is precise, consistent, and therefore reliable. Additionally, it is also important to portray relevancy and fitness for purpose of the assessment, hence enhancing the validity of the assessment. For SBA, moderation can be conducted externally and internally. Externally, moderators from Ministry of Education, Malaysian Examinations Syndicate, the State Education Department, and the District Education Department may visit schools to moderate assessment tasks and instruments used. Internally, moderation is typically conducted by the Head of Department, Excellent Teachers, Head of Panel, Master Trainers (SISC+), the Principal and teachers who may be part of the SBA committee (Lembaga Peperiksan Malaysia, 2012).

Monitoring on the other hand is a QA process in ensuring that SBA implementation adheres to the procedure and guidelines prescribed by Malaysian Examinations Syndicate. Monitoring is conducted throughout the duration of SBA and it follows the timetable set by the SBA committee of the school. The objectives of monitoring are to ensure that SBA implementation instructions are observed, identify problems in SBA implementation by teachers, avoid misappropriation and nonconformity, and prepare SBA implementation reports for the purpose of improvement. Internal monitoring is conducted by school. Monitors may include the Principal, Senior Assistants, Head of Department, Excellent Teachers, Master Trainer (SISC+) or teachers appointed by the principals or headmasters. During the monitoring process, the learner's performance will be moderated to ensure that

there is uniformity and reliability in the teacher's recording and reporting of each assessment (Yusof, 2013).

Next, mentoring is also used as a method to ensure quality assurance is maintained. It is a process of assisting, guiding and improving teachers' knowledge and understanding in implementing the SBA by following the procedures and guidelines as provided by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012). Mentors, such as the head of panels, head teachers, and fellow colleagues can help and assist the teachers in developing good assessment instruments, ensure that the implementation of assessments is in line with ministry guidelines, and provide feedback on the teaching, learning and assessment practices in their classroom. Ministry has also developed the SISC+ coaching system to support this process of mentoring. The use of School Improvement Specialist Coaches (SISC+) was implemented in 2013 as part of the government's initiative to have a master trainer be present at each district education department to become the single point of contact between the Curriculum Development Division (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, BPK) and the Examinations Syndicate (LP). Their role is to ensure that new curricula and assessments are implemented effectively in schools and to coach teachers on pedagogical skills (Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013). This ensures that teachers will be guided by a specialist in curriculum and assessment delivery.

Finally, tracking on the other hand, is a process to evaluate the suitability, strengths and weaknesses of the assessments used in the school assessments and central assessments (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2012). Tracking is done periodically both internally and externally by the school and the local district education department. This is to ensure that from time to time, teachers will be tracked on their progress of implementing school-based assessment effectively within their classrooms. It is also meant to ensure that the strengths and

effectiveness of assessment instruments are of an acceptable standard (Idris et al., 2015). Following the tracking process, an external tracker such as the SISC+ or district education officer, may offer solutions or suggestions to any problems the teacher might have. They will follow up on the teacher's progress and implementation in the following tracking meeting.

2.8.6 School- Based Assessment Management System (SPPBS)

In an effort to systematically capture students' progress. reduce teachers' clerical work and overall workload, the government implemented the School-Based Assessment Management System, or better known as Sistem Pengurusan Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah (SPPBS). This was launched together with the Physical Activities, Sports and Co-curricular assessment application (Aplikasi PAJSK). The SPPBS was meant to record and report students' academic achievement while the PAJSK application was meant to record non-academic achievement (Yusof, 2013). These systems were also meant to generate descriptive reports that could be given to parents or other stakeholders and accessed by teachers whenever required. This would also eliminate the need for teachers to have individual physical files of students and record data manually (Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013).

While the applications may have been created and designed with the best intentions in mind, the two applications were met with strong opposition by teachers. Teachers rallied in February 2014, protesting against the systems as there were too many overlapping online input systems with the SPPBS often crashing and suffering from lag (Chapman & Goon, 2014). Other systems put in place by the Ministry of Education include the Student Information System (SIS) and the School Examination Analysis System (SAPS). As a

response, the Ministry of Education then decided to put the SPPBS system and PAJSK application on hold and they were subsequently abolished later in 2014 (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2014). While during the deferment, then Education minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin indicated that teachers would still have to keep physical records of student performance, this directive was subsequently overwritten by a Ministry circular later that same year in 2014. The directive indicated that there would be no more student development files, showcase files and transit records. Student development will be reported informally by the teachers to students and parents at their own discretion (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2014).

2.8.7 SBA Teacher Training

One of the largest challenges the Ministry of Education faced at the start of the implementation of school-based assessments was to ensure that all English teachers at both primary and secondary level were well trained and well-equipped to conduct SBA in schools (Yusof, 2013). As a result, a cascading training model was applied to ensure that all teachers received some form of training. A cascading training model is a program where information is cascaded from a national level, to state level and lastly to school level (Chan et.al, 2006). The cascading training model is good in a situation of large numbers of teachers (Karalis, 2016), as the principle is that a group from the national level training will be able to train other trainees at state level and these trainees will then train the remaining teachers at school level (Aziz, 2016). According to Azman (as cited in Chin, 2018), it is also cost effective and logistically more practical as it would not be possible to convene thousands of teachers for training programs.

However, cascading training models do have their disadvantages. Studies by Tan (2023), and Yusof (2013) highlighted that the trainings may not be effective enough as there

may be a dilution of information during the information transfer between trainer and trainee. Information is further diluted when it is transferred from one section to another. Cascading training models are not hands on, so teachers cannot practice during the training due to a short period of time, and the training is not conducted in-situ within a real school setting (Chan & Sidhu, 2011). Aziz (2016) further argues that while the cascading model may be best suited to information transfer, changing attitudes and developing skills for both students and teachers need more support over extended periods of time. One major concern to consider is that, with the feelings of being overburdened and a lack of desire to change the current operation principles, the teacher population might be reluctant to fully engage and be committed during the training process. An extensive search of the literature yielded no recent findings on the effectiveness on the SBA training. The most recent and extensive research on this came from Arumugham (2020) who found that teachers still needed ongoing guidance and supervision to ensure they can understand and realise the implementation of classroom assessment while Talib et. al (2014)'s study of 400 teachers in the state of Johor, found that only 50 percent of her participants felt that they were confident in implementing school-based assessment practices. The teachers highlighted that there was insufficient time for training, not enough opportunities to conduct practical training, and that the trainers themselves were not adequately versed in school-based assessment practices.

2.8.8 International Practices of School-Based Assessment

Implementation of school-based assessment is not new and has developed all across the world. European and Asian nations have utilised SBA to promote higher order thinking in equipping leaners for life in the 21st century (Brookhart, 2007; Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2008). In Finland and Sweden for example, SBA has been aligned to 21st

century learning outcomes, and success in SBA has led to extraordinary success in international examination results (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2008). In fact, many aspects of the current Malaysian SBA implementation were adopted from current international practices. For example, all implementations of the SBA had both internal and external assessment aspects. Davidson and Leung (2009) have also noted that there has been a rise of classroom-based language assessment in both developed and developing countries. While there have been variations in terminology, a review of the literature by Shrestha (2014) has shown that terms such as teacher-based assessment, alternative assessment, assessment for learning, school-based assessment and formative assessment have been used interchangeably by different researchers.

School-based assessment has been implemented in a number of countries by both developed and developing nations. SBA gained widespread interest and attention following ground-breaking research by Black and Wiliam (1998a) which demonstrated substantial gains were achieved in student learning when teachers focus on using formative assessment in the classroom. Scotland then launched the 'Assessment is for Learning' programme in 2001 where they argued that assessment should be integral to learning and teaching, and be concerned to improve learning and achievement; the approach to change should be evolutionary; teachers' informed professional judgement should be considered; and information for monitoring purposes should be streamlined (Hayward, 2007). Even in England where there was a huge focus on student achievement through GCSE scores and school league tables, the consideration of internal assessment by teachers as an important indicator of achievement was being mooted (Isaacs, 2010). Consequently, a review of GCSEs via the National Qualifications Framework resulted in the addition of both internal and external assessment where a GCSE will have 25% internal assessment, featuring

coursework and other classroom performance indicators, while the rest of the weightage would come from external assessment (QCA, 2008).

Other developed nations such as New Zealand and Australia also adopted SBA in the early 2000s. New Zealand implemented the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) in 2002 and under the new system, grades and percentages were removed and students gained credits for successful achievement in subcomponents of individual subjects. An 'assessment matrix' for languages was drawn up, which summarised the aims of different components of the assessment such as reading or listening across the NCEA levels (East & Scott, 2011). Australia adopted the standards-based Higher School Certificate in 2002 and it offered syllabi that set clear expectations of what students must learn and measure students against a set of standards. Here, teachers were made to be the primary assessors of student achievement with curriculum guidelines that allowed for the appropriate school-level contextualisation. Within this standards-referenced assessment system was the principle that performance goals were made clear to students prior to assessment activities and students were explicitly told how to achieve those goals (Cumming & Maxwell, 2004).

While most developed countries have moved towards less testing and more school-based assessment practices, the United States of America has been one developed nation bucking the norm. In 2010, despite the claims of many researchers and stakeholders, there was public outcry that standards-based assessment and education had failed to provide adequate accountability of student achievement (Ravitch, 2010). This was despite the many papers that showed children's loss of sleep and illnesses during test periods, students' academic disengagement and teacher/principal job losses (Au & Tempel, 2012; Lipman, 2004). The United States then implemented the Testing Industrial Complex (TIC) system in

2010 which was a system of education reform aimed at standardised testing. Under this system, the federal government implemented the Common Core State Standards Initiative that details what students throughout the United States should know in English language arts and mathematics at the conclusion of each school grade. The initiative sought to establish consistent educational standards across the states. Only the state of Georgia announced that it would pull out of the Common Core States Standards Initiative but it had not done so because of the testing's shortcomings, rather as a way to save money (Croft et al., 2015).

The implementation of the SBA has not been limited to developed countries or western contexts. SBA has been implemented in a number of developing nations as well as nations in Asia, which include Malaysia, South Africa, Malta, Macedonia, Hong Kong, Japan, and Thailand among many others. Hong Kong was one of the earliest Asian countries to adopt the SBA system. In 2000, Hong Kong went through a curriculum reform in which they recognised that the education system did not provide the students in Hong Kong lifelong learning nor an all-round education (Education Commission, 2000). Specifically, the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) highlighted that all schools in Hong Kong should review their assessment practices and put more emphasis on assessment for learning. Teachers should diagnose student learning problems and provide quality feedback for students on how to improve their work. Different modes of assessment are to be used whenever appropriate for students to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of student learning (Education Commission, 2000). Recent assessment guidelines by the Curriculum Development Council (2009) show a push for a balanced approached between the use of formative assessment and summative assessment in schools. Reporting of achievement has to be complemented with supporting students in the learning process. Berry (2011) believes that the Hong Kong government sees many educational benefits to teachers

as well as students in implementing SBA as it not only helps improve the validity and reliability of assessment but also creates a positive backwash effect on teaching.

In Japan, the government emphasised a more communicative approach to English language teaching by revamping the syllabus in the 1990s (Sasaki, 2008). This included an emphasis on practical communication skills and the use of criterion-referenced assessment (or standards-based assessment as it also used interchangeably) to evaluate student performance. As the Thailand government saw a need for English language for better economic and trade communication, the syllabus of the Thai English subject also went through a syllabus review in 1996. (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). The Thai government took upon a more functional-communicative approach in which communicative language teaching (CLT) was emphasised with teachers being asked to add more task-based and real-life context oral communication assessments in the classroom (Prapphal, 2008).

In other developing countries around the world, SBA has also gained much attention and interest. In 2008, South Africa implemented SBA for its English as a First Additional Language (EFAL) in the hope that an increase in classroom-based assessment would lead to an increase in language proficiency attainment (Reyneke, 2016). Formal and informal assessments would be used to gather information of student learning in which informal assessment would be used to continuously collect information on a learner's achievement, that can then be used to inform learning. Formal assessment tasks were to be marked formally and recorded by the teacher for progression purposes (DBE, 2011). Even smaller island nations and newly independent nations have also adopted SBA into their education system. SBA was implemented in Macedonia in 2008 in which teachers were solely responsible for assessment in primary schools (Murchan et al., 2012). Malta, Fiji and the Caribbean islands also implemented SBA in 2001, all of which required moderation from

external parties and external examinations at the end of the year or period of teaching (Grima, 2003; Haynes, 2001; Ravioce & Pongi, 2001).

2.8.9 Issues in SBA Implementation Internationally

According to Brindley (1998), there are three common types of issues and problems that arise from the implementation of school-based assessment and reporting of language learning programs. Firstly, are the political and social cultural issues that exist with the idea of accountability. Simply put, the focus on accountability by the public in ensuring that 'measurable outcomes' are achieved in education and a lack of trust in teachers and schools alike have led to a general skepticism over the implementation of SBA. In America we see a preference for standardised testing by politicians (Croft et al., 2015), whereas in South Africa we have parents who are sceptical that the assessments conducted in the classroom are an accurate representation of their children's ability (Reyneke, 2016).

Countries such as Hong Kong and Malaysia, who have been accustomed to high stakes testing as the gold standard of student achievement have struggled to change public perception that SBA is indeed better in ensuring better teaching and learning (Davison, 2007; Ong, 2010). As high stakes testing is still used to certify student learning, many teachers have defaulted back to rote learning and teaching to the test practices (Ong, 2010). The Cambridge International Examinations body when evaluating the implementation of SBA in South Africa for example, noted that teachers still had a heavy reliance on testing memorisation and recall rather than critical thinking and evaluation skills (Reyneke, 2016). In some cases, where strict guidelines are stipulated on how SBA is supposed to be implemented by the government and where teachers are expected to be held accountable for learner performance in national examinations, many teachers have merely mechanically

adhered to stipulations instead of creating worthwhile learning experiences or have not generated tasks aimed at promoting better understanding (The Ministerial Task Team, 2014).

Secondly, Brindley (1998) notes that there are issues of practicality concerning the implementation of SBA. In the case of Thailand and their initial implementation of SBA, it was found that there was a lack of support for teachers by the government and a lack of language assessment literacy among teachers which resulted in many students opting to attend private tutoring and coaching skills in order to prepare for tests (Prapphal, 2008). Ong (2010) highlights that in Malaysia, there was serious concern among teachers over the lack of clarity in terms of their role and they felt that they were not consulted in regards to the implementation of the SBA. Additionally, a cascading training model which led to a watered-down training for many teachers compounded with large class sizes (Ong, 2010), time constraints to fill in progress reports for students and a lack of professional development courses led to much furore by teachers and students alike (Yeh, 2021). Similar situations have been identified in Hong Kong whereby teachers lacked the time to implement and give feedback on assessments, and were hampered by large class sizes and heavy workloads (Davidson, 2007; Qian, 2010).

In the case of Scotland, Hayward et al. (2005) found that there were clear differences in the ethos and culture of formative assessments in the classroom. However, their study also showed that increased motivation amongst both teachers and learners, deeper understandings of formative assessment and increased dialogue amongst teachers led to better SBA practices. Lingard et al. (2006) further notes that in Queensland where the curriculum, pedagogies and assessment practices were coherent and mutually supportive, both teachers and learners were receptive to the change from more summative to more formative assessments.

The last issue that Brindley (1998) highlights is the issue of validity and reliability. Berry (2008) highlights that teachers in Hong Kong see SBA as increasing their workload because it involves additional collecting and recording of information through giving students a larger number of assessment activities. Yung (2006) also notes that many teachers do not have the right mentality or attitude in implementing formative assessment by supporting and delivering feedback to their students in the proper manner. This is a similar finding to Arumugham (2020) where they find teachers still requiring supervision and guidance in implementing SBA. Teachers in South Africa on the other hand have not implemented SBA properly in which many teachers still employ summative assessments most of the time, resulting in a narrow assessment base, i.e. teaching to the test as teachers try to inflate results to boost examination marks (The Ministerial Task Team, 2014). Some are also concerned whether teachers are properly trained to collect different types of evidence under naturalistic conditions over a long period of time (Davidson, 2007).

Ultimately there needs to be a balance between the use of formative and summative testing and there must be an interconnectedness of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment as well as interconnectedness of policy and practice (Hayward, 2007). To improve one's language proficiency, East and Scott (2011) argue that assessments need to focus more on language production that increases in difficulty across levels. Therefore, there should not be a marginalisation of oral production and only an emphasis on written examinations. A collection of evidence over time and the opportunity for students to select their best work for final assessment purposes should be promoted (Assessment Reform Group, 2002). While it can be seen that much work needs to be done internationally for SBA to be implemented efficiently, it cannot be argued that assessments which promote communication, interaction, negotiation of meaning and authentic real world language tasks should be used.

2.9 Reviewing Classroom Assessment and Pedagogy

This thesis section begins by exploring the theory of pedagogy, emphasizing that any robust theory of formative assessment must be situated within a broader theoretical framework (Perrenoud, 1998). The discussion then shifts to the evolution of testing and assessment in education, with a particular emphasis on English language testing and assessment, examining trends and developments both in Malaysia and internationally. The impact of School-Based Assessment (SBA) on teaching and learning, as well as its potential contributions to school improvement, are also examined. Finally, the section highlights the significance of effective assessment practices in language learning and the implications these practices have on learners.

2.9.1 Pedagogy and Instruction

Pedagogy, the method and practice of teaching and instruction, varies in usage and interpretation across different countries (Black & Wiliam, 2018). In England, for instance, Simon (1981) observed that the term wasn't widely used among teachers, who preferred more pragmatic or ideological descriptions of their teaching methods. However, Watkins and Mortimore (1999) note that its usage has become more prevalent, though it's often linked to various teaching and learning approaches. Freire (1970) gave the term a political dimension, associating it with critical, conflict, liberatory, and gender aspects. Stenhouse (1985) viewed pedagogy as guidance for teachers on 'how' but not 'why' to teach, while Shulman (1999) described it as encompassing the factors and interrelationships influencing the teaching and learning process.

This research posits that a limited view of pedagogy might neglect or only partially include assessment. Alexander (2004) defines pedagogy broadly as the act and discourse of teaching, encompassing educational theories, values, evidence, and justifications. He emphasizes that pedagogy involves the knowledge and skills necessary for various teaching decisions. However, literature indicates that assessment is often overlooked within pedagogical discussions (Black & Atkin, 2014). To fully grasp the effectiveness of assessments on student achievement, it's essential to consider the types of assessments used and their role in the educational context, as well as how they complement classroom teaching and learning (Black & Wiliam, 2018).

One of the earliest frameworks of pedagogy and instruction was proposed by Ralph Tyler in 1949, in which he presents four fundamental questions which teachers should consider when developing the curriculum or an instruction plan (Tyler, 1949, p. 1).

1. What educational purpose should the school seek to attain?

2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?

3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?

4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Black (2016) proposed a revised version of Tyler's framework where he introduces 5 steps of pedagogy and instruction:

Step 1: Clear aims – the first stage of planning

Step 2: Planning and activities – setting up activities with the potential to achieve the aims

Step 3: Interaction in dialogue – classroom teaching and learning

Step 4: Review of the learning – using informal assessments to check achievement

Step 5: Formal summative assessment – using summative assessment to guide decisions about the next stage of students' work.

Black and Wiliam (2018) critique the linear step process often depicted in many educational contexts as an oversimplification of teaching and learning. They advocate for a more intricate model that recognizes the complexity of pedagogy. This model accounts for the continuous interaction among various components in the educational process, moving away from the notion that teaching and learning decisions are a straightforward sequence of steps. This approach underlines the dynamic and interconnected nature of educational practices in the classroom. The model of assessment in relation to pedagogy by Black and Wiliam (2018) is as presented below, followed by a summary of the interacting components.

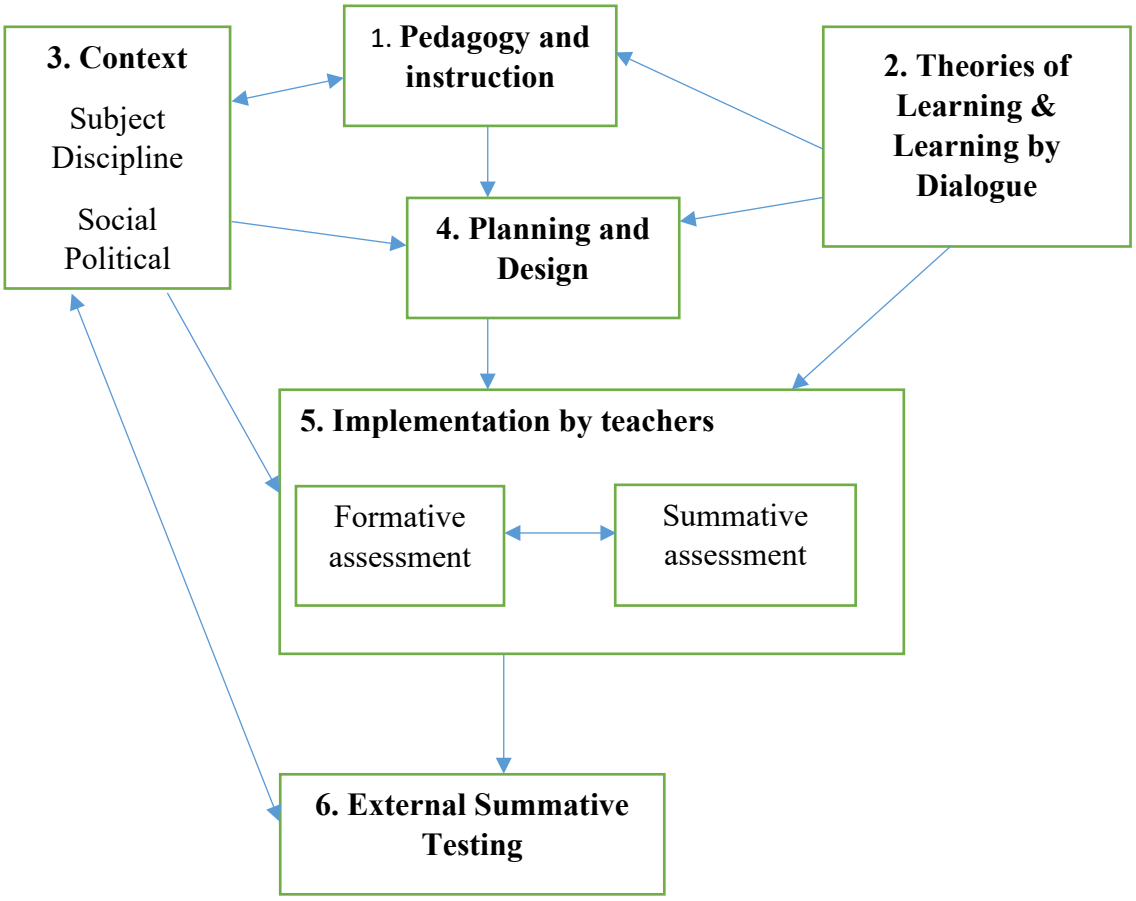


Figure 2.3: Model for Assessment in Relation to Pedagogy (Black and William, 2018)

As mentioned earlier, the aims of pedagogy are to provide guidance about the sequencing of learning activities based on the different kinds of cognitive processes as a student matures. Bruner (1966) for example, states that activities should be designed to promote progression in thinking, from enactive to symbolic, whereas Tyler (1949) emphasised progression from inductive thinking and deductive thinking to assembling complex arguments. Tyler (1949) also points out that the teacher's task must be to relate aims to practice as learning can only take place if a student understands what they are supposed to learn. One thing that both have agreed on is the fact that pedagogy and instruction must be based on theories of learning, and that the learning in the classroom will

continue to be part of learning beyond school when the students have moved on (Black & Wiliam, 2018).

Additionally, Black and Wiliam (2018) argue that effective teaching and learning comes from more opportunities to talk, a focus on group work, and collaborative learning. Through these activities, not only can students learn from each other, it can lead to greater sociocultural benefits of learning, i.e. the habit of collaboration and working through a community. Furthermore, they argue that through collaboration and cooperation, additional benefits such as instilling the concepts of values and virtue will be much easier. Studies such as Baines et al. (2009) and Daws et al. (2000) do note however, that the benefits of collaboration and group work can only be achieved if students are carefully trained in group work. Leach and Scott (2005) point out however that that is not the current way teaching and learning is often conducted in classrooms. There is an emphasis on learning content in particular, and that lesson aims are often geared towards applying the knowledge epistemologically rather than ontologically. Nuthall (2007) adds that very importantly, the aim of teaching and learning is to develop students' abilities to apply what they have learned in one context to another context. Black (2015) suggests that dialogue does not necessarily be limited to discussions among students but can also be with teachers as well. Both oral feedback and written feedback as a form of dialogue can help to encourage learners and cope better with further challenges when moving from one learning environment to another (Dweck, 2000).

When planning for a lesson, one must consider if the lesson has been fashioned in a way that engages the learners and helps elicit evidence of their understanding (Black & Wiliam, 2018). This evidence is useful as it will help make inferences about what actions or further planning need to be done for subsequent lessons. Famous curriculum theorist Taba

(1962) once pointed out that lessons must be designed to engage attention, motivate and present a challenge in which learners can respond and achieve success, thereby achieving an intrinsic reward. Effective lesson plans are those that can engage and develop the interest of students, for it will build not only students' knowledge but also their commitment to learning (Green, 2014). Natriello (1987) also points out that learners will be more engaged if they understand the direction planned, know the purpose of the lesson and assessment, and are clear about the criteria of student performance. Teachers should also understand the learning aims and not sway from it during the course of the lesson as it is important for students to stay focused and for teachers to maintain the intended learning outcomes for the whole group (Berliner, 1994). To ensure that learning and achievement remains on track, assessment is therefore a key component in regulating that process (Wiliam, 2007). As Shulman (2005) argues, teachers must gain evidence about students' capabilities and needs and this evidence should be used to adjust instruction to better meet the learning needs of students. The evidence obtained must also be of a high quality, i.e. not only valid and reliable but also be from all students, so that a holistic view of achievement can be made (Wiliam, 2016).

Two important concepts central to language assessment which been adopted from business management are standards and quality management (Saville, 2013). Are the assessments fit for purpose, consistent, practical, and cost effective? These questions come to mind when we think about the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation in language assessment. Often times, these factors are not properly addressed as Popham (2001) argues that many teachers suffer from a lack of assessment literacy. They may not have received training in basic assessment principles and do not understand how assessment and teaching can support each other. Tests can be made too easy or too difficult for students or fail to

reflect what learners have achieved as a result of a lack of assessment literacy (Coniam, 2009). A detailed discussion on assessment is provided in the following section.

2.9.2 Purposes for Assessment

Assessment is and has always been an important part of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. While the purpose of testing and assessment may have evolved over time through various different educational settings, different forms of testing and assessment are still widely used to this day. Black (1998) believes that the earliest form of testing and assessment may have started over 2000 years ago in China. During that period, a written formal test was held for aspiring civil servants for selection into the civil service profession. 2000 years on, examinations in the form of written tests are still popular. Public examinations as a standardised measure of student performance became popular in the 19th century in England and while the country has undergone several assessment reforms, it still includes a standardised tests in the form of GCE and GCSE examinations to gauge student achievement. Owing to an influx of immigration into the country, as well as a largely decentralised system of education, the United States of America in the 1920's began implementing standardised and centralised tests for purposes such as awarding scholarships, entering jobs and selection for higher education institutions (Black, 1998). One commonality Black (1998) highlights in all these instances is that the tests provided commonly focused more on factual recall with less emphasis on the conceptual thinking of students and did not relate to curriculum and instruction. National Research Council (2000) argues that the current learning theory emphasises the importance of learning with understanding. Curriculum and teaching approaches should emphasise understanding rather than memorisation and provide opportunities for in-depth study that allows for knowledge

building and conceptual development. Assessment practices should therefore enable students to demonstrate a keen understanding of concepts rather than surface knowledge and the recall of facts.

Green (2014) argues that language assessments are often used to collect two forms of data. The first he coins as educational language assessment; in which he explains that assessments can be used towards collecting data about a student's achievement towards a learning goal. Educational language assessment typically takes place within language programmes. These can come in various forms, such as observation of learners, portfolios (collection of learners' work), self-assessment (learners assessing their own learning and abilities), informal tests or quizzes as well as formal tests that are standardised and carried out under controlled conditions. Another form of assessment comes in the form of proficiency assessment whereby a person's language ability is assessed to evaluate whether the person's language proficiency has met a predetermined need or standard. Proficiency assessments are important to assess whether a person has the language proficiency or skills needed to carry out a job, study an academic subject, or fulfil a certain role.

Proficiency assessments differ from educational assessments in that they do not centre on learning processes or the outcomes of a particular course of study, rather they are more interested in functionality. Taylor (2006) argues that proficiency tests tend to follow a 'deficit model' in assessing and penalising what learners can or cannot do. There is a focus on the learners' understanding of the knowledge and form of the language rather than function and communication.

What teachers currently lack, according to Green (2014) is the ability to design assessments that takes its purpose into consideration. Each purpose, for example wanting to

know what difficulties learners face in articulating different sounds, requires a balance of knowledge, skills, and abilities. In developing assessments for different purposes and for different groups of learners, it is important to consider the types of assessments we give to learners which will affect the kinds of linguistic knowledge they will draw on and the cognitive process they will engage.

2.9.3 Defining Testing & Assessment in the English Language Classroom

Black and Wiliam (1998b, p. 1) define assessments as "activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged". Cronbach also points out that an assessment is a procedure for drawing inferences: "One validates, not a test, but an interpretation of data arising from a specified procedure" (Cronbach, 1971, p. 447). Popham (2008, p.6) on the other hand, defines assessment as a "planned process in which students and teachers use assessment-based evidence to adjust what they are currently doing". Drummond (as cited in Swaffield 2011, p.434) sees assessment as a process practiced by teachers in which he states: "Assessment is a process of teachers looking at pupils' learning, striving to understand it, and using the knowledge in the interest of the pupils". As this study focuses on the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) in the English language classroom, the researcher will use the definition of assessment as provided by Black and Wiliam (1998b) as the definition accurately summarises the focus of SBA.

According to Black and Wiliam (1998a), assessment activities conducted by teachers can vary from observation and discussion in the classroom and can include marking exams and exercise books, to even assessing performance in discussions, drama performances or

general behaviour in class. Based on the definitions provided, it is then surmised that any educational assessment is therefore a procedure for making inferences about learning. Language testing and assessment is important as we need to evaluate whether students have obtained the necessary language skills and knowledge in order to read, listen, write, speak, interact, or mediate with others (Green, 2014). Green (2014) further defines language assessment as the process of obtaining evidence to inform inferences about a person's language-related knowledge, skills, and abilities. He argues that teachers should have adequate assessment literacy, that is to understand how assessments are designed, scored, and interpreted by others and also be able to make, score and interpret the results of useful assessments themselves. Furthermore, low levels of assessment literacy can lead to bad educational decisions and contribute to less effective teaching and learning.

2.9.4 Trends in Language Assessment in The Classroom

Language assessment has evolved under various influences, including practicality, political factors, developments in language teaching, and global phenomena like international trade, tourism, and migration (Green, 2014). Historically, language education focused on fostering an appreciation of foreign literature and culture, as noted by Spolsky (1977). However, the perception shifted as governments and policymakers recognized the economic significance of language skills. This recognition led to the understanding that proficiency in foreign languages is a valuable asset, essential for creating a workforce capable of engaging in international markets.

Language assessment has evolved significantly over time. Originally, tests like the Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) focused on literature, but by 1936, they began incorporating business-oriented language use (Weir, 2003). However, Weir noted that the

CPE, despite being labeled a proficiency test, was more akin to an achievement test, closely aligned with textbook exercises. In the pre-1960s era, termed by Spolsky (1977) as the pre-scientific or traditional phase, language teaching was dominated by grammar translation, focusing on translation, grammar exercises, and essay writing. During the 1960s, reformists like Peter Strevens advocated for a shift from academic exercises to practical communication skills, promoting audio-lingualism and disconnecting tests from curricula (Strevens, 1965; Lado, 1961). Lado also pushed for a more scientific approach to language assessment, suggesting a merger of linguistic science with psychometric testing technology. He emphasized the importance of hard statistical evidence for test validity and reliability, advocating for objective scoring methods like multiple-choice questions. This era was known as the psychometric-structuralist phase, where Lado proposed a skills/components model, dividing language into linguistic components and skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with listening components including pronunciation, grammatical structure, and lexicon (Lado, 1961; Spolsky, 1977).

The skills/components approach significantly influenced language testing, as seen in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), introduced in 1964. Initially, the TOEFL test included reading comprehension, listening, and vocabulary sections, but notably omitted speaking and writing components. Traynor (1985) criticized this omission, suggesting it might lead to the neglect of these skills in language teaching. It was not until 2005 that speaking and writing were fully integrated into the test (Green, 2014). While Lado (1961) favored multiple-choice questions for objective scoring, McNamara (2000) criticized this approach for focusing too much on formal linguistic knowledge rather than communicative ability. Selinker (1972) also advocated for a more interpersonal approach to

language learning, emphasizing the development of grammatical understanding through practical use rather than mere repetition.

The 1970s brought on a change in teaching and learning English in the second language classroom. Bloom (1968) argued that if teaching could be better matched to learners' individual aptitudes, it would bring about improved results. Carroll (1963) argued that while everybody had the capacity to learn, some learnt faster than others. Therefore, teachers should pay more attention to the variation between learners' rate of learning. In charting progress of students' proficiency, behavioural objectives were developed and presented in the form of 'Can Do' statements, i.e. specifying the observable behaviours that should result from successful learning (Block, 1971). Furthermore, Carroll (1971) further argued that it is very important that a teacher be able to state what the learning task is in testable form and must also be able to determine when a student has mastered a task to a satisfactory degree. Bloom (1968) added that if a unit of instruction had a specified objective, a test could be administered at the end of the period of instruction to assess whether the teaching and learning is successful. Students through formative testing could be measured and monitored and those who were not performing based on test performance could be given extra guidance or instruction to improve their achievement. This change in thinking placed a new emphasis on testing and made assessment central to the educational process.

During the 1980s, there was a greater emphasis on the pragmatism of tests that linguists felt important to complement lesson objectives. Oller (1979) argued that tests should be both integrative, i.e. a combination of components as well as pragmatic, i.e. a test should engage the test taker's awareness of meanings and contextual constraints as well as knowledge of linguistic forms. He proposed dictation and cloze texts as integrative task types that engaged in both form and meaning. The famous linguist Stephen Krashen also rejected

the teaching of grammatical structures to second language learners as he felt that instead of repeating certain phrases, words, and structures to students, teachers should present learners with linguistic input at just a level above what they are currently able to produce (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Classroom assessments could then be used to discover what kinds of language learners could produce and what they could process. In support of such changes in perspective as mentioned above, sociolinguists such as Dell Hymes argued that the most important linguistic ability was not the ability to produce grammatically correct utterances, but more importantly utterances that appropriate to the context in which they were made. As Hymes observes:

"…a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others." (Hymes 1972, p. 277)

Other sociolinguists agreed with Hymes to this point in that there should be a distinction between the different types of competencies a student acquires when learning a language (Cooper, 1968). Apart from linguistic competence, i.e. the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and conventions, learners should also develop contextual competence, that is to know what to say, with whom, when, and where (Cooper, 1968, p. 58). To assess whether learners had achieved different types of competencies, Morrow (1979) proposed a manifesto for communicative language testing. He argued that it was not in our best interests to only test knowledge of language systems, but we had to also test the ability of learners to use language functionally to carry out real world tasks, understand and pass on ideas, form and maintain relationships, and to negotiate transactions.

While it was indeed ideal that we tested learners' proficiency based on their ability to carry real world tasks, researchers such as Alderson (1988) were worried that designing individual tests that catered to individual learner backgrounds, contexts and needs were highly impractical. Additionally, Bachman (1990) argued that the communicative emphasis on successfully carrying out real world tasks could not substitute for an evaluation of the knowledge, skills and abilities learned in the classroom. As Stevenson (1985) aptly quips, "a test is a test and not a tea party". Stevenson argued that the test takers clearly understood that they were taking a test and would not behave naturally during the test and therefore a test could never fully replicate real life conditions. Bachman and Palmer (1996, 2010) then presented a model of communicative language ability in which he suggested that a learner needed to have four forms of competencies in order to master a language.

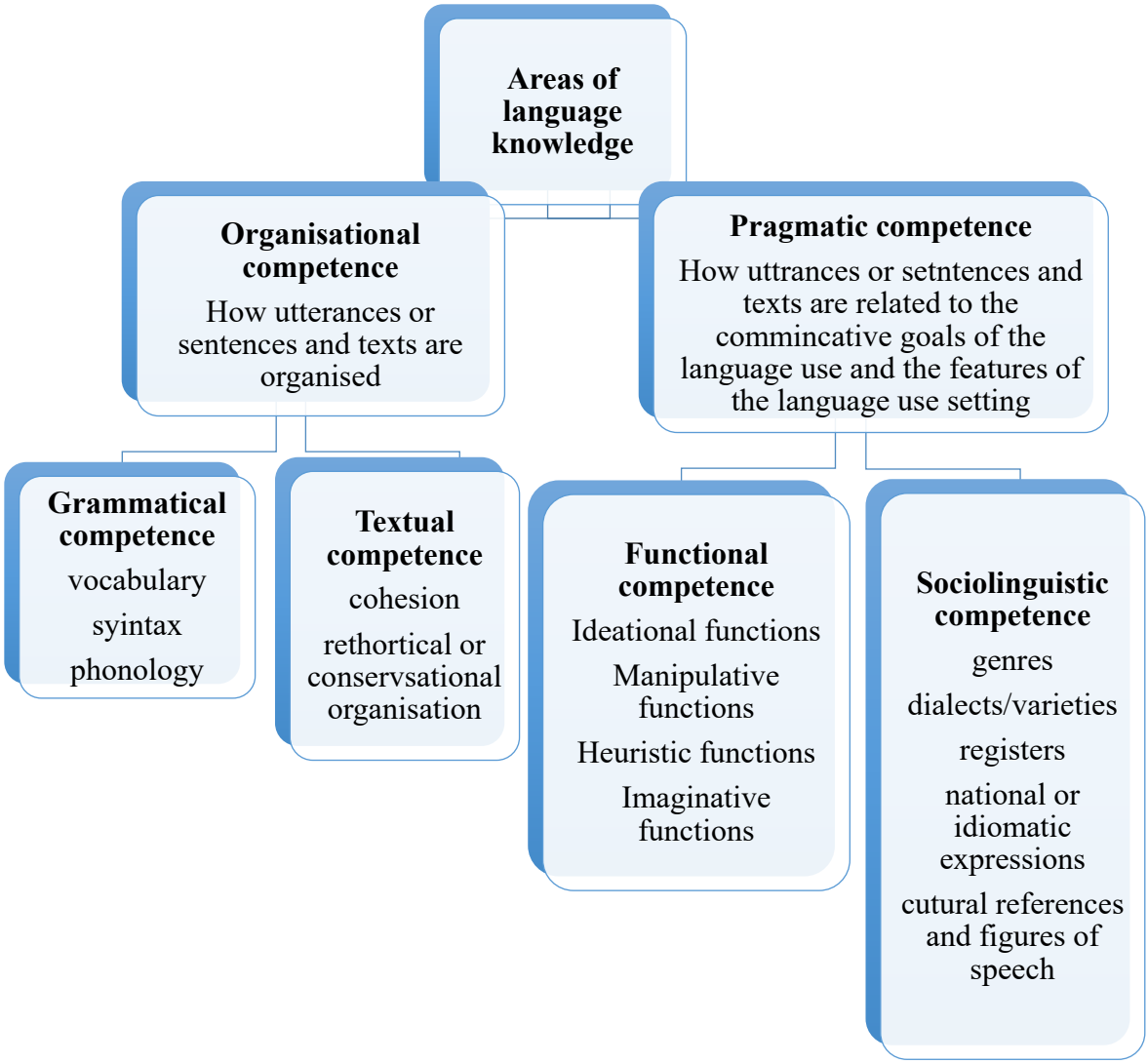


Figure 2.4: The Bachman Model of Language Knowledge (Bachman & Palmer, 2010).

Bachman's model of language knowledge suggests that communicative language ability is not only about language knowledge but also includes learner characteristics like topic knowledge, strategic competence, and affective aspects such as motivation and anxiety. Language knowledge itself comprises organizational and pragmatic components, with organizational competence relating to the production of grammatically correct sentences and pragmatic knowledge to producing contextually appropriate language. Chalhoub-Deville

(2003) and Chapelle (1998) argue that language usage contexts are crucial to language ability, noting that competencies in one setting may not necessarily transfer to another. This perspective significantly influences how test scores are interpreted, particularly regarding their applicability across different contexts.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, there was a shift in how teachers assessed students. Recognizing that meaningful learning happens when learners are actively involved and able to control their learning, teaching methods began to evolve (National Research Council, 2000). Teachers started focusing on actively engaging students in the learning process and incorporating metacognitive approaches like sense-making, self-assessment, and reflection. This led to a teaching style that provided constant feedback and monitored student progress, known as formative assessment or assessment for learning.

Nystrand et al. (1997) argues that when students are not involved in sense making, and only needing to recite, remember, and guess, this supplants thinking. Alexander (2008) in his large study of various countries, points out that a wide spectrum of pedagogy exists, from rote, recitation, instruction by exposition, to discussion and dialogue. According to Popham (2008), formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve student's achievement of intended instructional outcomes. The aim of this process is to identify the students' learning goals, intentions, and criteria for achievement (Young & Giebelhaus, 2005). Formative assessment is typically carried out during the teaching and learning process. It is not meant to be an add-on to teaching but rather integrated into the process (Rayment, 2006). Formative assessments can take on the form of a quiz or monthly tests (Abdul Ghafar, 2011); checklists, observations, homework (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011); and portfolios and learning logs (Brindley, 1989).

One other form of assessment commonly used in classroom teaching and learning is summative assessment. Summative assessment is an assessment which measures students' level of attainment in the form of a monitored examination by a subject teacher or by a board of external examiners at the end of a stage or task (Rayment, 2006). Stiggins (2005) adds that short-cycle assessments, common assessments, benchmark tests, end-of-course examinations or quarterly or monthly exams can also be considered as summative assessments. Summative assessment can also involve feedback but in the form of scores, grades or comments that are given to students after they have completed their test (Fynewever, 2008). Additionally, Fynewever (2008) states that summative assessments measure the results of learning but do not measure students' performance during learning. Summative assessments also come in the form of external tests or high stakes nationwide testing which act as a judgement of students' progress in relation to national standards, and can be used to promote students into further education, getting certification, or entering an occupation (Wiliam, 1998). Results of summative assessments have also been used as an indicator of the effectiveness of an educational programme (Wang, 2008) and also teacher and school performance (Harlen, 2005). It is also commonly used by policy makers as a means of proving education quality, to monitor school performance across the country, and also to provide accountability (Stiggins, 2004).

In differentiating the purposes of assessments, Earl (2013) describes three different kinds of assessment. Firstly, assessment for learning is an assessment that integrates assessment into the teaching and learning process where the teacher uses inferences about student progress to inform their teaching. Assessment goals are explicit and students are assisted to understand clearly what they are trying to learn and what is expected of them. Assessment for learning also encourages active involvement in their learning and uses a

variety of activities to elicit student achievement. Teachers play a key role in diagnosing gaps in student achievement and planning intervention strategies to close the gap in achievement. Therefore, assessment for learning is largely formative in nature. A comprehensive definition of assessment of learning by Black et al. (2004) is as follows:

"Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning." (Black et al., 2004).

An assessment activity becomes 'formative' when evidence is used by both student and teacher to adapt the teaching and learning process to meet learning needs. The second form of assessment is assessment as learning. This term has been used to describe the role of students in monitoring and directing their own learning (Hayward, 2015). Here Earl (2013) argues that by having self and peer assessment, this establishes students' roles and responsibilities in relation to their learning and assessment. He further states that by reflecting on their learning, students are able to build confidence and self-esteem by understanding how they learn. In this form of assessment, students monitor their learning and use feedback from this monitoring to make changes to what they understand.

Thirdly is assessment of learning, which describes the extent to which a student has achieved the learning goals or standards and demonstrates what the student knows and can do. It is mainly summative and gives an overview of previous learning (Black, 1998). Earl (2013) adds that the assessment is used to certify learning for reporting to students, parents, schools, and the government. It usually takes place at the end of unit, program, or year of study. It is based on teacher moderation through exams to make consistent judgements about student achievement and to evaluate student learning.

While this approach does adequately highlight the differences between each form of assessments by using different prepositions, Black and Wiliam (2018) argue that it does not provide any straightforward way of integrating the role that peers have to play in supporting learning. Additionally, Sadler (2005) also argues that these "prepositional permutations" serve to obscure rather than illuminate the important processes involved in teaching and learning, and Bennett (2011) adds that replacing one term with another serves merely to move the definitional burden.

Black and Wiliam (2018) further explain that at times it is difficult to determine if an assessment is formative or summative. It would be better served if the distinction between what is summative and what is formative be in the kinds of inferences being drawn from assessment outcomes. If the inference relates to the current achievement of the student or about their future potential, then the assessment is functioning summatively and where the inferences relate to the actions that would best help the students to learn, the assessment is functioning formatively. Bennett (2009) endorses the idea that it is unhelpful and simplistic to equate assessment for learning with formative assessment and assessment of learning with summative assessment. He suggests that assessments designed mainly to function formatively can also function summatively and vice versa. An example of how this can happen in an English language lesson is aptly described by Willian (2011) in the example below:

A sixth-grade class has been learning about different kinds of figurative language. In order to check on the class's understanding, the teacher gives each student a set of six cards bearing the letters A, B, C, D and E. On the interactive white board, she displays the following list:

A. Alliteration
B. Onomatopoeia
C. Hyperbole
D. Personification
E. Simile

She then reads out a series of statements:
1. He was like a bull in a china shop.
2. This backpack weighs a ton.
3. He was as tall as a house.
4. He honked his horn at the cyclist.

As each statement is read out to them, each member of the class has to hold up letter cards to indicate what kind of figurative language they heard. The teacher realises that almost all of the students have assumed that each sentence can have only one kind of figurative language. She points out that the third sentence is a simile but is also a hyperbole and she then re-polls the class on the last two statements, and finds out that most students can now correctly identify the two kids of figurative language in the last two statements. In addition, she makes a mental note of three students who answer most of the questions incorrectly, so that she can follow up with them individually at some later point.

Figure 2.5: Example of Formative and Summative Assessment in an English Language Class (Wiliam, 2011).

In the scenario above, assessment information was used to make a better decision about instruction and hence 'formative', while the teacher also managed to find evidence of student achievement and hence was able to plan to improve their instruction later which meant that the assessment was also 'summative'. Perhaps the best definition of assessment for learning was provided by Black et al. (2004, p. 10) where they state:

Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability or of ranking, or of

certifying competence. An assessment activity can help if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes 'formative assessment' when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs. (Black et al. 2004, p.10).

The analysis of Wiliam and Thompson (2008) shows how activities in the classroom can be designed and formative assessments can be embedded through a framework of strategies in teacher assessment.

Table 2.8: Key strategies in teacher assessment (Wiliam & Thompson, 2008)

<table>
<tr><th>Actor</th><th>Where the learner is going</th><th>Where the learner is right now</th><th>How to get there</th></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher</td><td rowspan="3">Clarifying learning intentions and criteria for success

Understanding and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success

Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success</td><td>Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that illicit evidence of student understanding</td><td>Providing feedback that moves learners forward</td></tr>
<tr><td>Peer</td><td colspan="2">Activating students as instructional resources for one another</td></tr>
<tr><td>Learner</td><td colspan="2">Activating students as owners of their own learning</td></tr>
</table>

To enhance teaching, learning, and assessment, Wiliam and Thompson (2008) highlight the roles of three key actors: the teacher, peer, and learner. In the classroom, teachers are responsible for gathering evidence to identify and bridge gaps between current and desired performances. They should also identify instructional activities that will most effectively improve performance (Wiliam, 2011). Additionally, teachers are advised to avoid

'phatic praise,' a term introduced by Alexander (2001), which refers to praise that does not seriously consider learners' responses or stimulate further exploration and challenge in their thinking.

For effective learning, the learner themselves must actively engage in their education. This involves undertaking remedial activities, seeking peer assistance, and reflecting on ways to enhance their learning. Additionally, peer interaction plays a crucial role, as it allows learners to engage in class discussions and assess each other's work to identify strengths and weaknesses. Boekaerts (2006) notes that students engaged in a learning activity use three information sources to understand and evaluate the task: their perception of the task and its context, domain-specific knowledge and metacognitive strategies, and their motivational beliefs, including interest, effort, and self-perceived ability.

Therefore, if students are to “activate themselves as owners of their own learning”, teachers must engage the students in knowledge learning, self-regulation and self-motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1994). Students who are interested in a task will be more positive and receptive, and will direct more effort when they are able to see their personal growth and improvement (Dweck, 2000). Vygotsky’s (1986) zone of proximal development theory also supports this notion that as long as tasks remain challenging, engages the learner and is not beyond the learner’s capability and capacity to learn, learners will be motivated to learn.

2.9.5 An Interactionist Versus Interventionist View on Assessment

The distinction between formative (assessment for learning) and summative assessment methods lies in how they engage students. Poehner (2008) views formative assessments as interactionist, focusing on engagement and interaction, while summative

assessments are more interventionist. Bruner (1983) advocates for formative approaches in classroom assessments to enhance and support students' learning potential. For instance, when a student struggles with a question, a teacher can provide tailored assistance, adjusting the level and type of help needed. This formative process offers immediate learning opportunities, continuous feedback, and chances for self-correction. Green (2014) argues that this interactionist approach not only enhances teaching and learning but also provides insights into the extent of development required for each learner to achieve independent performance.

Vygotsky (1986) calls this mediation process a zone of proximal development. Understanding student's current ability and what they need to improve on allows both learners and the teacher to better understand the distance between what learners are able to do with support with others and what they are able to do independently. Poehner (2008) explains this process succinctly through an example:

Two learners are practicing a speaking activity. Both learners have made an error with verb tenses while speaking. The teacher stops their conversation and at the time, one was able to realise her mistake and corrected it immediately while the other only managed to correct herself after the correct form was modelled for her.

Through this activity, it was clear who needed more scaffolding and who could use the appropriate forms independently. The rich understanding of a learner's state of development would be far more informative than a traditional proficiency test or achievement scores. Differences between the two approaches by Poehner (2008) are summarised as below:

Table 2.9: Interventionist and Interactionist Assessment of Learning (Poehner, 2008)

	Interventionist	**Interactionist**
Questions addressed	How much has the assessed already learned? What can he/she do? What can't he/she do? How does this person's performance compare with other people's?	How does this person learn? Under what conditions and by how much can performance be improved? What are the main obstacles to a better level of performance?
Assessment focus	Retrospective: products of past experience	Prospective: processes involved in learning and prospects for improvement
Assessment conditions	Standardised: Same for everybody	Individualised: responsive to what is discovered during the assessment
Assessed performance	Independent One opportunity to perform	Supported Repeated opportunities to perform
Role of assessor	Presents tasks Records responses Disengaged	Presents tasks Identifies obstacles Engaged: mediates tasks provides feedback Promotes learning
Outcomes	Scores as estimate of current state of knowledge, level of skill or ability	Descriptions of learning potential: identification of obstacles to learning and of what is possible with intervention of the assessor or the other expert
Interpretation of results	Identification of outcomes of learning, strengths and weaknesses to inform future teaching Identification of need for intervention	Identification of obstacles to learning and performance Suggestions on ways of helping learners to overcome these obstacles

2.9.6 Importance of Feedback

In order for assessments to be useful, the insights obtained through assessments must inform effective action. As Stobart (2006) argues, the main priority of assessments is the provision of feedback that encourages and promotes learning. By obtaining feedback, teachers will be able to know if learning has taken place and if it has not, it can be used to trigger modifications that will improve learning, either by repeating, practicing, or revising if necessary (Green, 2014). Furthermore, the information that students receive can help improve on their performance if they have accepted the feedback as evidence and the feedback outlines the steps required to help the students make progress (Leung, 2010). Wiliam (2011) through his analysis of feedback given to learners of all ages showed that well-conceived feedback can help to narrow the performance gap between the higher achieving and lower achieving learners.

He also notes that the type of feedback given is important and that giving feedback for the sake of it does not necessarily provide any beneficial consequences. Unproductive feedback can also be harmful to the learner. Indeed, students can sometimes find feedback to be unhelpful and uninformative (Wiggins, 1998). When students do not find the feedback useful, they would know if they are close or far from the goal, but not how to reach the goal or even know what the goal is. Poor feedback would not convey what learners need to change to improve their performance. On the other hand, even good feedback can be sometimes ignored. According to Green (2014) students may only be interested in the grades they receive and would ignore the teachers' comments, thus failing to benefit from the feedback given.

Thus, feedback needs to be given when it can be internalised and used by learners, i.e. learners should be given opportunities to improve their learning based on their feedback. If teachers can challenge the ways in which learners learn through receiving feedback, learners would be able to use the insights gained through feedback to try again or revise what they have produced. Advocates of assessment of learning argue that grades or marks should be delayed as long as possible and be open to modification through remedial work. Grades can also cause students to feel negatively about themselves if they score a low mark and this can cause learners to lose motivation. On the other hand, consistent high grades may also encourage complacency and lead to a reduction in effort (Wiliam, 2011).

According to Hill and McNamara (2013), feedback should be explanatory and corrective. This is done by making it clear to the learner why their work may not satisfy certain criteria and how it can be improved. Consequently, this helps learners see how they can achieve the learning goals better. Additionally, if learners are able to interpret the criteria of assessment, compare their work to their peers and also evaluate their own work, then learners will be able to learn and achieve better results (Black & Wiliam, 2018). Frequent informal assessment activities can also help keep teachers in touch with how well learners are able to understand new information and where necessary, scaffold the learning process to help learners understand how to complete a task or gain new knowledge. A table comparing characteristics of effective feedback and unproductive feedback synthesised from Wiliam (2011) and Hill and McNamara (2012) is as below:

Table 2.10: Characteristics of Effective Feedback (Hill & McNamara, 2012; Wiliam, 2011).

Effective feedback	**Unproductive feedback**
Prospective • Looks forward to guide and encourage learners to reflect and take action to improve performance	Retrospective • Only looks back at completed performance, does not require action by the learner
Directly related to learning goals • Makes use of checklists or scales based on curriculum goals • Learner understands the criteria	Not related to learning goals • Comments are inconsistent and unfocused • Learner does not grasp the criteria
Continuous and timely • Feedback is provided as an integral element of each unit • There are opportunities to improve before the unit ends	Infrequent and delayed • Comes only after the relevant unit is complete
Specific • Clear examples of success. e.g. 'Successful use of linking words to connect sentences'	Generic • Example: 'Good organisation'
Feedback is frequent and continuous	Feedback is infrequent
Task referenced: descriptive of the performance, not judgemental of the person. • Example: 'there are three grammatical errors in the second paragraph, can you find them?'	Person referenced: praise or criticism of the learner Example: • 'Good job' • 'Must try harder!'
Corrective: targeted and achievable • requires action that is within scope of learner abilities • additional support (scaffolding) may be provided to simplify task	Excessive • Asks too much of the learner in terms of difficulty and quantity

2.9.7 Directions in Classroom Assessment

From the discussion above on the new trends of classroom assessment, it can be seen that education should emphasise the active engagement of students in the learning process and the use of meta-cognitive approaches to learning such as sense making, self-assessment, and reflection of what worked and what needs improving. Assessment processes should provide feedback and focus on getting learners to engage in the classroom while gaining knowledge and understanding. Birenbaum (2003) notes that these new understandings about learning have led to a rethinking of the educative process and a rethinking of the nature of assessment. He states that we are now in an assessment culture that embeds assessment in the teaching and learning process and "focuses on the assessment of the process of learning in addition to that of its products" (Birenbaum, 2003). Segers et al. (2003) describes these changes of direction through a number of dimensions. Firstly, in terms of authenticity, assessments are much less decontextualized and atomistic, and are now contextualised and focused on the application of skills in context.

There is a shift away from summative testing as a single measure of student achievement to using multiple measures to build a student's learning profile that gives a more accurate representation of their ability. We also see that assessments now not only assess low level competencies but also high level skills, and assessment is now integrated within the teaching and learning process with students taking a greater role and responsibility in their own assessment. Gielen et al. (2003) highlights that in this culture, students become active participants in the learning and assessment process by sharing and developing criteria in self and peer assessment; reflecting on their own learning and keeping track of their performance; and utilising feedback to refine their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Large studies such as the ones by Black and Wiliam (1998), Broadfoot et al. (1999) and OECD (2005) have shown that through effective feedback in assessment for learning practices, substantial gains in student achievement can be achieved. The OECD (2005) reports that achievement gains associated with formative learning practices are one of the "largest ever reported for educational interventions" and that formative assessment is one of the most effective strategies in developing students' "learning to learn" skills.

2.9.8 Teacher Assessment Versus Standardised Testing

While assessment for learning practices have shown that it is important to align the curriculum and the students' learning experiences, and also to support a broader range of inferences about students' capabilities, assessments have also been traditionally used to measure student performance.

Volante (2005) argues that standardised tests can provide administrators and policymakers with evidence to judge the quality of their school programs, curricula, and policies. Gaps in student learning identified through standardised tests might also encourage teachers to evaluate their own pedagogy and also pursue further professional development. Students can also measure their knowledge and skills through standardised testing (Linn & Miller, 2005). From a psychometric point of view, classroom assessment involves a variability of conditions and procedures that is incompatible with the goal of objective measurement (Green, 2014). Thus, without standardised external testing, assessment of a student can be unsystematic and coupled with biased judgements. When teachers are asked to take on responsibility of summative assessment, this can place them in a contradictory position. Teachers have to be accountable for learners to succeed, yet judge whether or not

they have achieved success. This in turn may lead to corrupt or biased practices (Brindley, 1998; Teasdale & Leung, 2000).

However, extensive literature has also shown the negative impacts of standardised testing. Firstly, the assessment of students may not be accurate given that students are assessed purely on a singular test which is conducted in a time-limited, tool-limited, and venue-limited test conditions (Fan, 2011). The pre-occupation with high-stakes, standardised testing has also narrowed the curriculum and distracted teachers from a thoughtful discourse on the utility of diverse assessment approaches (Shepard, 1991). Commonly tested content may be taught and emphasised in favour of and at the expense of non-tested content (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985). Design of the tests are often beyond the control of teachers, often leading them to guess and narrow the curriculum in expectation of certain tested content (Rea-Dickins, 2001). This in turn produces results which are less reliable and valid (Wiliam, 2001). Van Lier (2004, p. 29) characterises standardised tests as 'dehumanizing and oppressive pseudo-assessments' as he too argued that such tests can dominate the curriculum, taking control over the content and pacing of instruction away from the teacher and encouraging teaching to become more test-like. Formative applications of assessment also tend to be crowded out by the need to cover the content that will be tested.

A test-driven curriculum encourages the teaching of skills in isolation and the presence of rote learning by memorizing answers denies the student the opportunity to think critically (Shephard, 1989). A good example is through the use of multiple-choice item questions in standardised assessment. Testing with such questions urges students to recall and recognise discrete facts without analysing critically (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2008). Stake (1971) has argued that standardized tests often are poor approximations of what teachers actually teach. He further states norm-referenced tests often do not measure

achievements well for low and high scoring students. Unfortunately, program evaluators often have made uncritical use of standardized test results to judge a program's out- comes, just because the results were conveniently available and had face validity for the public. Green (2014) also adds that teachers' knowledge of learners that they have built up over an extended period of time is discarded in favour of the limited snapshots of learner' abilities provided by tests. Furthermore, standardised tests can affect students' emotion and confidence levels which could influence their motivation to succeed (Stiggins, 2005). Teachers may also tend to be biased towards students with higher student achievement and would neglect slower or poorer performing students (Buhagiar & Murphy, 2008). All these issues may impact negatively on students' development.

Furthermore, Black and Wiliam (2018) suggests that changes in the kinds of skills needed in employment and the focus of new key competencies required for students to attain through education highlights the problems of traditional national assessment systems. Key competences are a complex construct to assess knowledge, skill and attitudes of learners. They are underpinned by creativity, problem solving, risk assessment and decision making. According to the European Commission Directorate General for Education & Culture (2010), the dimensions of key competences are difficult to capture yet crucial that they are learned equally. In order to effectively meet the challenges of the future, learners must be able to attain key competencies today.

Additionally, Black and Wiliam (2018) argue that at times, traditional assessments do not paint an accurate picture of a student's competency. Take the example of language proficiency assessments, where reading and writing skills are more frequently assessed as opposed to listening and speaking skills. This shows an under representation of language competency through such assessment measures. While it can be argued that measures of

performance in reading and writing could potentially indicate performance in listening and speaking, this can only be true if the teacher develops all listening and speaking skills in the class as well. However, in the case where high stakes testing occurs, teachers and students would have a greater incentive to focus on reading and writing at the expense of listening and speaking. Over a period of time, discrepancies in performance between these skills would suggest that reading and writing scores would no longer be an accurate indicator of listening and speaking performance. Questions of validity would inevitably arise given that there are aspects of learning that are important but cannot be adequately assessed by formal external tests (Stanley et al. 2009). Aspects such as creativity, motivation and other performance behaviours require human judgement in authentic assessment tasks.

Shohamy (2001) supports the idea that there needs to be a more 'democratic' system of assessment that involve a wide range of stakeholders at design stage that relies on multiple sources of evidence, including both classroom-based assessment and external tests. A key point made by Black and Wiliam (2018) was that high-stakes assessments inevitably comes with pressure, and therefore priority cannot be given to good learning practices if many of these practices do not produce the outcomes that will improve performance of students in high stakes assessments. Therefore, that is the reason why large-scale assessment systems that rely on formal written tests set and scored by external parties is incompatible with the idea of holistic learning and assessment for learning as desired by many education systems.

The conclusion from the discussion here is fairly simple: that both summative and formative assessment, together with classroom-based assessment and external testing can support a student's potential to achieve in education. The symbiotic relationship of different forms of assessment lends greater credibility, validity and accountability to the work that teachers do in the classroom. Numerous studies such as Jerald (2001). Miesels, Atkins-

Burnett, Xue and Bickel (2003); and Rodriguez (2004) have all shown that improving the quality and effectiveness of student involved formative assessment raises student achievement in summative assessments. These studies suggest that achievement gains and reduction in score gaps can be reached if these assessments have a clear focus, have meaningful feedback and engages students in the classroom learning process. As Black and Wiliam (2018) aptly state:

"we have to replace the assumptions that a sharp discontinuity between formative and summative assessments is the norm with acceptance that there out to, and can be synergy between them"

2.10 Evaluating the Implementation of SBA

As this thesis is about evaluating the implementation and perceptions of English teachers on the school-based assessment system in Sarawak, it is imperative that a systematic model of evaluation be used to accurately evaluate its implementation. As Malaysia continues to reform its educational curriculum and assessment methods, we must first know why we are changing and the direction in which change should proceed, and this can only be done through a systematic collection of evidence to inform our decision. Evaluation should not be something that takes place rarely or after a programme has ended, rather an ongoing process that should help clarify curriculum issues and enable teachers, schools, and the government to make informed decisions.

According to Stufflebeam (2001), the theory and practice of evaluation models began in the 1960s when the United States of America's government wanted to ensure that the defense systems of its nation were effective against the threat of the Soviet Union. Equity laws that were enacted during the 1960s and programs initiated during that period to support

these laws had to be evaluated for their efficacy. During the 1970s, the public as well as the government began to put an emphasis on the accountability of educational institutions to achieve educational outcomes and the increasing stresses on ensuring international competitiveness meant that evaluation was necessary to ensure quality, competitiveness, and equity in delivering services. It was during this period where schools, higher education institutions, healthcare organizations and other social enterprises were asked to show through evaluation whether or not services and improvement efforts were effective (Silver, 2004). Modern day programme evaluations in education revolve around assessing the impact of new strategies and curriculum implementations or assessing quality of service and outcomes (Gredler, 1996; Stufflebeam, 2001).

According to Donaldson and Scriven (2008), evaluation is the process of determining the merit, worth and value of something. This definition is rather similar to that of Stufflebeam's (2001) where he argues that evaluation is a study designed and conducted to assist some audiences to assess an object's merit and worth. Education evaluation is important as it impacts various stakeholders and even more so when we think about school-based assessments which seek to change how we assess our learners. Therefore, programme evaluation can be seen as the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programmes to make judgments about the programme, improve programme effectiveness, and inform decisions about future programmes (Patton, 2000).

According to Welch (2011) there are three different categories of stakeholders. The first are upstream impactees who comprise of taxpayers, politicians, and policy makers. Meanwhile, midstream impactees are people who are more affected by the programme such as teachers, the school and lastly, the downstream impactees are those who are directly

affected by the programme such as students. Stufflebeam (1983) believed that as we collect information about a programme and it is fed to decision makers such as school administrators or the government, they are able to make better, informed decisions towards reforms in education. Furthermore, Stake (1967) also argues that teachers must be involved in the process of evaluating their own teaching so as to better understand their own teaching and to contribute more to the science of teaching. Hunkins (1980) believes that teachers are central in evaluating programme implementations. They are the 'doers' who plan and implement the changes; they are the 'observers' who observe how students react to the programme and the resources used for the programme; they are the 'judges' who interpret the reactions of students and data collected based on their feedback; and they are the 'actors' who should act upon the feedback and make informed decisions to drive better programme implementations.

As this study focuses on the perception of teachers on the implementation of SBA, it is important that the choice of evaluation model of the implementation puts teachers at the heart of the evaluation process. Therefore, it is important that the researcher selects the most appropriate evaluation model that is fit for purpose. It can be confusing at times as Stufflebeam (2001) points out that there are at least twenty-two evaluation approaches that can be grouped into four main categories of evaluation, i.e. pseudo-evaluations, questions/method-oriented evaluations, improvement/accountability evaluations and finally social agenda or advocacy evaluations. While evaluation models serve different purposes, all evaluation models strive to evaluate the programmes in a systematic and reliable way for positive outcomes. Here the researcher compares various evaluation models and makes an argument for the most appropriate model for this study.

According to Owston (2008), there are 5 widely used education models which will be discussed in this thesis. The models' foci and orientations are as shown in the table below:

Table 2.11: Evaluation Approaches, Models and Focus

Evaluation Model	Orientation	Focus
Tyler's Planning Model	Goal-based/Objective oriented	To evaluate whether programme has achieved outcomes
Kirkpatrick's Four Levels Model	Goal-based/Objective oriented	Evaluating programme effectiveness
Stufflebeam's CIPP Model	Management-oriented	To evaluate and facilitate rational and continuous decision-making
Scriven's Formative-Summative Model	Goal-based/Objective oriented	Evaluating formatively and summatively programme implementation
Stake's Countenance Model	Participation oriented	Evaluating how people respond and perceive programme implementation

2.10.1 Tyler's Planning Model

Tyler's Planning Model was designed by Ralph Tyler in 1949 (Print, 1993). Its key emphasis was to identify the instructional objectives of a programme and to measure student progress towards said objectives. It also measured performance targets and expected outcomes but largely ignored the evaluation of the 'process'. Evaluation was conducted based on a pre-post measurement of student performance and the strength of this model was that it was easy for evaluators to determine whether goals had been met (Kahan, 2008). Tyler's method of evaluation was fairly simple. Firstly, instructional objectives had to be specified, situations of which achievement or objectives that could be measured were identified, performance data was collected and lastly performance data was compared with the stated objectives. The framework for Tyler's Planning Model (1949) is as shown below:

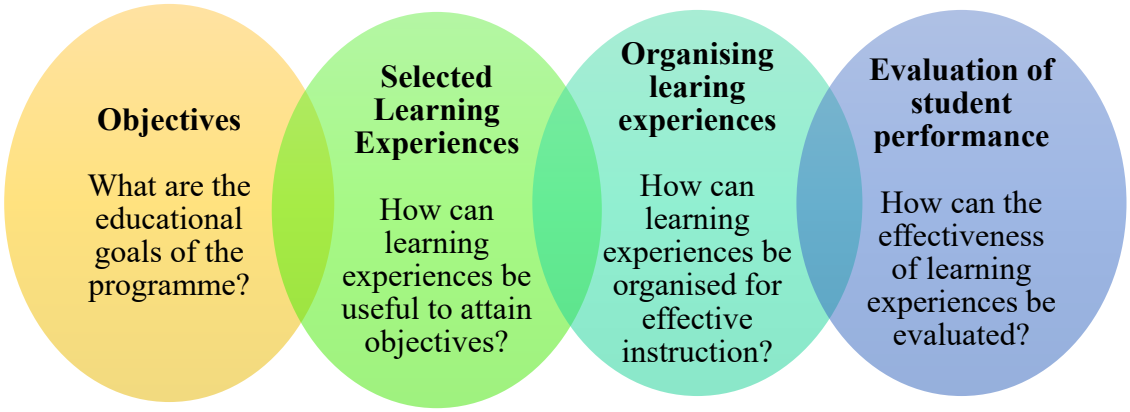


Figure 2.6: Tyler's Planning Model (1949)

The weakness of this evaluation model was that it tended to focus on the outcomes of a particular programme and not on the processes. Thus, it is not helpful for diagnosis of reasons why a curriculum or programme had failed. Kahan (2008) also adds that the achievement of outcomes cannot be solely measured through summative results as there could also be other factors that affect achievement. Therefore, in evaluating the current implementation of SBA and teachers' perceptions of the programme, this model would not be suitable as it focuses only on the stated and intended goals when evaluating a programme.

2.10.2 Kirkpatrick's 4 Levels Model

Kirkpatrick's model was developed by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959 and is often used to assess training effectiveness (Owston, 2008). The framework is divided into four levels and each successive evaluation level is built on information provided by the lower level. The four levels consist of reactions, learning, transfer, and results. According to this model, each evaluation should always begin with reactions, and progressing on to the next level if time and budget allows. Information from each prior level serves as the basis for the next level's evaluation. Reactions essentially measure how people respond to a particular programme

while learning measures the extent to which students have advanced in skills, knowledge or attitudes and goes beyond the reaction or satisfaction of the learner (Kirkpatrick, 2006). Level three measures the transfer that has occurred in the learner's behavior and actions as a result of the training programme or curriculum. Here, assessors evaluate whether newly acquired skills, knowledge or attitudes are 'transferred' or applied to other situations. The last level measures the success of the programme from a management perspective (Kahan, 2008). For example, has there been an increase in production, improved quality, increase in results or performance.

Critics of this model argue that it is hard to link between whether participants like or dislike a programme and therefore has a causal relationship with their learning or performance. Often, participants need to be tracked over a period of time to evaluate whether the programme has shown effectiveness, and this can be time consuming and financially difficult. McNamara et al. (2010) also suggest that as this is a linear process and does not take into consideration other confounding variables such as learner motivation, knowledge, or skills prior to the commencement of a programme, this evaluation is not holistic enough. As this thesis tries to provide a holistic view of the implementation of SBA as well as the teachers' perception and understanding of SBA, this model is therefore unhelpful in reaching the objectives.

2.10.3 Stufflebeam's CIPP Model

This model was developed by Daniel Stufflebeam in 1971 and is based on a management-oriented approach, which is an approach that seeks to obtain information for organizational leaders to make critical management decisions (Stufflebeam, 2001). This model also prides itself in being a decision or accountability-oriented evaluation and

therefore is able to facilitate decision-making and quality assurance processes (Stufflebeam & Shienkfield, 2007). There are four components to the model which are context, input, process, and product evaluation. Stufflebeam (2001) argues that this model focuses on decision making by assessing the intended planning decisions and the actual decisions made. Firstly, it evaluates the intended goals, followed by the intended means by assessing the procedural designs. Next it then evaluates the actual means or the procedures that are being used and lastly it evaluates the actual ends or attainments made by the learners.

Within this approach, the CIPP requires that there be multiple observers and informants to capture a holistic view of a programme. It also requires a thorough search of the existing information and would recommend multiple procedures for gathering data, cross checking between quantitative and qualitative results. Furthermore, Stufflebeam (2001) also recommends an independent review by stakeholders and other outside groups to corroborate findings from an evaluation. This is followed by a discussion with stakeholders to receive feedback on how to improve a programme. While this model is an extremely comprehensive model, it is impractical for a PhD study given the amount of time and resources required as well as the position of the researcher. To adequately fulfill all criteria of evaluation, the researcher would need to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from various stakeholders and a number of institutions for the data to be holistic and generalisable. Furthermore, the researcher is not in a position to direct or identify potential alternatives nor set up quality control systems to further improve the current implementation as the researcher is neither an employed teacher working in a school nor a policymaker working for the government. Hence, this model would not be feasible.

2.10.4 Scriven's Formative-Summative Assessment

This model developed by Michael Scriven in 1973 is also known as goal free evaluation (Print, 1993). Scriven argues that goals are only a subset of anticipated effects in which effects can include both intended effects and unintended effects. He further differentiates between two major roles of curriculum evaluation: the formative and the summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is carried out during the process of curriculum development and the evaluation results may contribute to the modification or formation of the curriculum (Scriven, 1974). On the other hand, summative evaluation is carried out after offering the programme or curriculum one or twice. This evaluation will summarise the merits and demerits of the programme. Scriven explains that there is a need to conduct summative evaluation for a programme or curriculum because while it may operate satisfactorily after a period of time, it may become obsolete. Thus, to prevent this from occurring, follow-up of curriculum and quality control of the programme should be maintained (Print, 1993).

Furthermore, according to Scriven (1974), there are seven criteria for judging evaluation studies. Firstly, we must evaluate the validity and reliability of the programme, then objectivity, importance, relevance, scope, and finally efficiency. While this is a good model to evaluate a programme implementation within one context, it is not adequate for this study as it does not take into account the factors prior to implementation of the programme, neither does it evaluate the outcomes of the programme. Thus, it is not suitable for this study. The researcher believes that Stake's model, that also takes into consideration similar factors as well as programme antecedents and outcomes, is a more holistic model for this study.

2.10.5 Stake's Countenance Model

Stake's countenance model was designed by Robert Stake in 1967. Stake first developed this model as a rejection of the many forms of accountability models that were developed as a result of the need for greater accountability and transparency. Often times, these models put a much heavier consideration on the outcomes or results of the programme rather than the process (Stake, 1973). The countenance model aims to capture the complexity of an educational innovation or change by comparing intended and observed outcomes at varying levels of operation. This model is also unique in that it is able to differentiate between the intentional and the observational accounts (Deepwell and Cousins, 2002), which provides the basis for judging the success or otherwise of the SBA within individual contexts, whilst at the same time allowing for the recording of unintended outcomes.

Stake also argues that formal evaluation actives in education tend to ignore the voice of the user, in that outcomes are always prioritized. He argues that an evaluator must seek to bring to light conditions of a programme within context, and that to be fully understood, it must be fully described and accurately judged both by the teacher and the evaluator (Stake, 1973).

Through the use of this model, it is assumed that the researcher will be able to evaluate how SBA is being implemented within different school contexts by different English language teachers. It will also bring to light what skills and knowledge teachers had prior to the implementation of SBA, their reaction towards the implementation, current conditions of implementation, and their feedback in terms of the implementation.

The greatest strength of this model is the manner in which intents and actions are clearly defined and observed together with standards and judgment (Woods, 1988).

According to Stake, the two major operations of any evaluation are complete description and judgement of a program (Wood, 2001). Stake believes that in order to achieve a 'fuller' evaluation of a programme, one must pay more attention to the connections among antecedents (prior conditions), transactions (processes) and outcomes. Three sets of data will be evaluated by looking at the different lenses of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. Antecedents evaluate the conditions existing before implementation which can include any condition related to outcome (Stake, 1977). This can include students' interests or prior learning practices, learning environment in a particular context, or traditions and values held by the institution, teachers or students.

In fact, Stake (1967) highlights that little effort was given to spell out antecedent conditions and classroom transactions and too little effort to link them with the various outcomes. Furthermore, there has been little attempt to measure the match between what an educator intends to do and what he or she does. Often, the traditional educational-outcome measurement are individual-student scores and predictive validity of teachers which can be subjective and questionable. Reyneke (2016) in her recent study of the implementation of SBA in South Africa for example, points out that the final yardstick of a teacher's success in implementing SBA in their classrooms are the marks that candidates achieve for high-stakes examination. As a result, teachers do not care for the effective implementation of SBA but rather grade and record marks merely to satisfy bureaucracy.

Transactions are successive engagements or dynamic encounters in the process of instruction (Popham, 1993). Transactions evaluate how activities that occur during the implementation form a two or more ways relationship with various parties, e.g., transactions that occur between teachers and students, students and students, students and curricular materials, and students and educational environment. Transactions are dynamic whereas

antecedents and outcomes are relatively static. The boundaries between them are not clear, e.g., during a transaction we can identify certain outcomes which are feedback antecedents for subsequent learning. When evaluating the implementation of a program, teachers' experiences, school contexts, classroom activities as well as scholastic outcomes should be taken into account. To Stake, an evaluation of a programme can only be made if the description of the programme is comprehensive and the judgment on the evaluation made by the evaluator is based on the comprehensive description (Stake, 1967).

Outcomes provide a detailed observation after analyzing all the data collected and judges the outcomes against external standards, e.g., comparing findings from other studies. Judgments could be made on whether learning outcomes have been achieved, how the new SBA implementation has impacted the teachers, students, administrators or the community in general, and whether the SBA has managed to achieve immediate outcomes or long term outcomes (Stake, 1977). Another key aspect of Stake's model, is the need to judge a program's effectiveness, for if there is no judgment, there is no evaluation. This is also supported by Cronbach's (1963) paper where he argues that if evaluators reserve judgment on a programme, then a programme will never improve.

In each lens or data matrix, an evaluator will begin by looking at the intents, followed by observations. Intents are planned-for conditions and behaviors including desired, anticipated, and feared effects (Wood, 2001). Observations are descriptions of environmental events and consequences, i.e. what actually happened (Stake, 1977). In the case of evaluating SBA, this will refer to teacher practices, school contexts and overall perceived student outcomes. The evaluator then assesses whether there was a congruence between the intent and what was observed. Based on the data collected through the observations, i.e. through survey answers and teacher interviews, the researcher will then

apply standards (intended transactions and outcomes) to the descriptive data (observational data) to form judgments about the SBA system (see figure 1.1, pg. 29).

The ideas in the Countenance model are similar to contemporary ideas of Stufflebeam (1971) and Kirkpatrick (1959), and in developing this model, Stake seriously engaged Scriven's (1967) ideas of the role of evaluators, especially with regard to making judgments, and formative and summative evaluation, as well as Cronbach's (1963) ideas on generalization. However, Stake's countenance model is unique as it provides description and judgment based on data collected. It is able to report how different teachers within different contexts perceive the implementation and responds to the need for further information of the SBA system in Malaysia. The strength of this model is that it provides a systematic method for the data matrices which contain descriptive data with intentions, observations and judgment data. Other evaluation models tend to have a typical emphasis on outcomes and does not emphasise on the context prior to and during a programme implementation (Mathison, 2011).

In conclusion, Stake's model will prove useful to this research as it provides extensive evidence to evaluate the success of the implementation of SBA by documenting all plausible links between all components of the system, which therefore also presents a multi-perspective view on the implementation of SBA (Hamm, 1985). Five main evaluation approaches have been discussed in this chapter. The table below shows a summary of the evaluation models discussed.

Table 2.12: Summary of Evaluation Models

	Approach	Main aim	Emphasis	Role of evaluator	Data source
Tyler	Planning	Comparing student performance	To determine whether goals of a programme are being achieved through measuring learning outcomes and attainment of objectives	To evaluate programme for curriculum development	Pre and post test results
Kirkpatrick	4 levels	Analyzing the effectiveness and impact of a programme	To evaluate the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of a programme implemented for students	To evaluate any level based on organizational needs	Reactions, learning, behavior and results
Stufflebeam	CIPP	To obtain different sources of information for decision making	To provide relevant information to decision makers for further decision making	To evaluate information for use in decision making	Context, input, process, product
Scriven	Formative - Summative	To evaluate intended and unintended effects of a programme	To evaluate a programme during its implementation and after its implementation	To evaluate results of programme implementation to contribute to the modification of the curriculum	Formative and summative assessments of programme
Stake	Countenance	To describe and judge a programme implementation	To describe and judge a programme implementation based on a structured and systematic collection of descriptive and judgemental data from practitioners	To collect, process and interpret descriptive and judgmental data	Antecedents, transactions, outcomes, intents and congruence

2.11 Chapter Review

This chapter provided a comprehensive overview of Malaysia's education system, particularly focusing on curriculum changes in English language education. It discussed recent language reforms and reasons for low English proficiency among Malaysian students. The chapter also examined school-based assessment practices both globally and in Malaysia, explored the evolution of English language teaching theories and practices, and compared various assessment models. Guided by the study's conceptual framework, this chapter offered insights into policies and practices surrounding the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA), which will aid in evaluating the implementation of SBA in English language classrooms and understanding English language teachers' perspectives on SBA. The next chapter will explain the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted for the study. It begins by presenting the chosen research design and justifying its alignment with the research objectives. Details about the study population, sample size, and the methods employed for data collection follow.

The robustness of the research tools is emphasized through a discussion of the reliability and validity of the instruments. Data collection procedures are then described, highlighting the steps and ethical considerations upheld throughout the research process.

The aims and objectives of the study are reemphasised as follows: The aim is to evaluate the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak from the perspective of English Language teachers using the Stake's Countenance model.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the antecedents that influenced the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak.

2. To explore the ESL teachers' perceptions of the transactions experienced during the implementation of SBA in Sarawak.

3. To determine the outcomes of the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak

4. To examine the relationship between the ESL teachers perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak

3.2 Research Design of the Study

Gorard (2010) emphasizes the importance of research design in organizing a research project effectively from its inception. He suggests that a well-considered design increases the likelihood of producing evidence that can convincingly answer research questions. Early consideration of research design is crucial to identify potential challenges and opportunities, streamline analysis, and support well-founded conclusions. For this research study, the design should provide a structured approach to complex issues, thereby enhancing understanding.

In this study, a sequential mixed methods research design (Teddlie & Yu, 2007) beginning with a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase is employed to comprehensively address the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in English language classrooms in Sarawak, Malaysia. The focus is particularly on teachers' perspectives, as they are key stakeholders in SBA implementation. This approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods, leveraging the strengths of each. Quantitative research, described by Tolmie et al. (2011), focuses on numerical data to identify patterns and relationships within a phenomenon, though it may not capture its full complexity. Qualitative research, defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), emphasizes interpretive practices to understand phenomena through the meanings people attribute to them. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) argue that integrating these methods enhances the quality of inferences and provides a more comprehensive understanding. Therefore, the researcher believes that

neither approach alone can fully capture the perspectives of English teachers on the implementation of SBA.

The research begins with a quantitative survey to capture a broad understanding of teachers' perceptions and practices related to SBA. This approach aligns with Cresswell's (2019) view that surveys are effective for measuring opinions and identifying practice patterns. The survey aims to gather data from a significant number of respondents across thirty public national secondary schools in the Kuching and Samarahan districts.

Following the survey, the study will employ qualitative case study interviews to gain deeper insights. This sequential approach, as advocated by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), allows for initial patterns identified in the survey to be further explored and confirmed through detailed case studies. Yin (2014) defines case studies as in-depth investigations of real-life contexts, making them suitable for exploring teachers' perceptions and experiences with SBA implementation. The semi-structured interview format, recommended by Robson (2016), offers the flexibility to adapt questions to the context and needs of each interviewee. This method is advantageous for probing deeper into issues identified in the survey and for exploring underlying motives and perspectives, as suggested by King (1994).

By focusing on teachers, who are the primary implementers of SBA in schools, the study aims to gather rich and meaningful data on the state of SBA implementation. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of teachers in the success of SBA (Salmiah, 2013; Mansor et al., 2013; Othman et al., 2013), reinforcing the decision to focus on this group.

Overall, the mixed methods design, combining a survey with case study interviews, provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the complexities of SBA implementation in Sarawak. This method allows for a broad analysis of trends and attitudes,

followed by an in-depth exploration of specific cases, thereby ensuring a thorough investigation of the research questions.

3.3 Selection of Participants and Sampling Procedure

In Sarawak, there are 193 public secondary schools, with 172 being Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK) or national type schools. The total number of teachers across these schools is 15,686, teaching various subjects from Transition to Form Six, and the student population totals 192,830 (JPNS, 2018). Specifically for English language education, there are 2,058 English teachers in these schools as of 2019, as reported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Research Sarawak. Given the large number of English teachers, this study will focus on a representative sample of these teachers. As Tolmie et al. (2011) suggest, in large populations, it is vital to select a sample systematically and, in a theory-driven manner to allow for generalizable conclusions.

Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that the ideal sample size depends on various factors including the study's purpose, the population's nature, the types of analyses, population size, and required stratification. Other practical considerations like sample availability, access, time constraints, manpower, and funding are also crucial. Accordingly, this study targets English teachers from lower secondary forms (Form 1 – 3) in all public national secondary schools in the Kuching and Samarahan districts. Only teachers with more than four years of experience in these forms are included. The study's scope is limited to these districts due to time and budget constraints.

The implementation of SBA in lower secondary forms (Form 1 – 3), fully introduced in 2015, is the focus of this study. Teachers selected for this study need to have experience

prior to the introduction of SBA, as well as familiarity with the previous assessment method, the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR). The study is concentrated in the Kuching and Samarahan districts, selected for their geographical proximity to the researcher. However, these districts still represent a substantial 17.5% of the total public national secondary schools (SMK) in Sarawak. To maintain sample consistency, the study includes only teachers from public national schools (SMK), excluding those from religious (Sekolah Agama, SA), technical (Sekolah Menengah Teknik, SMT), or performing arts schools (Sekolah Seni). The population data of teachers and students in these districts is detailed in the table provided.

Table 3.1: Number of Schools, Teachers and Students According To District

District	Total Number of Public National Secondary Schools (SMK)	Urban	Sub-Urban/Sub-rural	Total Teachers	Total Students
Kuching	21	18	3	1909	23,945
Samarahan	9	0	9	900	12,144

Based on the classification of schools provided by JPNS, the Kuching education district has a total of 18 urban and 3 sub-urban/sub-rural public national secondary schools. On the other hand, the Samarahan education district has a total of 9 public national secondary schools all of which are listed as sub-urban/sub-rural. This sample size represents 17.5% of the total number of SMK schools in Sarawak.

In the quantitative phase of this study, the researcher aimed to select participants from public national secondary schools (SMK) in Kuching and Samarahan. Due to the lack

of specific data from the Sarawak state education department (JPNS), the researcher directly contacted school principals to identify English teachers who met the criteria of having more than four years of experience teaching English in Forms 1-3 and were currently teaching these forms. Finding that most schools had three to four eligible teachers, the researcher adopted a stratified cluster sampling method. Two teachers from each of the 30 SMK schools were invited to participate, ensuring a random and diverse sample. This approach aimed to capture a range of experiences and perceptions. In cases with more willing participants, the researcher focused on selecting teachers with diverse characteristics like gender, age, and teaching experience.

Those who completed the questionnaire were invited for the qualitative phase, which involved semi-structured interviews. To maintain a balanced representation and explore different perspectives, only one teacher per school was selected for interviews if multiple teachers from the same school expressed interest. This led to a total of 14 teachers participating in the interviews, chosen to confirm patterns identified in the survey (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) and to ensure diverse representation. Participant demographics are further outlined in the following chapter.

3.4 Instrument Design and Validation

This section outlines how the qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments for the study were selected, designed and validated.

3.4.1 Quantitative Method of Data Collection Design

In selecting the quantitative data collection method for this study, a multi-step process was followed. Mujis (2011) offers various options for collecting quantitative data,

with the choice in this study being a web-based questionnaire survey using Google Forms. This approach aligns with Oppenheim's (1996) recommendation of self-administered questionnaires, providing flexibility and comfort for respondents, as they could complete the questionnaire in their own time without the researcher's presence. This method was chosen for its logistical advantages, like cost-effectiveness and ease of data compilation, as noted by Cohen et al. (2007).

To ensure participation, initial letters were sent to school principals, followed by consultations with English department heads to identify eligible teachers. The online format also addressed potential issues of missing data and respondent fatigue by requiring answers to each question before proceeding. Despite the benefits of using online questionnaires, potential downsides like low response rates for lengthy surveys (Eiselen & Uys, 2015) and biased responses (Oppenheim, 1996) were mitigated by piloting the survey with teachers and ensuring clarity in the questions. The study's focus on English teachers, who are likely to have adequate literacy levels, further reduced the risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the survey items.

3.4.2 Development of the Survey

Developing the survey for this study entailed a comprehensive process guided by the principles outlined by Cohen et al. (2007). The initial step involved clearly defining the objectives of the questionnaire, ensuring they aligned with the study's goals. This was followed by generating constructs and identifying the specific data needed to meet these objectives, a process known as operationalizing. The questionnaire's constructs were derived from extensive literature reviews and aligned with the theoretical framework of the Stake

Countenance Model, focusing on aspects like antecedents, transactions, and outcomes in SBA implementation.

Drawing on various sources, including previous studies by Chan and Sidhu (2011), Che Musa et al. (2012), Cheng et al. (2011), and Majid (2011), as well as official documents like the Malaysian Education Blueprint and Panduan dan Peraturan PBS, the questionnaire was crafted to encompass a broad range of relevant topics. It consisted of 153 items, categorized into sections that addressed teachers' knowledge, practices, and overall views on SBA implementation. These sections were further broken down into subcategories for a detailed exploration of each aspect.

1. Antecedents: Teachers' knowledge in administering SBA in the English classroom
    a. Teachers' knowledge in planning English language lessons
    b. Teachers' knowledge in developing and administering SBA in the English classroom
    c. Teachers' knowledge in scoring, reporting and analyzing SBA in the English classroom
2. Transaction: Teachers' practices in administering SBA in the English classroom
    a. Teachers' practices in planning English language lessons
    b. Teachers' practices in developing and administering SBA in the English classroom
    c. Teachers' practices in scoring, reporting and analyzing SBA in the English classroom

3. Outcomes: Teachers' overall views on the implementation of SBA

    a. Perceptions on using SBA in teaching English

    b. Perceptions on SBA courses, implementation and training

    c. Perceptions on In House Training (IHT) of SBA at their current school

    d. General administration, coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation at their school

    e. Challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA in their school

    f. Overall importance of SBA implementation

    g. Impact of SBA on students in their classroom

The questionnaire, detailed in Appendix 1, is divided into four main sections, from Section A to D. Section A covers demographic information of the respondents. Section B (32 items) aimed to explore the antecedents of School-Based Assessment (SBA), focusing on teachers' prior knowledge and their preparedness to implement SBA. Section C (32 items) aimed to examine the transactions of SBA, assessing how teachers' knowledge affects their classroom implementation practices. Finally, Section D (77 items) delves into both the transactions and outcomes of SBA implementation, capturing teachers' perceptions of the implementation process and its impact.

The questionnaire's design incorporated a five-point Likert scale, offering respondents varied options to accurately express their agreement, proficiency, or frequency regarding survey questions. This approach, recognized by Losby and Wetmore (2012) for its simplicity and precision, was carefully chosen to capture nuanced responses. However, mindful of potential biases identified by Bertram (2006), the study planned to validate the

survey findings through qualitative interviews. This methodological combination aimed to enrich the understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences with SBA implementation, ensuring a more comprehensive analysis.

3.4.3 Validity and Reliability of the Survey

Mujis (2011) defines the validity of an instrument as its ability to measure what it is intended to measure accurately. A high degree of accuracy in measurement correlates with high validity. Hughes (2003) echoes this, asserting that an instrument's validity hinges on its capacity to measure its intended variable. Green (2014) expands this concept, emphasizing that validity encompasses not just the design of the instrument but also how users interpret its results, ensuring that these interpretations correspond closely with real-life applications.

When designing a questionnaire, it's crucial to consider four types of validity: criterion validity, face validity, content validity, and construct validity, as outlined by Mujis (2011). Criterion validity, which evaluates if a test measures a specific set of abilities (Green, 2014), can be established by aligning the questionnaire with theoretical foundations and previously conducted surveys. This study's questionnaire, drawing on established surveys by Chan and Sidhu (2011), Che Musa et al. (2012), and Cheng et al. (2011), effectively secures criterion validity by adhering to these standards.

To establish content and face validity, a preliminary version of the questionnaire was distributed to five teachers actively involved in implementing SBA in their schools. These teachers assessed the questionnaire's relevance to their teaching practices and implementation of SBA, and identified any potential issues with the survey items. Their feedback led to the addition of specific items, such as those assessing teachers' opportunities

to discuss SBA implementation and activities with their colleagues. This step ensured that the questionnaire was practical and relevant to the real-life context of English teachers engaged in SBA.

To achieve content and construct validity for the questionnaire, an approach recommended by Mujis (2011) and Jackson (2003) was followed. This involved conducting an extensive review of relevant literature, including frameworks, theories, concepts, and instruments pertinent to the study. Additionally, the questionnaire underwent multiple revisions and was scrutinized by an associate professor specializing in measurement and evaluation. This rigorous process ensured that the questionnaire items were effectively designed to capture the necessary information for the study, aligning closely with the research objectives and theoretical underpinnings.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, internal consistency reliability was utilized, a method appropriate when a single version of an instrument is administered, as described by Cresswell (2019). Reliability is crucial for ensuring measurement accuracy and consistency (Mujis, 2011; Cresswell, 2019). In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to evaluate internal consistency across the questionnaire's sections, with values ranging between 0.00 and 1.00 (Cohen et al., 2007). A higher alpha value indicates stronger internal consistency. Mujis (2011) contends that an alpha value over 0.7 signifies adequate internal consistency. The Cronbach alpha for this questionnaire is detailed in Table 3.2 of the study.

Table 3.2: Overall Cronbach's Alpha Values for Each Section

Section	Construct	Items	N of Items	Overall Cronbach Alpha Value
B	Knowledge in planning English language lessons	B1 – B9	9	0.894
C	Knowledge in developing and administering SBA in the English classroom	C10 - C26	17	0.979
D	Knowledge in Scoring, Reporting and Analysing SBA in the English classroom	D27 – D32	6	0.921
E	Planning implementation in English lessons	E1 – E9	9	0.863
F	Developing and administering SBA in English class	F10 - F26	17	0.970
G	Scoring, reporting and analysing SBA in the English class	G27 – G32	6	0.854
H	Views on using SBA to teach English	H1 – H22	22	0.869
I	SBA centralised courses, Implementation and Training	I23 – I26	5	0.924
J	In-House Training (IHT) provided on SBA in your school	J27 – J30	4	0.889
K	General administration, coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation	K31 – K39	9	0.903
L	Challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA	L40 – L53	16	0.936
M	Importance of SBA implementation	M54 – M64	12	0.940
N	Impact of SBA on students	N65 – N72	10	0.966

3.5 Qualitative Method of Data Collection Design

In the qualitative phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted. This approach aligns with Robson's (2016) assertion that qualitative methods can enrich quantitative findings by revealing patterns or disparities. Rubin & Rubin (2012) conceptualize interviews as social interactions akin to conversations, while Kvale and Brinkman (2015) view them as a process of constructing knowledge through dialogue. Interviews, in contrast to questionnaires, offer the flexibility to adapt the line of inquiry, delve deeper into responses, and explore underlying motives, providing a more nuanced understanding of the subjects' perspectives and experiences.

Interviews can vary in structure. A fully structured interview involves pre-determined questions with fixed wording in a set order. Semi-structured interviews, which were used in this study, also have pre-determined questions but allow flexibility in the order and wording. Lastly, unstructured or open-questioned interviews are more flexible, with a general area of interest and no fixed questions or order, allowing the conversation to evolve naturally. These interview formats can be conducted either individually or in groups, depending on the research needs.

For this study, the semi-structured interview format was chosen to facilitate organic and natural responses from interviewees, allowing for a balance between structured and open-ended questioning. This approach aligns with Lofland and Lofland’s (1995) emphasis on the importance of having a clear structure in interviews to ensure concise and valuable responses. Semi-structured interviews provide the flexibility to modify question sequencing, wording, and focus, enabling interviewers to cover a set list of topics while adapting the conversation based on responses and the interview context (Powney & Watts, 1987).

3.5.1 Development of the Semi-structured Interview

Cresswell and Poth (2018) outline key steps for conducting interviews: Firstly, formulate open-ended research questions focusing on the central phenomenon, in this case, SBA implementation. Select interviewees who can provide insightful answers, in this study chosen from survey participants using maximum variation sampling to capture diverse perspectives (Miles, Huberman & Saladana, 2019). Secondly, create an interview guide with 5-7 open-ended questions, including follow-ups (Kvale & Brinkman, 2015). Finally, conduct a pilot test to refine the interview process and questions, enhancing the effectiveness of the research instruments (Yin, 2004; Sampson, 2004).

For this study's interview, questions were framed based on the research questions and research framework. In this study, the interview consisted of 30 open-ended questions. The interview, similar to the questionnaire, covers all three parts of the theoretical framework, i.e. antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. The main sections and subsections are:

1. Antecedents: Teachers' personal background and knowledge of assessment practices

   a. Teachers' years of experience in teaching Form 1 – 3 English and their acceptance of SBA.

   b. Personal evaluation of differences between the curriculum and assessment practices of PMR and SBA

   c. The adequacy of centralized and in-house training provided in their own experience

2. Transaction: Teachers' practices in administering SBA in the English classroom

a. Teachers' practices in planning English language lessons

b. Teachers' practices in developing and administering SBA in the English classroom

c. Teachers' practices in scoring, reporting and analyzing SBA in the English classroom

3. Outcomes: Teachers' overall views on the implementation of SBA

a. Self-evaluation of teachers' skills and ability to conduct SBA
b. Perceptions of different stakeholders within their own school context on SBA
c. Perceived opinions of students towards SBA implementation
d. Perceived support, general administration, coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation at their school
e. Challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA in their school
f. Areas of improvement for more effective SBA policy implementation.

The interview guide in Appendix G comprised three main sections (A to C). Section A addressed the study's first two research questions, focusing on teachers' perceptions of the antecedents to SBA implementation and their knowledge and skills for effective implementation. Questions covered topics such as teaching experience, school demographics, changes in teaching and assessment post-SBA implementation, curriculum changes, assessment methods, readiness and adequacy of training, resource materials, and teachers' perceptions of stakeholder implementation within their schools. This thorough

questioning aimed to capture a comprehensive view of teachers' experiences and perspectives related to SBA.

Section B of the interview guide explored teachers' practices in SBA and their overall views on its implementation. It addressed how SBA impacted student behavior, assessment methods, and classroom engagement. Teachers were asked about changes in student confidence and attitudes during assessments, the effectiveness of various assessment methods, classroom dynamics, and the impact of SBA on teaching and learning practices. Additionally, the section delved into teachers' approaches to marking and analysis for identifying student weaknesses, and moderation processes to ensure consistent marking standards. This section aimed to understand the practical application of SBA and its perceived effectiveness in the English language classroom.

Section C of the interview guide addressed the transactions of SBA, focusing on three research questions: challenges in SBA implementation, the impact of SBA on student learning, and beliefs about SBA's importance in educational outcomes. Here, teachers evaluated SBA's outcomes in terms of student behavior and learning. They discussed challenges such as facilities, training, and stakeholder involvement, and gave their opinions on the effectiveness of the SBA policy. This section aimed to capture a comprehensive view of SBA's practical implications and its perceived value in the educational process.

3.5.2 Validity and Trustworthiness of the Interview

External validation is crucial for ensuring the comparability or translatability of a study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) use terms like credibility, authenticity, dependability, and confirmability to describe aspects of validity and reliability in qualitative research.

Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle (2011) define credibility as the accuracy of the results in reflecting participants' meanings and authenticity as the representation of diverse perspectives. They also emphasize criticality and integrity in the research process. Cresswell and Poth (2018) view validity in qualitative research as assessing the accuracy of findings as interpreted by the researcher, participants, and readers.

To ensure the validity of this study, various strategies from Cresswell and Poth's (2018) nine validation strategies were utilized. From the researcher's perspective, validation involved triangulating multiple data sources, including an extensive literature review. This approach informed the formation of relevant and unbiased questions specific to the Malaysian context of SBA implementation. Additionally, the researcher engaged participants, senior teachers, principals, and academicians to gather their perspectives on the interview questions, ensuring that the views and experiences of those directly involved in SBA were accurately represented and considered in the study.

In this study, draft interview schedules were reviewed by teachers and academicians for feedback on their credibility, relevance, and accuracy. This process, as described by Bazeley (2013), helped refine the questions and ensured the credibility of the study. Teachers provided input on their practices in scoring, reporting, and analysing SBA, and informed that it was not common for them to conduct in-depth statistical analysis of student results. Consequently, this question was omitted from the final interview schedule. Overall, teachers and academicians were satisfied with the scope of the questions provided.

Post-interview, transcriptions were sent to participants for member checking, a crucial step highlighted by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Cresswell & Poth (2018) for establishing credibility. This approach allowed participants to validate the accuracy and

credibility of the data, analyses, and interpretations. Stake (1995) also supports the idea of sharing 'rough drafts' with participants and stakeholders for critical feedback.

To enhance reliability in this qualitative study, Silverman (2013) outlines several approaches. The study emphasized capturing detailed data using high-quality recording equipment, with the SONY IC recorder used for all interviews. The environment for data collection was non-aggressive and comfortable, ensuring participants felt at ease. Additionally, a dynamic coding system was employed, where preliminary codes developed during the early analysis were revised and refined as more interviews were conducted. This approach helped in identifying broader themes and patterns, contributing to the reliability of the findings. Interviews for this study were strategically conducted in quiet cafes, rather than at the teachers' schools. This choice was made to ensure confidentiality and comfort, allowing participants to express their opinions freely without concern of being overheard by colleagues. The quiet setting also minimized background noise, facilitating clearer recordings for accurate transcription and coding. Furthermore, the analysis of the interview data was enhanced through the use of NVIVO (version 12), a qualitative data analysis software, which aided in the development and organization of the code list and in the thorough examination of the findings.

3.6 Pilot Testing of Instruments

Oppenheim (1996) emphasizes the importance of piloting social surveys to establish validity, reliability, and practicality, despite the potential time and cost involved. Cohen et al. (2007) further advocate for piloting to ensure clarity and suitability of questions, as well as to gauge the time needed for respondents to complete the survey.

In this study, a pilot survey was conducted with 30 teachers from 10 schools using convenience sampling. The pilot aimed to ensure the understandability of questions and the feasibility of completing the questionnaire within a reasonable timeframe. Teachers' feedback was carefully considered to refine the questionnaire, aligning with Cohen et al.'s (2007) suggestion that pilot participants should closely resemble the actual study sample.

Based on the feedback from the pilot study, several modifications were made to the survey instrument to enhance its clarity and comprehensiveness. Additional follow-up questions were introduced to elicit more comprehensive answers and capture a broader range of teacher experiences and perspectives. The table below outlines the new questions added:

Table 3.3: Additional Follow-Up Questions After Pilot Testing

Area of Focus	**Additional Follow-Up Questions**
Activity and Learning Objectives	Are there any differences in the activities/learning objectives you conduct in class?
Assessment Methods	Are there any differences in the assessments? Formative/summative?
Workshop Improvements	What can be improved in regards to the workshops?
Personal Efforts in SBA	Did you make effort personally to learn how to conduct SBA activities?
Perception of Burden	Did you see it as a burden?
Overcoming Challenges	Do you think these challenges can be overcome? In your opinion, what are the ways to overcome the issue?

These additions aimed to elicit a more detailed understanding of the teachers' experiences with SBA implementation, including their professional development efforts,

perceived challenges, and suggestions for improvement. This refinement process ensured that the final questionnaire was more robust and capable of capturing the complexities of SBA implementation among ESL teachers in Sarawak.

In the qualitative phase, a pilot was conducted with four English teachers who had participated in the quantitative pilot. They received the interview schedule a day beforehand to identify any unclear or irrelevant questions. Following Robson's (2016) guidance, interviews were limited to one hour to prevent participant fatigue. Post-interview, feedback on the experience and the relevance of questions was sought from the teachers. This input was then reviewed and discussed by the researcher and supervisor, leading to the refinement of the final interview schedule, ensuring it was well-tailored to the study's needs.

3.7 Data Collection Process

This study encompassed two data collection procedures. Firstly, questionnaires were distributed to English teachers in Form 1-3 at public national schools in Kuching and Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia. Secondly, interviews were conducted with teachers who volunteered to provide deeper insights into their survey responses. Approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia was necessary due to the study's focus on teachers. Following the successful defense of the PhD proposal, the researcher obtained the required approval through an online application supported by academic supervisors, enabling the conduct of research in the designated schools upon obtaining principals' agreement.

The researcher personally visited each school's principal (or senior assistant in their absence) to explain the research purpose and gain approval. Upon approval, the head of the English department was approached to identify two eligible teachers per school to participate. Both hard and online copies of the questionnaire were provided, with identical

items. Teachers had a two-week period to complete the questionnaire, with follow-up visits conducted for non-responses. Consequently, a 100% response rate was achieved, with all 60 distributed questionnaires returned.

In the questionnaire's final section, teachers indicated their willingness to participate in interviews, providing contact details for individual follow-up. Of the 60 respondents, 16 volunteered and were chosen for diverse representation. Interviews were conducted individually and recorded, with participants receiving the schedule in advance for preparation. The study emphasized confidentiality and participant comfort, allowing them to skip sensitive questions or halt the interview. Post-interview, transcriptions were shared for verification, and final findings were to be sent to participants for validity confirmation. Each interview lasted no longer than 70 minutes.

3.8 Ethical Considerations of the Study

The study adhered to stringent ethical practices. Permission was obtained from relevant authorities, ensuring legitimacy. Principals and participants received a comprehensive explanation of the research's aims, fostering transparency and understanding. Each questionnaire and interview were accompanied by a detailed information sheet. This sheet not only outlined the study's objectives but also emphasized the participants' right to withdraw at any point, a key ethical principle. Additionally, it assured confidentiality and informed participants that their participation, signified by completing the questionnaire or agreeing to an interview, constituted informed consent. This careful approach ensured ethical integrity and participant autonomy throughout the research process.

3.9 Data Analysis

In applying the described statistical approach to the study on School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak, the research utilized descriptive statistics through SPSS version 25 to analyze the responses of English language teachers. This methodology enabled a detailed understanding of the teachers' proficiency in SBA-related knowledge and their agreement on perceptions of training (antecedents), their frequency of engaging in SBA practices (transactions), and their level of agreement with the outcomes of SBA implementation. This includes calculating the mean and standard deviation for responses in each item.

For antecedents, the analysis of mean and standard deviation revealed the average proficiency levels of teachers in SBA knowledge, the variability of their understanding and their perceptions towards both in-house and centralised training. In the transactions construct, mean scores of practice-related items indicated how frequently teachers incorporate SBA practices in their teaching, with standard deviations highlighting consistency across the sample. Regarding outcomes, the mean scores and standard deviations captured the teachers' consensus on the effectiveness and impact of SBA, revealing the breadth of their perceptions and experiences.

Table 3.4: Mean Score Interpretation for Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes

Antecedents (Knowledge)		**Antecedents (Training)**		**Transactions (Practices)**		**Outcomes (Agreement)**	
	Mean Range		Mean Range		Mean Range		Mean Range
Low Proficiency	1.00 – 2.99	Low Agreement	1.00 – 2.99	Low Frequency	1.00 – 2.99	Low Agreement	1.00 – 2.99
Moderate Proficiency	3.00 – 3.99	Moderate Agreement	3.00 – 3.99	Moderate Frequency	3.00 – 3.99	Moderate Agreement	3.00 – 3.99
High Proficiency	4.00 – 5.00	High Agreement	4.00 – 5.00	High Frequency	4.00 – 5.00	High Agreement	4.00 – 5.00

Following this, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was employed to examine associations between various variables. This statistical method measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables, helping to identify if, and how strongly, the variables are related. Spearman's rho was chosen to evaluate the correlation between the constructs of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes due to its suitability for non-parametric data. The data was deemed to be non-parametric based on the normality of the distribution of scores for the 'Antecedents', 'Transactions' and 'Outcomes' construct evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests (see pg 243 – 251). A table explaining the coefficient interpretation of Spearman's rho is presented in Table 3.4 based on Mujis (2011). This was done to explore relationships between teachers' knowledge, practices, and their perceptions of SBA outcomes.

Lastly, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyse the relationship between all three variables of antecedents, transactions and outcomes. This method is suitable for understanding how various factors together influence an outcome. The analysis was conducted using SPSS v25.

The regression model was specified as:

$$\text{Outcomes\_Mean} = \beta 0 + \beta 1(\text{Antecedents\_Mean}) + \beta 2\ (\text{Transactions\_Mean}) + \epsilon$$

where $\beta 0$ is the intercept, $\beta 1$ and $\beta 2$ are the coefficients for Antecedents and Transactions, respectively, and ϵ is the error term.

The multiple regression analysis was executed with Antecedents and Transactions as predictor variables and Outcomes as the dependent variable.

Table 3.5: Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient of Spearman's rho

Correlation Coefficient (r)	Strength of Correlation	Description
-1.0 to -0.7	Very Strong	A very strong negative linear relationship.
-0.7 to -0.5	Strong	A strong negative linear relationship.
-0.5 to -0.3	Moderate	A moderate negative linear relationship.
-0.3 to -0.1	Weak	A weak negative linear relationship.
-0.1 to 0.1	None or Very Weak	No or very weak linear relationship.
0.1 to 0.3	Weak	A weak positive linear relationship.
0.3 to 0.5	Moderate	A moderate positive linear relationship.
0.5 to 0.7	Strong	A strong positive linear relationship.
0.7 to 1.0	Very Strong	A very strong positive linear relationship.

The thematic analysis model used in this qualitative data analysis closely follows the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This model involves a systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns, or themes, within the data. The approach adopted for thematisation in this study can be described through several key phases that align with Braun and Clarke's methodology.

The process began with familiarization with the data, where the researcher thoroughly read the interview transcripts. This immersion in the data was crucial for developing an in-depth understanding of teachers' perspectives on SBA. By repeatedly reading the transcripts, the researcher gained a deep familiarity with the content and context of the data, which is essential for the subsequent phases of analysis.

Following this, the researcher proceeded to generating initial codes. In line with the approach outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019), significant segments in the transcripts that related to teachers' experiences, challenges, and perceptions of SBA were systematically identified and categorized into initial codes. This coding phase involved organizing the data into meaningful groups, capturing the essence of the relevant information.

The next phase involved searching for themes. The initial codes were organized into potential themes that reflected broader patterns in the data, such as the effectiveness of SBA, challenges faced in its implementation, and its impact on teaching practices. This phase required collating codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.

Once potential themes were identified, the researcher moved on to reviewing themes. The themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the coded data and the overall data set. This phase involved re-examining the codes and transcripts to verify the themes' validity and coherence, checking if the themes worked in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.

After refining the themes, the next step was defining and naming themes. Each theme was clearly defined and named, capturing the essence of what each theme represented in

relation to teachers' experiences and perceptions of SBA in Sarawak. This phase involved ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis told.

Finally, the researcher summarized the findings, integrating the quantitative analyses with the qualitative thematic analysis. This integration included aligning the themes with the study's research questions, literature review, and theoretical framework. By following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, the researcher ensured a rigorous and systematic approach to thematic analysis, resulting in a thorough and nuanced interpretation of the qualitative data.

3.10 Chapter Review

This chapter has meticulously detailed the research methodology designed to evaluate the perceptions and implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) system by English teachers. Utilizing a mixed method approach, the study focused on the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of SBA policy implementation. The chapter described the population, sampling methods, and the data collection processes employed. It also outlined the derivation of study concepts and constructs, the conduct of a pilot study, and steps taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collection methods. Additionally, ethical considerations were thoroughly addressed, and the methods of data analysis for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study were explained. The ensuing chapter will discuss the findings of the main study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter comprehensively analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data from the study. A survey questionnaire with 153 items spanning 14 sections was distributed to 60 teachers from 30 schools (2 teachers from each school), achieving a full response rate. This analysis encompasses participant demographics, English teacher's understanding, execution, opinions, and the challenges encountered in SBA implementation. Additionally, the chapter delves into qualitative insights from 14 English teachers selected for interviews post-survey completion. Despite 16 volunteers, selection was refined to one teacher per school to ensure diverse representation. Conducted in quiet and neutral settings, each interview, lasting about an hour, was recorded and transcribed for participant verification. The chapter integrates these findings and presents them aligned with the study's research questions.

4.2 Research Objectives and Research Questions

A recap of the research objectives and research questions is provided here for ease of reference. The aim of this research is to evaluate the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak from the perspective of English Language teachers using the Stake's Countenance model. This encompasses exploring the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes associated with the implementation and practice of the SBA.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the antecedents of the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak.

2. To explore the ESL teachers' perceptions of the transactions experienced during the implementation of SBA in Sarawak.

3. To determine the outcomes of the implementation of SBA as perceived by the ESL teachers in Sarawak

4. To examine the relationship between the ESL teachers perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak

Based on the research objectives above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

RQ1: What were the antecedents of the introduction of SBA among the ESL teachers in Sarawak?

RQ2: How do ESL teachers perceive the transactions during the SBA implementation in Sarawak?

RQ3: How do the ESL teachers perceive the outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA among the ESL teachers in Sarawak?

4.3 Quantitative Data Screening Process

Before analysing the data, the researcher embarked in a screening and cleaning process to ensure that any errors during data entering were corrected. These included

screening for data entry errors such as keying in the wrong value. No abnormal outlier values were detected in the screening process.

As the study required respondents to answer every question via Google Forms, there were no missing data reported in the survey items.

4.4 Survey Respondents Demographic

4.4.1 Distribution of Survey Participants According to District

Table 4.1: Distribution of Survey Participants According to District

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Kuching	44	73.3%	73.3%	73.3%
Samarahan	16	26.7%	26.7%	100.0%
Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 4.1 displays the distribution of teachers from the Kuching and Samarahan districts who responded to a survey. Out of a total of 60 respondents, a predominant 73.3% are from the Kuching district. Conversely, the Samarahan district, while lesser represented, accounts for 26.7% of the responses.

4.4.2 Location of Survey Respondent's Schools

Table 4.2: Location of Survey Respondent's Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Urban	36	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
	Sub Urban/Sub Rural	24	40.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

The data represents the distribution of where respondent's schools are based on their location: Urban or Sub-Urban/Sub-Rural. Out of a total of 60 schools surveyed, a majority of them (60.0% or 36 schools) are situated in urban areas. On the other hand, 40% of the schools, translating to 24 institutions, were located in sub-urban or sub-rural regions.

4.4.3 Gender of Survey Respondents

Table 4.3: Survey Respondent's Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	49	81.7%	81.7%	81.7%
Male	11	18.3%	18.3%	100.0%
Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

The data delineates the gender distribution of respondents in a survey. Of the total 60 respondents, a significant majority, 81.7% or 49 individuals, identified as female. Conversely, only 18.3% of the respondents, equating to 11 individuals, identified as male.

4.4.4 Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

Table 4.4: Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Malay	14	23.3%	23.3%	23.3%
Chinese	24	40.0%	40.0%	63.3%
Iban	10	16.7%	16.7%	80.0%
Bidayuh	2	3.3%	3.3%	83.3%
Melanau	4	6.7%	6.7%	90.0%
Indian	6	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

The provided data offers insight into the ethnic distribution of teachers who participated in the survey. The largest ethnic group represented among the respondents is the Chinese, constituting 40% or 24 of the total 60 respondents. Following the Chinese, the Malays make up the second-largest group, with a representation of 23.3% or 14 respondents. The Iban ethnic group comes next, accounting for 16.7% with 10 teachers. Notably smaller proportions are then observed in the subsequent ethnicities: 10% or 6 teachers are of Indian descent, 6.7% or 4 teachers belong to the Melanau community, and the Bidayuh community is represented by 3.3% or 2 teachers. In summary, while the survey showcases a diverse range of ethnicities, Chinese teachers are the most predominant, with Malay and Iban teachers also holding significant portions.

4.4.5 Academic Qualification of Survey Respondents

Table 4.5: Academic Qualification of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Diploma	5	8.3%	8.3%	8.3%
	Degree	51	85.0%	85.0%	93.3%
	Masters	4	6.7%	6.7%	100.0%
	Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

The table provides a breakdown of the academic qualifications held by teachers who responded to the survey. Among the total 60 respondents, a dominant majority, 85% or 51 teachers, reported having a degree as their highest academic qualification. On the other hand, a relatively smaller portion, 8.3% or 5 teachers, indicated that they hold a diploma. Lastly, the least represented group consists of teachers with a master's qualification, accounting for 6.7% or 4 respondents.

4.4.6 Forms that Teachers Surveyed Have Taught in the Last 3 Years

Table 4.6: Forms that Teachers Surveyed Have Taught in the Last 3 Years

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Form 1 only	3	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
	Form 2 only	5	8.3%	8.3%	13.3%
	Form 3 only	19	31.7%	31.7%	45.0%

Table 4.6 continued

Form 1 &2 only	5	8.3%	8.3%	53.3%
Form 1 & 3 only	6	10.0%	10.0%	63.3%
Form 2 & 3	4	6.7%	6.7%	70.0%
Form 1, 2 & 3	18	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

The table elucidates the various forms or grade levels that the surveyed teachers have taught English to over the past three years. Among the 60 respondents, the most common individual form taught is 'Form 3 only', with 31.7% (or 19 teachers) exclusively teaching this grade. On the other hand, teaching 'Form 1 only' or 'Form 2 only' is less common, with only 5.0% (3 teachers) and 8.3% (5 teachers) respectively dedicating their instruction to these individual forms.

When it comes to combinations of forms, a noteworthy 30% (or 18 teachers) have taught all three forms: Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3. This suggests a sizable portion of teachers handle a diverse range of grade levels.

4.4.7 Percentage of Surveyed Teachers Who Have Attended Any Specific Courses or Training on SBA Implementation for the English Subject

Table 4.7: Percentage of Surveyed Teachers Who Have Attended Specific Courses/Training on SBA English Subject

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	46.7%	46.7%	46.7%
	No	32	53.3%	53.3%	100.0%
	Total	60	100.0%	100.0%	

Out of the 60 respondents surveyed, 46.7% (equivalent to 28 teachers) confirmed that they have attended such specialized training or courses on SBA implementation. In contrast, a slightly higher proportion of 53.3%, which translates to 32 teachers, indicated that they have not partaken in any such training or courses.

4.5 Interviewee Demographics

Table 4.8: Interviewees Demographics and Personal Details

	Participant Code Name	School District	Age Range (in years)	Years of Experience Teaching English	Positions held
1	AZ	Kuching	31 - 35	9 - 13	English Teacher
2	AJ	Kuching	31 – 35	4 – 8	English Teacher
3	CW	Kuching	31 – 35	9 – 13	English Teacher
4	QC	Kuching	46 - 50	24 – 28	Head of English Language
5	JM	Kuching	41 – 45	14 - 18	Head of English Language
6	HH	Kuching	51 – 55	24 - 28	English Teacher
7	NA	Kuching	36 – 40	9 – 13	English Teacher
8	VP	Kuching	31 – 35	4 – 8	English Teacher
9	SBH	Kuching	41 – 45	19 – 23	Head of English Language
10	VD	Kuching	51 – 55	24 – 28	Head of English Language
11	AA	Samarahan	46 – 50	24 – 28	Head of English Language
12	KC	Samarahan	36 – 40	9 – 13	English Teacher
13	SH	Samarahan	51 – 55	24 – 28	Head of English Language
14	NB	Samarahan	41 – 45	14 – 18	English Teacher

As can be seen from the above table, 36% of the participants were from schools in Samarahan while 64% were from Kuching schools. While not intended, this proportion was ideal as it also represented a similar distribution as compared to the participants in phase 1 of this study. 43% of the interviewees also held a higher administrative role, i.e. as Head

of English Language Subject and would be able to give a perspective not only as a teacher but also as an administrator. This is welcomed as their viewpoints may have differ from that of a teacher who had not held an administrative position. The age range and years of experience in teaching English were also very varied, thus providing a good representation of teacher voices at different stages of their career.

4.6 Antecedents of the Introduction of SBA as Perceived by ESL Teachers in Sarawak

This section explores the antecedents influencing the introduction of SBA as perceived by the English teachers in Sarawak. It presents survey findings on teachers' self-reported knowledge in various aspects of SBA, which includes knowledge of Bloom's learning domains, lesson planning, and assessment design. Additionally, it delves into interview insights regarding teachers' general perceptions of the PMR, SBA, and PT3. This includes their preparedness for SBA implementation, skepticism and resistance towards it, communication issues from the Ministry of Education, experiences of professional development courses on SBA, and their higher education training in this area. This exploration aims to uncover the foundational factors that shaped the implementation and reception of SBA in Sarawak's educational landscape.

4.6.1 Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Bloom's Learning Domains

Table 4.9: Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Bloom's Learning Domains

Teacher's Knowledge Of	Very Limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Mean	SD
I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's Cognitive domain	0%	3.3%	33.3%	60%	3.3%	3.63	.61
I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's affective domain	0%	6.7%	45%	41.7%	6.7%	3.48	.73
I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's psychomotor domain	0%	10%	41.7%	45%	3.3%	3.42	.72
Average	**0%**	**6.67%**	**40.00%**	**48.90%**	**4.43%**	**3.51**	**.69**

Table 4.9 presents the teachers' self-assessment regarding their expertise in framing learning objectives based on 3 survey items on Bloom's three learning domains: Cognitive, Psychomotor, and Affective and the results show moderate levels of proficiency with a mean for knowledge of cognitive domain is 3.63, followed by the Affective domain, which has an average score of 3.48, psychomotor with a mean of 3.42 indicating a moderate proficiency. The results indicate the teachers knowledge in all three Bloom's learning domain are moderate but they are most confident in the Cognitive domain, with a notable 60% considering themselves proficient in the cognitive domain followed by affective. Psychomotor domain is where the teachers feel slightly less proficient, although there's a differentiation in their self-perceived proficiency levels across the knowledge of Bloom's learning domains, the variability of teachers' responses around the mean, as indicated by the

standard deviations (ranging from 0.61 to 0.73), is relatively consistent. This suggests that teachers' perceptions of their knowledge levels are somewhat uniform in distribution for all three domains.

4.6.2 Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Lesson Planning

Table 4.10: Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Lesson Planning

Teacher's Knowledge Of	Very Limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Mean	SD
I know how to write general objectives for a lesson plan	0%	0%	15%	31.7%	53.3%	4.38	.74
I know how to use the English language syllabus	0%	0%	11.7%	41.7%	46.7%	4.35	.69
I know how to write specific objectives for a lesson plan	0%	0%	11.7%	43.3%	45%	4.33	.68
Average	**0%**	**0%**	**12.80%**	**38.90%**	**48.33%**	**4.35**	**.70**

The table offers insights into teachers' self-rated proficiency in various aspects of lesson planning, particularly focusing on the English language syllabus and setting objectives for lesson plans based on 3 survey items. When it comes to utilizing the English language syllabus, a huge majority of teachers feel confident, with 41.7% rating themselves as proficient and a further 46.7% considering themselves very proficient. This high level of perceived proficiency is underscored by an average score of 4.35 out of 5 and a standard

deviation of 0.69. Similarly, in writing general objectives for a lesson plan, 53.3% of the teachers view themselves as very proficient, leading to an overall mean rating of 4.38. However, there's a slightly wider spread in this category with a standard deviation of 0.74. Lastly, when tasked with formulating specific objectives for a lesson plan, teachers' confidence remains consistent, with 43.3% feeling proficient and 45% feeling very proficient. This results in an average rating of 4.33, and a closely packed distribution of responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.68. Overall, the data suggests that teachers are substantially confident in their lesson planning skills, especially when crafting objectives and navigating the English language syllabus.

4.6.3 Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Assessment Design

Table 4.11: Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Assessment Design

Teacher's Knowledge Of	Very Limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Mean	SD
I know how to construct MCQ's in grammar	0%	3.3%	28.3%	40%	28.3%	3.93	.84
I know how to assemble classroom test according to the format	0%	5%	31.7%	28.3%	35%	3.93	.94
I know how to construct MCQ's in reading comprehension	0%	0%	36.7%	38.3%	25%	3.88	.78
I know how to construct open-ended questions in guided composition	0%	5%	25%	48.3%	21.7%	3.87	.81
I know how to construct MCQ's in language forms and functions	0%	0%	40%	35%	25%	3.85	.80

Table 4.11 continued

I know how to construct MCQ's on literature components	0%	5%	36.7%	36.7%	21.7%	3.85	.90
I know how to review classroom test according to the format	0%	5%	31.7%	36.7%	26.7%	3.85	.88
I know how to prepare answer keys for MCQ's	0%	5%	31.7%	36.7%	26.7%	3.85	.88
I know how to construct MCQ's in language use	0%	3.3%	36.7%	38.3%	21.7%	3.78	.83
I know how to construct open-ended questions in free writing	0%	5%	31.7%	43.3%	20%	3.78	.83
I know how to construct open-ended questions in cloze test	0%	5%	36.7%	36.7%	21.7%	3.75	.86
I know how to develop a table of specification for a test	0%	3.3%	33.3%	53.3%	10%	3.70	.70
I know how to list instructional objectives for a test	0%	8.3%	40%	40%	11.7%	3.55	.81
I know how to outline instructional content for a test	0%	5%	43.3%	48.3%	3.3%	3.50	.65
I know how to construct questions for speaking components	5%	3.3%	40%	45%	6.7%	3.45	.87
I know how to develop analytic scoring rubrics for essay questions	0%	11.7%	38.3%	46.7%	3.3%	3.42	.74
I know how to develop holistic scoring rubrics for essay questions	0%	16.7%	33.3%	46.7%	3.3%	3.37	.80
I know how to construct questions for listening components	5%	6.7%	43.3%	41.7%	3.3%	3.32	.85
Average	**0.56%**	**5.37%**	**35.47%**	**41.11%**	**17.51%**	**3.7**	**.82**

The table sheds light on teachers' self-assessed proficiency concerning various aspects of assessment design based on 18 items in the survey. 63.3% of teachers feel proficient in creating a table of specification for a test, with a mean score of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 0.70. Similarly, outlining instructional content and listing instructional objectives for tests yielded average scores of 3.50 and 3.55, respectively. In constructing Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), 60% of teachers feel competent when the focus is on grammar, indicated by a mean score of 3.93. This is closely followed by questions related to literature components and language forms and functions, both tying at an average rating of 3.85. Teachers also feel fairly confident in framing open-ended questions, especially in the domain of guided composition, as evidenced by a score of 3.87.

There is a notable dip in confidence when it comes to constructing questions for listening components, yielding the lowest mean score of 3.32, followed by the creation of questions for speaking components at 3.45. 63.4% of teachers appear assured in assembling and reviewing classroom tests according to specified formats, with scores hovering around 3.93 and 3.85, respectively.

When crafting answer keys for MCQs, 63.4% of teachers again project strong competence with a mean rating of 3.85. Their expertise in developing scoring rubrics for essay questions varies slightly. While they feel slightly more confident about developing analytic rubrics (mean score of 3.42), the holistic rubrics come in at a close second with a mean score of 3.37.

The standard deviations across all components suggest a relatively uniform distribution of responses, although there's slightly more variability in assembling classroom tests and developing rubrics. Overall, the data underscores a predominant sense of

confidence among teachers in the area of assessment design, albeit with certain areas requiring more attention and training than others.

4.6.4 Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge in Administering Different Assessment Types

Table 4.12: Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge in Administering Different Assessment Types

Teacher's Knowledge Of	Very Limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Mean	SD
I know how to administer summative assessments in the classroom	0%	3.3%	18.3%	55%	23.3%	3.98	.74
I know how to administer formative assessments in the classroom	0%	5%	16.7%	61.7%	16.7%	3.90	.73
Average	**0%**	**4.15%**	**17.50%**	**58.35%**	**20.00%**	**3.94**	**.74**

Teacher knowledge in administering different assessment types is crucial for SBA because it ensures a comprehensive and versatile approach to evaluating student learning. This knowledge allows teachers to effectively utilize various assessment forms, such as formative and summative assessments which include quizzes, projects, or oral presentations, catering to different learning styles and intelligences. It enables the adaptation of assessments to different content areas and skill levels, ensuring more accurate and relevant measurements of student understanding and ability.

The table presents teachers' confidence in administering two types of classroom assessments: formative and summative based on 2 items surveyed. For formative assessments, most teachers (61.7%) see themselves as proficient, leading to an average

confidence score of 3.90. In summative assessments, 55% feel proficient, with an overall higher confidence score of 3.98. Both assessments show a standard deviation around 0.73-0.74, indicating similar response spreads. Overall, teachers feel slightly more confident in administering summative over formative assessments.

4.6.5 Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Assessment Marking

Table 4.13: Surveyed Teacher's Knowledge of Assessment Marking

Teacher's Knowledge Of	Very Limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Mean	SD
I know how to score MCQ answers	0%	5%	8.3%	43.3%	43.3%	4.25	.82
I know how to score essay questions	0%	3.3%	15%	50%	31.7%	4.10	.78
I know how to report scores of students	0%	8.3%	21.7%	41.7%	28.3%	3.90	.92
I know how to calculate mean of results	3.3%	8.3%	25%	33.3%	30%	3.78	1.07
I know how to form an item bank	0%	8.3%	38.3%	35%	18.3%	3.63	.88
I know how to calculate standard deviation of results	8.3%	16.7%	43.3%	23.3%	8.3%	3.07	1.04
Average	**1.93%**	**8.32%**	**25.27%**	**37.77%**	**26.65%**	**3.79**	**.92**

Knowledge in assessment marking is vital for teachers conducting SBA because it ensures accurate, fair, and consistent evaluation of student performance. Proficiency in scoring different types of assessments, like multiple-choice questions and essays, allows teachers to effectively measure varied aspects of learning, from factual knowledge to critical

thinking. Understanding how to report scores, calculate means, form item banks, and determine standard deviations is essential for meaningful analysis of student results. This knowledge enables teachers to provide constructive feedback, tailor future teaching strategies, and contribute to the overall goal of SBA, which is to enhance student learning and achievement through continuous and comprehensive assessment.

The table delineates teachers' self-rated proficiency in various aspects of assessment marking based on 6 items in the survey. Teachers express strong confidence in scoring MCQ answers, with 43.3% rating themselves both as proficient and very proficient, resulting in a high mean score of 4.25. Likewise, they demonstrate notable expertise in scoring essay questions, with a mean rating of 4.10. However, when it comes to more statistical tasks, confidence varies. Calculating the mean of results has a moderate mean rating of 3.78, and there's a dip in confidence for calculating the standard deviation of results with a mean of 3.07. Nevertheless, teachers regain confidence in reporting student scores, evidenced by a mean of 3.90. For forming an item bank, teachers have a fairly balanced spread of responses, with the mean score settling at 3.63. Standard deviations across these categories range from 0.78 to 1.07, suggesting varying levels of agreement among teachers on their competencies in these areas.

4.6.2 Surveyed Teacher's View on Centralized Training Courses on SBA by MOE

Table 4.14: Surveyed Teacher's View on Centralized Training Courses on SBA by MOE

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Courses on SBA have upgraded my skills to explain assessment criteria in detail to students	0%	3.3%	28.3%	43.3%	6.7%	3.65	.69
Courses on SBA have upgraded my skills to use different assessment instruments to assess students' language proficiency	0%	3.3%	33.3%	38.3%	6.7%	3.59	.70
Courses on SBA have upgraded my skills to assess student performance based on criteria as outlined in the curriculum	0%	3.3%	33.3%	38.3%	6.7%	3.59	.70
Courses on SBA have upgraded my skills to conduct assessment activities effectively	0%	3.3%	41.7%	30%	6.7%	3.49	.71
SBA training has been properly planned and implemented	3.3%	15%	58.3%	23.3%	0%	3.02	.72
Average	**0.66%**	**5.64%**	**38.98%**	**34.64%**	**5.36%**	**3.47**	**.70**

The table reflects teachers' perspectives regarding the effectiveness of centralised School-Based Assessment (SBA) training across five survey items. When examining the

planning and implementation of the SBA training, the majority of teachers (58.3%) were neutral, resulting in a mean score of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 0.72. This indicates some uncertainty or mixed feelings about the training's setup and execution. However, looking at the tangible benefits and impacts of the centralised SBA courses, more affirmative responses were obtained. Specifically, 38.3% of teachers concurred that the training enhanced their ability to utilize diverse assessment tools for gauging students' language proficiency, reflected by a mean of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.70. The same statistics were observed for the belief that the SBA training improved their skill in evaluating students based on curriculum-defined criteria. Additionally, 43.3% believed the training had refined their capability to thoroughly convey assessment criteria to students, denoted by a slightly higher mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.69. Lastly, the effectiveness of the centralised SBA courses in enhancing the actual conduction of assessment activities was endorsed by 36.7% of teachers, producing a mean of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 0.71. Overall, the data suggests that while there may be reservations about the SBA training's initial stages, its practical applications and outcomes are perceived positively, as evidenced by the mean values consistently above the score of 3.0.

4.6.3 Surveyed Teacher's views of In-House Training (IHT) Provided on SBA at their schools

Table 4.15: Surveyed Teacher's views of In-House Training (IHT) Provided on SBA at their schools

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Trainers of the IHT programs were well versed in SBA assessments and implementation	0%	10%	43.3%	25%	3.3%	3.27	.73
IHT included both practical and theoretical applications of SBA	0%	20%	30%	25%	6.7%	3.22	.91
Adequate number in IHT sessions on SBA were given to teachers in your school	8.3%	10%	38.3%	18.3%	6.7%	3.06	1.04
Specific SBA training on creating English language assessment were provided	0%	21.7%	40%	20%	0%	2.98	.72
Average	**2.08%**	**15.43%**	**37.90%**	**22.08%**	**4.18%**	**3.13**	**.85**

The table shows teachers' viewpoints on In-House Training (IHT) sessions concerning School-Based Assessment (SBA) across four distinct survey items. Beginning with the frequency of these sessions, 38.3% of respondents held a neutral stance on whether an adequate number of IHT sessions on SBA were delivered, with the mean and standard deviation being 3.06 and 1.04 respectively. This suggests a degree of uncertainty or mixed feelings about the volume of sessions provided. Regarding the expertise of the trainers,

43.3% of teachers remained neutral, but a noteworthy 25% agreed that the trainers of the IHT programs were proficient in SBA assessments and implementation, leading to a mean score of 3.27 and a standard deviation of 0.73. As for the content and structure of the IHT, 30% of the participants were neutral, while 25% agreed that the sessions encompassed both practical and theoretical facets of SBA, resulting in a mean value of 3.22 and a standard deviation of 0.91. Lastly, when inquired about the specificity of the training, especially related to crafting English language assessments, 40% held a neutral viewpoint, and the lack of strong positive responses led to a mean score of 2.98 with a standard deviation of 0.72. The findings generally indicate that while there's an appreciation for some elements of the IHT, there's still room for enhancement, particularly in tailoring the training more towards specific needs like English language assessment.

4.6.1 Interviewed Teachers' General Perception of the PMR

Out of all 14 teachers interviewed, it must be highlighted that all teachers did not feel that PMR was an inadequate summative assessment, nor did any teacher in particular, saw the need for PMR to be abolished or replaced with SBA and PT3. AJ, a teacher who had taught English for more than 4 years states:

> I believe PMR should have stayed although the format can change but not the way they are treating it now as a school-based assessment. I feel that students are becoming too comfortable when they feel that PT3 is now less important. Being a school-based assessment, they feel that it does not carry much weight for them when they are actually still given a chance to enter Form 4 the following year.

One major concern with the SBA and PT3 was the issue of fairness in testing, with many teachers agreeing that the PMR due to how the examination is structured and marked, seemed to be a fairer and more reliable method of assessing students. AJ further elaborates:

> I feel that public exams where they have external markers, who mark and grade the test, are far more accurate than having their own teachers grade the assessment.

NB also agrees that with external markers who mark students that they do not know where or who they are, the marking would be fairer:

> PMR is fair as it was blindmarking. Because we are tied by the marking criteria, some of it [marking criteria] was quite strict like spelling mistakes and things that make it hard for the student to score maximum [marks]. Even if we wanted to help, we are tied by the criteria.

An interesting point made by one senior teacher, VD, on the debate of balancing fairness and authenticity in assessment, was that PMR was heavily focused on drilling and teaching to the test. On the one hand, while the PMR could be viewed as a fairer test, it may not have been able to accurately capture a student's real proficiency. VD states:

> I look at it from two different points of view. PMR was easy to drill students to pass because the way they set the questions every year are objective. I feel that students learn more with PMR because of the different areas that they are tested on. But what is fairer? The grades? Because a lot of drilling goes on here, do they understand or not? How much and in what way do you want the child to improve? Alot of drilling in Grammar parts and even the essays and closed passages so is it really accurate?

4.6.2 Interviewed Teachers' General Perception of SBA and PT3

While the teachers that were interviewed did not see the need for the shift to SBA and PT3, they were still open to the change. The majority of teachers interviewed in this study had positive views about SBA and PT3. All teachers in this study agreed that the SBA was a good policy if implemented properly. While there were initially some wariness and confusion in terms of its implementation, teachers understood the need for the policy.

In this section, I highlight key views of teachers on the implementation of SBA and PT3. There were obvious doubts however, regarding how much difference the SBA policy was going to make. One teacher, KC points out:

> I think we have a long way to go honestly. Till today I think we are still very stuck in an era where an "A" is an "A". Many do not understand what is a holistic assessment, that it isn't just about one final exam paper. Furthermore, I as with many other teachers, lack the ability to give good feedback to students and even parents, which is very important for students to be able to reach a good standard or achieve their potential.

There were certainly mixed views on whether formative assessments like SBA should be the sole method of evaluation or if it should also contain a summative assessment element like the PT3. One teacher, QC suggests that evaluation of student performance should be fully formative:

> I think that the school-based assessments in the long run is a good policy. It's just that whether it aligns with the PT3 is a different story. Overall SBA is helpful to the students but it may not be compatible with a final assessment.

AJ on the other hand suggests otherwise, preferring to have a mix of formative and summative exam in the form of SBA and an exam, however, with an emphasis that student performance should ultimately be gauged by an exam:

> School-based assessments are fine. There's nothing wrong with having school-based assessments but maybe not to the extent where you are going to use those scores as an actual gauge or benchmark for the students. Better to have a mix of SBA and exam.

All teachers interviewed generally understood what school-based assessments were and what it entailed. However, one teacher, HH, seemed to believe that school-based assessments were in fact bi-annual examinations, yet felt that SBA were akin to giving exercises, and didn't fully understand the principals of it. She states:

> If we didn't have SBA, I will still give my students exercises, I will still make them do the correction, my students will still learn even without SBA. But if without SBA, I don't have to give my students exercises, I don't have to make them do corrections, they only need to wait for twice a year examination and that will be a disadvantage to them.

One teacher, NB, however noted that SBA empowers the teachers in schools to design assessments that are fit for purpose. She argues that teachers who teach their own students

would know what content has been covered, and what assessments would accurately gauge student performance. She illustrates:

> It gives empowerment to the teachers. For example, we can assess our students in SBA oral assessments conducted by teachers in the school. We understand our students better and know their normal level of performance. Since it is tested by their own teacher, they won't feel so nervous or scared that it'd be a very formal setting too.

When it comes to language learning, teachers interviewed generally agreed that SBA assess' students more accurately. HH notes:

> Looking at the learning process, I think the change is necessary. I think the assessment in terms of language skill is more. And then we can actually get more accurate feedback from the test compared to the PMR assessment.

NA adds that through SBA, teachers can evaluate students through the use of both formative and summative testing to gauge student performance throughout the year. She states:

> Under SBA the evaluation is fairer in a sense that you are going to do two types of evaluation, formative and summative. Formative would be ongoing and summative [will occur] at the end of the semester where we can see whether the students are reaching that part of the language target that we want them to learn.

4.6.3 Interviewed Teachers' Preparedness to implement SBA

After analyzing the responses from all teachers, it was found that not all teachers anticipated the change from PMR to school-based assessments nor did they feel the need to make the shift to SBA. Furthermore, due to the lack of anticipation, many teachers did not feel well prepared to implement SBA. Teacher AZ recalls the first time SBA was implemented:

> I couldn't recall the year, but they [MOE] just implemented SBA. I feel sorry for the students because it's so sudden. The first year, students in Form 3 were suddenly tested, having no experience nor the chance to practice.

When asked about teacher readiness, QC added that it required some time to acclimatize to the new assessment, noting:

> In the beginning it was difficult to accept because it was a totally different thing. When you train students for such a long time in PMR and then you see certain needs and certain ways of testing and then SBA was something totally new. Getting students used to that new format and way of answering questions was not easy but in the long run now, students acquire more skills.

Another teacher, KC, believed that the transition to SBA was more well received by younger teachers compared to older teachers. According to him, younger teachers were more accepting and willing to try while older teachers were more fixed in their ways, believing that summative assessments and results from such assessments are the preferred measure of student performance:

> Younger teachers are more accepting to the new SBA and CEFR-aligned syllabus. They are willing to try, to go page by page, activity by activity and unit by unit. Maybe there are slightly older teachers who have been with the [school] system for a long time, they feel that "I still need to get my students to score a certain percentage in their exam" and they feel that the only way the students can perform is what is reflected in their results.

This was corroborated by CW, who as a young teacher, did not feel anxious or nervous with the implementation. Instead, she recalls that it was the administrators and senior management team who were more nervous of the implementation:

> I wouldn't call it shoving it in our throats but… so when it's first being released [SBA] and we were told to implement it. And so, in my first school the administrators were so nervous and so anxious about the implementation. For me, I was okay with it.

4.6.4 Interviewed Teachers' Skepticism and Resistance towards SBA

Perhaps, the resistance towards implementing SBA can be attributed to teachers' skepticism on the reliability and validity of SBA and PT3 in fairly assessing student performance. Teacher AA explains that the PMR may be a fairer assessment of student performance:

> For me, PMR is a good [way] to evaluate where students stand after 3 years of learning. In terms of the transparency, in PT3 [part of SBA] we have 3 sets of questions and it's been marked by school teachers themselves. It's not to say that the teachers are not transparent, but the teachers may be biased because the name [of the students] is stated [on the test papers]. Even the parents also question teachers who mark their own student's test papers, [especially] when they give high marks.

On the issue of biased marking, one teacher, SBH quips that given the lack of anonymity and the fact that she and other teachers are marking their own student's assessments, that they would be inclined to award higher marks, either as a result of personal perception or based on past performance:

> In PMR the focus is there. The students only have to focus on two papers, namely the comprehension (Paper 1) and the reading paper (paper 2). [In SBA] There is always a conflict of interest when marking the students' papers as we tend to be biased because we know them. The fact that I teach that class [that I am assessing means] that I know some students who can do very good and I can give them high marks. However, for PMR, the students' scripts are checked by teachers from other schools and states. We do not have to worry if they are bias or not.

4.6.5 Interviewed Teacher's Perceived Lack of Communication from the Ministry of Education

This resistance by some teachers was exacerbated by the lack of communication from the Ministry of Education in the implementation of SBA as well. Seven teachers mentioned that there was a lack of clear communication in regards to the implementation of SBA offered by MOE. Teachers felt 'blindsided' when they were asked to assess students in the new way. According to NB:

> Initially there was a big hoo-ha over it. We weren't sure how to test would look like. Whether it would be broken up [to separate assessments] or just one at the end. Our main worry was whether we had the skills and expertise to set the assessments.

AA echoes the issue of a lack of communication where she mentions:

> I don't understand why the Ministry of Education would come up with a system but teachers are left [in the dark]. When we were first informed of the change to PT3, we

> wanted to see what the format is like but we did not have any sample. How would we prepare our students? We needed to prepare them before PT3 in October. We just know from hearsay and if the teachers are in the dark what more to say the students? The format was totally changed so we had to start anew.

The lack of communication during the transition period to SBA and PT3 affected teachers who were in urban areas but also in rural areas. AJ, who at the time of the SBA implementation, was a teacher in Mukah, Sarawak quipped:

> At first, during the transition period when there was the change from PMR to PT3, I felt that most teachers were still fumbling because we did not know what to expect. Information was given to us and relayed very slowly and also very suddenly. As a novice teacher at that time, I feel that I'm quite lost, in fact, because I am actually transitioning to the newer ways of assessment. It was quite a shock for me.

His experience suggests that novice teachers who have not been trained adequately on SBA in teacher training colleges or universities and yet lack practical experience in the field may feel ill-equipped and ill-prepared to implement SBA in their classroom.

4.6.6 Interviewed Teacher's Experiences of Continuous Professional Development Courses (CPD) on SBA

From the interviews, it became very clear that the teachers interviewed had varying experiences and satisfaction over the training that they received. This was because, the method of how courses were conducted were varied. Typically, teachers were either sent to a centralized training session conducted by a master trainer, or received in-house training conducted by the teacher who attended the centralized training session which represented the school. Senior teachers or head of subject would normally be selected to attend the centralized training and be expected to cascade the training when he or she returns back to school.

VP explains:

> At the time, I remembered the senior teacher in our school who went for the course and came back to give us in-house training with lots of materials and hand-on group work. We are always divided into different groups. Well, I think it is a good way of training [cascading model].

In terms of the training experience of those who attended the centralized training, many teachers felt that the training was useful and they learnt a lot from the master trainer. The interviewees highlight the importance of having a knowledgeable trainer who is able to explain clearly. VD, a senior teacher illustrates:

> The master trainer conducted the course for about 30 teachers. When he went in, he was able to get the teachers to understand him. He did not just 'vomit' it out. He went through the extra trouble of trying to come up with a way that would make the teachers understand and at the same time not be boring.

VD further highlights the importance of having a trainer who is engaging and is willing to provide extra support:

> I find that this batch of teachers [those who attended the training mentioned earlier] benefited more. There are other master trainers who came in just hand out things and expect you to know when you don't. We teachers are students as well. It depends on the master trainer that is selected.

While it is clear that those who attended the centralized training acknowledged its usefulness and praised the quality of trainers, it became quite clear that many others who attended the in-house training delivered by teachers who attended those courses, felt much to be desired. One teacher, NB, surmised that it boiled down to the character of the teachers who attended the course and came back to deliver it:

> If it is done correctly by the one whom is supposed to deliver, it does work. I will have to be honest, some teachers coming back from courses will just say "Okay here's a pile of notes I got from my training. I will just brief through the main points and the rest I think we all know how to read".

While NB may have experienced a case of unprofessional attitude from the teacher who attended the centralized training, SBH who recollects her experience of attending the

centralized training, yet feeling unclear about what she had learnt. This lack of clarify subsequently impacted on what she could share to her fellow colleagues:

> In 2012, I attended a five-day centralized training. The funny thing is that only one teacher from one school was appointed as the jurulatih utama [master trainer]. After the 5 day course, we go back to school to impart what we have gone through and to other teachers. The thing is, we are giving the teachers secondhand information which may not be very clear to them because of my explanation as we weren't very clear about it either.

Another teacher SH, also had a similar experience which affected the in-house training she conducted:

> I did not understand all of it [centralized training], so I picked the things that I really understood. The things I understood, I gave more explanation to my teachers. But the things I was not, sometimes I will ask my SISC+ [School Improvement Specialist Coaches] or maybe I google in the internet or YouTube sometimes to see how this type of assessment is conducted to make it clear.

Seven other teachers also felt dissatisfied with the in-house training that they received. This were due to several reasons. Firstly, teachers who attended the centralized training were likely given extensive multi-day, full eight hours of training daily. This meant that teachers would have received up to thirty-five hours of training. However, when the training was cascaded down to the in-house training provided by colleagues, the duration of the training reduced significantly. CW recalls her experience:

> it's diluted [the training] quite a lot. She [the teacher] went for, I don't remember how many days of training. She gave us a workshop for less than two hours. So how much do you think you can squeeze within that two hours? …and then when we have questions that we asked her, she couldn't answer it.

It can be seen that from her comment above that teachers often do not receive the adequate in house training. This perhaps could be due to the teacher who was sent not understanding the content that was delivered, or perhaps the training that was delivered centrally itself was inadequate or in the worse case scenario, perhaps the teacher who attended did not pay full attention to the training.

In-house training could also be inadequate if there was a lack of interest or buy-in from the teachers. One teacher, SH comments:

> In-house training doesn't really work as not all teachers are interested most of the time. So you know they[teachers] have this type of attitude some time when you do it[training]. They keep playing with their phones and they don't listen…

There were also unique cases where certain teachers did not get the opportunity to attend any training at all for neither PT3 nor SBA. This typically happens when the school has dual sessions, where upper secondary classes are conducted in the morning (form 4 – 5), while lower secondary classes are conducted in the afternoon (form 1 – 3) or vice versa. A teacher might have been teaching in the upper forms when the training was conducted and thus, that teacher would not have been asked to attend neither the centralized training nor the in-house training conducted by their fellow teachers. From the interview, two teachers had experienced this situation. QC recollects her experience and how it impacted her:

> I moved schools in 2015, and was asked to teach a lower form. I hadn't had any form of training because only the afternoon teachers in my previous school received in-house training as it didn't affect the morning sessions then. My new colleagues had a head start on how to do assessments in class and give band. I had to learn it as I went with my colleagues, and it was very difficult at the start.

KC also had a similar experience and recounts:

> Somebody in the afternoon session went for the SBA course, and in my case, the teacher who came back from the training was reluctant to give the training for the morning session teachers. This is because the training would have to be conducted at a common time, like on Saturday but schools and teachers aren't so open to the idea. We always had that problem and by the time we find a common place and time, it's been so long since the training, the information wouldn't be as 'fresh in their mind' as when they first attended the course. Thus information may be left out.

Thus, it can be seen from the above recollection that certain teachers may slip through the cracks and not receive adequate training, and consultation necessary for them to implement SBA properly. In the instance where the support of colleagues is present, this issue might be mitigated, but teachers may have to be more independent and resourceful in cases otherwise.

4.6.7 Interviewed Teachers' Past Higher Education Training on SBA

As I had a wide variety of teachers who participated in the interview, some who had graduated from university decades ago, and some who had only graduated from university within 5 years from the interview, I was very interested in whether their past higher education training prepared them to conduct school-based assessments, or even formative assessments. Through the interviews, it was clear that teachers who received their training recently were exposed more to the idea of formative and summative testing, as opposed to senior teachers who were more familiar with the idea of testing. This can be contrasted through some of the following highlights. A senior teacher SH, recalls:

> I graduated more than 10 years ago, it was so long ago but I recalled the focus was on setting language tests, we weren't really taught how to do in-class assessment.

Fellow senior teacher VD also recollects a similar experience:

> I went through a module of setting questions for exams in university. My whole time before SBA I was setting tests. All I needed to take into consideration was the level of difficulty of the questions. We could use model questions from the internet or from resource books. That was what I was taught [in university] too. So when they asked us now to think about setting assessments for SBA, my mind went blank for a while.

The experiences of the senior teachers above were in stark contrast to teachers who had graduated in recent years. Through the interviews, it was clear that university curriculum had evolved beyond testing to include different types of assessments. This was exemplified through the following experiences of the younger teachers interviewed.

CW notes:

> In my final year [of university] I had a unit on assessments, we had to carry out a project to write an assignment, an essay on assessments and assessment practices. We got to know different types of assessment frameworks and the changes in assessments. So I knew the changes when I was in university and wasn't surprised by the changes later on. While I wasn't surprised many older teachers were up in arms. In theory assessments is good, but how do we carry it out? How is it supposed

> to look like? The trouble [complaints from teachers] came in when senior teachers didn't know what they were supposed to do exactly.

One other teacher noted the variety of assessments that were given to her during her university days which helped her understand the need for different assessment types in her classroom.

NA recalls:

> I had various forms for assessments like exams and assignments. Sometimes they were oral assessments and its different stimulus. I find it to be somewhat parallel to what we're doing for our students now. I think whatever changes comes, being a teacher, if we are professional, we can do it.

4.6.8 Summary of Themes from Interview Data – Antecedents

Table 4.16: Summary of Qualitative Themes – Antecedents

Selected Statements	Keywords	Subtheme	Theme
"PMR should have stayed"	Fairness of assessment	Perception towards SBA	Antecedents in SBA implementation
"PMR is fair as it was blindmarking"			
"It isn't just about one final exam paper."			
"Better to have a mix of SBA and exams"			
"SBA gives empowerment to the teachers"			
"SBA uses two types of evaluation, formative and summative."			

Table 4.16 continued

"In the beginning it was difficult to accept"	Anxiety in implementation	Preparedness of teachers	
"Younger teachers are more accepting to SBA"			
"Parents also question teachers who mark their own student's test papers"			
"Teachers were still fumbling because we did not know what to expect"			
"Information was relayed very slowly and also very suddenly"	Dissemination of information	Communication and guide from MOE	
"Some master trainers came in and just hand out things and expect you to know"			
"I will just brief through the main points and the rest I think we all know how to read"	Cascaded Training	Continuous professional development experiences	
"We are giving the teachers secondhand information"			
"We weren't really taught how to do in-class assessment in university"	Prior university education	Prior education	

4.6.9 Summary of Findings on the Antecedents of the Introduction of SBA as Perceived by ESL Teachers in Sarawak

The introduction of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak, as perceived by English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, was influenced by a range of antecedents. Teachers highlighted the importance of understanding Bloom's Learning Domains, which was essential for crafting effective assessments. Proficiency in lesson planning and assessment design emerged as a critical skill, ensuring that SBA was well-integrated into educational practices. Additionally, the ability to administer diverse assessment types was crucial for a holistic evaluation of student learning. The shift from the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) to SBA and PT3 was marked by challenges in teacher preparedness, adaptation, and skepticism, reflecting a complex transition that impacted teaching attitudes and methodologies.

4.7 ESL teachers Perceptions Towards the Transactions During SBA Implementation in Sarawak

In this section, the study delves into the 'transactions' of Stake's Countenance Model, focusing on English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers' perceptions and practices during the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak. It assesses surveyed teachers' self-reported practices in critical areas such as learning domains, lesson planning, assessment design, and marking. Additionally, the study sheds light on teachers' experiences in administering SBA, particularly regarding general assessment tasks, compulsory school-based assessments, and lesson planning strategies, as revealed through interviews. Emphasizing the transactional aspects of SBA, this study closely examines teachers' pre- and post-assessment practices, including the development, administration, scoring, reporting, and analysis of assessments within their classrooms.

4.7.1 Surveyed Teacher's Practices of Using of Bloom's Learning Domains

Table 4.17: Surveyed Teacher's Practices of Using of Bloom's Learning Domains

Teacher's Practices Of	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
I write learning objectives based on Bloom's cognitive domain	0%	6.7%	65%	21.7%	6.7%	3.28	.69
I know write learning objectives based on Bloom's affective domain	3.3%	13.3%	58.3%	25%	0%	3.05	.72
I write learning objectives based on Bloom's psychomotor domain	3.3%	13.3%	61.7%	21.7%	0%	3.02	.70
Average	**2.20%**	**11.10%**	**61.67%**	**22.80%**	**2.23%**	**3.12**	**.70**

The table provides insight into how frequently teachers incorporate Bloom's Learning Domains when designing their lessons based on 3 items in the survey. When considering the Cognitive domain, a significant portion of teachers (65%) integrates it on a "sometimes" basis, averaging a mean of 3.28. In contrast, the Psychomotor domain sees a comparable frequency of "sometimes" usage at 61.7%, but interestingly, no teachers claim to utilize it "always", bringing its average down to 3.02. The Affective domain exhibits a similar trend to the Psychomotor domain, with a mean score of 3.05, underscoring that while these domains are acknowledged in lesson planning, they aren't consistently the primary focus. The relatively tight standard deviations around 0.7 across these domains suggest a uniform response spread among the educators

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4.7.2 Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Lesson Planning

Table 4.18: Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Lesson Planning

Teacher's Practices Of	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
I write learning objectives based on Bloom's cognitive domain	0%	6.7%	65%	21.7%	6.7%	3.28	.69
I know write learning objectives based on Bloom's affective domain	3.3%	13.3%	58.3%	25%	0%	3.05	.72
I write learning objectives based on Bloom's psychomotor domain	3.3%	13.3%	61.7%	21.7%	0%	3.02	.70
Average	**2.20%**	**11.10%**	**61.67%**	**22.80%**	**2.23%**	**3.12**	**.70**

The table summarises the practices of teachers in lesson planning. First, in the use of the English language syllabus, a vast majority of educators frequently integrate it, with 45% employing it "often" and 43.3% using it "always." This leads to a high mean score of 4.32. Similarly, half of the teachers claim to "always" write general objectives for their lesson plans, though 10% do it "rarely," culminating in a mean score of 4.23. When it comes to drafting specific objectives, 50% of teachers assert they "always" incorporate them into their lesson plans, and 38.3% do so "often." The mean score for this practice is slightly higher at 4.38. The standard deviations, mostly under 1, suggest a fairly consistent approach to lesson planning among the surveyed teachers.

4.7.3 Surveyed Teacher's Practices of Assessment Design

Table 4.19: Surveyed Teacher's Practices of Assessment Design

Teacher's Practices Of	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
I review classroom test according to the format	0%	3.3%	35%	25%	36.7%	3.95	.92
I assemble classroom test according to the format	0%	3.3%	35%	25%	36.7%	3.92	.90
I prepare answer keys for MCQ's	5%	5%	25%	31.7%	33.3%	3.83	1.10
I construct open-ended questions in free writing	0%	5%	35%	36.7%	23.3%	3.78	.86
I develop a table of specification for a test	0%	5%	45%	26.7%	23.3%	3.68	.89
I construct MCQ's in grammar	0%	11.7%	38.3%	26.7%	23.3%	3.62	.97
I outline instructional content for a test	0%	8.3%	43.3%	31.7%	16.7%	3.57	.87
I list instructional objectives for a test	0%	8.3%	43.3%	35%	13.3%	3.53	.83
I construct MCQ's in language use	0%	11.7%	43.3%	25%	20%	3.53	.94
I construct open-ended questions in cloze test	0%	8.3%	43.3%	35%	13.3%	3.53	.83
I construct open-ended questions in guided composition	3.3%	8.3%	36.7%	35%	16.7%	3.53	.98
I construct MCQ's on literature components	3.3%	11.7%	38.3%	26.7%	20%	3.48	1.04
I construct MCQ's in reading comprehension	0%	11.7%	50%	18.3%	20%	3.47	.94
I develop holistic scoring rubrics for essay questions	3.3%	8.3%	40%	35%	13.3%	3.47	.94
I construct MCQ's in language forms and functions	3.3%	11.7%	43.3%	25%	16.7%	3.40	1.01

Table 4.19 continued

I construct questions for speaking components	3.3%	13.3%	38.3%	30%	15%	3.40	1.01
I construct questions for listening components	3.3%	10%	48.3%	28.3%	10%	3.32	.91
I develop analytic scoring rubrics for essay questions	3.3%	13.3%	46.7%	30%	6.7%	3.23	.89
Average	**1.56%**	**8.79%**	**40.45%**	**29.27%**	**19.91%**	**3.57**	**.94**

The provided table delineates the practices of teachers in assessment design through 18 items surveyed. Predominantly, teachers often show a moderate to high frequency in developing assessment materials. Specifically, a substantial portion of teachers frequently develop a table of specification for tests and are adept at outlining instructional content, with mean scores of 3.57 to 3.68. The construction of multiple-choice questions, spanning areas from reading comprehension to grammar, exhibits a prevailing trend of teachers "sometimes" engaging in this practice, with mean values clustering between 3.40 and 3.62. The crafting of open-ended questions and questions tailored for specific components, such as listening and speaking, generally leans towards the "sometimes" to "often" range, suggesting occasional to regular incorporation in assessments. Furthermore, there is evident consistency in practices like assembling and reviewing classroom tests according to specified formats and preparing answer keys for MCQs, as evidenced by the respective mean values of 3.92 and 3.83. However, while many teachers seem to embrace the development of analytic and holistic scoring rubrics for essay questions, the frequencies do vary, reflected by mean scores of 3.23 and 3.47, respectively. Overall, the data underscores a tangible commitment among teachers towards refining and systematizing their assessment design practices.

4.7.4 Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Administering Different Assessment Types

Table 4.20: Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Administering Different Assessment Types

Teacher's Practices Of	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
I administer formative assessments in the classroom	0%	5%	26.7%	35%	33.3%	3.97	.90
I administer summative assessments in the classroom	0%	5%	23.3%	41.7%	30%	3.97	.86
Average	**0%**	**5.00%**	**25.00%**	**38.35%**	**31.65%**	**3.97**	**.88**

The table presents insights into teachers' practices regarding the administration of different types of assessments in the classroom. When it comes to formative assessments, which are integral for ongoing feedback and instructional adjustments, a significant majority of educators either "often" or "always" utilize them, evidenced by a combined percentage of 68.3% and a mean score of 3.97. The standard deviation of 0.90 suggests a moderate spread in responses. Similarly, summative assessments, which evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit, also see frequent use. A substantial 71.7% of teachers administer these assessments "often" or "always," mirrored by an identical mean score of 3.97 but with a slightly lower standard deviation of 0.86. This consistency in mean scores across both assessment types underscores the balanced emphasis teachers place on both ongoing and summative evaluations in their instructional practices.

4.7.5 Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Assessment Marking

Table 4.21: Surveyed Teacher's Practices in Assessment Marking

Teacher's Practices Of	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
I report scores of students	0%	0%	23.3%	35%	41.7%	4.18	.79
I score essay questions	0%	5%	23.3%	35%	36.7%	4.03	.90
I score MCQ answers	0%	8.3%	20%	38.3%	33.3%	3.97	.94
I form an item bank	0%	8.3%	45%	30%	16.7%	3.55	.87
I calculate mean of results	3.3%	13.3%	36.7%	33.3%	13.3%	3.40	.99
I calculate standard deviation of results	6.7%	23.3%	45%	18.3%	6.7%	2.95	.98
Average	1.67%	9.70%	32.22%	31.65%	24.73%	3.68	.911

The table delineates the practices of teachers concerning various facets of assessment marking through 6 items surveyed. Essay questions are the most commonly assessed, with a sum of 71.7% of teachers marking them either "often" or "always", leading to a high mean of 4.03 and a comparable standard deviation of 0.90. This is very closely followed by scoring Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) answers, as suggested by a combined 71.6% who do so "often" or "always," reflecting in a mean value of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.94. However, fewer teachers consistently calculate the mean and standard deviation of results, as evidenced by their respective mean scores of 3.40 and 2.95. Specifically, only 46.6% and 25% of teachers frequently perform these calculations. A substantial 76.7% of teachers "often" or "always" report students' scores, resulting in a robust mean of 4.18 and a narrower spread of responses with a standard deviation of 0.79. Finally, the practice of forming an item bank, essential for creating reliable assessment tools, is embraced "often" or "always" by 46.7% of the teachers, with a mean score of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.87. This

data sheds light on the emphasis placed by teachers on various elements of assessment marking, from grading to analysis and reporting of assessment results.

4.7.6 Interviewed Teachers' Practices of Embedding Assessments into English Language Lessons

In all of the interviews, all teachers claim to conduct different types of assessments in class. Teachers mentioned that they use both formative and summative assessments in class, albeit to varying degrees. Some teachers embrace the use of more formative assessments, while others prefer summative assessments instead. These were down to certain factors such as use of textbook exercises, class proficiency, discipline, number of students, time and skills assessed. This were illustrated from the following excerpts:

On using the prescribed exercises in the textbook to assess students, VP explains:

> I would collect their [exercise] books and go through and check them. For example, I used to use the Close-Up [textbook] reviews and revisions where I go through them. If they are still weak in certain parts, for example in writing, I will reteach them the topic again according to different topics.

On language proficiency affecting use of assessments in the classroom, SH recollects:

> Students from the kampung, their language is not good. Some topics they don't understand and are bored, and don't have the vocabulary to express themselves, so I don't do assessments. In some classes, students are rebellious, they don't want to listen, and it's hard doing assessments in the classroom.

One teacher, CW, showed her creativity in designing a fun activity which was used to assess students formatively as well:

> I got the students to do a penpal project. I collaborated with a teacher from another state in Malaysia and got the students to write letters to students from another school. So when the students received replies, I helped them with their replies, and I also assessed their writing through this activity. The students enjoyed it and learnt from it too.

An important aspect of SBA is the use of different types of assessments which includes both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Here, I illustrate teacher's recollections of their practices in embedding assessments into the classroom lessons. One teacher openly explains that it is not always possible to embed assessments due to constraints of time.

HH explains:

> Ideally, assessments should be included but we cannot do it all the time because we are running out of time. We have syllabus that we need to finish before the end of year exams. We don't have teacher assistants and we have discipline methods to handle so formative assessments are difficult to carry out.

Another teacher, AZ echoes this sentiment on time. It is clear from the interviews that teachers try to carry out only simple assessment tasks in class. She adds:

> Yes of course, I assess my students in class in order to make sure that the students understand. But the time constraints are short, so most of the assessments are oral assessment but a very quick one.

NA on the other hand explains that each of the lessons that she plans for, is based on the curriculum standards document which states the learning outcomes and focused skill of the lesson. Thus she creates assessments that are based on the document standards for her lesson:

> We depend on the curriculum standards document which states the learning outcomes and focused skill of the lesson. We follow whatever is there and add on assessments based on the relevancy to the lesson. Most of the time the assessments will depend on our own creativity.

During the interview, teachers also mentioned that they are required to conduct only two official SBA assessments a year before the final PT3 exam.

4.7.7 Interviewed Teachers' Practices of Embedding and Conducting Formative Assessments in English Language Lessons.

One key aspect of SBA is the use of formative assessments that looks to use assessment as a tool for learning and not of learning. There are two kinds of formative assessments conducted in the classroom. The first are 'informal' formative assessments which are conducted as part of the learning activity in any given class, and the second are compulsory formal assessments as part of the SBA assessment requirements.

NA explains:

> For SBA, we conduct it twice a year. It's in the first term and the second term. It is conducted at Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3 where the marks will be kept for the various forms. But the official results will be based on the Form 3 formative assessment in Term 1 and Term 2

For informal in-class assessments, teacher AZ informs that he is not able to conduct formative assessments in each of his periods. This is due to the fact that a period is 35 minutes and he is unable to cover the learning objective and assess the students within such a short period of time. He elaborates:

> I try to conduct formative assessments twice a week. Usually if they have two periods I will do that. Can't do it in one period. No, in a one period class we just come in and decide we will draw the leaning objectives on the board so that know what to expect, what they are supposed to learn, then the lesson activities itself and by then 35 minutes is almost done

From the interviews, it was found that not all teachers are keen to implement formative assessments, with some deigning experience towards summative assessments. Below are some of the responses of teachers on their practices in embedding formative assessments into their English lessons.

NB recollects:

> Formative assessments has not become my habit yet because I am still very much into the summative kind of assessments. I would selectively do the summative one. At the end of the unit I will choose whether I want to focus more on speaking assessment and maybe the next one would be more about writing assessment. I'm also very much tied to time and with a lot of cover in very short time.

AA on the other hand explains that he only conducts formative assessments in form 1 and form 2 as he focuses on teaching to the test in form 3 as it is the PT3 exam year. He explains that weaker students need to be trained to answer the exam and that students have yet to adapt to formative assessments. He elaborates:

> For Form 3, I follow the syllabus but at the same time prepare them for the exams. I teach the techniques to answer the exam which is a must. In Form 1 and 2, I do the same thing especially when it is a week before the summative exams. I feel I have to do that because the students want to know how to answer questions. I would like to have more formative assessments. However, we have to think from the students [point of view]. Not every student can adapt. It must [be introduced] slowly and step-by-step.

CW further adds that formative assessments are not a requirement to be conducted in class and thus some teachers may not opt to do so. She explains:

> Well, it's not as frequent as once a week I'll conduct formative assessments as I see how it will fit into my teaching, my lesson planning. Because you cannot suddenly disrupt the lesson and then conduct a formative assessment. Right? You know, it would just disrupt the flow of the lesson. But the summative one, like it or not, it will still have to be carried out. In my school, we have our summative assessment in March, end of March before the school holiday and another one is May before the school holiday as well. And the end of year assessment, it should be October.

Furthermore, one teacher, VD explains that sometimes, formative assessments are tricky to conduct in large classes as oral assessments are difficult to manage and assess,

VD illustrates:

> I have 44 students. How do you give equal time [to assess] to all these people? Like for oral, you have to drill them with oral so at least they know how to speak. But if you start doing group activity then assessment, then how good is it? The active ones will start talking more and the others will start talking less. How do you assess them all at the same time? Teachers who talk about group assessments, you will find that they have small classes.

4.7.8 Interviewed Teachers' Practices of Giving Feedback to Students for Formative Assessments

From the interviews, findings suggest that teachers are not keen to conduct too many formative assessments. One reason that teachers might not be keen on formative assessments is due to the need to provide feedback after the assessments have been conducted. Here I document the responses of teachers on their practice of giving feedback.

Firstly, all teachers comment that they provide both oral and written feedback to students. However, comments are given based on either the teacher's personal preference or their perception of what students require the most. Their ability to provide feedback is also affected by a number of factors including class sizes, fitness for purpose, effort and time required.

AJ stresses the importance of providing feedback to students:

> With SBA I think more emphasis is placed on feedback now. We are encouraged to provide more feedback for students so they are able to know what are the areas for improvement. In case a student needs extra help, then what we will do is that we will call them aside and maybe spend some personal time with that particular student.

On the other hand, AA stresses the importance of giving both oral and written feedback and its relationship to the PT3 exams. She illustrates:

> I would give both written and oral feedback. When I mark, I strictly mark like the PT3 exams because I want to prepare them because they need to be prepared in the coming 2 years, since Form 1.

Throughout the interviews, it became increasingly clear that class sizes were a large hindrance to providing detailed individual feedback to students. 10 teachers from the interviews complained that their classes had more than 35 students and they taught 2 – 3 classes, thus hampering their ability to provide detailed feedback.

JM recollects her experience:

> No, I don't give individual feedback because most of the classes have big numbers. There are even classes with 39 [students]. Imagine this, if today I am going to assess them, the ones who really want to learn for that day will have to wait for their turn to be assessed. It will be lengthy and by the time they are assessed, they will get bored waiting for their turn. We really want to have everybody assessed at the same time but we just don't have the time. Even now, 30 to 40 minutes is not enough.

KC also shares a similar struggle. He acknowledges the benefit of giving detailed and personal feedback to students, but is unable to do so due to time constraints:

> I find it very hard to find time. I have to rush through the syllabus, activities and things like that. I find it very hard to find time to sit with the students to have a discussion and a one-on-one with them. I think it would be good if we could give feedback on a personal basis. Class size is another hindrance as well, we get 35 to 40 in a class and everyone of them is very difficult. Students need to be taught what to do with the feedback they get.

Interestingly in one of the interviews, NB admits that she only provides feedback to students who are keen to receive feedback and these are typically high achievers in class. She explains:

> I give thorough feedback only the very good students. Let's take the example from the better classes, I'm only able to make the good students better because I have a target for them and they want to improve. If they are at the border of a grade, those are the ones you would really focus on. For the mediocre ones, sometimes they get left out. Kind of a pity but I can't really give individual attention to all the 100 plus students I teach. As much as I want to, I can't.

As a result of large classes, time constraints, and other factors, it was clear that the trend for teachers was to give either group feedback orally, or short written feedback for written assessments. However, some teachers do make the extra effort to give more detailed feedback where possible. This were illustrated from the following excerpts.

AZ recollects:

> I usually do it in groups but in case we want to give individual feedback, I write it down to the individual student. But taking into consideration only 35 minutes of class, the time constraints are always the issue. It's difficult to give feedback to all students in class. For written assessments I would, after the marking, meet 4 or 5 students who made the same mistake and explain how to improve as a group.

Teachers interviewed were also keen to highlight that grammar was often emphasized when giving feedback. QC and SH both explain that they would comment on the student's grammar for writing assessments:

> I check the grammar (present, simple, and continuous), and say in writing an email exercise, did they use the correct tense when they try to write their email [SH]. When the students have a lot of grammatical mistakes, I call them personally and I tell them. Some students have lots of commas and long sentences without full stops, so I explain why this is wrong.

Despite the difficulties in providing feedback, some of the teachers who were interviewed managed to find interesting ways to provide feedback to students both inside and outside the classroom.

SBH explains two methods to provide feedback both in and outside her classroom:

> Firstly, when in class, I just pinpoint their errors and write in on the board to show them the correct way of doing it. Sometimes I use WhatsApp because we have a WhatsApp group for the class. So after school I will text whatever they did in their exercises which needs to be improved. Sometimes students do text me back personally asking why this is wrong, I will explain to them in detail. Sometimes there are parents who are really concerned will message me personally regarding their children's progress so I can update them too.

For VD, she uses an interesting method to arouse student's attention on her feedback:

> I use a stamp. I have different stamps for their quality of work. When they see a stamp that says see me, they will come up to me and ask me "Teacher, what's wrong with my essay?" It makes them curious about what they did wrongly. Sometimes in class, I get them to work in pairs and identify what their mistakes were in their essay before I comment on them.

4.7.9 Interviewed Teachers' Changes in Teaching and Assessment Practices

From the interviews, it can be seen that there were mixed attitudes when it came to assessments and whether teachers paid attention to it or not. One teacher, QC explains that she was not focusing on assessments in the classroom at all. Rather her focus was on teaching and completing the syllabus:

> I don't really focus so much on assessments. Its just that when we have to do the assessments twice a year [part of the assessment requirements in SBA] and the PT3. Aside from that, I'm just more into the SOW, into the skills, into getting students to do presentations and activities in class and getting them to enjoy learning English.

On the other hand, AJ explains that SBA and PT3 has definitely changed how he teaches and assesses students.

> The whole objective of SBA is to try and move away from the usual exam-oriented techniques of teaching the students. They are trying to be more student-centered and to get them to be able to fulfill their potential by a holistic assessment in the class. Yes, there is a change. Now I prepare students for exams and assessments. We have to be in-line with a student-centered way of teaching. Now I come up with different ways of assessing them in the classroom for their learning.

Interestingly, teacher VD believes that formative assessments has helped establish greater rapport between teacher and students. She explains:

> With PMR, it was always teaching to the test. They just listen and look at you blankly. With SBA, yeah, they were unresponsive at first, but as the weeks go by and with more activities in the classroom, they have more fun and as they come out of their shells, they speak more English.

4.7.10 Interviewed Teachers' SBA In-class Assessment Moderation Practices

As part of the SBA requirements, teachers are required to conduct two compulsory in-class assessments for students before the final PT3 examination. Here I document the practices of the teachers who have been interviewed. From the interviews it can be seen that moderation is practiced to a certain extent, albeit with different practices, indicating a lack of consistency in the practice itself.

QC notes that in her school, moderation of classroom assessments only happens in form 3. She recollects:

> The moderation only happens with in Form 3. Form 1 and form 2 so far we have no moderation but we do discuss among the other teachers, "how do you think this this student is able to get A, this kind of writing, this piece of writing, so we do ask for opinions.

On the other hand, NA explains that in her school, all teachers moderate together a few assessments and will discuss on students who did not do well in particular:

> Yes. We get together after each assessment, all English teachers as well as the coordinator, to try to moderate. the head of subject may ask us why a particular student got Band 1. We [would have] to give our reasoning to justify.

Assessment moderation is important as it ensures accountability and check and balance when marking. This ensures that teachers are marking fairly and marks have been reviewed and agreed by fellow teachers. HH illustrates this importance and necessity of it through his experience:

> There was this student who passed in the project presentation for history but failed in Bahasa Malaysia language assessment. Apparently, he couldn't speak a proper sentence in BM. So how could he have passed the project presentation for history then? This shows that moderation is important. Teachers will be more careful with their marking, because someone ise is going to review what you have marked. I don't like it, but it's necessary.

In some cases, moderation of assessment could be done randomly by an external party, such as a School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+), which was the case in KC's experience. He explains:

> I had a SISC+ sit in my lesson twice. She gave me tips about my teaching and also about the assessments I conducted. However, this is very rare, most of the time, they monitor the teaching and learning process, and usually they have to see many teachers, so they don't comment much on the assessments or marking.

4.7.11 Interviewed Teachers' PT3 Final Assessment Moderation Practices

In Form 3, at the end of the year, students are required to take the PT3 final assessment in addition to the two other in-class assessments. Here, it can be seen that teachers treat this as a high-stakes assessment, with proper internal and external moderation being conducted. Assessments are set by the district, while the scripts are marked by their

individual class teacher, and is moderated within the school and among schools. However, teachers also report their concerns of this practice, as can be read below.

Firstly, on the issue of the assessment being administered and marked by the student's own class teacher, VP explains:

> We should let the teachers mark the student's assessments because, for example, I've been teaching the student for 2 years and I know their achievements and their progress in English is, I can assess fairly and gauge if what they've presented is an accurate representation of their ability.

AJ also feels that teachers have the responsibility to uphold a high degree of professionalism and objectivity, and thus should be able to mark fairly. Where, he feels might have a discrepancy, is when teachers who may not be as qualified are asked to mark, and are unable to mark reliably. He explains:

> As teachers, we have to be professional and objective, but there might be a discrepancy in marking sometimes. From my experience, this is especially true when teachers who are non-optionists are being asked to teach English. So if their English is not that good, they can't spot the errors and may give higher marks. That could be another external factor as to why PT3 is not reliable in a certain way.

VP supports this as she feels there is no benefit in helping students achieving a higher band than what they are capable of:

> We won't give a higher band just because we want better results. If in PT3 we can "help" our students what about SPM? We can't. It's better for us to be fair and professional.

To ensure that marking is consistent both within the school and across schools, moderation of assessments is important. All teachers report that they conduct both internal and external moderation for the PT3 final assessment.

AZ explains:

> Because after marking the final assessment all the teachers will conduct a benchmarking. We compare marks awarded from different teachers and we also have teachers from other schools who act as the District Assessor (Pentaksir Kawasan),

> who will come and see whether our marking is reliable or not and that the marks awarded is fair. So far, I have not experienced any biasness in marking

KC further elaborates on the role of the district assessors:

> When the District Assessor comes to the school, he might pick out a few random scores ask to see the scripts of these students; typically, 3 or 4 students. These scripts would then be independently reviewed and if there was a discrepancy the teacher who marked would need to justify why.

VD, also explains that the external moderation process helps to ensure that marking is consistent and reliable:

> Teachers would think twice to inflate results as moderation is done at random. Scripts are selected randomly then moderated. If it is not what it is supposed to be, there will be a reassessment. Most of the time, [papers] reassessed will [be changed by] 1 or 2 marks. I would say that it is not that easy to manipulate unless teachers are willing to take the risk.

However, CW also cautions that because moderation can only take a relatively small sample of the population, there could still be potential for bias marking by the teacher. She hypothesizes:

> I'm not saying that it is happening, but it could happen [bias marking]. For example, borderline cases might be given a higher band even if they don't deserve it, and since moderation is done at random, maybe one or two have been unfairly marked but it may go undetected. So unless every single paper is moderated, how sure are we that teachers have marked fairly?

JM further supports this claim as perhaps teachers could potentially be forced by other parties to inflate results.

> Even though there is internal and external moderation, there is no truly standardized measurement of attainment. A band 3 could look like a band 4 to others. Some schools have reputations to maintain, scores to maintain, this might give undue pressure to the teachers.

AJ also adds that sometimes, teachers may be affected by personal relationships, such as teaching a fellow colleague's child:

> I've taught in a rural school before, where the school isn't very big and the students are sometimes my colleague's child or somebody prominent in the local village. There could be some pressure to award higher marks subconsciously, even if we don't normally think about it. If we score low marks, sometimes we are questioned as well on why a student is scoring badly. This plays on the back of our minds too.

It must be clearly mentioned however, that throughout all the interviews, no teacher has claimed to have witness any misconduct by teachers, or any external pressure being put upon teachers by any stakeholders. NB a senior teacher mentions that she herself has been a district assessor several times and believes in the moderation process. She explains:

> No I did not see any unethical practices during marking. I am strongly against that because I'm a moderator myself. I have observed how my colleagues at school and other schools mark, that issue does not arise. I've moderated for other schools and I'm a neutral party. I felt I've done justice to the marking, as there wasn't so much of a difference [between markers]. Any difference is just 1 or 2 marks.

4.7.12 Interviewed Teachers' Practices on Recording of Student Performance and Assessment Evaluation in SBA

As the SBA evaluation comprised of both formative assessments throughout Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3, as well as a summative assessment which was conducted at the end of Form 3, there were a lot of initial confusion as to how the results would be recorded and how they would be kept.

This was due to a lack of information disseminated by the MOE, and thus teachers differed in their practice. CW recollects her experience SBA had just been implemented:

> At the start, the school administrators made the teachers keep evidence file for all the students' work. Which is a very stupid thing to do because when you are asking the teachers to keep evidence file for every single work, then it means that works that's being done inside exercise books.

The situation occurred clearly due to the fact that no one at the time knew the proper practice. As a result, she felt that this added to teachers' workload and was due to a lack of proper information disseminated to schools.

> it's an extra burden, extra workload for the teachers like what's the point of photostating student's work and keeping a record. Later on MOE said that we don't have to photostate and keep an evidence file. This is the initiative that's done by some stupid administrators in the school that said, "okay, look in case one day, they want the evidence file, but this makes teachers feel like that they are not trusted.

Teacher SBH, from another school also had the same experience. She adds:

> It was quite tedious to carry out [record keeping] in the first few years when it was first introduced. Everything had to be done by the teachers. It wasn't just the subject matter results that had to be keyed in, the psychometric assessments, the physical activities, sports and co-curricular assessment (PAJSK) also had to be keyed in and recorded. It was just tedious.

Interestingly, one senior teacher, SH, admitted that she simply did not keep any reports or evidences when SBA was first implemented. She quips:

> When we were told to implement SBA, it wasn't clear if we should keep results of assessments or keep a report. Some of us didn't even keep a report. It was not that we did not want to, it is just that we did not know how.

Fortunately, after a few years since the implementation of the SBA, interviewees have all reported that they are happier with the current system in place, albeit not perfect.

NA explains:

> SBA is now very friendly in a sense that we have the evidence of student's work [to justify the band awarded] which can be kept online. Before this, we were piled up with student's product and it becomes difficult to keep.

NB supports this claim by adding:

> Each teacher will have their class own profile where they can key in results of assessments. The school admin can log-on for a periodical check. Myself [as the head of subject] and the senior assistant for academic matters will also go around to check. There is a clear system for filing evidences now.

While all teachers mentioned that the current system is better, it is not without complaints either. Two teachers explain that the current system still poses it difficulties to the teachers.

AJ elaborates:

> The biggest problem is keying-in of the marks. Most of the time, the servers are really slow. It's twice the work if we have to key it offline, then do it online later. And it takes time to key in the marks if it's slow.

HH is also adamant that this whole process of record keeping of student performance, online or otherwise is an unnecessary workload and tedious paperwork. He explains:

> Too much record keeping of assessments and evidences gives teachers a lot of unnecessary paperwork. What we should be focusing on is on the teaching and learning, the marking of student work and the feedback we give for students so that they learn and improve. We don't need something that we have to file and keep as evidence and students don't really care about it.

Lastly on the issue assessing student performance in SBA, again there were varied practices by teachers as this was school dependent and not a requirement by MOE. It was clear that there was a lack of analysis towards formative assessments conducted within class as teachers were not used to observing and reflecting on student performance for such assessments. On the other hand, it was far more common, 10 out of 14 teachers, for teachers to conduct item analysis on the summative assessments [assessments based on the PT3 final assessment] conducted in class.

SBH illustrates the process her school goes through:

> We conduct analysis on every test that we give. When we have finished marking and the marks are keyed in, our exam secretary will be the one doing the analysis. All teachers will analyze it together, like why is English this result, why is Bahasa Melayu like this result and what we can do to improve. We have to come up with our department's plan to help the students based on the results.

VD further adds that doing an item analysis helps her and her fellow teachers to identify areas of improvement for students:

> Through item analysis, I am able to foresee which part [of the PT3 assessment] that they are not going to do well. Most of the time, it will be the writing section that is struggling. In preparation for PT3, we would target certain aspects that students need help in.

All teachers interviewed also mentioned that they did not perform any statistical analysis. Most analysis were descriptive in nature.

4.7.13 Summary of Themes from Interview Data – Transactions

Table 4.22: Summary of Themes – Transactions

Selected Statements	Keywords	Subtheme	Theme
"it's hard doing assessments in the classroom."	Conducting assessments in the classroom	In class assessment practices	Transactions in SBA implementation
"We have syllabus that we need to finish before the end of year exams."	Focus on curriculum		
"I try to conduct formative assessments twice a week"	Frequency of assessments	Use of formative assessments	
"Formative assessments has not become my habit yet"			
"I have 44 students. How do you give equal time to assess?"	Large class sizes	Classroom sizes	
"More emphasis is placed on feedback now"	Shift in feedback practices	Feedback practices	
"give both written and oral feedback"	Types of feedback		
"Usually in groups but I do give individual feedback"			
"Now I prepare students for exams and assessments."	Conducting assessments in the classroom	In class assessment practices	
"The moderation only happens within Form 3"	Moderation processes	Moderation	

Table 4.22 continued

"Teachers will be more careful with their marking with moderation."			
"Teachers should mark their own student's assessments"	Marking processes	Marking and assessing	
"if a teacher's English is not that good, they can't spot the errors and may give higher marks"	Ethical conduct		
"one or two have been unfairly marked but it may go undetected"			
"I did not see any unethical practices during marking."			
"Extra workload for the teachers to keep assessment evidence"	Marking processes		
"The servers to key in marks are really slow."	Server connection	Recording student performance	
"Through item analysis, I am able to foresee where students are struggling in"	Item and performance analysis		

4.7.14 Summary of Findings of ESL teachers Perceptions Towards the Transactions During SBA Implementation in Sarawak

Teachers showed a robust understanding of Bloom's learning domains, effectively integrating this knowledge into their lesson planning and assessment designs. Their assessment practices have evolved, embracing a variety of methods beyond traditional exams, such as project-based evaluations and continuous assessments. Post-assessment activities included thorough scoring, detailed reporting, and insightful analysis, indicating a deep engagement with the SBA process. Despite initial challenges in adapting to SBA, teachers demonstrated flexibility and innovation in their instructional approaches, aligning with the holistic goals of SBA. These findings reflect a significant shift towards more comprehensive and continuous assessment methods in ESL teaching in Sarawak.

4.8 Outcomes of the Implementation of SBA as Perceived by the ESL Teachers in Sarawak

This section delves into the perceptions of ESL teachers in Sarawak regarding the outcomes of SBA implementation. It examines their perspectives on various aspects of SBA, including its application in English teaching, opportunities for collaborative discussions, assessment preparations, and the overall coordination and monitoring of SBA within their schools. The thematic analysis highlights teachers' self-assessment of their capabilities in executing SBA, their views on stakeholder attitudes towards SBA, and the support provided by the school system for its implementation. Additionally, the section explores the challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA and their suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of this educational policy.

4.8.1 Surveyed Teacher's Perceptions of Overall Teacher Competence in SBA Implementation in Their School

Table 4.23: Surveyed Teacher's Perceptions of Overall Teacher Competence in SBA Implementation in Their School

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
There is adequate knowledge in implementing the SBA process	3.3%	8.3%	26.7%	51.7%	10%	3.57	.90
Teachers are confident in implementing SBA activities	0%	11.7%	31.7%	50%	6.7%	3.52	.79
There is adequate expertise in implementing the SBA process	3.3%	8.3%	36.7%	41.7%	10%	3.47	.91
Teachers are confident in implementing SBA assessments	0%	6.7%	43.3%	46.7%	3.3%	3.47	.79
Average	**1.65%**	**8.75%**	**34.60%**	**47.53%**	**7.50%**	**3.51**	**.85**

The table provides insights into the perceptions of teachers regarding their colleagues' knowledge, expertise, and confidence in executing School-Based Assessment (SBA) practices, encompassing four survey items. A majority of the respondents believe there is adequate knowledge among teachers for implementing the SBA process, with 51.7% agreeing and 10% strongly agreeing, leading to a mean score of 3.57. Similarly, in terms of expertise in the SBA process, 41.7% agree and 10% strongly agree, resulting in a mean score of 3.47. Furthermore, teachers' confidence in conducting SBA activities is perceived positively by 50% of the respondents agreeing and 6.7% strongly agreeing, culminating in a mean of 3.52. The confidence extends to implementing SBA assessments as well, with 46.7% agreeing and 3.3% strongly agreeing, and a mean score of 3.47. Collectively, these

data points suggest a general optimism among teachers about the competence and confidence of their peers in the application of SBA in educational settings.

4.8.2 Surveyed English Teacher's Views on Overall Changes After Implementing SBA

Table 4.24: Surveyed English Teacher's Views on Overall Changes After Implementing SBA

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
There have been considerable differences in the way students are assessed after the implementation of SBA	0%	13.3%	41.7%	45%	0%	3.32	.70
Students no longer memorise and reproduce prepared answers when tested	0%	25%	45%	30%	0%	3.05	.74
There is a weak emphasis in centralised testing and examination	6.7%	23.3%	36.7%	28.3%	5%	3.02	1.0
Teachers no longer teach to the test when preparing students for assessments	0	36.7%	38.3%	25%	0%	2.88	.78
Average	**1.68%**	**24.58%**	**40.43%**	**32.08%**	**1.25%**	**3.1**	**.81**

The table illustrates English language teachers' perspectives on changes seen after implementing SBA, encapsulating four survey items. A majority of teachers (34%) believe there is a moderate to weak emphasis on centralised testing and examination, reflected in a mean score of 3.02 with a standard deviation of 1.0. This viewpoint is further supported by the subsequent item where a significant 36.7% of teachers disagree with the notion that

educators no longer "teach to the test" in preparation for assessments, resulting in a mean of 2.88. In relation to students' assessment preparation methods, 25% of teachers feel that students continue to rely on memorisation and reproduction of prepared answers, though a sizeable 45% remain neutral, yielding a mean score of 3.05. Lastly, indicating a perceptible shift in assessment methodologies post the introduction of School-Based Assessment (SBA), 45% of teachers concur that there have been considerable differences in assessment strategies, with a mean value of 3.32. These insights underscore the teachers' observations on the evolving educational assessment dynamics as a result of the SBA's introduction.

4.8.3 Surveyed English Language Teacher's Views of Using SBA in Teaching English

Table 4.25: Surveyed English Language Teacher's Views of Using SBA in Teaching English

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
SBA has provided more opportunities to students to be assessed especially when assessing language proficiency	0%	0%	13.3%	50%	36.7%	4.23	.67
Using school-based assessment (SBA) in teaching English is compulsory	0%	0%	25%	36.7%	38.3%	4.13	.79
SBA helps students to become more independent English language learners	0%	3.3%	31.7%	56.7%	8.3%	3.70	.67

Table 4.25 continued

SBA is efficient in improving students learning of the English language	0%	3.3%	35%	51.7%	10%	3.68	.70
SBA has been effectively incorporated into existing English language lessons	0%	3.3%	50%	40%	6.7%	3.50	.67
Using school-based assessment (SBA) in teaching English is a burden to me	3.3%	3.3%	55%	30%	8.3%	3.37	.82
Average	**0.55%**	**2.20%**	**35.00%**	**44.18%**	**18.05%**	**3.77**	**.72**

The table presents the perspectives of English language teachers regarding the implementation and efficacy of school-based assessment (SBA) in English instruction. Spanning six survey items, the data suggests a general inclination towards the positive aspects of SBA. A combined 75% of respondents either "agree" or "strongly agree" that the use of SBA in teaching English is compulsory, yielding a mean score of 4.13 with a standard deviation of 0.79. However, there's a noticeable ambivalence about whether SBA constitutes a burden, with 55% of teachers remaining neutral and only 38.3% expressing agreement to varying degrees, leading to a mean of 3.37. Positive sentiments are echoed when considering the integration of SBA into existing lessons, with 46.7% agreeing, resulting in a mean of 3.50. Furthermore, a strong 86.7% of educators believe that SBA provides students with more assessment opportunities, especially in assessing language proficiency, reflected in a mean score of 4.23. Around 65% of the teachers concur that SBA aids students in becoming more autonomous English learners, and approximately 61.7% recognize its efficiency in enhancing English language learning, with these items having mean scores of 3.70 and 3.68, respectively. These findings illuminate the English language teachers' recognition of SBA's

importance, though there's a hint of reservation on its potential burdens and seamless integration into existing curricula.

4.8.4 Surveyed English Teacher's Views on Their English Language Assessment Practices After Implementing SBA

Table 4.26: Surveyed English Teacher's Views on Their English Language Assessment Practices After Implementing SBA

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
I conduct SBA during the teaching and learning process	0%	5%	33.3%	55%	6.7%	3.63	.68
I am qualified to implement SBA assessment activities in the classroom	0%	0%	45%	50%	5%	3.60	.58
With SBA, I am able to prepare adequate assessments for writing activities	0%	5%	41.7%	43.3%	10%	3.58	.74
With SBA, I am able to prepare assessments for reading activities	0%	5%	41.7%	46.7%	6.7%	3.55	.69
I have adequate assessment skills for SBA implementing assessment activities	0	3.3%	48.3%	43.3%	5%	3.50	.65
With SBA, I am able to prepare adequate assessments for speaking activities	0%	5%	50%	45%	0	3.40	.58

Table 4.26 continued

With SBA, assessments are now less examination oriented	3.3%	16.7%	41.7%	31.7%	6.7%	3.22	.92
With SBA, I am able to prepare adequate assessments for listening activities	3.3%	18.3%	41.7%	33.3%	3.3%	3.15	.88
Average	**0.83%**	**7.29%**	**42.93%**	**43.54%**	**5.43%**	**3.45**	**.72**

The table shows the perceptions of English language teachers concerning their assessment practices as a result of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) implementation, comprising eight survey items. A notable proportion of teachers (38.4%) feel that assessments have shifted towards being less examination-centric due to SBA, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.22. When dissecting the specific skills that SBA has enabled, approximately one-third of the teachers believe they can now more adequately prepare assessments for listening (33.3%), speaking (45%), reading (46.7%), and writing (43.3%) activities, with mean scores ranging from 3.15 to 3.58. In terms of their own proficiency, half of the respondents feel competent in executing SBA assessment activities in classrooms, reflected in a mean of 3.60. This sentiment is paralleled by the 43.3% who believe they possess the requisite assessment skills for implementing SBA activities, yielding a mean score of 3.50. Furthermore, a dominant 55% of teachers indicate that they integrate SBA throughout the teaching and learning process, as captured by a mean of 3.63. Collectively, these findings illuminate the perceived enhancements in assessment capabilities and methodologies of teachers following the adoption of SBA.

4.8.5 Surveyed Teachers' Perception of Collegiality and Cooperation Among English Teachers Implementing SBA In School

Table 4.27: Surveyed Teacher' Perception of Collegiality and Cooperation Among English Teachers Implementing SBA In School

Teacher's Views On	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Teachers in my school co-operate with each other in implementing SBA activities	0%	5%	25%	45%	25%	3.9	.84
I have opportunities to discuss SBA implementation with my fellow English teachers	0%	3.3%	30%	63.3%	3.3%	3.67	.60
Selection of assessments for English is systematic and is discussed before used	0%	6.7%	41.7%	40%	11.7%	3.57	.79
Head of subjects monitor SBA activity implementation efficiently	0%	5%	48.3%	35%	11.7%	3.53	.77
I have opportunities to discuss SBA activities with my fellow English teachers	0%	8.3%	33.3%	58.3%	0%	3.50	.65
Average	**0%**	**5.66%**	**35.66%**	**48.32%**	**10.34%**	**3.63**	**.73**

The data reflects a strong sense of collegiality and cooperation among English teachers when it comes to the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in school, based on five survey items. A majority of teachers feel they have ample opportunities to

discuss SBA, both in terms of its implementation (63.3% agreement) and its activities (58.3% agreement) with their colleagues, scoring means of 3.67 and 3.50 respectively. This highlights a collaborative environment wherein teachers are engaged in discourse to share best practices and insights. Additionally, the head of subjects appears to play an active role in monitoring the SBA activity implementation, with 35% of respondents agreeing and a further 11.7% strongly agreeing that it is done efficiently, yielding a mean score of 3.53. The systematic nature of assessment selection for English is evident, with 40% agreeing and 11.7% strongly agreeing that assessments are discussed prior to their use, reflected in a mean score of 3.57. Notably, there is a strong sense of unity and mutual support in the implementation of SBA activities, as 45% of teachers agree and an impressive 25% strongly agree that there's cooperation among staff, culminating in the highest mean of 3.9 for this aspect of collegiality.

4.8.6 Surveyed Teacher's views on General Administration, Coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation in School

Table 4.28: Surveyed Teacher's views on General Administration, Coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation in School

Teacher's Views on	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
After every assessment I keep a record of my students' scores	0%	0%	20%	46.7%	33.3%	4.13	.72
At the end of every summative assessment, I prepare an evidence report of students' achievement	0%	8.3%	16.7%	40%	35%	4.02	.93

Table 4.28 continued

I record the marks of evidence in the SPPBS application punctually (within two weeks of results release)	3.3%	6.7%	25%	30%	35%	3.87	1.08
School management is supportive of the implementation of SBA in the school	0%	5%	35%	38.3%	21.7%	3.77	.85
Moderation (standardising marks given) sessions for each assessment is done	6.7%	0%	38.3%	36.7%	18.3%	3.60	1.01
There are teachers that have been appointed as internal monitors of the SBA implementation	5%	15%	13.3%	50%	16.7%	3.58	1.09
Teachers are recognised for good implementation of SBA in their classroom	0%	21.7%	31.7%	35%	11.7%	3.37	.95
Average	**2.14%**	**8.10%**	**25.71%**	**39.53%**	**24.53%**	**3.76**	**.95**

Based on seven survey items, the table illustrates teachers' perspectives on the general administration, coordination, and monitoring of School-Based Assessment (SBA) implementation in schools.

For the recognition of good SBA implementation, the mean response is 3.37, with a standard deviation of 0.95, indicating varied perceptions among teachers. This means while 35% agree and 11.7% strongly agree that teachers are acknowledged, the spread of the responses is wide, with 21.7% disagreeing.

The support from school management towards SBA implementation is more consistent, with a mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 0.85. Here, 38.3% of teachers agree and 21.7% strongly agree about the management's supportive nature.

Moderation sessions have a mean score of 3.60, but with a substantial SD of 1.01, suggesting that while many teachers (36.7% agree and 18.3% strongly agree) believe in the existence of these sessions, there's a considerable spread in the responses.

The mean of the survey item on internal SBA monitors is 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.09. Although 50% agree on their existence, the high SD indicates varied experiences and perhaps inconsistency in the appointment or visibility of these monitors across different settings.

When considering record-keeping habits, 80% of educators either agree or strongly agree about keeping students' scores post-assessment, generating the highest mean of 4.13. The SD of 0.72, though, suggests a relatively consistent practice among teachers in this regard.

For the preparation of evidence reports post-summative evaluation, the mean is 4.02, with a standard deviation of 0.93. This shows that while 75% of the teachers agree or strongly agree about this practice, there's still a notable variation in the responses.

Lastly, punctuality in recording marks in the SPPBS application recorded a mean of 3.87. The relatively high SD of 1.08 hints at different levels of punctuality and perhaps challenges some teachers face in adhering to the two-week window. The inclusion of the standard deviations in the analysis offers a deeper insight into the dispersion or agreement among teachers on various facets of SBA implementation in schools.

4.9 Challenges faced by Surveyed English language Teachers in Effectively Implementing SBA

This section the challenges faced by English language teachers in effectively implementing SBA in their classroom. This includes items on their principal's support, adequacy of facilities and resources as well as their expertise and knowledge collectively as a school to implement SBA.

4.9.1 Surveyed Teacher's Perception of Adequacy on Leadership, Facilities, Support and Resources by the School to Implement SBA successfully

Table 4.29: Surveyed Teacher's Perception of Adequacy of Leadership, Facilities, Support and Resources by the School to Implement SBA successfully

Teacher's Challenges	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
My principal does support the SBA implementation	3.3%	10%	23.3%	25%	38.3%	3.85	1.14
There is adequate knowledge in implementing the SBA process	3%	8%	26%	51.7%	10%	3.57	.90
There is adequate expertise in implementing the SBA process	3.3%	8.3%	36.7%	41.7%	10%	3.47	.91
The general school climate and culture promotes SBA	0%	11.7%	35%	50%	3.3%	3.45	.74
There are adequate resources in implementing SBA assessments	0%	15%	35%	50%	0	3.35	.73
There are sufficient financial resources to conduct SBA effectively	5%	15%	45%	31.7%	3.3%	3.13	.89

Table 4.29 continued

The equipment is suitable to conduct SBA activities for English	11.7%	11.7%	43.3%	26.7%	6.7%	3.05	1.06
The physical classroom space is adequate for SBA activities	11.7%	8.3%	56.7%	23.3%	0%	2.92	.89
The ICT facilities are adequate to conduct SBA activities for an English language class	11.7%	21.7%	46.7%	20%	0	2.75	.91
Average	**5.52%**	**12.19%**	**38.63%**	**35.57%**	**7.96%**	**3.28**	**.91**

Based on nine survey items, the table provides insight into the perceived adequacy of facilities, support, and resources available in schools for the successful implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA). Principals' support for SBA implementation stands out as the most positively perceived factor, with a mean of 3.85 and a relatively high standard deviation of 1.14, highlighting some variability in responses. 63.3% of respondents either agree or strongly agree about the principal's support, though there's still a fraction that disagrees. Teachers believe that there are suitable resources for implementing SBA assessments, reflected in a mean of 3.35, though the lack of strong agreement (with 0% strongly agreeing) and a standard deviation of 0.73 indicates some variation in this view. In terms of knowledge and expertise in implementing the SBA process, the respective means of 3.57 and 3.47 and standard deviations of 0.90 and 0.91 suggest that while a majority feel adequately prepared, there's still a sizeable portion that might feel otherwise. The overall school atmosphere promoting SBA yielded a mean of 3.45. Financial resources present a more divisive perspective, with a mean of 3.13 and a standard deviation of 0.89, highlighting potential budgetary constraints some schools face. Equipment suitability and classroom space adequacy for SBA activities register lower means of 3.05 and 2.92, respectively, suggesting possible areas of improvement. Notably, the adequacy of ICT facilities for

English SBA activities yields the lowest mean of 2.75, paired with a standard deviation of 0.91, marking it as a significant challenge among the surveyed teachers. In sum, while certain aspects of SBA implementation are perceived positively, there remain areas, especially concerning infrastructural resources, where enhancements could be beneficial.

4.9.2 Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs of Trust and Public Perceptions Towards the Implementation of SBA

Table 4.30: Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs of Trust and Public Perceptions Towards the Implementation of SBA

Teacher's Challenges	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Students trust teachers' evaluation when conducting SBA	0%	8.3%	31.7%	43.3%	16.7%	3.68	.85
SBA improves quality and assurance monitoring processes	0%	6.7%	43.3%	38.3%	11.7%	3.55	.79
Parents trust teachers' evaluation when conducting SBA	0%	8.3%	38.3%	50%	3.3%	3.48	.70
SBA creates public confidence towards the school assessment system	0%	11.7%	38.3%	41.7%	8.3%	3.47	.81
Average	**0%**	**8.75%**	**37.90%**	**43.33%**	**10.00%**	**3.55**	**.79**

The table above shows teachers' beliefs regarding trust and public perceptions towards the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) based on four survey items. Firstly, 50% of teachers concurred that parents trust their evaluations during the SBA process, evidenced by a mean score of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.70. Similarly, the

trust placed by students in teachers' evaluations is evident, with 43.3% agreeing and an additional 16.7% strongly concurring, resulting in a mean of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.85. The broader implications of the SBA on institutional processes are further highlighted with 38.3% of respondents agreeing that the SBA positively influences quality and assurance monitoring processes, a sentiment reflected by a mean score of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.79. Lastly, with a mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 0.81, 41.7% of teachers believe that the SBA enhances public confidence in the school assessment system. This comprehensive analysis underscores the significant trust and positive perceptions surrounding the SBA's implementation among various stakeholders.

4.10 Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs of The Impact of Current Implementation of SBA for Students

This section document's the beliefs of teachers of the impact of the current implementation of SBA on their students that they teach. These covers their perceived feelings on pressure, motivation, and engagement in the classroom.

4.10.1 Surveyed Teacher's Belief of the Impact of SBA Towards Student Motivation and Engagement

Table 4.31: Surveyed Teacher's Belief of the Impact of SBA Towards Student Motivation and Engagement

Teacher's Beliefs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Students do not feel that SBA **is** a burden towards their studies	0%	6.7%	43.3%	50%	0%	3.43	.62

Table 4.31 continued

Students are more motivated to learn through SBA activities	0%	15%	33.3%	48.3%	3.3%	3.40	.78
SBA reduces pressure on students compared to when taking public examinations	5%	28.3%	28.3%	35%	3.3%	3.03	.99
Student's rate of absenteeism has decreased after implementation of SBA	6.7%	22.3%	46.7%	23.3%	0%	2.87	.85
Average	**2.93%**	**18.08%**	**37.90%**	**39.15%**	**1.65%**	**3.18**	**.81**

Based on the findings from four survey items, the data suggests a nuanced perspective on the stress associated with assessments. Specifically, 35% of teachers believe that the SBA reduces the pressure on students when compared with traditional public examinations, a sentiment substantiated by a mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.99. Furthermore, concerning attendance, 23.3% of respondents agreed that the rate of student absenteeism has witnessed a decline post the SBA's implementation, yielding a mean value of 2.87 and a standard deviation of 0.85. Significantly, almost half (48.3%) of the surveyed teachers concurred that students are more invigorated to learn through SBA activities, a belief reflected in a mean score of 3.40 with a standard deviation of 0.78. Lastly, emphasizing the SBA's perceived workload, a dominant 50% believe that students don't view the SBA as a burdensome addition to their academic responsibilities, with this viewpoint reinforced by a mean of 3.43 and a comparatively lower standard deviation of 0.62. Collectively, these findings underscore the SBA's potential positive implications for student motivation and commitment to their academic pursuits.

4.10.2 Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs on SBA in Encouraging Students to Learn

Table 4.32: Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs on SBA in Encouraging Students to Learn

Teacher's Beliefs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
SBA provides students with new learning opportunities to help identify student weaknesses	0%	5%	28.3%	48.3%	18.3%	3.80	.79
SBA provides new learning opportunities for building student's strengths	0%	5%	31.7%	48.3%	15%	3.73	.78
SBA encourages students to read	0%	13.3%	30%	45%	11.7%	3.55	.87
SBA encourages students to research	3.3%	16.7%	16.7%	51.7%	11.7%	3.52	1.0
SBA encourages students to be more knowledgeable than ever before	0%	11.7%	33.3%	51.7%	3.3%	3.47	.75
Average	**0.66%**	**10.34%**	**28.00%**	**49.00%**	**12.00%**	**3.61**	**.84**

In this table, five survey items offer insights into teacher's beliefs of SBA in encouraging students to learn. A significant 45% of teachers agree that the SBA encourages students to read more, with a mean score of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.87. Additionally, 51.7% believe that SBA galvanizes students into undertaking research, mirroring in a mean of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.0. A corresponding 51.7% also contend that the SBA facilitates students becoming more knowledgeable than before, supported by a mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 0.75. Diving deeper into the role of SBA in bolstering learning, an impressive 48.3% of respondents advocate that it crafts novel

learning opportunities, fortifying student strengths, as evident from a mean score of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 0.78. In parallel, another 48.3% of teachers opine that the SBA uncovers fresh learning avenues, assisting in pinpointing student weaknesses—this perspective being underpinned by a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.79. Collectively, these survey items illuminate the overarching sentiment that the SBA serves as a dynamic catalyst in enhancing various facets of student learning.

4.10.3 Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs on SBA's Impacts on Student's English Language Learning

Table 4.33: Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs on SBA's Impacts on Student's English Language Learning

Teacher's Beliefs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
SBA helps students to understand their strengths in the English language	0%	11.7%	28.3%	53.3%	6.7%	3.55	.79
SBA helps students to understand their weaknesses in the English language	0%	15%	28.3%	48.3%	8.3%	3.50	.85
After the implementation of SBA, students are more interested in learning English than previously	0%	18.3%	30%	45%	6.7%	3.40	.86
SBA improves literacy and proficiency of students	5%	15%	25%	51.7%	3.3%	3.33	.95
Students no longer memorise and reproduce answers when assessed	0%	25%	45%	30%	0%	3.05	.74
Average	**1.00%**	**17.00%**	**31.32%**	**45.66%**	**5.00%**	**3.37**	**.84**

The table presents an analysis of teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of School-Based Assessment (SBA) on students' English language learning, encompassing five survey items. Firstly, 45% of teachers affirm that after the implementation of SBA, there is a heightened interest among students in learning English, as reflected in a mean score of 3.40 and a standard deviation of 0.86. Furthermore, a majority, 51.7%, believe that SBA plays a pivotal role in enhancing the literacy and proficiency levels of students, a sentiment substantiated by a mean of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.95. However, when examining traditional learning methods, 45% of teachers remain neutral, but 30% agree that students have moved away from rote memorization and regurgitation of answers during assessments, illustrated by a mean of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 0.74. Delving into student self-awareness, 53.3% of respondents agree that SBA effectively aids students in recognizing their strengths in English, with a mean score of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.79. In a similar vein, 48.3% believe it also illuminates students' weaknesses in the subject, mirrored by a mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.85. In aggregate, these survey items underscore the prevailing belief among educators that SBA significantly influences and enhances various aspects of students' English language acquisition and awareness.

4.10.4 Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs of the Impact of SBA on How Students Perceive Feedback

Table 4.34: Surveyed Teacher's Beliefs of the Impact of SBA on How Students Perceive Feedback

Teacher's Beliefs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Students feel that the feedback received from SBA are more meaningful	0%	11.7%	40%	40%	8.3%	3.45	.81
Students feel that the feedback received from SBA can help them to develop further	0%	15%	35%	45%	5%	3.40	.80
Average	**0%**	**13.35%**	**37.50%**	**42.50%**	**6.65%**	**3.43**	**.81**

The table elucidates teachers' beliefs concerning the influence of School-Based Assessment (SBA) on students' perceptions of feedback, captured across two survey items. A substantial 40% of educators concurred that students discern the feedback derived from SBA as more meaningful, which is reflected in a mean score of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 0.81. Complementing this viewpoint, another 45% of teachers opined that students believe the feedback from SBA can be instrumental in their further academic development, evident from a mean value of 3.40 and a standard deviation of 0.80. Collectively, these findings highlight the prevailing sentiment among educators that SBA feedback is perceived by students not just as meaningful, but also as a valuable tool for their ongoing academic enhancement.

4.10.5 Interviewed Teacher's Observation of Students Receptiveness Towards SBA

Throughout the interviews, it was clear that all teachers believed that students preferred the new SBA assessment method compared to the PMR exam. Teachers attributed a number of factors, including having the opportunity to have multiple assessments instead of only one final exam determining their results, reduction of test anxiety, and less pressure overall.

All teachers report that they also make it known to students when they are formally assessed as part of the SBA requirements and when it is just an in-class activity with an assessment exercise.

AZ illustrates:

> Yes, they do know that they are being assessed [as part of SBA]. It is their right to know and I inform them before they are assessed. Still, students prefer SBA because they feel less pressure and they feel like that they know that every step of the way they are tested and they know their ability based on each assessment.

QC also believes that the in-class assessment creates an environment that does not seem like an exam or a test, rather an activity just like any other activity conducted in class. She claims that she can see the difference between student's attitude when an assessment is based on an exam format:

> When we have assessments in class, they don't see it as an assessment. Even when I tell them," This is graded, I have to give you bands", they still don't see it as assessments. They see it as activities, whether it's fun or not whether they like it or not. They try their best without pressure. When I give them, assessments based on the PT3 format you can see the pressure before the assessment, the worry when they take the exam and the anticipation for their results after.

On the issue of nervousness and anxiety when undertaking assessments compared to the PMR exam, there were mixed feelings reported by the teachers interviewed.

AJ claims that because invigilation is now carried out by their own teachers, students feel more relaxed:

> Definitely not as stressed as before because the assessments are now invigilated by their own school teachers. It is a very comfortable atmosphere for them to take their test.

NB also explains that SBA assessments are typically less formal, with less rigidity:

> With SBA, they are surrounded by their friends and it's not that formal. If it's a public exam, they have to be quarantined which increases their adrenaline levels.

CW adds that the lesson planning is important as well as embedding a formal assessment into a well-planned class activity can also help students to forget that they are being assessed:

> If you plan the lesson properly, they are very excited about it even if they know it's an assessment. So like in my pen-pal assessment, they are more focused on the message they are conveying to their pen-pal rather than the exercise being marked as a graded assessment which definitely helped with anxiety.

On the other hand, three teachers, AZ, SH and HH report that their students still feel anxious when faced with assessments, albeit for different reasons.

AZ explains:

> That depends on the student's level, the lower proficiency students will always look nervous. I will just comfort them that it's better to speak and do their best and come out with your best ideas. but overall, they feel less stressed.

This sentiment is echoed by SH who teaches students who come from the nearby villages. She recollects:

> Yes, still honestly, they do [feel nervous]. Because my students are from the village areas so they just learn English only in schools and when they get home they do something else and don't practice the language. So when it comes to assessments, they still feel nervous.

HH on the other hand feels that his students still treat SBA as a high-stakes examination and still feel nervous because of their potential results, regardless of the method of assessment.

> The students still feel nervous when they didn't do well. They are afraid they cannot go into a good class in Form 4. So, they are nervous because of an expectation to perform well regardless of the way they are being assessed.

Overall, teachers feel that it is a matter of students acclimatizing to a new way of being assessed. As time passes, students would be clearer with what they are expected to achieve and will cope with the changes in format, teaching and learning methods, and overall concept.

QC explains:

> My students enjoy themselves much better with SBA. They acquire skills meaningfully in class rather than just memorizing strategies on answering exam papers. In class they can be assessed from group work, presentations, projects, so there is less formality and they prefer this format.

AJ also reasons why students are resistant at first:

> Perhaps earlier batches of students are not used to it because they were geared that way (exam oriented) for many years and they used to question, why do I need to do assessments if they are not graded, or why do I need to do exercises that won't be tested in the exam. They were also not used to meeting short term goals like formative assessments. But now when we explain why we do the assessments, how it can benefit them, they begin to see meaning.

4.10.6 Interviewed Teacher's Perception of Changes in Student Motivation and Engagement with SBA

In this section I highlight some of the key changes to student motivation and engagement in the English classroom that teachers have reported. With a greater focus on formative assessments in the classroom, teachers have reported that their classes now focus on less drilling and less teaching to the test, leading to more positive and meaningful learning in the classroom.

NA explains:

> Definitely students are learning better under the new SBA where there is less memorisation, less drilling and I think students are using the language more naturally. I can see students using English even in the weakest class because they use it to interact during class activities.

KC also echoes the sentiment where he now sees that students are more active and prepared for discussion now than before. He illustrates:

> I can see the changes from when it was first implemented [SBA] and now. The students that have been with me from Form 1 till Form 3 now no longer wait for every instruction. If I tell them that we'll be doing a project or discussion after a video, they know there'll be a speaking element, or a report element, or a presentation, and they won't shy away. Previously you'd have students who are shy and won't speak because they are not used to it.

NB adds that SBA has not only made a change to student engagement but also how teachers conduct their classes. She elaborates:

> Students participate more. Most of the SBA assessment takes into account the communicative and collaborative [aspects] in class. When we do it, students find these kinds of activities more interesting because they have to move and not just sitting down. They have a chance to talk to their friend. They enjoy the activity. The teacher has to control and manage [the class] well and make it meaningful. I do much fewer drilling exercises compared to before.

Additionally, teachers felt that the SBA system of having both in-class assessments and a final assessment continued to provide motivation for students to do well yet, take away some pressure and stress often associated with high-stakes testing.

QC comments:

> Yes, the final exam gives students more pressure, because knowing that they would be demoted or promoted to a better class at the end of Form 1 or 2 and also PT3, it gets them all worked up.

AJ also believes that having both in-class assessments and a final exam is a good combination. He explains:

> a combination of both because you definitely need to have a final test that will be the student's long-term goal. They're working towards achieving good grades for their final test. At the same time, they will have school-based assessments to assess their learning as they go along their school life. The school-based assessments can be fun

> and because of their short attention span, they feel that they have achieved something instead of waiting for what's yet to come in maybe a year or by the end of the year.

KC is also impressed with how students have adapted and evolved as a result of the implementation of SBA. He claims:

> Compared to when everything was spoon-fed for PMR, the teacher used to have to provide everything for them, and even with that, they find it very difficult to stand up and speak. After two years in SBA, students know what I expect of them and they know what activities will be like. So looking back, I'm impressed.

4.10.7 Interviewed Teachers' Perception of Parent's Opinions towards SBA Implementation

Interviews on how parents reacted towards the implementation of SBA were very animated. It was obvious that there was a lot of pushback and concern from parents when the policy was first implemented. Some were concerned about how their child would be evaluated, others were worried about the fairness and validity of the evaluation. On the other hand, some parents did not care while others were supportive of the change. Below are a number of vivid recollections recalled by the teachers.

SBH recollects a particularly tense moment during the initial stages of the SBA implementation:

> At first, the parents did not like it. They thought that with PMR abolished, they had no way of knowing how good their children were. Many parents sent their children to tuition and spend a lot of money just to prepare them for PMR, and when it was announced that there would be SBA and PT4 replacing PMR, the parents were up in arms. I remembered during a parents and teachers meeting, it was a shouting match. They blamed the government, they blamed the school, we had to call each parent to explain what they changes were and why it was done. It took us months to get through to them all.

During the initial stages of the SBA implementation, one teacher, AA mentioned that parents were skeptical about the bands awarded by teachers, questioning their marking.

> Sometimes we get questioned [by parents] on why we wouldn't just give higher marks for our students. In actual fact, they don't know that we are not the only ones who mark the test papers. There's the Pentaksir Kawasan to moderate.

HH on the other hand thinks that the focus on exam results is a result of our Asian culture. He feels that with SBA parents feel that they are able to put pressure and interfere with the teacher's marking. He explains:

> Different parents have different opinion when it comes to SBA. Some parents think that it's not good while some think that its good because they think that if they are close to the teacher then they will mark advantageously. Perhaps in western countries, they respect the teacher and they are not going to interfere [in the marking]. While in Asian countries, this practice will affect the relationship between the parents and the teacher.

One teacher herself, VD, was particularly worried for her own son, who had issues with his teachers in school. She felt that if her son continued in that school, he might be marked unfairly and thus made a difficult decision to transfer her son to another school. She recollects:

> My son was initially in a different school, but I transferred him to another school. Why? Because I did not trust the teachers from his previous school. They range from retiring to brand new teachers and in terms of conducting SBA, they were totally new. The thing is, my son has a tendency to irritate teachers with his condescending ways. He has irritated a number of teachers. But when I look through his exam papers, I felt that he has been marked down. I kind of panicked, thinking "What is going to happen for PT3, if the markers are the very same teachers he irritated. Are they going to mark him down? Are the teachers actually qualified?

However, with time, it seems that parents are now better informed and are supportive of the SBA implementation. CW describes the type of parents that she faces currently:

> Well, you have two extreme ends are parents. Some parents would be questioning why their child got a certain band, but are okay after you have justified, but some parents could not be bothered. I have some parents who doesn't even know what are performance levels and what are the bands.

Many teachers attributed concern of student's achievement down to whether the parents were educated or not. 3 teachers claimed that most of the parents who asked about SBA were working professionals. AA illustrates:

> In my school now there is no questions from parents. This may depend on their background. If they are from a good school and their parents are professional, they might ask why their daughter didn't achieve [a certain grade]. [Our students] are from a background where their parents are not very professional like fishermen and labourers so they don't question much.

In contrast, JM mentions that parents who are highly educated will come and question and ask about their child's performance. She recollects:

> We have a few cases where parents of high achievers want their child to obtain perfect marks and are very vocal about it. They'll question why their child receive a certain grade. But we made it clear to them that the marks were fair and were moderated both internally and externally. Most parents and students believe it, so it's not a big issue anymore.

Overall, teachers report that now parents understand SBA better and support its implementation. QC explains:

> I see that parents are happier. After they've understood the policy, they understand it's not just test and exams. They can now see progress not just from grades and they are happy that their children are not pressured by exams. But of course, we still have a few teachers who swear by exams…

And AZ adds:

> Parents now are more supportive and adaptive. They are accepting that its not just one exam that determines how many A's and they now trust my marking and the marks I award. I definitely see this change.

Lastly, NB, a mother herself explains that she's happier with SBA given that more feedback is given to her child to improve. She elaborates:

> As a parent, when looking back at my kid's work from school-based assessments, i find it acceptable. The feedback given helps as it suggests ways to improve. At least I know that my child is weak and I know where he can improve or where I can help. If there is no feedback and just a grade, most parents won't know what to do with it. It's just a grade, meaningless.

4.10.8 Interviewed Teacher's Perception of Principal's Support to Teachers towards SBA implementation

A key element for a successful implementation of any policy in a school would be the support given by the principal to the teachers. In this section I highlight key opinions of teachers on whether they felt supported and guided by their school management and principal.

In the interviews, it was clear that the teachers believed there were only two kinds of principals. One that either supported the implementation of SBA and the other that followed whatever policy that the government wanted to implement.

QC illustrates:

> My principal is just moving along with the government. Whatever the government ask us to do, you have to do it as teachers. He says, "okay this year we have to do SBA! therefore do SBA. This year we have to do PT3, so we do it." It's basically what the government tells them to do, you have to implement.

JM says that it is also just a matter of compliance for her principal:

> Whether we implement it the right way or not, principal doesn't really care. At the end of the day, she just wants to see the report and whether it is done. She checks to see if it has been implemented that's it.

On the other hand, the majority of teachers, 10 out of 14, felt that their principals supported the implementation of the SBA policy.

NB feels that her principal was very supportive of the implementation. She mentions:

> Our principal was very supportive of SBA.in his opinion, SBA helps our students a lot. Teachers are in contact with students everyday, and so he feels we know best how to assess them.

NA shares a similar experience:

> Yes, she is very supportive. We have frequent discussion and meetings where we talk about academic achievement. She feels the bands are a good indication of student performance and a good tracker for student improvement.

SBH also believes that principals simply have to support the implementation as they have to maintain standards at the school regardless of what type of assessment is given. She explains:

> Our school is a high performing school. Our school is always compared to during meetings with the Ministry of Education. If our performance drops by a little, we will be question, so my principal constantly follows the progress of student performance irrespective of the type of assessment.

4.10.9 Interviewed Teachers' Perceptions of Collegial Support and Their Perception towards SBA implementation

In this section, teachers report their experiences of collegial support and cooperation by fellow English teachers teaching in lower secondary as well as relate their colleague's perceptions towards the SBA implementation.

Overall, teachers felt that their younger colleagues who were exposed to principles of formative assessment before in university were more open towards the implementation of SBA. On the other hand, senior teachers were not initially happy with the implementation of the SBA as it meant learning a new method of assessment, as well as having the need to familiarize themselves with the new PT3 assessment structure.

At least 6 teachers recalled having senior teachers being unhappy at the implementation of SBA. CW recalls:

> Well, some of the older teachers definitely complained. They think that SBA is more work and with changes in the format of the PT3, everybody is confused. Some of them were not familiar in assessments, but I told them they needed to try or else, it would just get worse as there would be assessments throughout Form 1 to 3.

SBH adds that while there were disgruntled feelings amidst the initial confusion, she and her colleagues pulled through by helping each other:

> My colleagues were initially against SBA as we had to do more work. At the start we did not know what materials to give, what to record and how to keep the report. Everybody came with a different idea on how the records should be kept. As everyone suggested different things, it became chaotic and for two years, we had no clear cut on what to do. However, we did it anyway and we helped each other.

However, all teachers reported a high degree of collegiality and cooperativeness in trying to ensure that the SBA policy was implemented to the best of their abilities.

QC shared her experience on how she and her fellow teachers worked together:

> In my school, all the teacher are very cooperative. We like to have discussions, we talk, we share. We share materials, we share what we have prepared, we try to help those who are having trouble especially in preparing exam or assessment questions and even lesson plans.

One teacher, AZ says that perhaps younger teachers or more proficient teachers should be more proactive in helping other teachers acclimatize to the policy. He shares his point of view:

> If we don't have materials, we should just ask fellow teachers. Some teachers don't share because they assume you already have it. It's not really being selfish. Also we should be open to share and help. In my own experience, after I attended my first SBA training course, I shared the materials to all my fellow teachers. So if they have a question they come to me.

Finally, NB also explains that guidance can also come from the education department in the form of the master trainers who delivered the SBA training. She adds:

> The Master Trainer after training still keeps in touch with us in our chat groups. She always asks us how are we doing in our lessons and whether we are coping well. Sometimes she will ask us to share our lesson plan. This is a very good way to support each other. Even though her time for training us has passed, she still keeps in touch with us and share materials. We don't really feel lost. If we are not sure we still can approach her to ask.

4.10.10 Interviewed Teachers' Perceived Challenges towards SBA implementation

In this section I document the perceived challenges towards SBA implementation that interviewees have faced so far. Through the interviews, the three major challenges were workload, class sizes and resource availability. Below are some excerpts from teachers on these three challenges.

Firstly, the majority of teachers complain that they are inundated with work beyond classroom teaching. The work assign to them can be paperwork for school management, extra-curricular activities and other general tasks that take away their focus on the classroom and adds additional workload.

JM explains:

> Teachers all fear clerical work. Say you're given the task to be the teacher in charge of textbook handouts. You have to type out all the serial numbers, ensure students get the right books, write a report thereafter. If you win the biggest prize of the year [in jest] and become the secretary for the year, good luck. You will have to write all sorts of reports and type all day. Even for decorating the classroom you need to write paperwork.

VD adds:

> Everything comes with paperwork. We have a meeting later after class, and that has to be included in the minutes. Then there's the evidence for activities we do inside and outside classes. We have to take pictures to prove that we're doing work. When we go to training, we need to write a report. When we cascade and train other teachers, we have to write another report.

The issue of workload can also be exacerbated if teachers are assigned multiple classes with large student numbers per class.

HH complains:

> I am teaching 3 classes and it's close to 100 students. Imaging if you have 3 classes a day, so you have to mark about 100 pieces of exercises and you have to file it. And that is not the only class you teach because you teach other classes also. That is a lot of unnecessary work.

AJ quips:

> A lot of paperwork is being given to teachers. I feel that perhaps they [school management] could come up with a separate committee or a separate group of staff who would deal with this statistical analysis and all this data entry.

On the issue of class sizes, it was clear that teachers in urban schools face much larger student numbers per class compared to colleagues teaching in rural schools. This has an impact on how they conduct SBA in their classroom.

QC explains:

> My class is too noisy and I was told off by the assistant principal. Because I had 42 students and doing activities with 42 students it is very noisy. It was a speaking class and how can you not make noise speaking. How does large student numbers help us? They are crammed in a classroom and they can't move around. How can they do group activities?

Most teachers in urban schools teach upwards of 30 students with the highest number mentioned at 45 students per class.

SH hypothetically questions:

> I have between 30 - 35 students, and I think it is the ideal number, because am so lucky that they are not problem students or students with discipline problem in the school. That's why I can conduct activities in class. Even though not all students participate but in terms of class control, I could manage it very well. But what if I had those with discipline problems? It might not be so easy.

Lastly, NB suggests:

> I find it easier to teach classes below 30 students. For the poorer proficiency classes, if I have a smaller group, it would be also easier to handle. They need more attention and guidance. We can spend more time with them individually.

In terms of resources, again this varied from school to school. Some teachers were fortunate enough to report that they did not face any issue with resources required to conduct English

classes in general however some teachers complained a lack of physical resources in their schools.

CW explains her situation:

> In my school we don't have LCD projectors in the classroom. We don't have proper speakers in the classroom either. So how do we conduct a listening assessment in class then? I have to bring a portable projector, a speaker and my own laptop. This takes time to setup and is a lot of effort to carry. We only have 1 computer lab in school, and the principal needs to approve the booking before we can use it. To top it all off, we have to get the students to move from their class to the computer room. It's just too much of a hassle.

AA adds:

> In my school most of the power sockets in the classrooms won't function. When you ask students to do research for a group project, they don't have laptops and we have none to provide from the school. The internet is poor and there isn't a projector either. The students I have are not well off, so if we want them to do group work, we have to prepare mahjong papers and markers for them to as well. What's the incentive for teachers to do so?

NB also adds:

> Some of the equipment available were vandalized by the students. We don't have a proper classroom setting to use ICT. I do fancy bringing an LCD to show students clips but some classes are too bright and there are no curtains. It just doesn't work.

4.10.11 Summary of Themes from Interview Data – Outcomes

Table 4.35: Summary of Themes – Outcomes

Selected Statements	Keywords	Subtheme	Theme
"they feel less pressure"	Pressure	Student's receptiveness	Outcomes in SBA implementation
"Definitely not as stressed as before"	Stress		
"[Rural students] still feel nervous"	Nervous		
"students are learning better"	Learning	Student motivation and engagement	
"students participate more"	Student participation		
"I do much fewer drilling exercises"	Classroom teaching approach		
"At first, the parents did not like SBA"	Different parents opinion	Parent's perception	
"Different parents have different opinion"			
"marks were fair and were moderated both internally and externally."	Fairness in marking	Fairness in marking	
"The feedback given helps as it suggests ways to improve."	Feedback versus marks		

Table 4.35 continued

"My principal is just moving along with the government"	Principal support	Principal's support	
"Our principal was very supportive of SBA"			
"We have frequent discussion and meetings with the principal on SBA"			
"we helped each other"	Collegial support	Collegial support	
"We share materials, we share what we have prepared, we try to help those who are having trouble"			
"Teachers all fear clerical work"	Paperwork	Challenges in implementation	
"I am teaching 3 classes and it's close to 100 students"	Classroom sizes		
"My class is too noisy and I was told off by the assistant principal"			
"if I have a smaller group, it would be also easier to handle"			

Table 4.35 continued

"we don't have LCD projectors in the classroom"	ICT equipment		
"most of the power sockets in the classrooms won't function"			
"Students don't have laptops and we have none to provide"	Funding		
"We don't have a proper classroom setting to use ICT"	Classroom suitability		

4.10.12 Summary of findings on How ESL teachers perceive the outcomes of the implementation of SBA in Sarawak

The findings reveal that ESL teachers in Sarawak have varied perceptions regarding the outcomes of the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA). Teachers generally acknowledge the potential benefits of SBA in enhancing student learning and assessment practices. They appreciate the benefits SBA offers for student learning, such as more diverse assessment methods and improved engagement. However, they also express concerns about the challenges faced during its implementation. These include issues related to workload, lack of clarity in guidelines, and insufficient training and support. Additionally, teachers highlight the need for more effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders to improve the implementation process. Overall, while recognizing the value of SBA to students, teachers call for better resources, support, and clearer directives to fully realize its benefits in the educational setting.

4.11 Relationship Between the Perceived Antecedents, Transactions, and Outcomes of the Implementation of SBA Among the ESL Teachers in Sarawak

This section analyses the relationship between the perceived antecedents, transactions and outcomes of the implementation of SBA among ESL Teachers in Sarawak. Test of normality is first conducted to assess distribution of data. Then, a correlation analysis using Spearman's rho was conducted to assess the correlation between the antecedent – transaction constructs, antecedent – outcome constructs, and transaction – outcome constructs. Lastly a multiple regression analysis between the independent variables of antecedents and transactions against the dependent variables of outcomes are presented.

4.11.1 Assessing Normality of Antecedents Construct

Visual inspection of the histogram and Q-Q plot for of Antecedents suggests that the data is not normally distributed. The detrended Q-Q plot indicates that the left tail of the distribution is heavier than normal, suggesting negative skewness. However, there is also some indication of a heavier right tail, implying the presence of both negative and positive skewness components.

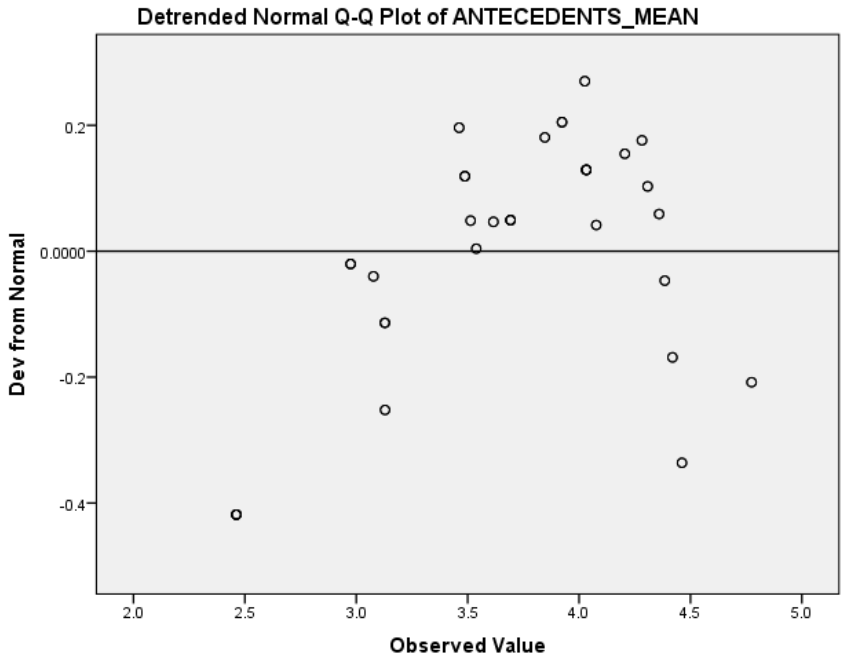


Figure 4.1: Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Antecedents Construct

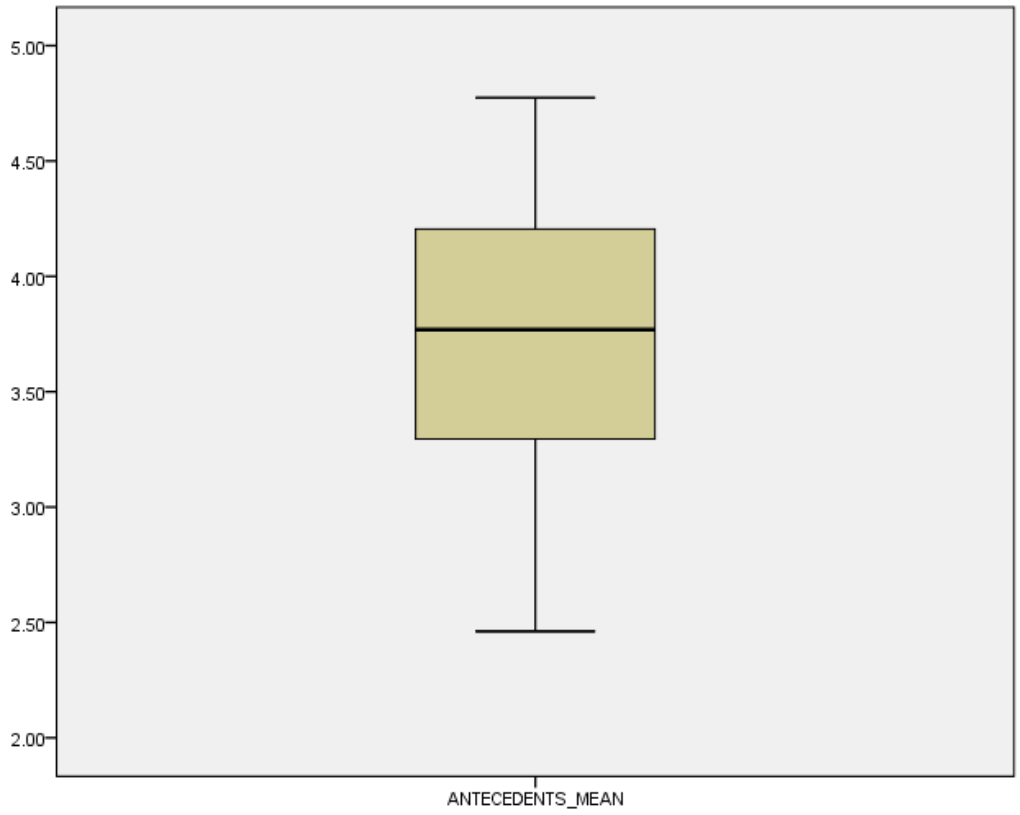


Figure 4.2: Boxplot of Antecedents Construct

The boxplot of ANTECEDENTS_MEAN shows that the data is approximately symmetric, with the median close to the center of the interquartile range (IQR). The whiskers extend to the minimum and maximum values, indicating no outliers, and the spread of the data appears to be relatively consistent within the range of 2.5 to 5.0.

Table 4.36: Tests of Normality for Antecedents Construct

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ANTECEDENTS_MEAN	.115	60	.047	.950	60	.015

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality of the data for the construct 'Antecedents' was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. The Shapiro-Wilk test yielded a statistic of .950, with a significance level of .015. Similarly, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a statistic of .115 with a significance level of .047. Both tests indicated significant deviations from a normal distribution (Shapiro-Wilk: $p = .015$; Kolmogorov-Smirnov: $p = .047$), suggesting that the distribution of scores for 'Antecedents' is not normally distributed.

4.11.2 Assessing Normality of Transactions Construct

Visual inspection of the histogram and Q-Q plot for of Antecedents suggests that the data is not normally distributed. The detrended Q-Q plot of TRANSACTIONS_MEAN shows a heavier left tail with points deviating significantly below the line, suggesting negative skewness. Additionally, there are deviations above the line on the right side, indicating some positive skewness as well.

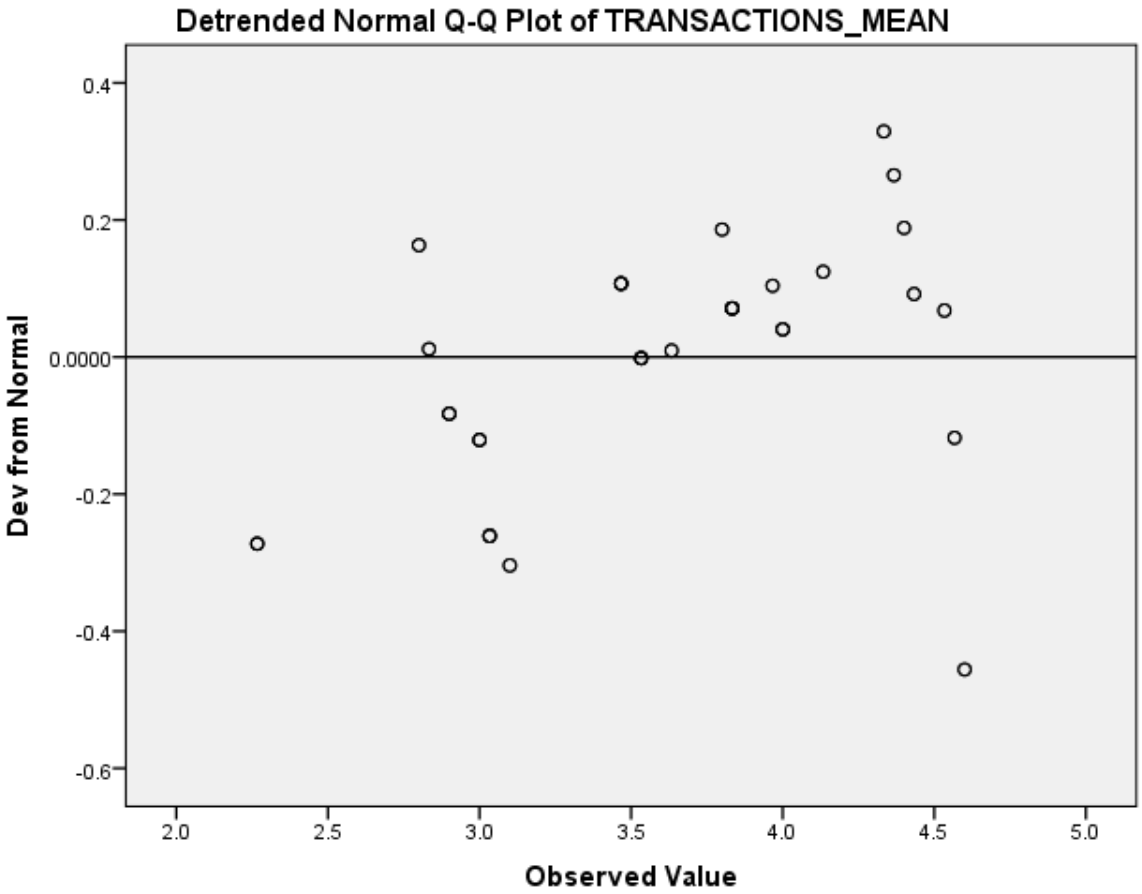


Figure 4.2: Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Transactions Construct

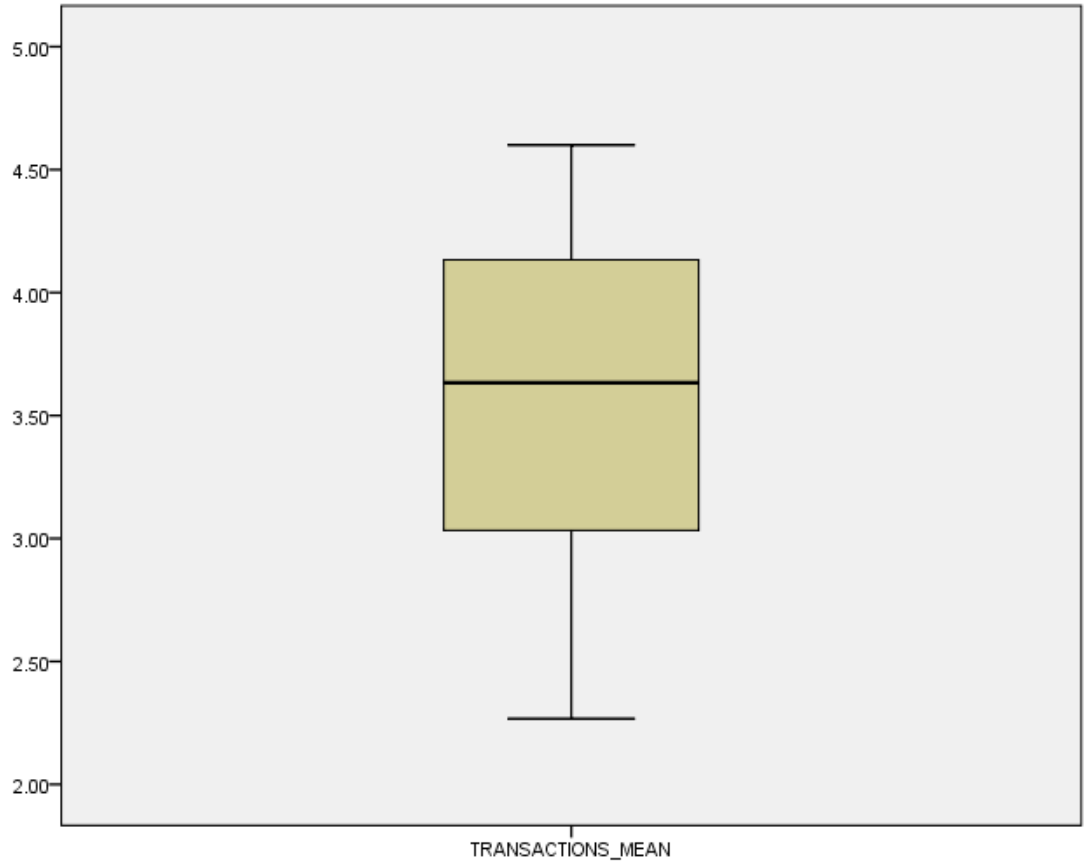


Figure 4.3: Boxplot of Transactions Construct

Table 4.37: Tests of Normality for Transactions Construct

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
TRANSACTIONS_MEAN	.110	60	.067	.950	60	.016

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality of the data for the construct 'Transactions' was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated a significant deviation from normal distribution (W = .950, p = .016), suggesting that the data for 'Transactions' is not normally distributed. However, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test did not

indicate a significant deviation from normality (D = .110, p = .067). Given that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is more accurate with larger datasets, and based on the visual findings of the Q-Q plot, the normality of the data was found to be non-normal.

4.11.3 Assessing Normality of Outcomes Construct

Visual inspection of the histogram and Q-Q plot for of Antecedents suggests that the data is not normally distributed

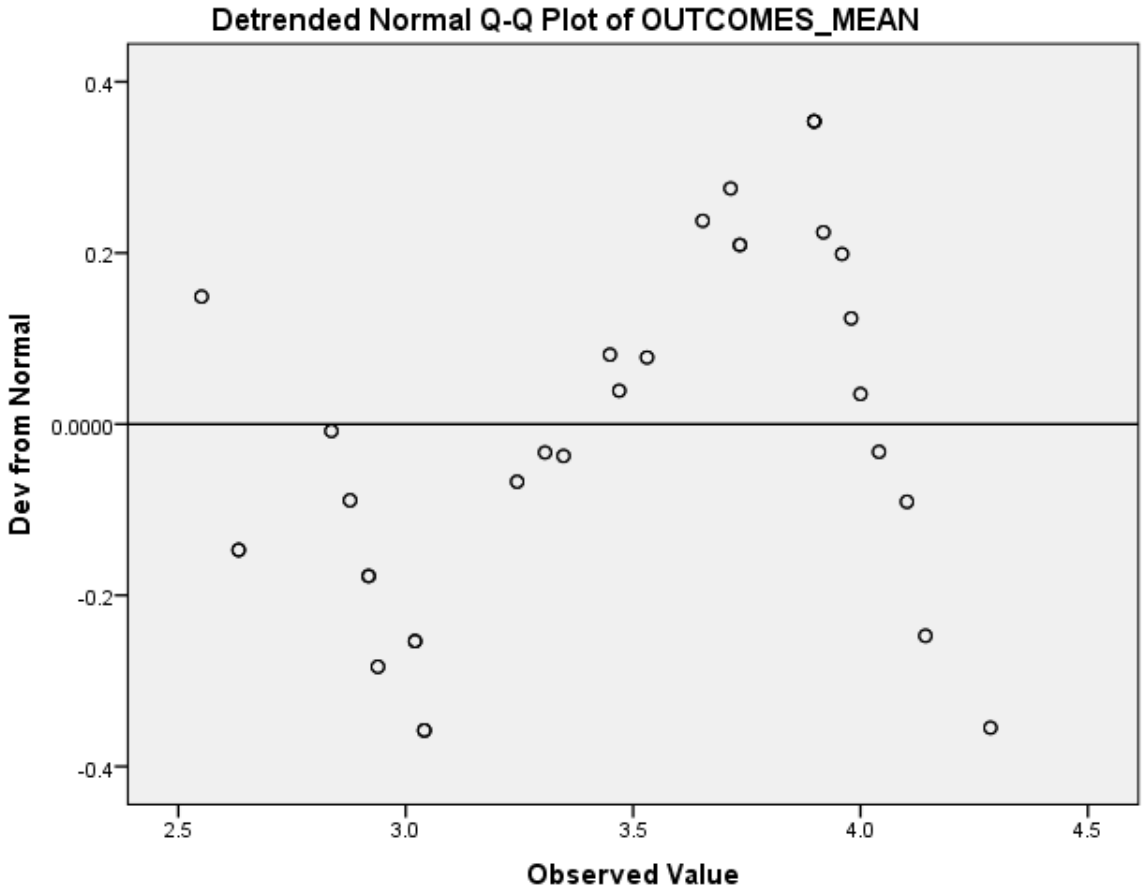


Figure 4.4: Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Outcomes Construct

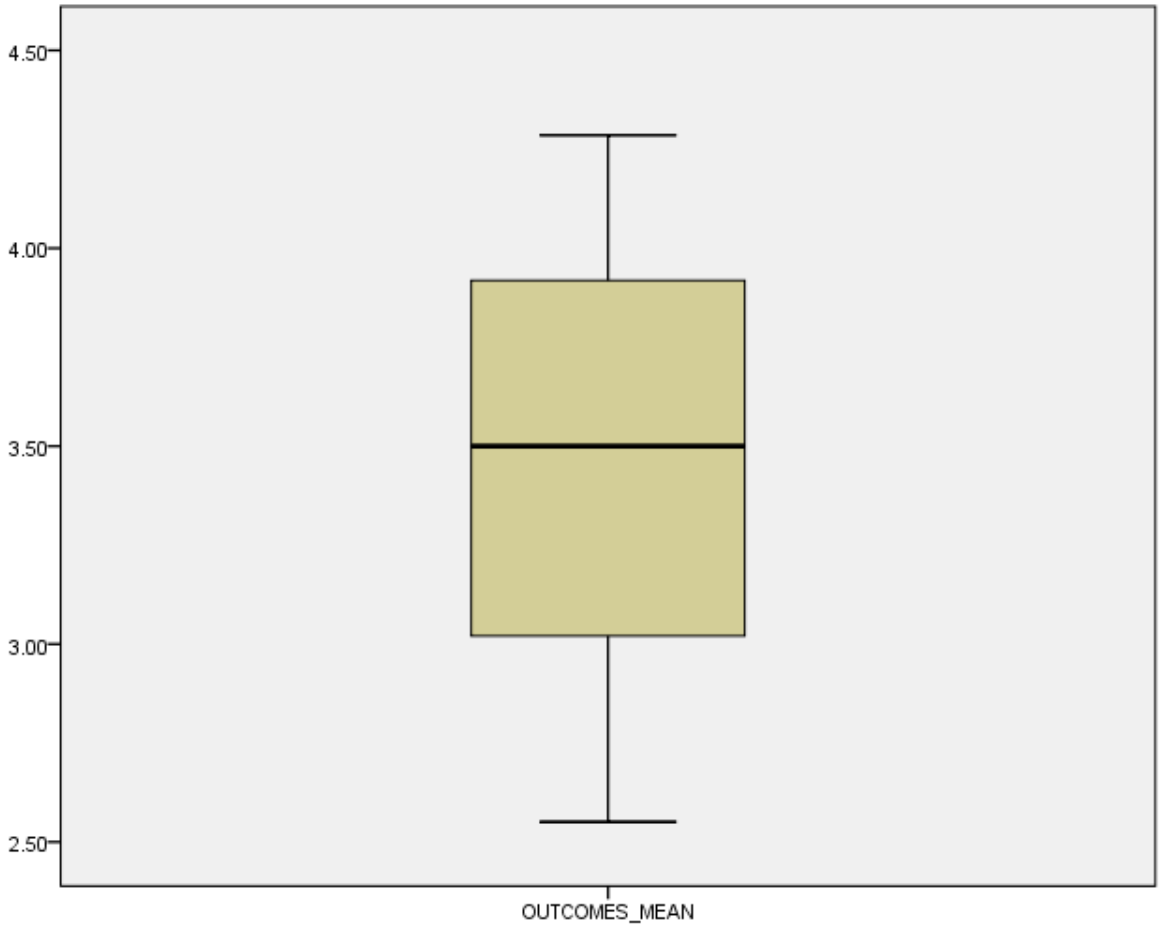


Figure 4.5: Boxplot of Outcomes Construct

The boxplot of OUTCOMES_MEAN indicates that the data is fairly symmetric, with the median located near the center of the interquartile range (IQR). The whiskers extend to the minimum and maximum values, showing no outliers, and the data is evenly spread within the range of 2.5 to 4.5.

Table 4.38: Tests of Normality for Outcomes Construct

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
OUTCOMES_MEAN	.151	60	.002	.936	60	.003

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality of the distribution of scores for the 'Outcomes' construct was evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. The Shapiro-Wilk test revealed a significant deviation from normality ($W = .936$, $p = .003$), suggesting that the data for 'Outcomes' is not normally distributed. Similarly, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test also indicated a significant deviation from a normal distribution ($D = .151$, $p = .002$). Given these results, it can be concluded that the distribution of 'Outcomes' scores significantly differs from a normal distribution.

4.11.4 Analysing the Correlation Between the Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Construct

For the correlation tests between the perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the implementation of SBA among ESL teachers in Sarawak, the hypotheses and null hypotheses can be stated as follows:

1. **Correlation between Antecedents and Transactions:**
    - **Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant correlation between antecedents and transactions. H0: $\rho=0$
    - **Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant correlation between antecedents and transactions. H1: $\rho\neq0$
2. **Correlation between Antecedents and Outcomes:**
    - **Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant correlation between antecedents and outcomes. H0: $\rho=0$
    - **Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant correlation between antecedents and outcomes. H1: $\rho\neq0$
3. **Correlation between Transactions and Outcomes:**

- **Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant correlation between transactions and outcomes. H0: $\rho=0$
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant correlation between transactions and outcomes. H1: $\rho\neq0$

These hypotheses will be tested using Spearman's rho correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the constructs.

Table 4.39: Correlation Analyses Between Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Construct

Correlations

			ANTECEDENTS	TRANSACTIONS	OUTCOMES
Spearman's rho	ANTECEDENTS_MEAN	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.815**	.572**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	60	60	60
	TRANSACTIONS_MEAN	Correlation Coefficient	.815**	1.000	.524**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	60	60	60
	OUTCOMES_MEAN	Correlation Coefficient	.572**	.524**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	60	60	60

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Spearman's rho test was used in this analysis because the normality tests (Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov) for the constructs of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes indicated that the data were not normally distributed. Spearman's rho is a non-parametric test, which does not assume normal distribution of the data, making it more suitable for assessing the correlation between non-normally distributed variables, as in this study (Mujis, 2011). Therefore, Spearman's rho was chosen to evaluate the correlation between the constructs of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes due to its suitability for non-parametric data. The correlation data from the study indicates a significant relationship between the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of the SBA as perceived by ESL teachers in Sarawak. A strong positive correlation (Spearman's rho = .815, $p < .01$) between antecedents and transactions suggests that teachers' knowledge and preparedness (antecedents) are closely linked to their actual practices in administering SBA (transactions). This implies that better understanding and training in SBA theories and practices positively influence the effectiveness of SBA implementation in the classroom.

Similarly, a moderate positive correlation between antecedents and outcomes (Spearman's rho = .572, $p < .01$) and between transactions and outcomes (Spearman's rho = .524, $p < .01$) suggests that both teachers' knowledge and their practical application of SBA in the classroom significantly impact the perceived effectiveness of SBA outcomes. This could be interpreted as indicating that both the theoretical knowledge, training, and practices of SBA by teachers contribute to successful outcomes, such as improved student engagement and student outcomes. Overall, these findings also highlight the importance of comprehensive teacher training in both the theory and practice of SBA to ensure its effective implementation and to achieve the desired educational outcomes.

4.11.5 Regression Analysis of Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Constructs

Table 4.40: Regression Analysis of Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Constructs

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.582[a]	.339	.316	.41825

a. Predictors: (Constant), TRANSACTIONS_MEAN, ANTECEDENTS_MEAN

In the analysis of the relationship between antecedents, transactions, and outcomes, the Model Summary table from the multiple regression output provides insightful metrics. The multiple correlation coefficient, R, is .582, indicating a moderate correlation between the predictors antecedents and transactions and the dependent variable outcomes.

This is further elaborated by the R Square value of .339, suggesting that approximately 33.9% of the variance in the outcomes can be explained by the model. The Adjusted R Square, a more precise measure considering the number of predictors, is .316, indicating that about 31.6% of the variance in outcomes is accounted for, after adjusting for the number of variables in the model. The standard error of the estimate is .41825, which provides an estimate of the typical prediction error.

Table 4.41: ANOVA Analysis of Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Constructs

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.116	2	2.558	14.623	.000[b]
	Residual	9.971	57	.175		
	Total	15.087	59			

a. Dependent Variable: OUTCOMES_MEAN

b. Predictors: (Constant), TRANSACTIONS_MEAN, ANTECEDENTS_MEAN

The ANOVA table shows the overall significance of the regression model. The F-statistic of 14.623 with a significance level of .000 ($p < .05$) strongly suggests that the regression model significantly predicts the outcome variable, meaning the model performs better than if the mean of the outcome was used as a prediction. This significance is pivotal in validating the use of the regression model for interpreting the relationships among the variables.

Table 4.42: Coefficients Analysis of Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes Constructs

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.647	.342		4.821	.000
	ANTECEDENTS	.411	.172	.490	2.388	.020
	TRANSACTIONS	.082	.161	.105	.510	.612

a. Dependent Variable: OUTCOMES_MEAN

The Coefficients table offers a detailed look at the contribution of each predictor. The constant term, or intercept, has a value of 1.647 and is statistically significant ($p = .000$), indicating that the expected mean value of outcomes when all independent variables are zero is significantly different from zero. The predictor antecedents shows a coefficient (B) of .411 and a standardized coefficient (Beta) of .490. This implies that for each one-unit increase in antecedents, outcomes is expected to increase by .411 units, holding other factors constant. The significance value of .020 for antecedents confirms its statistical significance as a predictor. On the other hand, transactions, with a B value of .082 and a Beta of .105, is not a statistically significant predictor of outcomes, as indicated by its significance value of .612.

In summary, the multiple regression analysis reveals that antecedents is a significant predictor of the outcomes of SBA implementation, while transactions does not significantly predict the outcomes. The model explains a moderate proportion of the variance in the outcomes, underscoring the importance of antecedents in the context of SBA implementation.

4.11.6 Summary of the Relationship Between the Perceived Antecedents, Transactions, and Outcomes of the Implementation of SBA Among the ESL Teachers in Sarawak

In the context of this study, the significance of antecedents in predicting the outcomes of SBA implementation suggests that foundational elements such as teachers' prior knowledge, training, and preparedness have a considerable impact on the effectiveness and perceived success of SBA. This aligns with educational theories that emphasize the importance of teacher readiness and competence in the implementation of new pedagogical strategies.

The relatively lower significance of transactions (day-to-day practices of SBA) in predicting outcomes might indicate that while regular practices are essential, they might not be as influential as the foundational antecedent factors. It could suggest that the effectiveness of SBA is more deeply rooted in the initial stages of implementation, such as teacher training and the understanding of SBA principles, rather than the ongoing transactions.

These findings reflect the complex nature of educational change, where the initial conditions and readiness of educators play a pivotal role in determining the success of new

initiatives like SBA. This underscores the need for comprehensive training and support for teachers before and during the implementation of such educational reforms.

4.12 Chapter Review

This chapter presented an extensive analysis of the study's findings based on a survey conducted with 60 teachers from 30 schools in Kuching and Samarahan. It offered insights into teachers' knowledge, practices, and perspectives on implementing School-Based Assessment (SBA). The chapter also highlighted the challenges teachers face in SBA implementation and its perceived impact on student learning in English language, motivation, and engagement.

Additionally, the chapter summarized the qualitative findings, which involved transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed interviews, structured according to Stake's Countenance Model. These findings were segmented into antecedents, transactions, outcomes, and recommendations for improvement. The subsequent chapter will discuss these findings, integrating insights from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses, and conclude with recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview

This chapter interprets and discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4. It begins with an overview of the research, discussion of findings, summary of the research, recommendations for future research, limitations as well as conclusions of the research.

5.2 Summary of the Research Study

The aim of this study was to evaluate the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak from the perspective of English Language teachers using the Stake's Countenance model. A mixed methods research design involving a survey (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) of teachers were used to obtain data for this research.

The study utilized a two-phase approach to data collection, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Initially, quantitative data was garnered through a self-administered questionnaire administered via Google Forms to 60 teachers across 30 schools in Kuching and Samarahan districts of Sarawak. This web-based mode of dissemination was chosen for its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Once consent was obtained from the state education department, school principals, prospective teacher participants were identified by consulting the English department heads. The digital platform presented a dual advantage: it afforded teachers the flexibility and time for thoughtful and

candid responses, and it streamlined data compilation, eliminating the need for physical collection or postal correspondence.

Subsequently, the study employed qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews of 14 teachers. This interview style was specifically chosen to elicit organic responses that help provided further explanation and insights. The discussion of the results of this study are presented below, organized according to the research questions of this study.

5.3 Antecedents of the Introduction of SBA among ESL Teachers in Sarawak

Based on this study, English language teachers' perceptions of the antecedents prior to the implementation of the SBA are diverse and multi-layered. They expressed mixed feelings regarding the cessation of the PMR system, with some reminiscing its fairness due to blind marking. In contrast, others acknowledged the comprehensive benefits of the SBA, noting its ability to offer more than just a final exam and its incorporation of both formative and summative evaluations. Additionally, the empowerment SBA afforded teachers was viewed positively.

However, there was a consensus on the initial challenges posed by the SBA, with younger educators appearing more amenable to its introduction than their senior counterparts. Perhaps they are willing to try new approaches and follow the updated syllabus closely as one teacher suggests: "Younger teachers are more accepting to the new SBA and CEFR-aligned syllabus. They are willing to try to go page by page, activity by activity, and unit by unit." Furthermore, senior teachers often have a longer history with traditional summative assessments and may believe in their effectiveness based on years of experience. This makes them more resistant to change. One teacher explained: "Older teachers... feel

that 'I still need to get my students to score a certain percentage in their exam' and they feel that the only way the students can perform is what is reflected in their results."

A significant concern revolved around the Ministry of Education's communication and guidance on SBA, with teachers highlighting delays in information dissemination, inadequate training sessions, and a general lack of preparedness instilled by their university education. One teacher recalled, "Information was given to us and relayed very slowly and also very suddenly". Novice teachers, in particular, felt ill-equipped due to inadequate training on SBA during their university education: "As a novice teacher at that time I feel that I'm quite lost". Survey results supported these concerns, with 58.3% of teachers feeling neutral about the planning and implementation of SBA training, while only 23.3% agreed that it was well planned. Furthermore, 53.3% of teachers had not attended specific courses or training on SBA implementation, highlighting a gap in professional development.

When juxtaposing the study's findings on the perceptions of English language teachers regarding the antecedents prior to SBA implementation with the existing literature, several commonalities and differences come to the fore. Both the study and literature consistently highlight the challenges posed by of skepticism and apprehension towards its implementation. The skepticism and mistrust expressed by the public, as illuminated by the teachers, align with the documented preference for standardized testing in places like America (Croft et al., 2015) and the reservations voiced by South African teachers and parents as well (Reyneke, 2016). Moreover, regions such as Hong Kong, entrenched in a history of high-stakes testing, confront the intricate task of recalibrating public perceptions to recognize SBA as an authentic measure of student achievement (Davison, 2007).

Issues of practicality emerge as another converging theme. As an example, the teachers in this study's interviews, reveal apprehensions regarding clarity in their roles, the pitfalls of cascading training models, and the challenges posed by large classroom sizes. For instance, 63.3% of teachers expressed concerns about their roles in assessment design. These concerns, echo the narratives from other studies in Malaysia, as well as Thailand, and Hong Kong (Lius & Mahamod, 2021; Ong, 2010; Prapphal, 2008; Davidson, 2007).

The formidable task of balancing increased workloads and judiciously implementing formative assessments, as articulated by the teachers, is also corroborated by findings from Hong Kong (Berry, 2008) and South Africa (The Ministerial Task Team, 2014).

5.3.1 Knowledge and Skills of English Teachers to Effectively Implement SBA

Teachers should understand Bloom's Learning Domains for effective SBA as it provides a structured framework to assess a wide range of student skills. This knowledge enables teachers to design assessments that measure not only factual knowledge but also higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. By aligning assessments with these domains, teachers can ensure a comprehensive evaluation of student learning, cater to diverse learning styles, and facilitate the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for students' academic and personal growth.

Teacher knowledge in lesson planning is also crucial for SBA because it ensures that assessments are seamlessly integrated into the learning process. Effective lesson planning allows teachers to align assessment activities with learning objectives, ensuring that assessments accurately measure students' understanding and skills in relation to the curriculum. Additionally, well-planned lessons facilitate the use of a variety of assessment

methods, catering to different learning styles and needs. This approach not only enhances the reliability and validity of the assessments but also supports differentiated instruction, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in ways that suit their strengths and learning preferences.

Finally, teacher knowledge in assessment design is vital for SBA) as it directly influences the effectiveness and fairness of the assessment process. Skilled teachers can create assessments that accurately measure student learning, align with educational objectives, and provide meaningful feedback for further improvement. This expertise enables the crafting of diverse assessment types, from traditional tests to creative projects, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of students' understanding and skills. Proficient assessment design by teachers is essential for delivering fair, inclusive, and educationally beneficial assessments that genuinely reflect student learning and promote ongoing educational growth.

Based on the analysed data, English teachers in this study appear to possess a substantial foundation of knowledge and skills to effectively implement School-Based Assessments (SBA). The findings also corroborate with Jusoh and Mahamod's (2019) study of Malay teachers, who were highly proficient and clearly understood the implementation of formative assessment in the classroom. Based on the survey, they showcased a robust understanding of various learning domains, particularly the Cognitive domain, where a majority feel proficient (60%). This perceived proficiency indicates their capability to design assessments that test students' thinking and understanding. This is in alignment with Salleh et al. (2019)'s findings which found that Malaysian teachers already have a good understanding of implementing classroom assessment.

In lesson planning, teachers exhibit strong confidence, especially when utilizing the English language syllabus and crafting both general and specific objectives, crucial components for effective SBA. For instance, 46.7% of teachers rated themselves as very proficient in using the syllabus. Furthermore, their adeptness in assessment design is evident. While they excel in creating a table of specifications, outlining instructional content, and framing questions—particularly Multiple-Choice Questions focusing on grammar—they show a slightly diminished confidence in designing listening and speaking components. This suggests that teachers must have a well-planned strategy for preparing for their classes (Khory, et al. 2021).

However, their marked expertise in assembling and reviewing classroom tests, combined with their comfort in developing answer keys and scoring rubrics, signifies their readiness in designing assessments. On the topic of classroom assessments, teachers manifest a slightly higher confidence in administering summative assessments compared to formative ones. Specifically, 55% of teachers feel proficient in administering summative assessments, compared to 61.7% who feel proficient in administering formative assessments. Lastly, while proficient in scoring MCQs and essays, a need for bolstering their statistical skills, particularly in calculating standard deviations, emerges. Only 6.7% of teachers feel very proficient in calculating standard deviations. In summary, English teachers possess a vast array of knowledge and skills for SBA implementation, with a few areas suggesting potential room for further professional development.

This study also found that continuous professional development played an important role in equipping teachers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to effectively implement SBA. However, the effectiveness of these continuous professional development training seems to hinge largely on the delivery method and the competence of the trainers.

Centralized training, especially when conducted by experienced and engaging master trainers, was viewed favourably by participants. Teachers who attended such sessions reported a comprehensive understanding of SBA and found value in the interactive and in-depth nature of the training. Master trainers who went the extra mile, ensuring that concepts were well-understood rather than just presented, made a marked difference in the effectiveness of these sessions.

However, the cascading model of training, where senior teachers or heads of subjects attend centralized training and then relay that information in-house, appears less effective. Several factors contribute to this inconsistency. The duration of the in-house training is often significantly reduced, leading to condensed and sometimes unclear instruction. The effectiveness of the in-house training seems contingent on the aptitude and diligence of the senior teacher delivering it. As noted, some teachers merely glossed over materials or could not answer queries, suggesting either a lack of understanding from the initial training or perhaps a lack of investment in the training process: "Some teachers coming back from courses will just say ‘Okay here’s a pile of notes I got from my training. I will just brief through the main points and the rest I think we all know how to read’". It's also evident that the in-house training environment can be less than optimal, with distracted or disinterested attendees, further diminishing its efficacy. This finding contradicts findings from Omar (2019) who found that teachers have good attitudes and readiness in solving issues of classroom assessment.

An additional concern arises for teachers who miss both centralized and in-house training, particularly due to school scheduling conflicts. These teachers are left without formal instruction, relying on ad-hoc knowledge transfer from colleagues, self-directed learning, or sometimes no guidance at all. Such scenarios are concerning as they risk creating

significant gaps in the understanding and application of SBA: "I moved schools in 2015 and was asked to teach a lower form. I hadn't had any form of training".

While some teachers benefit from robust professional development regarding SBA, others grapple with diluted or absent training. For SBA implementation to be universally effective, there's a pressing need for consistent, high-quality, and universally accessible professional development opportunities for all educators involved.

The findings from this study corroborates, in various aspects, with the prevailing themes in literature regarding the effective implementation SBA by English teachers. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), emphasises the quality of centralized training and the instrumental role of knowledgeable, proficient and engaging master trainers.

A significant concern highlighted in this study on the quality of training through the cascading model of training mirrors the critiques present in Knight (2012) who emphasised the potential pitfalls of such a model, including the risk of watered-down information and inconsistencies in content delivery. The literature, thus, reinforces the study's findings, emphasising that shortened and condensed in-house training sessions may lack the depth and comprehensiveness required for effective SBA implementation (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Furthermore, the teachers' experiences as expressed in the interviews, which indicate discrepancies in the engagement level during professional development sessions, echo findings in literature where Hunzicker (2011) has articulated the nexus between active participation during training and its consequent effectiveness, validating the observations from the interviews.

Additionally, the challenges faced by teachers who didn't receive adequate SBA training—or missed out entirely—are not isolated occurrences. Such concerns over equitable

access to quality professional development are echoed in academic circles, as reflected in the works of Borko (2004).

5.4 ESL Teachers' Perceptions of the Transactions during the SBA Implementation in Sarawak

In the context of SBA implementation in Sarawak, English teachers predominantly rely on Bloom's Cognitive domain in lesson planning, a choice reflecting traditional educational practices and assessment norms. The survey revealed that 65% of surveyed educators find the Cognitive domain more straightforward to integrate (mean score: 3.28). However, the incorporation of Psychomotor and Affective domains is less pronounced, with 61.7% and 58.3% of teachers respectively incorporating these domains only "sometimes" (mean scores: 3.02 and 3.05) highlighting a gap between holistic education ideals and the realities of curricular limitations (Taylor, 2018). this divergence may happen due to the challenges teachers face in assessing and integrating these domains within the standard curriculum. He further explains that many curricula are designed with a heavy emphasis on knowledge and understanding. Teachers have a set amount of content they must cover within a specific timeframe. Introducing activities or lessons that emphasize the Psychomotor or Affective domains might be seen as detracting from the 'essential' content.

The study also found a reliance on the language syllabus for instructional guidance, pointing towards a safety net approach that prioritizes mandatory content coverage. For instance, 46.7% of teachers rated themselves as very proficient in using the syllabus. Yet, teachers express a yearning for greater flexibility in assessment design, aligning with Shepard's (2005) support for teacher autonomy in crafting assessments that truly reflect and enhance learning experiences. She advocates for a learning culture where teachers have more

control and flexibility in crafting assessment that truly reflect and promote learning while Bennet's (2011) study sheds light on potential pitfalls when teachers do not have the autonomy and flexibility to adapt assessments to classroom needs.

Multiple-choice questions, especially those honing in on grammar and reading comprehension, are often used in assessments. For example, 60% of teachers feel proficient in creating MCQs focusing on grammar (mean score: 3.93). Yet, when interviewees were probed further, some expressed reservations. They acknowledged that while MCQs are efficient, they might not fully capture a student's comprehension or analytical prowess. This is also consistent with findings from a study by Roberts (2016) on the effectiveness of MCQs in English language teaching. Interestingly, open-ended questions for listening and speaking skills, although less consistent in their application, were often hailed in interviews as valuable tools for gauging genuine language proficiency.

Formative assessments were frequently used by teachers in this study, with 61.7% feeling proficient in administering these types of assessments (mean score: 3.90). as they indicate its ability to provide immediate feedback. Summative assessments were also employed with 55% of surveyed educators emphasizing their importance in providing students a band to evaluate performance. Teachers reported that essay questions were useful in assessing students but marking them was often time-consuming and subjective. In contrast, though MCQs are regularly employed by teachers, only a minority ventured into deep statistical analyses, often citing a lack of training or resources as barriers. For instance, only 8.3% of teachers feel proficient in calculating standard deviations (mean score: 3.07). This is also common internationally, where teachers often are not trained to conduct statistical analyses of assessment results (Peterson & Mitchell, 2020; Brookhart & Nitko, 2008; Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).

Interviews and surveys in this study showed teachers grappling with merging traditional methods and the more modern, holistic SBA approaches. This included the additional work and the inability to provide meaningful, formative feedback for improvement due to large class sizes and lack of time. Furthermore, teachers reported a significant burden of additional clerical work and challenges in maintaining assessment evidence. They faced issues with the infrastructure needed to conduct assessments effectively, such as functioning power sockets and adequate IT equipment: "We have to handle discipline and have large classes, so formative assessments are difficult to carry out". Literature, meanwhile, underscores the effectiveness of SBAs in language classes, which highlight the importance of individualized feedback and tailored instruction, indicating a broader shift to student-centered learning (Fletcher & Goodman, 2018). This therefore suggests that while educators recognize the merits of holistic, student-centric methods in literature, practical challenges in integration persist.

In sum, while the survey and interviews shed light on current practices and teacher sentiments, contrasting them with literature underscores the gap between ideal practices and on-ground realities, highlighting areas for potential development and support. For instance, despite recognizing the value of student-centered methods, 43.3% of teachers felt only neutral about the sufficiency of the SBA training they received, indicating a need for more robust and comprehensive professional development programs.

5.5 ESL Teachers' Perceptions of the Outcomes of the Implementation of SBA in Sarawak

Based on both the quantitative and qualitative data, the overall perception of the outcomes in the implementation of SBA in Sarawak are both diverse and insightful. Firstly,

there's evident optimism about the competence of colleagues in implementing SBA. 61.7% of respondents believe that their peers possess the necessary knowledge, expertise, and confidence to adeptly execute SBA practices.

Teachers also believe that with SBA, there is a decline in the emphasis on centralized testing, however, 36.7% of teachers still believe that educators primarily "teach to the test." Moreover, 25% of respondents still feel that students continue to rely on memorization techniques.

In terms of English language learning, 86.7% of teachers believe SBA grants students increased opportunities for language proficiency assessment, with a corresponding high mean score of 4.23. Regarding assessment practices post-SBA adoption, the shift towards a less examination-centric approach is notable. Earl (2013) however, suggests that while formative assessments can offer invaluable insights into student learning, there's a risk of them becoming frequent, perfunctory exercises that distract from teaching.

Next, teachers feel confident and proficient in preparing and conducting assessments for various language skills, with mean scores ranging from 3.15 to 3.58. However, based on the interviews, concern remains on the practicalities of in-class assessment practices. Teachers express the inherent challenges of conducting assessments within the classroom setting, emphasizing the difficulty they face in managing such tasks. Furthermore, there's a notable tension between the need to complete the curriculum and the frequent conduct of formative assessments, a sentiment echoed by a teacher who admits that formative assessment practices have yet to become a habit for them.

Classroom sizes and their implications emerge as a significant concern, as well. Teachers who manage larger classrooms express reservations about their capacity to fairly

and thoroughly assess every student. A teacher's candid observation, questioning how equal time can be given for assessment when managing a class of 44 students, poignantly captures this sentiment. Concerns about class sizes and their implications on assessments are also prevalent in literature. Large class sizes, as Wiliam & Black (1996) suggest, can make it challenging for teachers to offer personalized feedback, thus potentially undermining the efficacy of formative assessments.

This study has observed a shift towards prioritizing feedback, with teachers adopting both oral and written feedback methods. Group feedback seems to be the prevalent approach, though teachers have also expressed the need to provide individualized feedback occasionally. The evident shift towards prioritizing feedback is consistent with current educational research emphasizing the critical role of feedback in student learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The balance between group and individual feedback reflects the literature's advocacy for varied feedback methods tailored to student needs (Brookhart, 2008).

Teachers through the interviews have also raised issues of fairness and reliability in SBA marking and assessing practices. While 46.7% feel recognized for adept SBA implementation, there's a notable variance in experiences concerning moderation sessions and internal SBA moderators. Ethical concerns therefore arise, where some educators voice apprehensions about potential inconsistencies in marking, particularly when a teacher's language proficiency or biasness might inadvertently affect grading accuracy. The fear that a few assessments might be unfairly graded but might remain unnoticed underscores these concerns. Klenowski (2009) argues that, while SBAs offer a more holistic view of student performance, they also come with challenges of consistency and potential bias. However,

this remains an assertion of probability, as ethical practices during marking appear to be followed, with no reported instances of unethical behavior.

The data also highlights an environment of collaboration and collegiality among English teachers. A majority (63.3% and 58.3% respectively, with means above 3.5) affirm that discussions regarding SBA often take place. According to Baird et al. (2017), collaborative environments foster better SBA practices while a shared understanding and collaborative inquiry into assessment can bolster the consistency and effectiveness of SBA.

Teachers also reported high mean scores of 4.13 and 4.02 for record-keeping and evidence report preparations but these tasks are additional responsibilities with some teachers citing it as an extra workload. The added workload resonates with the literature suggesting that while SBAs can be more informative, they might also be more demanding (Harlen, 2005). Additionally, Stiggins (2002) and Black & Wiliam (2009), highlights that teachers' abilities to interpret and utilize assessment information are crucial for successful SBA implementation.

Lastly, teachers have noted that the technological infrastructure supporting this process isn't always dependable, as teachers lament about slow server connections hindering the efficient keying in of marks. The need for robust technological infrastructure to support SBAs has also been emphasized by various researchers (Tierney, 2013). In summary, while the SBA implementation is being embraced positively by teachers, it's also interspersed with reservations and practical challenges.

5.5.1 Challenges faced by English Language Teachers in Effectively Implementing SBA

Based on the provided findings from both surveys and interviews, English Language Teachers face a multitude of challenges when effectively implementing SBA. One of the most prominent challenges identified is the additional workload teachers face outside the realm of classroom instruction. The requirement for extensive paperwork, whether it's for school management, after-meeting minutes, or evidence of classroom and extracurricular activities, exerts significant pressure on educators. Interviews highlighted the bureaucratic nature of tasks such preparing textbook handouts, attending and conducting training sessions, and even preparing classroom decorations. Such clerical tasks are seen as detracting from the core purpose of teaching and can cause fatigue and reduced motivation. One teacher noted, "We have to handle discipline and have large classes, so formative assessments are difficult to carry out". Thus, the teachers' concerns about excessive non-teaching duties resonate with the findings of Kyriacou (2001). He indicated that teacher stress is a significant issue, with administrative burdens being a leading factor contributing to teacher burnout and decreased job satisfaction.

Secondly, the size of the classes taught significantly impacts the teacher's ability to effectively carry out SBA. Larger class sizes, particularly in urban schools, make it challenging to manage students, especially when the curriculum demands interactive tasks like speaking exercises. As the interviewees pointed out, conducting formative assessment activities can become noisy, unwieldy, and hard to control, more so when classes have students with disciplinary issues. Both class noise and the physical inability to facilitate group activities due to space constraints are pressing concerns highlighted in this study.

Blatchford, Bassett, and Brown (2005) found that class size plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of student engagement and active participation and thus large classes can be an impediment to language teaching and learning.

A clear challenge that emerges from the surveys and interviews was the inconsistency in the availability of essential resources across schools. While some schools are equipped adequately, many lack fundamental resources like LCD projectors, functional power sockets, and even basic stationery like mahjong papers and markers. For instance, 40% of teachers mentioned that their schools lack sufficient resources for effective SBA implementation. As two teachers in this study elucidate, the absence of such resources not only inhibits the effective conduction of assessments but also places an additional burden on teachers. The need to carry personal equipment, go through the hassle of booking shared resources, and plan efficiently on moving students to computer labs. Furthermore, the condition of existing equipment, as one interviewee mentions, can be compromised due to student vandalism or poor maintenance. The lack of necessary physical resources and appropriate ICT infrastructure, as expressed by the teachers, is not unique to this context. Warschauer (2004) has emphasized how a lack of technological tools, particularly in language instruction, can hinder SBA implementation. Furthermore, the challenges of setting up and accessing technology reflect the broader issues of technological equity and access in schools, as discussed by Selwyn (2013).

Lastly, while not directly a challenge, the perceptions and trust levels of parents, students, and the broader public play a significant role in how SBA is received. Based on the interviews, teachers feel that they are under pressure to ensure their assessments meet the expectations and trust levels of these stakeholders, which can add to the stress of the implementation process. One teacher highlighted, "Parents also question teachers who mark

their own student's test papers [especially] when they give high marks". Thus, relational trust among school stakeholders is important as Bryk and Schneider (2002) argue that trust forms the foundation for meaningful educational reforms and initiatives while Fullan (2001) asserts that trust from parents and other stakeholders towards teachers significantly affects their commitment and effectiveness in teaching in the classroom.

5.5.2 English Language Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Current Implementation of SBA on Student Learning and Educational Outcomes

The study's findings suggest that SBA has a largely positive influence on student learning and engagement, especially in the context of English language learning. From the survey, many teachers observed increased student engagement, reduced focus on rote memorization, more authentic use of language, and an overall decrease in assessment-associated stress. Specifically, 61.7% of teachers reported that SBA reduces the pressure on students compared to traditional public examinations. Based on the interviews, teachers have mentioned that the mix of both in-class and final assessment balances the stress of students when it comes to high stakes testing. This shift towards more formative, classroom-based evaluations aligns with a number of studies which highlight the benefits of SBA. Literature consistently emphasizes the potential of SBA in fostering deeper, more meaningful learning, as it encourages students to engage with content more authentically and reduces the 'teach to the test' mentality prevalent in many educational settings (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Harlen, 2007).

The survey in this study also noted that 55% of teachers believed students to be more engaged and interested in learning through SBA activities. The interviewees also noted a shift in their own teaching from drilling and teaching to the test to a more active and

meaningful learning environment instead. Students have become more proactive, participating more in class activities and taking initiatives in projects or discussions. One teacher observed, "Students have become more proactive, participating more in class activities and taking initiatives in projects or discussions". However, the noted positive outcomes in this study, such as increased student participation, motivation, and a move away from purely exam-oriented teaching, contrast with some research which suggests that SBA can sometimes lead to superficial learning if not properly implemented. These studies argue that without clear guidelines and proper teacher training, SBA might not always achieve its intended outcomes (Buhagiar, 2007).

On the other hand. the survey findings that 70% of teachers felt the feedback derived from SBA was more meaningful and valuable for students' ongoing academic enhancement is consistent with literature that champions formative assessment's role in providing timely, actionable feedback to learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Feedback in such contexts is presented not merely as a post-exam formality but as an integral component of the learning journey.

Interestingly, while many teachers interviewed in the study believed that SBA reduced assessment-related stress and anxiety for students, there was a mixed response regarding nervousness and anxiety from literature. Some literature supports the idea that SBA can indeed reduce stress since students are assessed in a more familiar environment and often by their own teachers (Looney, 2011). However, other research warns of the potential bias, pressure, and anxiety that can arise from teacher-led assessments, as students might feel a need to consistently perform well in front of familiar faces, which could in turn distort the genuine representation of their skills (Broadfoot et al., 1990).

The sentiments expressed by teachers in the interviews, particularly regarding the evolution of teaching practices and student attitudes over time, mirrors literature that points to the need for an adjustment period when transitioning to new assessment methods. One teacher remarked, "Initially, it was difficult to accept, but over time, students acquired more skills". The idea that initial resistance gives way to acceptance and appreciation over time, once the benefits of SBA become clear, resonates with studies that discuss the importance of persistence and ongoing support in the face of initial skepticism or resistance (Earl, 2013).

5.6 Understanding the Relationship Between the Perceived Antecedents, Transactions and Outcomes of the Implementation of SBA among ESL Teachers in Sarawak

The relationship between the perceived antecedents, transactions, and outcomes of School-Based Assessment (SBA) implementation among English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Sarawak offers an interesting dynamic of educational policy and practice. The analysis conducted explored the interconnections between the readiness of teachers (antecedents), their practical application of SBA in classroom settings (transactions), and the resulting effectiveness of SBA implementation (outcomes).

To unravel these complex relationships, the study utilized Spearman's rho for correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, acknowledging the non-normal distribution of the data. These statistical analyses helped to provide insights on the relationships of these three key constructs of the study.

Findings showed a significant positive correlation between antecedents and transactions ($\rho=.815$, $p<.01$), indicating that teachers' theoretical knowledge robustly informs their practical application of SBA. Furthermore, moderate positive correlations were

observed between antecedents and outcomes (ρ=.572,p<.01) and between transactions and outcomes (p=.524,p<.01), suggesting a meaningful impact of both knowledge and practice on the effectiveness of SBA.

In the regression analysis, antecedents emerged as significant predictors of successful outcomes, highlighting the foundational importance of teacher preparedness, training, and knowledge in implementing SBA. This suggests a paradigm where the groundwork laid by teacher education is more predictive of SBA success than the day-to-day transactions in the classroom.

Supporting this perspective, Avalos (2011) emphasizes the evolving nature of teacher professional development and its critical impact on reform implementation, paralleling our findings on the importance of antecedents. Timperley (2011) also underscores the transformative power of professional learning, which aligns with the observed correlation between teacher readiness and SBA outcomes in our study. The connection between theoretical understanding and practical application, as highlighted by our analysis, resonates with Korthagen's (2017) advocacy for integrative approaches in teacher education. Additionally, the work of Opfer and Pedder (2011) on the dynamics of teacher learning provides a framework for understanding the observed relationships between transactions and outcomes in our study. In the broader context of educational outcomes, the insights of Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), and Wiliam (2016) on the influence of teacher learning and leadership on student achievement echo our findings on the impact of teacher practices on SBA effectiveness.

The study’s findings, in comparison to literature, call for a reevaluation of teacher training programs, especially in the context of SBA. It suggests a more holistic approach to

teacher education, one that not only imparts theoretical knowledge but also focuses on the practical application of these theories in classroom settings. This approach aligns with contemporary views on professional development, advocating for a more integrated and reflective practice, as suggested by Korthagen (2017). Moreover, the moderate correlations between transactions and outcomes point to the necessity of ongoing support and development for teachers, even after the initial training phase, to ensure the effective application of SBA strategies.

In conclusion, this detailed analysis, supported by literature, underscores the critical role of foundational teacher training and readiness in the successful implementation of SBA among ESL teachers in Sarawak. The study advocates for a comprehensive and continuous teacher training. This strategy should aim to equip teachers not only with the necessary theoretical knowledge but also with the practical skills to apply these theories effectively, thereby ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of innovative educational approaches like SBA.

5.7 Implications of the study

This research seeks to underscore the significance of effectively implementing School-Based Assessment (SBA) by illuminating its current status of implementation in schools across two Sarawak education districts. The intention is to enlighten policymakers, educational institutions, educators, and researchers about the vital aspects of SBA implementation. This study has aimed to bring the research data and findings to the attention of all stakeholders. The theoretical, methodological and practical implications are presented in this section.

5.7.1 Theoretical Implications

Stake's Countenance Model (1967) offers a unique structure focusing on antecedents (pre-existing conditions), transactions (processes and interactions), and outcomes (results of the said processes). By applying this model to evaluate the implementation of SBA in Sarawak, this study was able to capture the complexities of implementation. The study has demonstrated the credibility of Stake's theory in accurately assessing the conditions of implementation, pre, while and post, of a particular policy or practice thus suggesting its usefulness and applicability to assess diverse educational contexts and situations.

Secondly, when teachers are faced with the implementation of SBA in the classroom, they come with personal beliefs, experiences, and expectations. By using Stake's model, there is an opportunity to systematically examine these perceptions against the backdrop of actual implementation processes (transactions) and results (outcomes). The model has revealed whether teachers' anticipations (antecedents) align with their actual experiences and the realized outcomes. Such insights could drive a deeper understanding of the myriad factors influencing teacher responses to assessment reforms.

Furthermore, Stake's model, with its emphasis on transactions, champions the idea that the means are as critical as the ends. Traditional assessment evaluations on the other hand often prioritize outcomes, sometimes at the expense of understanding the intricate processes leading to them. From this study's context, the use of Stake's model has shed light on the myriad classroom interactions, teaching methods, and informal assessments that cumulatively influence the formal SBA outcomes. Such a holistic view could push theorists and practitioners alike to value and optimize the learning process as much as the final results.

Lastly, the insights gained from applying Stake's model in this study can serve as a valuable case study for other districts and states and even countries. Findings here can serve as a reference point to other contexts and the same process of investigation can be replicated elsewhere saving time and effort for designing new research designs and processes.

5.7.2 Methodological Implications

The utilization of Stake's Countenance Model in conjunction with a mixed-methods approach significantly enhanced the evaluation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) implementation in Sarawak. By incorporating both surveys and interviews, this study effectively balanced the breadth of quantitative data with the depth of qualitative insights. The survey, encompassing responses from 60 teachers, offered a wide lens to understand general perceptions and trends, contributing to the model's outcome component. Concurrently, the interviews with 14 teachers provided detailed, context-specific understandings, aligning with the transactional aspect of Stake's model. The use of both quantitative and qualitative data enabled triangulation, strengthening the validity of the findings. This methodological triangulation, as outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), ensured a more comprehensive and accurate representation of the SBA's impact.

The congruence observed in data from both surveys and interviews presents a more reliable picture of SBA's implementation, offering diverse perspectives from teachers across Kuching and Samarahan. This approach highlights the efficacy of combining quantitative breadth with qualitative depth in educational research, as advocated by researchers like Greene (2007), Cresswell (2014) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), who emphasize the value of mixed-methods in enhancing research validity and comprehensiveness.

5.7.3 Practical Implications and Recommendations

Firstly, this study has provided practical implications in terms of teacher training and continuous professional development. One of the key takeaways is the difference in effectiveness of centralized versus in-house training. As Joyce and Showers (2002) articulate in their work on student achievement via staff development, the modality of professional development can significantly influence its transfer to classroom practice. Their investigations echo the experiences of the teachers in this study, where centralised training seemed to offer more comprehensive and clear directives to teachers attending.

A pertinent concern raised in the interviews is the contrast between the depth and duration of centralised training versus in-house versions. The effectiveness of training often correlates with its duration, as longer training sessions allow a deeper focus into content and more extensive practice for participants. Desimone (2009) posits that the duration of professional development is one of its core features that directly affect its effectiveness.

Moreover, the quality of trainers emerged as a pivotal element. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) emphasize the importance of content expertise in trainers, reflecting the sentiments of the interviewed teachers who found greater clarity and engagement with knowledgeable master trainers.

Nevertheless, the continuous professional development (CPD) of educators remains important, as it not only enhances their teaching skills but also fosters an environment of lifelong learning (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Teachers who were unable to attend any form of training felt left behind, which underscores the necessity of regular, accessible CPD opportunities. For school management, this translates into investing in ongoing well

designed professional development sessions that equip teachers with the skills to implement SBA effectively, in line with the views of Fletcher & Goodman (2018).

Additionally, to minimize the limitations of the cascading approach, which has often been ineffective, schools can leverage modern technologies such as AI, MOOCs, and non-face-to-face (non-F2F) delivery methods. These tools can provide flexible, scalable, and high-quality professional development opportunities. AI can personalize training to meet individual teacher needs (Chaipidech, Srisawasdi, Kajornmanee, and Chaipah, 2022), while MOOCs offer comprehensive courses that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, ensuring that all teachers receive consistent and thorough training (Ashakumari, 2016). Non-F2F methods, such as virtual workshops and webinars, can bridge the gap in continuous training without the constraints of physical attendance, ensuring wider reach and engagement.

Secondly, this study has found that teachers predominantly use Bloom's Cognitive domain in lesson planning, largely due to its alignment with traditional teaching and assessment methods. The underutilization of Psychomotor and Affective domains indicates the need for training and resources to help educators integrate these domains. Practical challenges, such as curriculum constraints highlighted by Taylor (2018), must be addressed so educators can adopt a more holistic approach to teaching and assessment. For policymakers, this suggests a pivot towards a more comprehensive educational model that encapsulates all facets of Bloom’s taxonomy.

The study shows a tension between the acknowledged benefits of holistic SBA approaches and the challenges in their actual implementation. Fletcher and Goodman (2018) tout the merits of SBA in fostering student-centered learning. However, this research indicates on-ground realities, such as large class sizes and limited time, often hinder ideal

practices. This could mean the school management to consider reducing student numbers per class, deploying additional teaching assistants, or leveraging technology to aid personalized assessment.

Teachers must also strike a balance between the effective feedback for formative learning and the time required to do so. While formative assessments are prevalent, their frequency might detract from core teaching time, a concern emphasized by Earl (2013). The focus on feedback, both group and individualized, reflects Hattie and Timperley's (2007) and Brookhart's (2008) emphasis on its role in enhancing student learning. Nevertheless, large class sizes, as discussed by Wiliam & Black (1996), may compromise the quality of feedback.

The sense of collaboration among English teachers in this study, with many engaging in SBA discussions, reiterates Baird et al.'s (2017) emphasis on collaborative environments fostering effective SBA practices. By fostering a culture of collaboration, teachers can share best practices and address mutual challenges more effectively. This may involve organising regular team meetings, workshops, or establishing platforms where teachers can share their experiences and best practices related to SBA.

5.8 Limitations of the Study

While this study has provided comprehensive study using a mixed methods approach in examining the implementation of SBA and the perceptions of teachers in 2 districts in Sarawak, there are a number of limitations identified which may guide suggestions for further research. Firstly, using Stake's Countenance Model to evaluate SBA through teachers' perspectives may not fully capture the multifaceted nature of the implementation. The study's focus on English teachers was thorough, but however, excludes other subjects,

limiting a comprehensive understanding across the curriculum. While the focus of the study was to provide a perspective from the teacher's viewpoint, the exclusion of other stakeholders like students, parents, and officials narrows the scope, potentially leading to a singular, teacher-centric viewpoint. Geographically, the study is confined to two districts in Sarawak, which may not represent the entire state's experience. Finally, the reliance on predominantly Western literature could skew the contextual understanding in an Asian setting (Nguyen, 2016). These limitations suggest the need for broader, more inclusive research approaches in future studies.

5.9 Suggestions for Future Research

The limitations identified in this study pave the way for several avenues of future research in the area of SBA. While the focus of the present study was on the teachers, expanding the scope of research to include varied stakeholders such as school administrators, students, parents, and ministry officials would offer a more comprehensive understanding of SBA's implementation and impact.

In addition, the present study focused on a single state i.e. Sarawak in East Malaysia, comparative studies across different regions, including urban and rural areas, as well as between Peninsular and East Malaysia, could illuminate broader trends and best practices in SBA.

Also, longitudinal research is crucial for observing the evolution of SBA practices and teacher attitudes over time. At the same time, enhancing the sample size by including more districts and stakeholders in the research would contribute to more diverse and representative findings.

Additionally, future studies could focus on the effectiveness of professional development sessions, exploring how they impact teacher practices and student outcomes. Investigating the effects of feedback methods on student performance and well-being could also provide valuable insights into optimising SBA practices.

5.10 Conclusion

The study of School-Based Assessment (SBA) practices among English teachers in two districts of Sarawak has provided invaluable insights into the landscape of assessment practices in teaching and learning. Through a theoretical framework utilising Stake's Countenance Model and a mixed method approach employing surveys and interviews, this study has unveiled the intricacies, challenges, and aspirations that define the implementation of SBA in English language classrooms in Sarawak.

A key revelation from this study was the teachers' reliance on the language syllabus for teaching and learning. The syllabus, seen as a safety net, highlights the tension between adhering to curriculum demands and the desire for pedagogical freedom. This reliance is further evident in assessment design, teachers continue to use the table of specifications and instructional content outlines, yet desiring among educators' greater autonomy and flexibility in assessment design.

Interestingly, while formative assessments have become a mainstay in classrooms due to their ability to provide immediate feedback, the challenge of large classroom sizes poses significant constraints on their effective implementation. Literature corroborates this, emphasizing the efficacy of SBAs in language classes, further underlining the need for a broader shift towards student-centered learning.

Practical implications drawn from the study resonate with the broader educational discourse. They serve as a call for educators, policymakers, and school management to facilitate a more holistic, practical, and supportive environment for teachers navigating the complexities of SBA. Simultaneously, this study has illuminated areas of contention and concern, especially regarding technological infrastructure, assessment biases, and the potential pitfalls of an overwhelming focus on formative assessment at the expense of holistic learning.

In terms of policy and school management, the study's findings underscore the necessity for more streamlined training programs, improved technological support, and perhaps most importantly, a revisitation of classroom size standards, which directly impacts assessment effectiveness. However, as with any comprehensive study, limitations persist. From its geographical scope to the participant demographic and methodological constraints, these limitations offer pathways for future research, urging a deeper, more holistic exploration of SBA practices globally.

A significant part of this study involved examining the intended versus observed outcomes of the SBA implementation. Stake's countenance model, which was employed in this study, emphasizes the comparison between intended and observed outcomes at varying levels of operation. This model is unique in its ability to differentiate between intentional and observational accounts, providing a basis for judging the success of SBA within individual contexts and allowing for the recording of unintended outcomes.

The intended outcomes of SBA include enhancing student engagement, fostering a more active and meaningful learning environment, and reducing reliance on traditional, exam-oriented teaching methods. The aim was to shift towards student-centered learning,

where students actively participate in their education through projects, discussions, and continuous assessments.

The observed outcomes, as noted by the teachers in this study, indicated that students became more engaged and proactive in their learning. Teachers reported a noticeable shift from drilling and teaching to the test towards creating a more dynamic classroom environment. Students participated more in class activities and took initiatives in their projects. However, despite these positive outcomes, there were challenges noted in achieving the full potential of SBA. Some teachers expressed concerns that without clear guidelines and proper training, SBA could sometimes lead to superficial learning rather than deep, meaningful engagement.

In conclusion, this study has provided key insights to the evolving nature of English language teaching and assessment. It highlights the need for an educational ecosystem that not only acknowledges the complexities of modern pedagogical practices but actively strives to bridge the gap between the ideal and the practical. As English language education continues to grow and develop in Malaysia, it is clear that SBA will be a defining feature, warranting continued exploration, understanding, and adaptation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Support from Faculty of Language and Communication

Fakulti Bahasa dan Komunikasi
Faculty of Language and Communication

UNIMAS/NC-28/.02/04-01 Jld 4 (05)

25 Januari 2019

KEPADA SESIAPA YANG BERKENAAN

Dengan segala hormatnya, perkara di atas dirujuk.

Dimaklumkan bahawa **Hugh John Leong Yik Kuan (871214-13-5853)** adalah pelajar pascasiswazah UNIMAS **(No Matrik: 18010018)** dan akan menjalankan penyelidikan peringkat Pengajian Doktor Falsafah dalam bidang Linguistik Terapan. Tajuk tesis beliau ialah, *'An Evaluation of the Implementation and Perceptions of English Teachers on the School Based Assessment System in Sarawak, Malaysia.'*

Sehubungan dengan itu, pihak kami memohon kerjasama daripada pihak tuan/puan bagi menjayakan penyelidikan beliau.

Sekian, terima kasih.

Yang benar,

Malia Taibi
Timbalan Dekan Penyelidikan dan Siswazah

MSC-Status

94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, MALAYSIA | Tel + 60 82 581 750 | Fax + 60 82 581 781

www.unimas.my

Appendix B: Application Submission to Educational Research Application System, Ministry of Education Malaysia

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA
BAHAGIAN PERANCANGAN DAN PENYELIDIKAN DASAR PENDIDIKAN
ARAS 1 - 4 BLOK E8, KOMPLEKS KERAJAAN PARCEL E
PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN
62604 PUTRAJAYA

TEL : 03 - 8884 6591
FAKS : 03 - 8884 6579

BORANG BPPDP 2(A)

Pengarah
Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
Aras 1-4, Blok E8
Kompleks Kerajaan Parcel E
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62604 Putrajaya

BAHAGIAN A : Maklumat Diri Penyelidik

1. Nama Penyelidik (seperti dalam KP)	HUGH JOHN LEONG YIK KUAN
2. No. Kad Pengenalan	
3. Nama Institusi	UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
4. Tajuk Kajian	An Evaluation of the Implementation and Perceptions of English Teachers on The School Based Assessment System in Sarawak, Malaysia

5. Dengan ini saya **HUGH JOHN LEONG YIK KUAN** (NO.KP :
mengaku bahawa saya akan mematuhi segala syarat yang ditetapkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. Saya memberi jaminan bahawa satu naskhah laporan / disertasi / tesis yang berkenaan akan dihantar kepada Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan melalui Ketua Jabatan / Fakulti saya selepas kajian ini selesai di-jalankan.

Tandatangan Penyelidik

Tarikh : 1/2/2019

BAHAGIAN B : Untuk diisi oleh Penyelia (bagi pelajar kolej dan universiti) atau Ketua Jabatan (Kajian Am dan Lain-lain)

Saya Soubakeavathi Rethinasamy telah (menyemak / ~~tidak menyemak~~)
kertas cadangan dan instrumen kajian pemohon ini.

Permohonan ini : ☑ Disokong ☐ Tidak Disokong

Ulasan (jika ada) :

Penyelidik telah membuat pengakuan bahawa satu naskhah laporan/disertasi / tesis yang berkenaan akan dihantar kepada Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan melalui Ketua Jabatan / Fakulti selepas kajian ini selesai dijalankan.

Tandatangan Penyelia/Ketua Jabatan

Tarikh : 1/2/2019

Nama : Soubakeavathi Rethinasamy
Cap Rasmi :

Dr Soubakeavathi Rethinasamy
Associate Professor
Faculty of Language and Communication
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

Appendix C: Approval from Ministry of Education Malaysia

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA
BAHAGIAN PERANCANGAN DAN PENYELIDIKAN DASAR PENDIDIKAN
ARAS 1-4, BLOK E8
KOMPLEKS KERAJAAN PARCEL E
PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN
62604 PUTRAJAYA

TEL : 0388846591
FAKS : 0388846579

Ruj. Kami : KPM.600-3/2/3-eras(3807)
Tarikh : 9 April 2019

HUGH JOHN LEONG YIK KUAN
NO. KP : 871214135853

901, LORONG B, JALAN STUTONG, TAMAN BDC
KUCHING 93350 KUCHING
SARAWAK

Tuan,

KELULUSAN UNTUK MENJALANKAN KAJIAN DI SEKOLAH, INSTITUT PENDIDIKAN GURU, JABATAN PENDIDIKAN NEGERI DAN BAHAGIAN DI BAWAH KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

Perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa permohonan tuan untuk menjalankan kajian seperti di bawah telah diluluskan.

" An Evaluation of the Implementation and Perceptions of English Teachers on The School Based Assessment System in Sarawak, Malaysia "

3. Kelulusan adalah berdasarkan kepada kertas cadangan penyelidikan dan instrumen kajian yang dikemukakan oleh tuan kepada bahagian ini. Walau bagaimanapun kelulusan ini bergantung kepada kebenaran Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri dan Pengetua / Guru Besar yang berkenaan.

4. Surat kelulusan ini sah digunakan bermula dari **15 April 2019** hingga **31 Julai 2019** .

5. Tuan dikehendaki menyerahkan senaskhah laporan akhir kajian dalam bentuk *hardcopy* bersama salinan *softcopy* berformat pdf dalam CD kepada Bahagian ini.Tuan juga diingatkan supaya mendapat kebenaran terlebih dahulu daripada Bahagian ini sekiranya sebahagian atau sepenuhnya dapatan kajian tersebut hendak diterbitkan di mana-mana forum, seminar atau diumumkan kepada media massa.

Sekian untuk makluman dan tindakan tuan selanjutnya. Terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menjalankan amanah,

Ketua Penolong Pengarah Kanan
Sektor Penyelidikan dan Penilaian Dasar
b.p. Pengarah
Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia

salinan kepada:-

JABATAN PENDIDIKAN SARAWAK

* SURAT INI DIJANA OLEH KOMPUTER DAN TIADA TANDATANGAN DIPERLUKAN *

Appendix D: Consent Information Sheet for Teachers

An Evaluation of the Implementation and Perceptions of English Teachers on The School Based Assessment System in Sarawak, Malaysia

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this consent information statement carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What this project is about and why it is being undertaken

This research seeks to investigate three key areas. Firstly, to what extent the implementation school-based assessment has been carried out in the state of Sarawak and secondly, what are the perceptions of the SBA by teachers of English who are teaching in the state of Sarawak, Malaysia. Thirdly, this research intends to also provide into the English teachers' self-assessment on their competency in designing assessment tasks.

Project Procedure

The study will be conducted in two parts: a questionnaire and an interview. At this stage you are being invited to take part in the questionnaire. The questionnaire will include sections on background information, teacher knowledge, teacher practice, teacher views, implementation and challenges.

You are encouraged to complete the questionnaire in your own time, independently. The questionnaire will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. Completion and submission of the questionnaire indicate consent to participate on the study. Note that your responses in the questionnaire will remain confidential.

At the end of the questionnaire, there will be a question asking if you would like to participate in the interview. If you are willing to be interviewed, please provide contact details in the space provided and the researcher will arrange for a follow-up meeting.

The interview will consist of questions regarding Teacher knowledge and skills in implementing SBA, Teacher practice in implementing SBA, teacher's overall views on the implementation of SBA & Challenges in Implementation of SBA. The duration of the interview will be no longer than 60 minutes.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Participant rights and interests – Risks & Benefits/Contingencies/Back-up Support

By participating in this project you may be exposing yourself to risks such as emotional discomfort and vulnerability. This may result from answering questionnaire and interview questions on your experience in the academic writing class and your overall writing experience. Additionally, you may also experience anxiety that results from being interviewed. To mitigate these risks, you may choose to end the interview at any time, withdraw participation from the project and request not to be audio recorded.

Participant rights and interests – Free Consent/Withdrawal from Participation

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

• Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation

• Withdraw from the study before April 2019

• Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher

• Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

You may contact the researcher to find out more about this project without any obligation to participate. If you are interested to participate in the questionnaire, completion and return of the questionnaire implies your consent to participate in the research. If you are interested to participate in the interview, you will be given a consent form to sign and the interview process will only commence after written consent is obtained.

Research output

It is expected that scholarly publications arise from this project. You will be provided with a copy of these publications for your reference.

If you would like more information regarding this project, do not hesitate to contact:

Hugh John Leong

Faculty of Language and Communication, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

E-mail : 18010018@siswa.unimas.my

Tel no : 016-8686341

Appendix E: Questionnaire on Teacher's Perception of SBA Implementation

Please answer **ALL** questions. Your responses will be strictly confidential and will be used only for academic purposes.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Instruction: Please put a *(√□)* in the box for each question and answer the questions.

1. School District ☐ Kuching ☐ Samarahan

2. School Location ☐ Urban ☐ Sub Urban/Rural ☐ Rural

3. Gender ☐ Female ☐ Male

4. Ethnicity ☐ Malay ☐ Iban ☐ Bidayuh ☐ Chinese ☐ Indian ☐ Melanau ☐ Others, please specify :

5. Age in 2018: _____ years

6. Academic qualification
   - ☐ Certificate please, specify: _____
   - ☐ Diploma please, specify :_____
   - ☐ Degree please, specify :_____
   - ☐ Masters please, specify :_____
   - ☐ PhD please, specify :_____

7. Teaching experience ___ years

8. Years of English language teaching experience ___ years

9. Form/Forms that you are currently teaching _____

10. Forms you have taught English for the last 3 years _____

11. Experience in practicing School Based Assessment for English ___ years

12. Have you attended any general courses/training on SBA? ☐ Yes, (if yes, please answer Q.13) ☐ No (if no, please answer Q.14)

13. Could you list down as many of them as you can remember?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Have you attended any specific courses/training on SBA implementation for the English subject? ☐ Yes, (if yes, please answer Q.15) ☐ No (If no, please go to Section B)

15. Could you list down as many of them as you can remember?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SECTION B: Teachers' Knowledge in Administering SBA in the English classroom

Using the following likert scale, please indicate by circling the most correct response, the degree to which you agree with the statements listed below:

1	2	3	4	5
Very limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very proficient

Knowledge in Planning English Language Lessons.

1	I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's cognitive domain	1	2	3	4	5
2	I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's psychomotor domain	1	2	3	4	5
3	I know how to write learning objectives based on Bloom's affective domain	1	2	3	4	5
4	I know how to use the English language syllabus	1	2	3	4	5
5	I know how to write general objectives for a lesson plan	1	2	3	4	5
6	I know how to write specific objectives for a lesson plan	1	2	3	4	5
7	I know how to develop a table of specification for a test	1	2	3	4	5
8	I know how to outline instructional content for a test	1	2	3	4	5
9	I know how to list instructional objectives for a test	1	2	3	4	5

Knowledge in Developing and Administering School Based Assessments in the English Language Classroom

10	I know how to construct MCQ's in reading comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
11	I know how to construct MCQ's in language forms and functions	1	2	3	4	5
12	I know how to construct MCQ's in language use	1	2	3	4	5
13	I know how to construct MCQ's in grammar	1	2	3	4	5
14	I know how to construct MCQ's on literature components	1	2	3	4	5
15	I know how to construct open-ended questions in cloze text	1	2	3	4	5
16	I know how to construct open-ended questions in guided composition	1	2	3	4	5
17	I know how to construct open-ended questions in free writing	1	2	3	4	5
18	I know how to construct questions for listening components	1	2	3	4	5
19	I know how to construct questions for speaking components	1	2	3	4	5
20	I know how to assemble classroom test according to the format	1	2	3	4	5
21	I know how to review classroom test according to the format	1	2	3	4	5
22	I know how to prepare answer keys for MCQ's	1	2	3	4	5
23	I know how to develop analytic scoring rubrics for essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
24	I know how to develop holistic scoring rubrics for essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
25	I know how to administer formative assessments in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
26	I know how to administer summative assessments/tests in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Very limited	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Very proficient

Knowledge in Scoring, Reporting and Analysing School Based Assessments in the English Language Classroom

27	I know how to score MCQ answers	1	2	3	4	5
28	I know how to score essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
29	I know how to calculate mean of results	1	2	3	4	5
30	I know how to calculate standard deviation of results	1	2	3	4	5
31	I know how to report scores of students	1	2	3	4	5
32	I know how to form an item bank	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: Teachers' Practices of SBA in the English classroom

Using the following likert scale, please indicate by circling the most correct response, the degree to which you agree with the statements listed below:

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

Planning Implementation in English Language Lessons.

I do the following in my class:

1	I write learning objectives based on Bloom's cognitive domain	1	2	3	4	5
2	I write learning objectives based on Bloom's psychomotor domain	1	2	3	4	5

3	I write learning objectives based on Bloom's affective domain	1	2	3	4	5
4	I use the English language syllabus	1	2	3	4	5
5	I write general objectives for a lesson plan	1	2	3	4	5
6	I write specific objectives for a lesson plan	1	2	3	4	5
7	I develop a table of specification for a test	1	2	3	4	5
8	I outline instructional content for a test	1	2	3	4	5
9	I list instructional objectives for a test	1	2	3	4	5

Developing and Administering School Based Assessments in the English Language Classroom

I do the following for my class:

10	I construct MCQ's in reading comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
11	I construct MCQ's in language forms and functions	1	2	3	4	5
12	I construct MCQ's in language use	1	2	3	4	5
13	I construct MCQ's in grammar	1	2	3	4	5
14	I construct MCQ's on literature components	1	2	3	4	5
15	I construct open-ended questions in cloze text	1	2	3	4	5
16	I construct open-ended questions in guided composition	1	2	3	4	5
17	I construct open-ended questions in free writing	1	2	3	4	5

18	I construct questions for listening components	1	2	3	4	5
19	I construct questions for speaking components	1	2	3	4	5
20	I assemble classroom tests according to the PT3 format	1	2	3	4	5
21	I review classroom tests according to the PT3 format	1	2	3	4	5
22	I prepare answer keys for MCQ's	1	2	3	4	5
23	I develop analytic scoring rubrics for essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
24	I develop holistic scoring rubrics for essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
25	I administer formative assessments in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
26	I administer summative assessments/tests in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

Scoring, Reporting and Analysing School Based Assessments in the English Language Classroom

I do the following for my class:

27	I score MCQ answers	1	2	3	4	5
28	I score essay questions	1	2	3	4	5
29	I calculate mean of results	1	2	3	4	5
30	I calculate standard deviation of results	1	2	3	4	5
31	I report scores of students	1	2	3	4	5
32	I form an item bank	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Teachers' overall views on the implementation of School Based Assessment

Using the following likert scale, please indicate by circling the most correct response, the degree to which you agree with the statements listed below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Using school-based assessment (SBA) in teaching English:

1	Is compulsory	1	2	3	4	5
2	Is a burden to me	1	2	3	4	5
3	SBA has been effectively incorporated into existing English language lessons	1	2	3	4	5
4	It is good that students have more than one opportunity to be assessed especially when assessing language proficiency	1	2	3	4	5
5	Helps students to become more independent English language learners	1	2	3	4	5
6	Is efficient in improving students learning of the English language	1	2	3	4	5
7	I have opportunities to discuss SBA implementation with my fellow English teachers	1	2	3	4	5
8	I have opportunities to discuss SBA activities with my fellow English teachers	1	2	3	4	5
9	I follow the planning instructed by the MOE in SBA implementation	1	2	3	4	5

10	With SBA, assessments are now less examination oriented	1	2	3	4	5
11	I conduct SBA during the teaching and learning process	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am able to prepare adequate assessments for listening activities	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am able to prepare adequate assessments for speaking activities	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am able to prepare adequate assessments for reading activities	1	2	3	4	5
15	I am able to prepare adequate assessments for writing activities	1	2	3	4	5
16	A teaching assistant is necessary to help teachers in assessing the pupils	1	2	3	4	5
17	Training of English teachers in SBA implementation has been properly planned and implemented	1	2	3	4	5
18	I am qualified to implement SBA assessment activities in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
19	I have adequate assessment skills for SBA implementing assessment activities	1	2	3	4	5
20	The equipment in the classroom (e.g. whiteboard, tables, PC, projector, etc..) is suitable to conduct SBA activities for English	1	2	3	4	5
21	The physical classroom space is adequate for SBA activities	1	2	3	4	5
22	The ICT facilities are adequate to conduct SBA activities for an English language class	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

SBA Courses, Implementation and Training (If you have never attended any courses or training on SBA, please skip this section and proceed to question no. 31)

The courses on SBA system has upgraded my skills on the following areas:

23	To use different assessment instruments to assess students language proficiency	1	2	3	4	5
24	To assess student performance based on criteria as outlined in the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
25	To explain assessment criteria in detail to students	1	2	3	4	5
26	To conduct assessment activities effectively	1	2	3	4	5

In House Training (IHT) provided on SBA at your current school:

27	Adequate number IHT sessions on SBA were given to teachers	1	2	3	4	5
28	Trainers of the IHT programs were versed in SBA assessments and implementation	1	2	3	4	5
29	Training included both practical and theoretical applications of SBA	1	2	3	4	5
30	Specific SBA training on creating English language assessments were provided	1	2	3	4	5

General Administration, coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation at your school

31	Teachers are recognised for good implementation of SBA in their classroom	1	2	3	4	5
32	School management is supportive of the implementation of SBA in the school	1	2	3	4	5
33	Head of subjects monitor SBA activity implementation efficiently	1	2	3	4	5
34	Selection of assessments for English is systematic and is discussed before used	1	2	3	4	5
35	Moderation (standardising marks given) sessions for each assessment is done	1	2	3	4	5
36	There are teachers that have been appointed as internal monitors of the SBA implementation	1	2	3	4	5
37	After every assessment I keep a record of my students' scores	1	2	3	4	5
38	At the end of every summative assessment I prepare an evidence report of students' achievement	1	2	3	4	5
39	I record the marks of evidence in the SPPBS application punctually (within two weeks of results release)	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA in your school:

40	My principal does support the SBA implementation	1	2	3	4	5
41	Teachers in my school co-operate with each other in implementing SBA activities	1	2	3	4	5
42	There is adequate knowledge in implementing the SBA process	1	2	3	4	5
43	There is adequate expertise in implementing the SBA process	1	2	3	4	5
44	Teachers are confident in implementing SBA activities	1	2	3	4	5
45	Teachers are confident in implementing SBA assessments	1	2	3	4	5
46	There are adequate resources in implementing SBA	1	2	3	4	5
47	The general school climate and culture promotes SBA	1	2	3	4	5
48	There are sufficient financial resources to conduct SBA effectively	1	2	3	4	5
49	SBA does not bring extra unwanted workload	1	2	3	4	5

50	Parents trust teachers' evaluation when conducting SBA	1	2	3	4	5
51	Students trust teachers' evaluation when conducting SBA	1	2	3	4	5
52	There is a weak emphasis on centralised testing and examination	1	2	3	4	5
53	Teachers no longer teach to the test when preparing students for assessments	1	2	3	4	5
54	Students no longer memorise and reproduce prepared answers when tested	1	2	3	4	5
55	There has been considerable differences in the way students are assessed after the implementation of SBA	1	2	3	4	5

Overall, the implementation of SBA is important because:

56	It improves quality assurance monitoring and processes	1	2	3	4	5
57	It creates public confidence towards the school	1	2	3	4	5
58	It provides new learning opportunities for building students' strengths	1	2	3	4	5
59	It provides new learning opportunities to help identify students' weaknesses					
60	Rate of absenteeism has decreased after the implementation of SBA	1	2	3	4	5

61	Helps me to improve my assessment practices	1	2	3	4	5
62	Helps me develop my professionalism and independence	1	2	3	4	5
63	Help me to develop authentic and interesting activities	1	2	3	4	5
64	Allows myself and students to discuss the teaching and learning activities	1	2	3	4	5
65	Make me more willing to take make changes to assessment practices previously not thought of before	1	2	3	4	5
66	Reduces pressure on students when taking public examinations	1	2	3	4	5
67	Improves literacy and proficiency of students	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Impact of SBA on students in your classroom:

68	Students are more motivated to learn through SBA activities	1	2	3	4	5
69	Students do not feel that SBA is a burden towards their studies	1	2	3	4	5
70	Students feel that the feedback received from SBA are more meaningful	1	2	3	4	5

71	Students feel that the feedback received from SBA can help them develop further	1	2	3	4	5
72	SBA encourages students to read	1	2	3	4	5
73	SBA encourages students to research	1	2	3	4	5
74	SBA encourages students to be more knowledgeable than ever before	1	2	3	4	5
75	After the implementation of SBA, students are more interested in learning English than previously	1	2	3	4	5
76	SBA helps students to understand their strengths in the English language	1	2	3	4	5
77	SBA helps students to understand their weaknesses in the English language	1	2	3	4	5

Section E

Any comments on SBA and its implementation?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. I appreciate the information you have provided.

I would also like to interview some of you to learn more about your experiences. If you are willing to be interviewed please fill in your contact details below.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Appendix F: Table of Open Ended Responses for Survey Questionnaire (Section E)

Question	**Any comments on SBA and its implementation?**
Responses	1. I feel that there should br on-going courses on SBA, as it is, there are no longer given as the assumption is that the teachers who went for the course did their in-house and everyone is now proficient. This is not the case as many are still unsure on how it should be carried out in class and how best to evaluate their students since SBA is now dependant on the teacher themselves. 2. SBA is not strictly monitored because exams are the main assesment which are seen. 3. In my current school, SBA is implemented fully and carried out even with inadequate facilities. 4. Number of students in each class need to be decreased. 5. The implementation very much depends on individuals and for me it is still quite exam oriented as the reading and writing tasks are still very much emphasised.... however the PT3 format has changed this year so it is difficult to foresee the outcome 6. I find record keeping and post assessment review sessions still have room for improvement. Limited chances of teachers

	discussing performance ofthe students, issues related to the assessment itself. 7. It has improved over the years 8. It runs smoothly especially when come to key in the SBA grade offline. All teachers cooperate to fill in the offline records before the deadline. 9. Implement SBA... Take away anything else 10. We give what the education department wants.

Appendix G: Interview Guide for Teachers

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS	MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
General Idea	***Main Questions***
Teacher Background *1. School District & location* *2. Teaching experience* *3. Years of ELT* *4. Forms and subjects currently taught*	*Teacher Background* 1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (Ice-breaker) 2. Could you briefly explain to me about your school and the demographics of your students? (Ice-breaker) 3. Can you tell me about your teaching & assessment practices in the English language classes prior to the implementation of SBA?
Appropriate curriculum	*Appropriate Curriculum* 1. Are there any differences between the KBSM and the KSSM for the English language subject? 2. In your opinion, are your English language assessment practices now different from what you did before prior to SBA? (Planning, implementation, marking & feedback) 3. Do you write learning objectives based on Bloom's cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains? 4. Could you tell me what steps do you take prior to constructing a test? 5. Are you able to construct different kinds of test questions? Could you please provide some examples? Do you follow these steps?

Resources, Training & Preparation *1. Attended general training/SBA?* *2. Attended English language SBA training?* *3. Skills and knowledge?* *4. Current practices?*	*Resources, Training & Preparation* 1. Were you fully prepared to embrace the change of the SBA? 2. Were there any training sessions/courses given to the teachers prior to the implementation? (English language & General training) 3. Were teachers provided with resource materials and general guidelines prior to the SBA implementation especially for the English language subject? 4. In your opinion, did you have the adequate knowledge to fully carry out the SBA implementation? 5. What skills and knowledge do you have to effectively conduct SBA in the English language classroom? 6. What skills and knowledge do you lack? 7. What skills and knowledge would you like to have or learn? *Perception of stakeholders* 1. How well received was the news of the implementation by: a). Fellow English teachers and colleagues b). School Principal and management c). Students d). Parents 2. What is the perception of a). Fellow English teachers and colleagues b). School Principal and management c). Students d). Parents on the current implementation of SBA in your school?

	Behavioural Interactions Do your students participate more in class? (If yes/no, how so? And in your opinion, why?) Were they nervous and stressed during assessments? What about exams? **Program Implementation** How familiar are you with different strategies and methods of testing and assessment in the English language subject? Do you use a range of resources and instructional media for your lessons? How are your classroom interactions? Are students engaged? *Scoring, Reporting & Analysing* Do you design a rubric and/or answer key for each assessment that you create? What happens after you have scored their work? Do you conduct any type of statistical analysis on students' scores? Do you verify your marks with other teachers via moderation or co-marking? (Explain what moderation and co-marking is if they do not understand)

Appendix H: Full Interview Guide for Researcher

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS	MAIN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	PROBES
SECTION A **RQ1: What are the perceptions of English language teachers on the antecedents prior to SBA implementation?** **RQ2: What knowledge and skills do English teachers have in effectively implementing SBA?**		
General Idea	***Main Questions***	**Follow Up Questions/Prompts**
Teacher Background *1. School District & location* *2. Teaching experience* *3. Years of ELT* *4. Forms and subjects currently taught*	*Teacher Background* 1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (Ice-breaker) 2. Could you briefly explain to me about your school and the demographics of your students? (Ice-breaker) 3. Can you tell me about your teaching & assessment practices in the English language classes prior to the implementation of SBA?	 How long have you been teaching English? Urban/Rural? Socioeconomics? Race? Was the teaching geared towards preparing students for the PMR? Did you feel that the PMR system was better or the PT3? Why do you feel that way?
Appropriate curriculum	*Appropriate Curriculum* 1. Are there any differences between the KBSM and the KSSM for the English language subject?	 What were the important factors that made you feel that way?

	2. In your opinion, are your English language assessment practices now different from what you did before prior to SBA? (Planning, implementation, marking & feedback) 3. Are you able to construct different kinds of test questions? Could you please provide some examples? Do you follow these steps?	What were the differences? (Four skills) Are there any differences in the activities/learning objectives you conduct in class? Are there any differences in in the assessments? Formative/summative? Was the change to PT3 and SBA in general necessary? Do you how to? Table of specification? Instructional content? MCQ? Cloze text? Open ended?
Resources, Training & Preparation *1. Attended general training/SBA?* *2. Attended English language SBA training?* *3. Skills and knowledge?* *4. Current practices?*	*Resources, Training & Preparation* 1. Were you fully prepared to embrace the change of the SBA? 2. Were there any training sessions/courses given to the teachers	Was the change (PMR to PT3) communicated from the school management early? How did you find out about the change? Rumours? Official circulation? Newspapers?

	prior to the implementation? (English language & General training)	Who conducted the training? Was it centralised or was it a cascading model? Who attended the training? Was it a general SBA training workshop? Or subject specific? Did all the teachers attend or only certain teachers? Was it beneficial to you? Why and why not? What can be improved in regards to the workshops?
	3. Were teachers provided with resource materials and general guidelines prior to the SBA implementation especially for the English language subject?	Was there any IHT provided? Was it general or specific? Who was the facilitator?
	4. In your opinion, did you have the adequate knowledge to fully carry out the SBA implementation?	Was it beneficial to you?
	5. What skills and knowledge do you have to effectively conduct SBA in the English language classroom?	Were you sent any resource materials by the ministry? Any new curriculum specification documents?

	6. What skills and knowledge do you lack? 7. What skills and knowledge would you like to have or learn? *Perception of stakeholders* 1. How well received was the news of the implementation by: a). Fellow English teachers and colleagues b). School Principal and management c). Students d). Parents 2. What is the perception of a). Fellow English teachers and colleagues b). School Principal and management c). Students d). Parents on the current implementation of SBA in your school?	General guidelines on conducting SBA? E.g. how to design activities, assessments and tests? How to design rubrics and evaluate students? Were you taught how to conduct SBA in your teacher training or degree studies? Did you make effort personally to learn how to conduct SBA activities? Did you see it as a burden? What were their attitudes? Positive/negative? Did they want the change? What were their concerns? Workload? Teacher's capability? Improving learning? Proficiency? Interest & excitement? Motivation? Understanding their own weaknesses? Parental trust? How different were the activities that you

		conducted prior to SBA and after?
Section B **RQ3: What are the practices of SBA by English teachers in the English language classroom?** **RQ4: What are the overall views of English language teachers on the implementation of SBA in their school?**		
	Program Transactions	
	Behavioural Interactions 1. Do your students participate more in class? (If yes/no, how so? And in your opinion, why?) 2. Were they nervous and stressed during assessments? What about exams? **Program Implementation** 1. How familiar are you with different strategies and methods of testing and assessment in the English language subject?	What sort of activities did you conduct? Were they formative/summative? Did you follow any particular concept? Assessment for learning? Assessment as Learning? Are there any differences between students' attitudes towards formative and summative testing? What about assessments in class and in exam conditions? How many students do you have per class? How long are your lessons?

		Is the size of the class ideal to conduct SBA? What about the duration of time per class?
	2. Do you use a range of resources and instructional media for your lessons?	What about the learning facilities? Physical space and layout?
	3. How are your classroom interactions? Are students engaged?	Do you construct your own MCQ's and open ended questions? Do you prepare your own classroom tests? Do you work together with other colleagues to prepare the tests?
	Scoring, Reporting & Analysing 1. Do you design a rubric and/or answer key for each assessment that you create?	Do you create and use rubrics for projects, assignments and essays? Is it difficult? Does it take up a lot of your time?
	2. What happens after you have scored their work? Do you conduct any type of statistical analysis on students' scores?	Do you think that it is necessary? Are the scores reported to the students? What do you do with students who score well/average/poorly?

	1. Do you verify your marks with other teachers via moderation or co-marking? (Explain what moderation and co-marking is if they do not understand)	Descriptive statistics? Basic analysis? – mean, SD Difficulty index and discrimination index of test items? Why yes or why not? Do you form an item bank?
Section C **RQ5: What are the challenges faced by English language teachers in effectively implementing SBA?** **RQ6: What are English language teachers' beliefs of the impact of current implementation of SBA on student learning?** **RQ7: What are English language teachers' beliefs of the importance of SBA in impacting educational outcomes?**		
	Program Outcomes	

	Performance 1. Are your students more motivated to learn English through SBA?	What evidences can you provide to support this view? Are students less stressed and less nervous when taking assessments as compared to taking tests before?
	2. Has your teaching and learning practice changed after the implementation of SBA?	What are the major changes? Could you please describe in detail one major change?
	3. Are students able to acquire the English language more easily by using SBA?	What evidences can you provide to support this claim?
	4. Are students' performing better in the PT3 compared to PMR previously?	Do you think these challenges can be overcome? In your opinion, what are the ways to overcome the issue?
	Challenges and areas of Improvement 1. What challenges do you face in implementing the SBA in the English language classroom?	Workload, general attitude, knowledge? Etc… Why or why not? Do you see a long term implementation of this system?

	2. What areas of the implementation needs improving? Especially looking at the English language subject? 3. Do you think that overall, the SBA system is a good policy?	