



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**IDENTIFICATION OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH
TEACHERS OF KUALA TERENGANU DISTRICT**

RAMASAMY A/L R. MUTHUSAMY

FPP 1998 17

**IDENTIFICATION OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NEEDS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS OF
KUALA TERENGANU DISTRICT**

By

RAMASAMY A/L R. MUTHUSAMY

**Project Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Science (Human Resource Development) in the
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

November 1998



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to record my sincere thanks and appreciation to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hj. Azimi bin Hj. Hamzah for his invaluable guidance and encouragement rendered to me in the completion of this project paper.

I am also indebted to Mr. Kim Teng Seng, my colleague at Maktab Perguruan Pasir Panjang who helped me greatly in analysing the data.

I would also like to thank the Kuala Terengganu District Education Officer, Tn Hj. Mohammad bin Isa for giving me permission to conduct the survey in the selected primary schools of the district.

Lastly, I would like to thank my wife Thavamale and my children, Arulkumar and Venupriya for their understanding and patience shown throughout this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
ABSTRAK	x
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of Study.....	1
Teacher Training Programmes.....	3
Pre-service Training.....	3
In-service Training.....	4
Scope of Teaching English in Primary Schools....	4
Statement of Problem.....	6
Research Questions.....	8
Objective of Study.....	8
Significance of the Study	9
Assumptions	10
Limitations	11
Definition of Terms.....	12



II	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	15
	Definition of Perception	15
	Needs and Needs Assessment.....	16
	Professional Needs of Teachers.....	18
	Definition of Continuing Professional Development	21
	Characteristics of Effective English Teachers.....	23
	Summary.....	24
III	METHODOLOGY.....	26
	Research Design.....	26
	Population and Sampling.....	27
	Instrumentation.....	27
	Rationale for use of instrument.....	29
	Pretesting of the Questionnaire.....	30
	Validity and Reliability	31
	Data Collection.....	31
	Independent and Dependent Variables.....	32
	Data Analysis	32
IV	FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	35
	Sample Profile.....	36
	Overall Means of Perceived Needs Of English Teachers	38
	Perceived Needs According To Categories.....	39

	Top Fifteen Perceived Needs Of English Teachers...	40
	Correlation among variables.....	44
	Summary.....	45
V	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	47
	Summary	47
	Conclusions.....	48
	Recommendations.....	52
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	54
	APPENDICES.....	58

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Distribution of Sample by Sex, Age, Academic Qualification and Teaching Experience	36
2	Distribution of Respondents by Overall Means Of Perceived Needs	38
3	Means and Standard Deviations of Perceived Needs Of English Teachers According To Categories	39
4	Means and Standard Deviations of Top Fifteen Perceived Needs of English Teachers	40

Abstract of project paper presented to Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS
OF KUALA TERENGGANU DISTRICT**

By

RAMASAMY A/L R.MUTHUSAMY

November 1998

Chairman : Associate Professor. Dr. Hj. Azimi bin Hj. Hamzah

Faculty : Educational Studies

The study was carried out mainly to identify the perceived needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu District. It also sought to find out the relationship between selected variables and the perceived needs for continuing professional development.

The data was collected using a questionnaire from 82 primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district. The findings of the study indicated that majority of the respondents have high perceived needs for continuing professional development. The study also revealed that the respondents have perceived needs in all the six

categories identified in the questionnaire which were (A) Knowledge, (B) Teaching Strategies, (C) Classroom-Based Skills, (D) Pastoral Care, (E) Student Management Skills and (F) Personal Development. It was found that there was a significant correlation between age and perceived needs for continuing professional development but it was low in nature.

The study recommended that provision of professional development activities for primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu District should be based on a needs assessment and teachers should be allowed to choose in-service courses based on their own needs.

The study has also suggested that further research should be conducted to obtain a more in-depth view of the perception of professional needs of English teachers through other research designs.

Abstrak kertas projek yang dikemukakan kepada Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains.

**MENGENALPASTI KEPERLUAN PERKEMBANGAN
PROFESIONAL DI KALANGAN
GURU-GURU BAHASA INGGERIS SEKOLAH RENDAH
DI DAERAH KUALA TERENGGANU**

Oleh

RAMASAMY A/L R.MUTHUSAMY

November 1998

Pengerusi : Profesor Madya. Dr. Hj. Azimi bin Hj. Hamzah

Fakulti : Pengajian Pendidikan

Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti tanggapan guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris sekolah rendah di daerah Kuala Terengganu terhadap keperluan perkembangan profesionalisme mereka. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti hubungan antara pembolehubah-pembolehubah terpilih seperti umur dan pengalaman mengajar dan tanggapan guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris terhadap keperluan profesionalisme mereka. Data bagi kajian ini dikumpul daripada 82 guru Bahasa Inggeris di daerah Kuala Terengganau melalui soal-selidik dalam enam kategori, iaitu, (A) Pengetahuan, (B) Kaedah dan Strategi Pengajaran, (C) Kemahiran Berasaskan Bilik Darjah, (D) Kemahiran Menguruskan Kebajikan

Murid, (E) Kemahiran Pengurusan Pelajar dan (F) Perkembangan Peribadi.

Kajian mendapati bahawa majoriti reponden mempunyai pengamatan keperluan yang tinggi untuk perkembangan profesional. Mereka juga mempunyai pengamatan keperluan di dalam semua enam kategori yang tersebut. Di samping itu, kajian juga mendapati bahawa terdapat korelasi yang signifikan tetapi rendah di antara pembolehubah umur dengan tanggapan keperluan profesional. guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris.

Kajian ini juga mencadangkan bahawa aktiviti-aktiviti untuk perkembangan profesional guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris sekolah rendah di daerah Kuala Terengganu perlu dijalankan berdasarkan kepada keperluan klien dan guru-guru tersebut juga di benarkan memilih kursus untuk perkembangan profesional mengikut keperluan mereka.

Kajian ini juga mencadangkan bahawa satu penyelidikan lanjutan perlu dijalankan menggunakan kaedah-kaedah yang lain untuk mengkaji secara lebih mendalam tentang persepsi keperluan profesional di kalangan guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris di sekolah rendah.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

English is taught as a second language in Malaysian schools. The Cabinet Committee Report on the Implementation of the National Education Policy (1982) requires that English should be taught to enable learners, firstly, to use English in the jobs they pursue as well as in situations which call for proficiency in the language; and secondly, to have a grasp of English as a second language so that they are better prepared for tertiary education. Furthermore, recent world trends such as globalization and information explosion have further enhanced the importance of English. It is needed to gain accessibility in the borderless world for economic purposes as well as to keep abreast with the rapid advancements in science and technology for most of the current developments in these fields are documented in English.

Thus, mastery of English is imperative for Malaysians to be competitive in the global world. English teachers both at primary and secondary levels will have to play a crucial role to enable learners to master English. In order to play this role effectively, the former Deputy Director of Teacher Education, Dr.Siti Hawa bt Ahmad (1995) views that it is essential for English teachers to upgrade their knowledge and skills continuously. This implies that the initial training of English teachers would be insufficient to enable them to be effective teachers of English. Welsh and Gibson (1986) support this view by saying that initial professional education in itself is not enough to maintain competence through one's working life. Mohana (1996) also says that no matter which profession is scrutinized, it becomes apparent that if the members have not concerned themselves with continuing professional development over the past five, ten or fifteen years, there is much of which they will not be aware and of which ought to be aware if they claim to be competent at their work. Corder (1968) is also of the view that initial training would be out-of-date well before retirement and language teachers need to engage in professional study for the health of the profession.

Based on the above views, it is possible to conclude that initial teacher-training of English teachers would be quite inadequate to teach English effectively in the context of rapidly-

changing world as well as to cope with the innovations in second language teaching. This emphasizes the need for continuing professional development of English teachers to enable them to acquire appropriate knowledge and skills to play their role more effectively in the teaching of English as a second language. This would mean that, English teachers, in spite of their initial teacher-training, would have needs for continuing professional development to be effective in the teaching of English. These needs have to be addressed in order to ensure that there is regular updating of knowledge and skills among English teachers for their continuing professional development.

Teacher Training Programmes

The Ministry of Education conducts two types of teacher training programmes for primary school English teachers, namely, pre-service training and in-service training.

Preservice Training

Pre-service training for primary school English teachers is conducted by the Teacher Education Division of the Ministry of Education. The duration of the teacher education programme is normally two and half years. During the final semester teacher

trainees will undergo one semester of practical attachment in schools. Teacher-trainees are trained as general purpose teachers as well as subject teachers. The course components are divided into core subjects, specialization, school subjects, self-enrichment, teaching practice and co-curricular activities and other academic subjects. The main subjects for those specialising in the teaching of English Language consists of proficiency courses in the language skills, methodology, linguistics, literature and evaluation.

In-service Training

In-service training for primary school English teachers is normally conducted at Teacher Activity Centres. The training sessions are usually conducted during weekends by the State Education Department or the District Education Office. Besides these departments, other agencies of the Ministry of Education also provide in-service training for English teachers. The agencies are Teacher Education Division and Curriculum Development Centre.

The Scope of Teaching English in Primary Schools

The English Language syllabus for primary school aims to equip pupils with basic skills and knowledge of the English Language so as to enable them to communicate, both orally and in

writing in and out of school (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1994).

In order to achieve the above aims, the syllabus has specified three types of content which are language skills, language content and learning content. The skills component comprises listening, speaking, reading and writing. The language contents are sound system, grammar and vocabulary. The learning content or topics selected for teaching are based on the immediate learning environment of the child. It then gradually expands in widening circles to include the home, village, country and the world.

In addition to the delivering of the above content, English teachers are also required to infuse moral values and thinking skills in their teaching. The Integrated Primary School Curriculum or the Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah (KBSR) also expects teachers to use the child-centred approach in their teaching (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1996).

Statement of Problem

Continuing professional development of primary school English teachers is necessary for the effective teaching of English in the primary schools to enable learners to attain the objectives of the Integrated Primary School Curriculum English syllabus in accordance to the National Education Philosophy. This would mean that primary school English teachers would have their own perceived professional needs which need to be identified. This study is basically concerned with identifying the different perceived needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district.

This study is deemed necessary because there has been no comprehensive needs assessment conducted to identify the professional needs of primary school English teachers in the district of Kuala Terengganu. Whatever attempts made to promote professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district have been based on the perceived needs of the providing agencies of the Ministry of Education such as the Curriculum Development Centre, the State Education Department of Terengganu and the Teacher Training Division rather than on a needs assessment. Thus, it would be valuable to assess the professional needs of primary school English teachers of the Kuala

Terengganu district to facilitate the professional development of these teachers.

Furthermore, these teachers also vary in terms of age and duration of teaching experience. Thus, it is very likely for them to perceive different needs for professional development. Under such circumstances, a needs assessment would be necessary to identify the specific perceived needs of primary school English teachers so that their needs can be catered for.

Thus, the identification of the perceived needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu, will assist the various agencies of the Ministry of Education responsible for staff development, to address these needs so that there will be more effective professional development of these teachers to ensure the effective teaching of English in the primary schools.

Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceived needs of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district for continuing professional development?
2. Is there a significant correlation between selected variables (age and teaching experience) and the perceived needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district?

Objective of Study

General Objective

The general objective of this study is to identify the needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district..

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to identify:

1. the needs of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district for continuing professional development.
2. the relationship between selected variables such as age and duration of teaching experience and the perceived needs for continuing professional development of primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu District.

Significance of the Study

The study intends to emphasize the importance of catering for the needs of primary schools English teachers for continuing professional development. Since a teacher is the linchpin in a system of education, his or her professional development should be of concern to the authorities concerned. It is hoped that the identification of the professional needs of English teachers will serve as new knowledge in balancing the provision of continuing professional development courses and activities between curriculum interests and the professional development of English teachers of primary schools in Kuala Terengganu district.

It is also hoped that the findings may help policy makers to formulate a comprehensive continuing professional development policy for English teachers of primary schools to promote their professional growth which would help to improve the quality of English Language instruction in primary schools in Kuala Terengganu district.

Another important significance of the findings is that it will help to identify areas for continuing professional development of English teachers in primary schools. The findings could also be used to determine the relevant content and strategies for the professional development of English teachers at school and district levels.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made in attempt to identify the needs of English teachers of primary schools for continuing professional development.

1. Primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district have formulated perceptions of their own individual needs for professional development.

2. Professional development of English teachers will help to improve the effectiveness of teaching English.
3. The respondents would be honest in their responses to the questionnaire.

Limitations

Some of the limitations of this study are as follows:

- a. The findings of this study are only relevant to primary school English teachers of Kuala Terengganu district and thus cannot be generalised to teachers of other subjects in primary schools or English teachers of secondary schools in the district.
- b. Another limitation of the study is that only one instrument i.e. a questionnaire has been relied upon for the collection of data. It is felt that more credibility could have been obtained if a triangulation procedure has been utilized such as structured interviews and observations.

- c. The needs assessed in the study have been limited to the needs specified in the questionnaire.

Definitions of Terms

Definitions of terms used in the study are as follows:

1. **Continuing Professional Development:** a lifelong learning process to increase the knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals for the enhancement of professional practice
2. **English teacher:** a trained teacher who is responsible to teach English as a second language
3. **In-service course:** a course to equip a practicing teacher to perform the same job better.
4. **Learners:** all persons who are expected to benefit educationally from a particular educational programme.
5. **Level 1:** Year 1 to Year 3 in a primary school
6. **Level 2:** Year 4 till Year 6 in a primary school

7. **Need:** the gap between what a person wants and what he or she has in terms of professional knowledge and expertise
8. **Needs Assessment:** a formal process which determines the gap between current outputs or outcomes and required or desired outputs or outcomes; places these gaps in priority order; and selects the most important one for resolution (Kaufman,1981)
9. **Pre-service course:** the basic training course for teachers
10. **Primary school:** a school for junior children of ages seven to twelve
11. **Skills:** abilities used in teaching/managing pupils
12. **Staff Development:** Institutional programmes directed at knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers, so as to assist them, in the pursuit of excellence, to meet more fully their own needs, the needs of their students, the institution and society at large (Main,1985)
13. **Teaching:** a deliberate set of actions and activities by a person for the purpose of inducing learning in terms of