

ENGLISH TEACHERS' CONCERN ON COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES (CEFR): AN APPLICATION OF CBAM

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Abstract: This study explores Form 1 and 2 English teachers' stages of concern towards the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) innovation. This study used the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) as the theoretical framework. The participants of this study consist of 200 Form 1 and 2 English teachers from 20 secondary schools in Negeri Sembilan. Each of the participants completed the Stage of Concern Questionnaire (SoCQ) comprising 35 items. The questionnaire was published based on CBAM and was intended to measure Form 1 and 2 English teachers' concerns in implementing the CEFR innovation. The findings show that the Form 1 and 2 English teachers' concern in terms of age, academic qualification, and years of teaching experience show characteristics of "distrustful nonuser". In other words, Form 1 and 2 English teachers show high concern for awareness information, personal, management and consequence in implementing CEFR innovation. This finding also points to the significance of providing intervention programs to support Form 1 and 2 English teachers to undergo the change of new curriculum, to ensure unity in language objective, and to promote the awareness of language use and competencies in education.

Keywords: Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR); Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM); innovation; English teachers

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that concerns are well associated with the degree of success of the implementation of an innovation and reforms (Hall & Hord, 2014). In the curriculum context, study of concerns has been researched extensively in different language learning contexts in the past decades (for a recent overview, see Hall & Hord, 2014). Similarly, to meet the demand that is in line with time changes, innovations, or changes in competitive curriculum and parallel to world, changes are required. Hence, on addressing the matter of English language standards in Malaysia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) have announced that imported English textbooks will be used in schools instead of locally produced ones to meet the new Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) levels in year 2018.

The Star Online (2017) commented that the Higher Education Ministry is committed to its aim of implementing the new Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by 2018 and as stated by the Deputy Education Minister; Datuk P. Kamalanathan, preschoolers, Year one and two pupils, and Form 1 and 2 students will start off with the curriculum (Chin & Rajaendram, 2017). The purpose of CEFR is to create a balanced human capital that can face the challenges of the 21st century, and to ensure a holistic and relevant curriculum is implemented (Ministry of Education, 2017). The curriculum transformation to CEFR covers the aspects of content, teaching time allocation, assessment methods, pedagogy, organization, materials, and curriculum management. Thus, the teacher is no exception in exposing curriculum transformation. Accordingly, the level of teachers' concern will be influenced during the CEFR implementation process.

Therefore, studies on identifying Form 1 and 2 English teachers' types and stages of concern, and other factors are necessary. This study seeks to respond to this need. The aim of this study is twofold. First, the different types of concern among Form 1 and 2 English teachers are explored by using the Stages of Concern Questionnaire (SoCQ). Second, Form 1 and 2 English teachers' concerns on CEFR innovation are further explored in terms of age, academic

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qualification, and years of teaching experience. In the present study, the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) was used as the theoretical framework.

Statement of Problem

In Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (2016) book on the new meaning of educational change, he stated that any changes that occur will face various challenges. As this statement illustrates, Fullan and Stiegelbauer tried to answer these challenges in the notion of teachers' concern by proposing that when there are curriculum changes, these changes will push teachers to change, as teachers are the agents of an innovation and curriculum change (Fullan and Stigelbauer, 2016). Bantiwini (2009) and Wang (2013) also states that the degree of success or failure of an innovation depends on the teacher as they are responsible for implementing the innovation in the classroom. Therefore, it seems to be very much appropriate and important to study the Form 1 and 2 English teacher's concerns about CEFR changes.

Although Conroy (1999) and Pilot (2007) argues that there are many factors that influence the curriculum change process; they noted that one crucial factor is the role of a teacher. Hence, it is desirable to look at teacher factors before a curriculum innovation is implemented. In their study, the findings showed that an implementation process of curriculum change will be disrupted if the teacher is unclear about the change (Conroy, 1999; Pilot, 2007). Likewise, many studies on the effectiveness of curriculum change have been undertaken. In most of these studies, their findings showed that teachers were incompetent in terms of teaching strategies and the new curriculum reform goals (Peeraer et al., 2009; Puteh, Ghazali, Tamyis, & Ali, 2016).

In addition, the new Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) will be implemented nationwide in Malaysia, beginning in 2018 and the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) has taken the initiative in reviewing CEFR implementation. According to Deputy Education Minister, Datuk P. Kamalanathan in The Star, on October 5, 2017, he stated that pre-schoolers, Year one and two pupils, and Form 1 and 2 students will start off with the new curriculum. Thus, a study to review the Form 1 and 2 English teachers' concerns for CEFR innovation is appropriate and parallel with KPM's efforts in implementing the educational innovation.

Research Objectives

- 1. To identify the Form 1 and Form 2 English teachers' level of concern in the implementation of CEFR based on gender, age, and years of teaching experience.
- 2. To identify the public profile of the Form 1 and Form 2 English teachers' level of concern in the implementation of CEFR.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework used in this study was based on the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), developed in the 1970s by the Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education in Austin, Texas (Hall & Hord, 1987). The CBAM model has been widely adopted and validated in the academic fields of education and educational psychology since its introduction, but has not, to our knowledge, spread beyond these fields. Yet there is much that this framework has to offer to those from nearly any field studying technology for development, because the process of change in adopting innovations must be understood and addressed if similar projects are to have a greater chance at succeeding.

As noted above, this article argues that teachers are the key to educational innovation and improvement; their willingness to adapt to change will determine whether an innovation succeeds or fails. In the absence of an active intervention introducing change, teachers' general perceptions of good teaching remain rooted in their own educational experiences students, from as the primary level all the way through their days as a pre-service teacher (Tunks & Weller 2009). These perceptions have a strong innovation tendency to persist, and if and change are to occur, teachers must become convinced of the usefulness of innovating, which then must be reflected in changed actions. Change comprises thoughts and actions, perceptions, and behaviours.

Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory (1983) has been widely used and provides invaluable descriptions of the change processes and constructs. However, we have adopted the CBAM model here because it provides a theoretical framework as well as the tools with which to conduct the study and interpret the results. Perhaps most importantly, however, the CBAM model enables our research to focus specifically on the key players in the change process - the teachers (Donovan, Hartley & Struder 2007). Because of this, it also provides a useful framework not only for designing teacher training and the development of programmes but also to encourage implementation of changes in policy (Hollingshead 2009, Khoboli & O'toole 2011).

Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)

The stages of concern about an innovation

Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a study guide for teachers to identify the stages of teachers' concern in curriculum innovation. According to Hall & Hord (2014), concerns can be categorized into seven stages namely Stage 0 (Awareness), Stage 1 (Information), Stage 2 (Personal), Stage 3 (Management), Stage 4 (Consequence), Stage 5 (Collaboration), and Stage 6 (Refocusing). Accordingly, these seven levels of concern are categorized into four levels of concern (see Table 1).

Table 1

Level	of	Stages of Concern	Definition
Concern Self		0 = Awareness	The teacher indicates little concern about or involvement with the innovation.
		1 = Information	The teacher indicates a general awareness of the innovation and interest in learning more details about it.
Task		2 = Personal	The teacher is uncertain about the demands of the innovation, his or her adequacy to meet those demands, and his or her role with the
		3 = Management	innovation. The teacher focusses on the processes and tasks of using the innovation. They also use the information and resources available optimally. The issues
			of efficiency, preparation, management, scheduling, and the required time period is prioritized.
Impact		4 = Consequence	The teacher focuses on the innovation's impact on students especially on student achievement and computation assessment.
		5 = Collaboration	The teachers work together with other teachers to improve the effectiveness regarding the use of the innovation.
		6 = Refocusing	The teacher focusses on exploring ways to reap more universal benefits from the innovation, including the possibilities or alternatives to improve the on-going innovation.

Source: Adapted from Hall & Hord (2014)

Hall and Hord (2014) suggested that teachers' concerns involve development in the process of change. In the above suggestion, they further illustrated that an experienced teacher will become a novice teacher when a new curriculum is implemented (Hall & Hord, 2014). According to Sanders and Ngxola (2009), this is because teachers have to face new topics such as new content issues and new pedagogical content knowledge. Therefore, teacher's concern will show the highest intensity at the early stage of innovation in the level of self-concern. However, as teachers become more

experienced in managing innovation, the intensity will shift to the level of task-concern and, finally to the next level of the impact-concern (Hall & Hord, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative survey research design was used in this study. The instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire, adapted from the questionnaire level of concern or known as the Stages of concern questionnaire, SoCQ (George et al., 2014) which was constructed based on the CBAM model by Hall and Hord (2014). There are two parts in the questionnaire - Part A with 4 demographic items and Part B with 35 items on an eight-point Likert Scale.

Overall Research Procedure

The present study was carried out among the Form 1 and 2 English teachers from ten secondary schools in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The researcher spent approximately one month in designing a pilot study and soliciting feedback from several participants and experts to refine the question items. Then, the questionnaire was personally delivered and distributed to the selected ten schools located in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. In addition, an official letter seeking permission from relevant gatekeepers were sought and sent to the Head of School to get approval for conducting the study in the schools.

A total number of 200 Form 1 and 2 English teachers participated and data were collected over a period of one month. The quantitative data management and analysis was performed using SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) version 23.0. Table 2 below presents the five stages of the research procedure.

Table 2

Data collection schedule at ten secondary schools

Date	Stage	Description
18.09.2017 - 29.09.2017	1	To apply for approval from the relevant gatekeepers to conduct the study.
02.10.2017 - 06.10.2017	2	Administration of questionnaire to secondary school 1- 20
09.10.2017 - 13.10.2017	3	Collection of questionnaire from secondary school 1-20

The Participants

The target participants were all Form 1 and 2 English teachers in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Through both criterion and convenience sampling, 200 Form 1 and 2 English teachers in ten secondary schools were chosen for this research. The criteria for sampling were geographical proximity (Negeri Sembilan) and possession of certain key characteristics that are related to the purpose of this study (e.g., Form 1 and 2 English teachers).

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study is the Secondary school English teachers' levels of concern on the implementation of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) questionnaire (See Appendix A). A thirty-fiveitem with seven levels of concern was used and each statement is guided with eight scales according to different intensities (e.g., from 0 (irrelevant) to 7 (very true of me now)) on the Likert scale. The questionnaire level of concern (SoCQ) was introduced and used since the 1970s. All the 35 items in the questionnaire were valid with a Cronbach alpha from .64 to .83 and reliability of .65 to .68 (Hall & Hord, 2014). Moreover, a pilot study for this study was conducted on 30 Form 1 and 2 English teachers in secondary schools in Selangor. The factor and reliability of this pilot run showed an alpha value of .84 (>.65). This shows that the questionnaire is a highly reliable instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis used in this study includes (i) descriptive statistics, and (ii) inferential statistics. Descriptive data dissemination is conducted to generate profiles of demographic groups and types of Form 1 and 2 English teacher concerns based on the SoCQ Quick Scoring Device guide (George et al., 2014). Inferential statistics used in this study were univariate analysis of variance ANOVA. Table 3 below lists the research objectives, research questions, and types of data analysis for this study.

Table 3

Types of data and analysis

ata Analysis
Iean (M), Frequency
F),
nivariate analysis
f variance
ANOVA)
F f

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study will be discussed according to two categories. First, the findings on the type of Form 1 and 2 English teachers concerns. The second category addresses the Form 1 and 2 English teachers' stages of concern on CEFR innovation in terms of age, academic qualification, and years of teaching experience.

Type of form 1 and 2 English Teachers' Concerns

Figure 1 below summarizes the analysis of Form 1 and 2 English teachers' stages of concern in implementing CEFR innovation at the secondary level. Overall, the mean score of the 200 Form 1 and 2 English teachers was high (M = 4.45 - 4.95). This showed that the teachers were familiar with the CEFR innovation. The highest mean level was observed at stage 2: Personal (M = 4.95), followed by Stage 4: Consequences (M = 4.89), and Stage 1: Information (M = 4.86). One of the reason of such high means at the personal, information and consequences stage may due to teachers unsettled, troubled, and uncertain feelings about their roles in the process of adopting and adapting to the new CEFR innovation. However, the findings also showed that teachers were aware of the necessary changes to take place and expressed their willingness and desire to adapt and learn the nature of the CEFR innovation.



Figure 1. Stages of concern for Form 1 and 2 English teachers



The lowest value of mean was showed in Stage 3: Management (M = 4.45), followed by Stage 6: Refocusing, (M = 4.50), and Stage 5: Collaboration (M = 4.55) which indicates that the Form1 and 2 English teachers was more concerned with how they can accomplish the teaching objectives and getting relevant materials, and covering the curriculum within the given framework of time. In other words, teachers are more concerned with ways to make their teaching varied and use learning practices that are alligned with the new CEFR innovation. More importantly, the findings from this study showed that teachers' concern focus primarily on the personal and task stage. As a result, this stage of concerns showed by the Form 1 and 2 English teachers over CEFR's innovations was identified as the "zone of enactment". This type of zone highlights the teachers' effort to deliver and develop the ideas found in the innovation.

Form 1 and 2 English Teachers' Concerns in Terms of Age

Table 4 below presents the Form1 and 2 English teachers' concerns in terms of age towards the CEFR innovation. The univariate analysis of variance ANOVA revealed that there were significant differences in teachers' concerns towards the CEFR innovation in terms of age in some of the stages of concern. For example, Stage 0: Awareness (F = 13.69; df = 1; p = 0.00), Stage 1: Information (F = 12.54; df = 1; p = 0.00), and Stage 2: Personal (F = 14.65; df = 1; p = 0.00). This finding revealed that Form 1 and 2 English teachers aged 20-39 years old exhibited higher self and task concerns on the CEFR innovation when compared to teachers above 40 years old. This may suggest that younger qualified Form 1 and 2 English teachers require more preparations and support when an innovation occurred, compared to older qualified teachers who were more experienced and have encountered more changes or innovations throughout their years of teaching (Alsunbaie, 2016; Davis, 2009).

Table 4

Demographic	Stages of Concern	df	F	P	
Variable					
Age	0 = Awareness	1	13.69	0.00	
-	1 = Information	1	12.54	0.00	
	2 = Personal	1	14.65	0.00	
	3 = Management	1	8.67	0.18	
	4 = Consequence	1	8.69	0.65	
	5 = Collaboration	1	9.94	0.17	
	6 = Refocusing	1	8.56	0.38	

Summary of stages of concern in terms of age

Form 1 and 2 English Teachers' Concerns in Terms of Academic Qualification

Table 5 below presents the Form1 and 2 English teachers' concerns in terms of academic qualification towards the CEFR innovation. Th univariate analysis of variance ANOVA revealed that there were no significant differences in teachers' concerns towards the CEFR innovation in terms of academic qualification except for Stage 2: Personal (F = 13.89; df = 1; p = 0.00). This shows that Form 1 and 2 English teachers realize the importance of accomplishing teaching and learning objectives as they are concerned with covering the curriculum content and addressing practical problems that may occur in the process of implementing the CEFR innovation.

Table 5

Summary of stages of concern in terms of academic qualification

Demographic	Stages of Concern	df	F	Р	
Variable					
Academic	0 = Awareness	1	1.89	1.48	
Qualification	1 = Information	1	2.37	0.75	
	2 = Personal	1	13.89	0.00	
	3 = Management	1	1.67	0.18	
	4 = Consequence	1	1.80	1.79	
	5 = Collaboration	1	1.65	0.17	
	6 = Refocusing	1	1.34	0.38	

Form 1 and 2 English Teachers' Concerns in Terms of Years of Teaching Experience

Table 6 below presents the Form1 and 2 English teachers' concerns in terms of years of teaching experience towards the CEFR innovation. Th univariate analysis of variance ANOVA revealed that there were no significant differences in teachers' concerns towards the CEFR innovation in terms of years of teaching experience except for Stage 4: Consequence (F = 1.95; df = 1; p = 0.00). This finding appears to reflect that teachers with less years of teaching experience worried more than other groups of teachers about the consequences that this CEFR innovation have for their students (e.g. using new imported textbooks and curriculum impact on students understanding and achievement). On the other hand, they are least concerned about collaboration with other teachers. This finding challenged what have been found in Christou et al. 's (2004) study. In their students. This finding also indicates that the teachers' stages of concerns are dynamic and will continually evolve instead of being static especially across disciplines, and in different teaching and learning contexts.

Table 6

Summary of stages of concern in terms of years of teaching experience

Demographic	Stages of Concern	df	F	Р	
Variable					
Academic	0 = Awareness	1	0.89	0.90	
Qualification	1 = Information	1	3.05	0.75	
	2 = Personal	1	7.75	1.37	
	3 = Management	1	1.37	1.95	
	4 = Consequence	1	1.95	0.00	
	5 = Collaboration	1	4.67	3.25	
	6 = Refocusing	1	0.96	0.96	

CONCLUSION

From this study findings, we can conclude that Form 1 and 2 English teachers, in general, are well familiar with the CEFR innovation. However, a closer look showed that the teachers are primarily focused on self and task-concern. In this regard, this may indicate that they are more oriented towards planning instructions and their daily teaching and learning process (Hall & Hord, 2014). The lowest mean score on the management, collaboration, and refocusing stages displayed by the teachers showed that their scrutiny is on processes and tasks required in implementing the CEFR innovation. Hence, interventions or professional development programmes should be carried out to encourage and to scaffold the Form 1 and 2 English teachers as they become more involved with the CEFR innovation.

With reference to the 9th principle in the CBAM model, the school is the main unit of change (Hall & Hord, 2014). An organization will not change until an individual who performs the innovation changes. Therefore, the school is an institution that plays an important role in supporting teachers so that the curriculum changes can be implemented smoothly. This further confirms the 10th principle that: teamwork facilitates change "(Hall & Hord, 2014).

Therefore, facilitators are advised to identify obstacles by taking into account teacher's doubts, fears or concerns when implementing CEFR innovations in schools so that teacher problems can be overcome through appropriate interventions either individually or in groups. Finally, it is desirable for the school to assess and address the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing CEFR innovations through research and intervention.

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APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Form 1 and 2 English teachers' levels of concern on the implementation of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have been selected to be a participant for this research study. This questionnaire aims to identify the level of Form 1 and 2 English teacher's concerns on the implementation of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Most of the items in this questionnaire may be "little or no" or "irrelevant" with you at present. For all "irrelevant" items, please mark "0" at a given scale. Other items that represent your concern, in different levels of intensity, should be marked on a higher scale based on the description at the top of each of the following pages.

For example:

This statement is very true of me at this time					4			
This statement is somewhat true of me now.					4			
This statement is not at all true of me at this time.					4			
This statement is irrelevant to me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

All information provided will be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. There is no correct or wrong answer in this study. Therefore, please respond to the items viewing in terms of *your present concern*, or how you feel about your involvement, or your potential to engage in CEFR implementation in your school. This study does not support anyone's definition, so please think about it in terms of *your own perception* of the change. Thank you so much again for your time and help.





Part B: Please indicate the extent to which your level of concern is with the following statements using the scale below.

0	1	2	3	4		5	6	7
Irrelevant	Not true of me	now	Somewhat now	true	of me	Very true	of me now	

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

No.	Items	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I am concerned about students' attitudes towards the CEFR innovation.								
2.	I now know of some other approaches that might work better.								
3.	I don't even know what is CEFR.								
4.	I am concerned about not having enough time to prepare my daily teaching based on CEFR.								
5.	I would like to help my colleagues in using the CEFR.								

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Irrelevant	Not true of me now	Somewhat	true	of	me	Very true of me now
		now				

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

No.	Items	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I have a very limited knowledge about CEFR.								
7.	I would like to know the effect of the use of CEFR that may apply to my profession status.								
8.	I am concerned about conflict between my interests and my responsibilities when using the CEFR.								
9.	I am concerned about revising my use of the CEFR.								
10.	I would like to develop working relationships with my colleagues inside and outside of school about CEFR.								
11.	I am concerned about how CEFR affects students.								
12.	I am not concerned about CEFR.								
13.	I would like to know who will make the decisions in carrying out CEFR.								



14.	I would like to discuss the possibility of using CEFR.				
15.	I would like to know what resources are available if we decide to adopt CEFR.				
16.	I am concerned about my inability to manage all the essential needs required in practicing CEFR.				
17.	I would like to know how my teaching or administration is supposed to change due to CEFR.				
18.	I would like to familiarize with my colleagues regarding the progress of the CEFR.				

0	1	2	3	4		5	6	7
Irrelevant	Not true of me	now	Somewhat	true	of me	Very true	of me now	
melevant	Not true of me	now	now	uuc	of the	e Very true of me now		

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

No.	Items	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	I am concerned about evaluating the CEFR impact on students.								
20.	I would like to revise the CEFR's instructional approach.								
21.	I have been involved in other matters, not regarding the use of CEFR.								
22.	I would like to modify our use of the CEFR based on the experience of our students.								
23.	Although I don't know about the CEFR, I am concerned about other things in this area.								
24.	I would like to excite my students about their part in CEFR.								
25.	I am concerned about my time spent working with non-academic problems related to CEFR.								
26.	I would like to know what is the use of CEFR will require in the immediate future.								
27.	I would like to coordinate my efforts with others to maximize the CEFR's effects.								
28.	I would like to have more information on time and energy commitments required to carry out CEFR.								
29.	I would like to know what my other colleagues are doing in CEFR.								



30.	At this CEFR.	time, I am not	rning the									
31.		d like to deterr e, or replace th	plement,									
32.	32. I would like to use feedback from students to change the way CEFR works.											
0 1 2 3				3	4			5	6		7	
Irrelevant Not true of me r		e now	Somewh now				Very true	e of 1	ne nov	V		

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

33.	I would like to know how my role will change when I am using the CEFR.	0			
34.	Coordination of tasks and people is taking too much of my time in using the CEFR.				
35.	I would like to know how this CEFR is better than what we have now.				