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Development and Usability of Training Module on the Efficacy and Anxiety Levels of Teaching English Among Early Childhood Education Teachers

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a training module to improve the efficacy among the early childhood education teachers in teaching English. The Design and Development Research methodology introduced by Richey and Klein (2014) was used in this study involving 3 phases. The data from the first phase (need analysis) were collected through questionnaire distributed among 90 early childhood education teachers via purposive sampling. The findings from the closed-ended questions were analysed using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 23 whereas the open-ended responses were subjected to thematic analysis. The data from the second phase were obtained based on the Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and Keller's ARCS Model. The theory specifies that there are four main factors that affect a person's self-efficacy, namely mastered self-experience (career-wise or past failure), vicarious experience (imposing other's success on himself), verbal persuasion (feedback on tasks given), psychological and physiological reactions (stress, worry and physical strength). The Keller's ARCS Model comprises four factors, A- *Attention*, R- *Relevance*, C- *Confidence* dan S- *Satisfaction*. The draft of the module was validated based on expert views and reliability questionnaires. The third phase that involves module usability was evaluated via quasi-experiment among 66 participants. A parametric test which is t-test revealed that the teachers from treatment group performed better in terms of self-efficacy belief, teaching efficacy practice, efficacy level, anxiety level and attitude. The qualitative data obtained from interview sessions with 8 teachers and 2 facilitators were used to support the findings. The findings show that there is a need to develop Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching among the Early Childhood Education Teacher (MEET-EceT). The findings from the second phase of the design study show that the expert views exceed 80 percent while the module reliability exceeds 70 percent. The results from the module usability evaluation shows that the efficacy level in English teaching increases, the anxiety level in teaching English decreases and there is a change of attitude in teaching English (knowledge, motivation, self-confidence, behaviour). Therefore, it is concluded that the MEET-EceT training

module should be emphasised among the early childhood education teachers during teachers' training to increase their efficacy level and decrease their anxiety level in teaching English.

Keywords: Design and Developmental Research, Training Module, Early Childhood Education Teachers, Teacher Efficacy And Teacher Anxiety.

Introduction

The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 highlights the need to ensure that every child is proficient in at least two languages : Bahasa Malaysia and English. Fundamental to this goal is the provision of the necessary resources required for language learning, reflected in the various language-based initiatives within the Malaysian education system. While the medium of instruction in our education system remains Bahasa Malaysia, the Ministry of Education believes that the goal of bilingual capacity will be achieved if a concerted effort is made to upskill teachers and students in English proficiency.

Based on the new policy, the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (NPSC) also undergoes changes such as allocation of additional hours for English subject, up to 600 minutes a week and preschoolers need to acquire listening, reading, writing and speaking skills(National Preschool Standard Curriculum, 2010).The latest change is the English Language Education Reform, which is known as CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). The Education Ministry had announced that starting 2018, the CEFR syllabus has kicked off in all preschool institutions. CEFR is an attempt made to for improve the students' proficiency up to the international standard by emphasising communication skill among the preschoolers.

Research Background

The PPSMI (Teaching of Science and Mathematics in English) has been abolished due to its failure to reach the expected goals, in which the performance in Science and Mathematics got worse and the teachers involved are not proficient in English. Thus, some changes have taken place in the education system. The first change is that the government has made a new policy of to Uphold Bahasa Malaysia and Strengthen English (MBMMBI). The Education Ministry apply comprehensive measures to improve the students' command of English via the Strengthening English (MBI) policy. Measures to improve the teaching and learning methods in English at schools were implemented by adding more hours for English subject and qualified English teachers including those who had studied abroad were hired to help polish the student proficiency in English.

Despite the changes implemented by the government, the actual situation does not meet the requirements of the Malaysian education system. The study conducted on the use of English in preschool classes found that most of the teachers are not confident in teaching English (KPM, 2010). The findings from the study on the National Preschool Standard Curriculum found that the preschool teachers do not comply with the implementation of using English while teaching in English (KPM, 2012). The report by *Jemaah Nazir dan Jaminan Kualiti (JNJK)* in 2012 found that preschool teachers do not adhere to the requirement in English teaching and learning. Rohaty (2013) found that the early childhood education teachers have low competence to interact in English and their English

proficiency does not meet the standard, where they are unable to speak in English fluently and confidence to do so. This is supported by another scholar that the preschool teachers were found to have insufficient basic skills in teaching English as the second language as requested in NPSC (Mardziah Abdullah, 2017). The findings showed that the early childhood teachers have lack of skills in English due to low self-esteem and they have negative attitude towards the use of English in communication. Other findings found that the teachers have low English proficiency, limited English vocabulary, besides having lack of interest, comprehension and confidence in English (Mustafa et.al, 2018).

The English curriculum undergo so many modifications, changes and improvements so that the students in Malaysia can master the language from 4 to 6 years old. The early childhood education teachers play an important role to deliver curriculum in teaching effectively. However, the issues involving the early childhood education need to be addressed, such as lack of English proficiency, lack of content knowledge and pedagogy, limited English vocabulary, unable to speak fluently, unable to give instruction in English while teaching, negative attitude towards English, not interested with English, have no motivation to teach in English, lack of confidence and have anxiety towards English.

The Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching among the Early Childhood Education Teacher (MEET-EceT) is a training module that aims to improve the efficacy level among the early childhood education teachers in teaching English to overcome the issues that have been highlighted.

Research Methodology

This research adopts the Design and Developmental Research (DDR) (Richey & Klein, 2014) to evaluate three main objectives. First, it is to identify the need to develop a training module for early childhood education teachers to improve their efficacy level and reduce their anxiety level in teaching English. Second, it is to develop a training module for early childhood education teachers to improve their efficacy and reduce their anxiety level in teaching English based on the Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and Keller's ARCS Model. Third, it is to evaluate the usability of the Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching among the Early Childhood Education Teacher (MEET-EceT) to improve their efficacy level and reduce their anxiety level in teaching English.

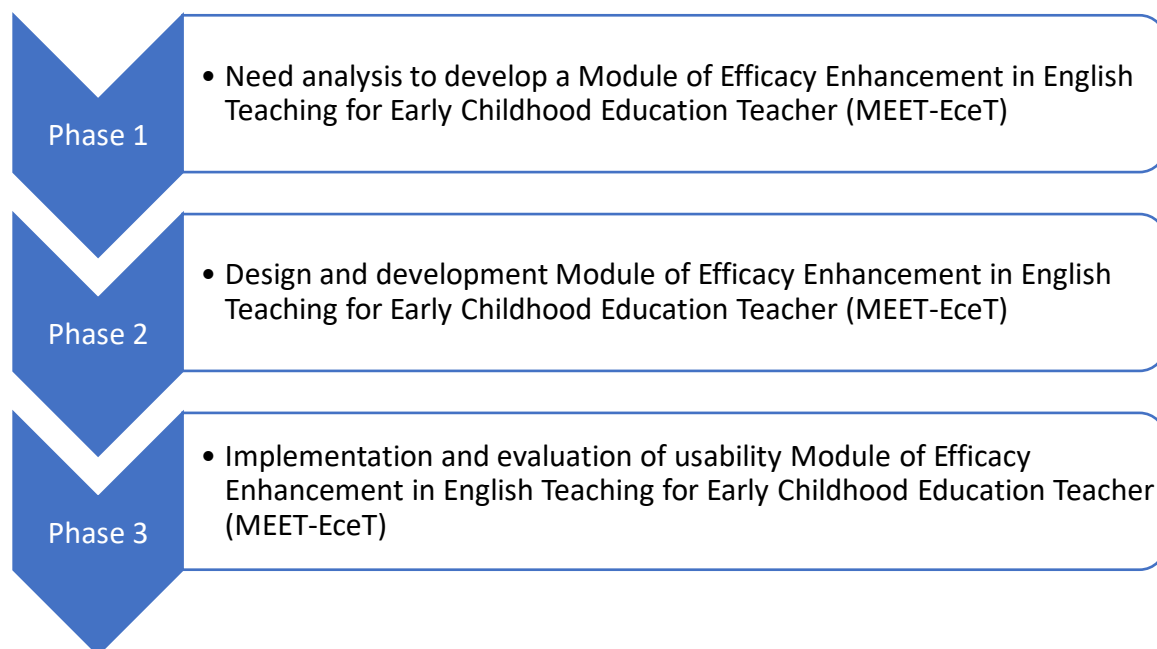


Figure 1 : Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching for Early Childhood Education Teacher (MEET-EceT) development process

Result and Key Findings

i) Need Analysis Phase

Table 1 : Mean difference and standard deviation for each domain

Domain	Mean Average	Std. Deviation
Self-assessment in teaching	2.4206	.91970
Self-development of emotions	2.5286	.93652
Knowledge and achievement in English	3.1760	.43396
Self-modelling in teaching	3.3873	.47945
Module development requirements	4.0489	.62894

Refer to the table above the need for Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching for Early Childhood Education Teacher (MEET-EceT) development is very high. Teacher have a low mean in self-assessment in teaching and self-development of emotions.

ii) Design and Development Phase

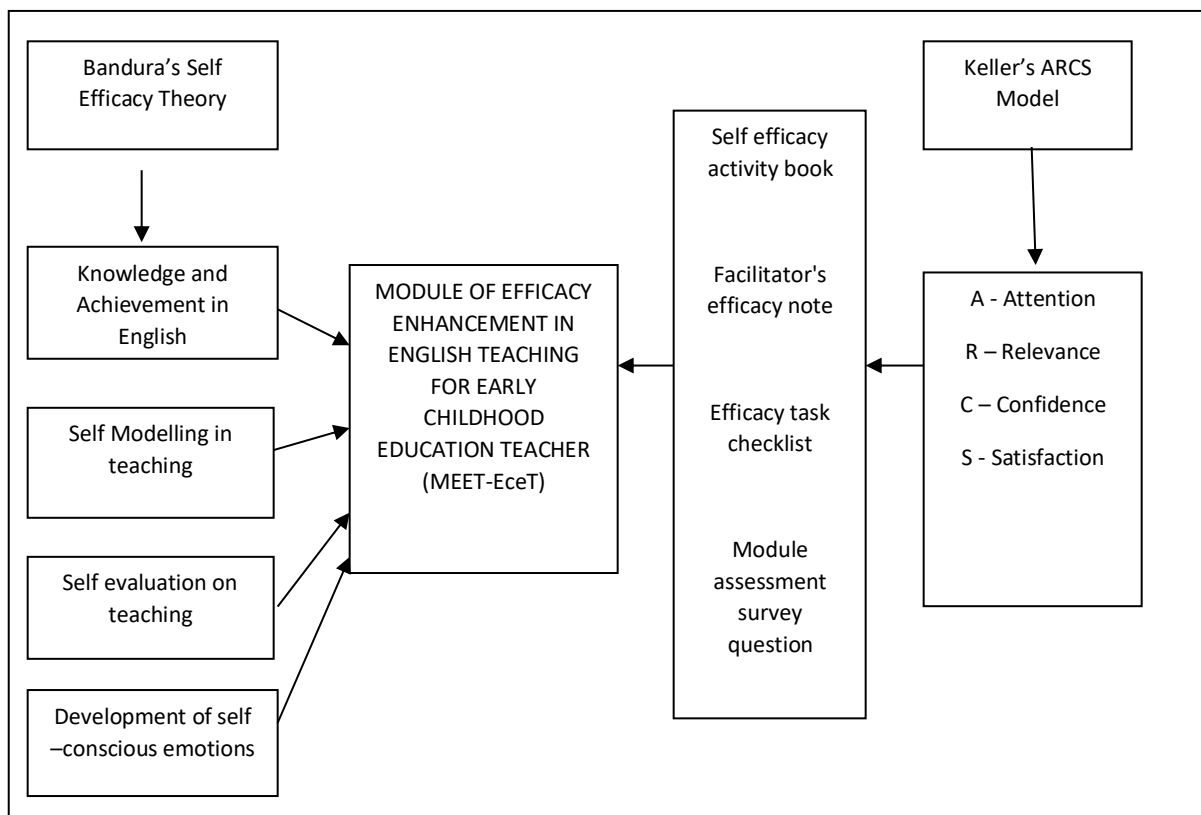


Diagram 1 MEET-EceT development based on Bandura Self Efficacy Theory and Keller's ARCS Model

There are several steps in the second phase; the validity of module content, module reliability through pilot study and module improvement after module implementation before evaluation phase. After all these steps, the module has been implemented for the actual study.

Table 2 : Content Activity Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching for Early Childhood Education Teachers (MEET-EceT)

Sub Module / Activity
Strategy 1 : Introduction to MEET-EceT Activity 1 : Build rapport Activity 2 : Getting to know Bandura's Self- Efficacy Theory Activity 3: Teacher's Self-Efficacy
Strategy 2 : Knowledge and Achievement in English Activity 1 : See other people's efficacy Activity 2 : Teachers' knowledge Activity 3 : Reflective thinking Activity 4 : Self-learning
Strategy 3 : Self-modeling in Teaching Activity 1 : Guiding my fellow friends Activity 2 : My mentor Activity 3 : My motivation Activity 4 : Learn through observation
Strategy 4 : Self-evaluation on Teaching Activity 1 : Video criticism Activity 2 : Let's write a teaching plan Activity 3 : Let's practice teaching Activity 4 : Feedback is not failure Activity 5 : Others methods in teaching
Strategy 5 : Development of Self Conscious Emotion Activity 1 : Changes in physiology and emotions Activity 2 : Managing stress Activity 3 : The pyramid of behavioral change Activity 4 : Positive thinking of English
Strategy 6 : Closing – Self Transformation Activity 1 : You can do it Activity 2 : Mind transformation

Module Validity

Table 3: Evaluation of MPEBI by nine experts (n = 9) based on Russell's (1974) module validity

Panels' Viewpoints	Experts' Percentage	Results
The content of this module is appropriate for the target population	84.4	Accepted
The content of this module can be implemented practically	84.4	Accepted
The content of this module corresponds with the time allocated	85.5	Accepted
The content of this module can improve knowledge in the efficacy of teachers teaching English	86.6	Accepted
The content of this module can reduce the level of anxiety of teachers teaching English	82.2	Accepted
Total content validity of MEET-EceT	84.6	Accepted

Module Reliability

Table 4 : Reliability of activities in six sub module / strategy

Sub Module / Activity	Alpha Cronbach Value	Result
Strategy 1 : Introduction to MEET-EceT Activity 1 : Build rapport Activity 2 : Getting to know Bandura's Self- Efficacy Theory Activity 3: Teacher's Self-Efficacy	.843	Accepted
Strategy 2 : Knowledge and Achievement in English Activity 1 : See other people's efficacy Activity 2 : Teachers' knowledge Activity 3 : Reflective thinking Activity 4 : Self-learning	.896	Accepted
Strategy 3 : Self-modeling in Teaching Activity 1 : Guiding my fellow friends Activity 2 : My mentor	.924	Accepted

Activity 3 : My motivation Activity 4 : Learn through observation		
Strategy 4 : Self-evaluation on Teaching Activity 1 : Video criticism Activity 2 : Let's write a teaching plan Activity 3 : Let's practice teaching Activity 4 : Feedback is not failure Activity 5 : Others methods in teaching	.932	Accepted
Strategy 5 : Development of Self Conscious Emotion Activity 1 : Changes in physiology and emotions Activity 2 : Managing stress Activity 3 : The pyramid of behavioral change Activity 4 : Positive thinking of English	.888	Accepted
Strategy 6 : Closing – Self Transformation Activity 1 : You can do it Activity 2 : Mind transformation	.680	Accepted
Total content reliability of MEPBI	.967	Accepted

Module improvement after pilot test

Table 5 : Content Activity Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching for Early Childhood Education Teachers (MEET-EceT) after pilot test

Content Activity MEET-EceT before pilot test	Content Activity MEET-EceT after pilot test
Strategy 1 : Introduction to MEET-EceT Activity 1 : Getting to know Bandura Self-Efficacy Theory Activity 2: Self-empowerment	Strategy 1 : Introduction to MEET-EceT Introducing a new activity Activity 1 : Build rapport Activity 2 : Getting to know Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory Activity 3: Teacher's Self-Efficacy
Strategy 2 : Knowledge and Achievement in English Activity 1 : Reaching for the stars Activity 2 : Knowledge on English pedagogy Activity 3 : Past teaching performance Activity 4 : Knowledge on content	Strategy 2 : Knowledge and Achievement in English Activity 1 : See other people's efficacy Activity 2 : Teachers' knowledge Activity 3 : Reflective thinking Activity 4 : Self-learning
Strategy 3 : Self-modelling in Teaching Activity 1 : Guiding my fellow friends Activity 2 : My mentor Activity 3 : I am champion Activity 4 : Let's practice	Strategy 3 : Self-modelling in Teaching Activity 1 : Guiding my fellow friends Activity 2 : My mentor Activity 3 : My motivation Activity 4 : Learn through observation
Strategy 4 : Self-evaluation on Teaching Activity 1 : Video critics Activity 2 : Micro-teaching Activity 3 : Let's write teaching programme Activity 4 : Think positively	Strategy 4 : Self-evaluation on Teaching Activity 1 : Video criticism Activity 2 : Let's write a teaching plan Activity 3 : Let's practice teaching Activity 4 : Feedback is not failure Introducing a new activity Activity 5 : Other methods in teaching
Strategy 5 : Development of Self-Emotion Activity 1 : Generating ideas Activity 2 : Managing stress Activity 3 : Trust on efficacy Activity 4 : I love English language	Strategy 5 : Development of Self Conscious Emotion Activity 1 : Changes in physiology and emotions Activity 2 : Managing stress Activity 3 : The pyramid of behavioral change Activity 4 : Positive thinking of English
Strategy 6 : Closing (Individual Transformation) Activity 1 : My mind map Activity 2 : You can do it!	Strategy 6 : Closing – Self Transformation Activity 1 : You can do it! Activity 2 : Mind transformation

Table 6 : Time Allocation for Each Activity in the Module of Efficacy Enhancement in English Teaching for Early Childhood Education Teachers (MEET-EceT) after pilot test

Sub Module / Activity	Time Allocation for Each Activity Before Pilot Test	Time Allocation for Each Activity After Pilot Test
Strategy 1 : Introduction to MEET-EceT Introducing a new activity Activity 1 : Build rapport		30 minutes
Activity 2 : Getting to know Bandura's Self- Efficacy Theory	60 minutes	45 minutes
Activity 3: Teacher's Self-Efficacy	60 minutes	45 minutes
Strategy 2 : Knowledge and Achievement in English Activity 1 : See other people's efficacy Activity 2 : Teachers' knowledge Activity 3 : Reflective thinking Activity 4 : Self-learning	60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes	45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes
Strategy 3 : Self-modeling in Teaching Activity 1 : Guiding my fellow friends Activity 2 : My mentor Activity 3 : My motivation Activity 4 : Learn through observation	60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes	45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes
Strategy 4 : Self-evaluation on Teaching Activity 1 : Video criticism Activity 2 : Let's write a teaching plan Activity 3 : Let's practice teaching Activity 4 : Feedback is not failure	60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes	60 minutes 30 minutes 120 minutes 30 minutes
Introducing a new activity Activity 5 : Others methods in teaching		90 minutes
Strategy 5 : Development of Self Conscious Emotion Activity 1 : Changes in physiology and emotions Activity 2 : Managing stress Activity 3 : The pyramid of behavioral change Activity 4 : Positive thinking of English	60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes 60 minutes	45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes 45 minutes
Strategy 6 : Closing – Self Transformation Activity 1 : You can do it Activity 2 : Mind transformation	60 minutes 60 minutes	45 minutes 45 minutes
Total hours MEET-EceT activities	20 hours	18 hours

iii) Evaluation Phase

Table 7 : Mean differences between treatment group and control group

Treatment Group				
Domain	Mean Pre	Mean Post	Mean Difference	Percent change of mean
Efficacy Belief	3.3892	4.0135	0.6243	12.486%
Efficacy practice	3.0478	3.9751	0.9273	18.546%
Efficacy of teaching	3.2185	3.9943	0.7758	15.516%
Anxiety	3.1508	2.4485	-0.7023	-14.046%
Efficacy Attitude	3.1960	3.4790	0.283	5.66%

Control group				
Domain	Mean Pre	Mean Post	Mean Difference	Percent change of mean
Efficacy Belief	3.4673	3.7387	0.2714	5.428%
Efficacy practice	3.3798	3.6747	0.2949	5.898%
Efficacy of teaching	3.4236	3.7067	0.2831	5.662%
Anxiety	3.1798	3.1818	0.002	0.04%
Efficacy Attitude	3.3423	3.5318	0.1895	3.79%

Table 8 : Result of t-test

	Min	Std.Dev	Std. Error	t	df	Significant 2 tailed
Efficacy Belief	-.44781	.47464	.05842	-7.665	65	.000
Efficacy practice	-.61111	.57832	.07119	-8.585	65	.000
Efficacy of teaching	-.52946	.45957	.05657	-9.360	65	.000
Anxiety	.35017	.68913	.08483	4.128	65	.000
Efficacy Attitude	-.23625	.28853	.03552	-6.652	65	.000

The t-value for the self-efficacy belief was -7.665 and significant at $p < 0.001$. This shows that the level of teacher's efficacy belief after attending the training is significantly higher as compared to before, with a mean difference of 0.6243. The t-value for efficacy practice was -8.585 and significant at $p < 0.001$. This shows that the level of teaching efficacy practice after attending the training is significantly higher as compared to before, with a mean difference of 0.9273.

The t-value for anxiety level was 4.128 and significant at $p < 0.001$. This indicates that the teacher's anxiety level after attending the training is significantly lower, with a mean difference of -0.7023. The t-value for the teaching efficacy (self-efficacy belief + teaching efficacy practice) was -9.360 and significant at $p < 0.001$. This shows that the teachers' teaching efficacy after attending the training is significantly higher than before, with a mean difference of 0.7758. The t-value for teachers' attitude towards English teaching (self-efficacy belief + teaching efficacy practice + anxiety level) was -6.652 and significant at $p < 0.001$. This shows that the teachers' attitude after the training was significantly better than before, with a mean difference of 0.283.

Qualitative data also taken as supportive data. Interview were conducted on eight teacher and two facilitator. Interview analysis is divided into three; module advantages, module weakness and module improvement. Table 9 are themes emerging based on the interview conducted;

Table 9 : Interview analysis data

	Module Advantages	Module Weakness	Module Improvement
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality changes • Enhanced knowledge and skills • Teaching become more attractive • Positive emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to add simulation activities • Need longer time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various activities such as role play, drama, conversation play and so on
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitability of module for training • Enhanced teachers knowledge and skills • Easy to follow and interesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module need more time for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module content uses a lot of terms that are rarely heard, so there needs to be a more detailed description

Conclusion

In conclusion, MEET-EceT can improve the early childhood education teachers' attitude towards English language, in terms of cognitive, behavioural and affective aspects. This module is useful to enhance the knowledge and efficacy belief in teaching English thus increase the efficiency and motivation during teaching practice, besides reducing the anxiety level among the preschool teachers while teaching in English.

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