The Representation of English Language in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025.
A CDA Perspective.

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In loving memory of

**Tengku Dato' Asmak Binti Almarhum Tengku Panglima Perang
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Declaration

This thesis has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree at this or any other university. It is the result of my own work and includes nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated. Many of the ideas in this thesis were the product of discussion with my supervisor Dr Karin Tusting.

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Abstract

The Representation Of English Language In The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025. A CDA Perspective.

This research is aimed at uncovering how English language is represented in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013 -2025 (Blueprint) and shedding some light on what the English language really means to the education system of Malaysia. In order to uncover how the English language is represented, four analyses were conducted. Firstly, a text analysis was conducted on the 'Language' section of the Blueprint with Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis framework. Secondly, the representation of English language teachers was analysed with van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic inventory of the representation of social actors. Thirdly, teachers were interviewed about the initiatives stipulated in the Blueprint and their responses were analysed thematically. Finally, using the 'Think-aloud' protocol approach, teachers were asked to verbalise their thoughts about an extract from the Blueprint. Their responses to the extract were then analysed thematically. To complement the results of the text analyses, I located issues from the findings of the interviews and personal responses which are related to my findings from the text analyses. The findings of this research revealed, firstly, that the English language is constructed as being a global language which MOE believes is important to master. Next, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) believes that being proficient in the English language will enable Malaysian youth to compete on a global platform and that success means being able to compete globally. The analyses also revealed that MOE does acknowledge the importance of English language and being proficient in the language but the execution and implementation of the initiatives for improving the level of English language proficiency need to be addressed with more attention. In addition, teachers are acknowledged only as implementers of initiatives and as teachers of English language but not as equals, partners or policymakers

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I end this acknowledgment with a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W for everyone who was with me throughout this PhD journey especially Dr Karin, Dr Diane Potts, Dr Johnny Unger and Dr Chris Hart:

The Prophet (SAW) said: "Allah swt, His angels and all those in the Heavens and on Earth, even ants in their ant-hills and fish in the water, call down blessings on those who instruct others in beneficial knowledge"

<div align="right">Hadith Al-Tirmidhi</div>

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1   The English Language Affair

1.1   The Springboard of this Research

This study analyses the representation of the English language in the Blueprint and uncovers how the English language teachers' role is represented in the Blueprint by conducting an analysis of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025. In examining how English language is positioned in the policy document by the Ministry of Education (MOE), three issues were addressed: how English language and the teaching and learning of English language are discursively constructed, how English language teachers are represented, and what insights about the teaching and learning of English language in Malaysia's education system emerged from the analyses.

The English language was introduced to Malaya (the name before Malaysia gained independence) when the British Empire colonised Malaya during the 18th century. English became the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools and also, the "lingua franca for business communication purposes" (Darmi & Albion, 2013, p. 176). Malaysia gained independence from the British Empire in 1957, the national language was changed from English to Bahasa Malaysia in 1957, (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division, 2008) (A more detailed discussion on the history of English language as the language of instruction in the education system of Malaysia in Section 2.4 of Chapter 2). The language-in-education policy of Malaysia then changed in 1969 when the government instructed that all lessons in national schools had to be conducted in Bahasa Malaysia, the national language of Malaysia (also known as the Malay language), except for English and other language lessons e.g. Mandarin and Tamil languages, and schools teaching in community

languages (referred to as 'national-type schools' in Malaysia) (Omar, 1982b). In the effort of changing the education system and the language of instruction to promote unity and nationalism due to the pluralistic society of Malaysia, the students' proficiency in English suffered (Foo & Richards, 2004; Omar, 1982a, 1996).

This scenario further led to various changes in the education system – change of syllabus, approaches in teaching as well as the emphasis. The Ministry of Education found that English language teaching in schools should emphasise oral activities to help students relate the language to their environment and eventually in 1989, a new syllabus was introduced- *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah* (Primary School New Curriculum) and *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (Secondary School New Curriculum). The new syllabus was introduced to focus on skills and knowledge that would enable students to enter the job market or continue their education after school. The changes were associated with aims that would enable the pupils to converse, express their ideas, and question well and with ease in the English language (Foo & Richards, 2004).

By the millennium, with the rapid growth in information and communications technology (ICT) and the acceleration of globalisation, the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad decided that English would become the language of instruction for two subjects - Science and Mathematics (Foo & Richards, 2004; Gill, 2007; Hashim, 2009; Heng & Tan, 2006). This second change came in 2002 (Foo & Richards, 2004; Gill, 2007; Hashim, 2009; Heng & Tan, 2006). This change in the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics led to the introduction of a new syllabus, English for Science and Technology (Foo & Richards, 2004).

Then, in 2010, the language of instruction for the abovementioned subjects faced a reversion, following poor results and teachers' reluctance to use English as the language of instruction. The instructional language for Science and Mathematics reverted to Bahasa Malaysia (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2009). Ironically, in December 2015, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) then introduced a Dual Language Programme which saw English reintroduced as the language of instruction for these subjects, to be carried out in several schools as a pilot project (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015).

When I first became an English language teacher with the Ministry of Education Malaysia in 2002, the change of language of instruction for Science and Mathematics from Bahasa Malaysia to English had just begun. I was instructed to teach English language and English for Science and Technology (EST). I was placed in an urban school in the Peninsular of Malaysia where most of the students were exposed to the English language and were able to converse in the language quite fluently.

The school did have students who were less fluent and not fluent in the English language, who preferred to speak in their mother tongue i.e. Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin, Hokkien, Cantonese and Tamil. I witnessed the struggles that some of the Science and Mathematics teachers had to go through in teaching both subjects in English. These teachers had themselves been taught Science and Mathematics in Bahasa Malaysia and during their entire school experience, the language of instruction was Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin or Tamil (except for the English language subject). Moreover, they conversed in their mother tongue on a daily basis. Nevertheless, these teachers went to English language courses organised by MOE from time to time and through perseverance they became quite comfortable in teaching in the English language.

Although I was no longer a teacher when MOE reverted to teaching Science and Mathematics in Bahasa Malaysia, my conversations with my teacher friends revealed that the Science and Mathematics teachers were not happy with the change. They lamented that they had just started feeling comfortable and confident in teaching the subjects in English but then at that point, they were instructed to teach in Bahasa Malaysia. They also commented that the students and parents were not happy with the change because, in their opinion, they felt that MOE was indecisive. They also felt it was unfair on the students for MOE to change the language of instruction again because the students were already getting used to learning the Scientific and Mathematical terms in English.

The several changes in the language of instruction and the accounts I gathered from my observations as a teacher and my teacher friends made me wonder what is the English language to MOE. MOE, despite the changes it makes in the language of instruction of the Science and Mathematics subjects, the continuous efforts in which MOE makes to improve the teaching of English language suggests that MOE has every intention of retaining English language education in Malaysia's education system. However, a closer look at how the English language is represented in the Blueprint reveals that there is more than it meets the eye.

In brief, MOE, like many other countries such as the U.S. and Australia, subscribe to the belief that a highly successful education system and a high level of proficiency in the English language will ensure global success. In other words, MOE equates English language acquisition and high level of proficiency of the language with global competitiveness and success. While this notion may be legitimate and has some truth in it, when an education system undergoes changes and transformation it should not be limited to certain aspects only, in this context, global economy success and to be in

tandem with the current trend. The changes and transformation should be localised instead of adopting policies and measures of other countries to ensure every aspect of the changes and improvement made can be achieved. Countries like Finland and Singapore did not subscribe to the idea of global economy success in totality for their education policy but their education system proved to be still successful (Sahlberg, 2016) which demonstrates that not following the trend can also bring success and that addressing the country's needs first can also ensure success to their education system and their country.

My concern over MOE's rationale for the transformation of the English language education, that is economic success, is not for the betterment of the nation. MOE believes that to be economically successful at a global level the education system of Malaysia has to be transformed and changed in the direction of globalisation; and to be able to compete internationally the nation becomes proficient in the English language. However, I believe an education system should be built on ensuring that a nation will be competent enough to face any challenges to come and not be limited to one direction alone. An education policy should be holistic and not measured by numbers or status.

This research intends to put forth that discourses concerning globalisation and global economic success influences policymakers, in this case – policymakers of the education system, and how these discourses have been weaved into the Blueprint to legitimate the transformation of the education system and English language education.

1.2   The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025

To address how MOE views English language, I chose to analyse The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 (Blueprint) because it is the policy document that

was developed after the reversion of language of instruction and the document that focused on the transformation of the education system.

The Blueprint was printed on a blue and semi-glossy coffee table book and developed after the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics subjects reverted to Bahasa Malaysia in 2010. The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 Preliminary Report was launched on 12 September 2012 (Bernama, 2012) and brought to the Cabinet in January 2013 (Bernama, 2013). It is printed in both Bahasa Malaysia and English languages and this research analyses the English language version. The Blueprint states that MOE had consulted various entities including the stakeholders, education experts, international education agencies, teachers and students before they began to develop and print this Blueprint. The Blueprint was developed with three objectives in mind and they are:

1. To understand the "current performance and challenges of the Malaysian education system – focussing on improving access to education, raising standards (quality), closing achievement gaps (equity), fostering unity amongst students, and maximising system efficiency";

2. To establish "a clear vision and aspirations for individual students and the education system as a whole over in the next 13 years";

3. To outline a "comprehensive transformation programme for the system, that includes key changes to MOE which will allow it to meet new demands and rising expectations, and to ignite and support overall civil service transformation."

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-2)

The Blueprint outlines eleven shifts which aim to ensure the success of transformation of the education system of Malaysia. The shifts include: to improve the proficiency of

Bahasa Malaysia and the English language, and to encourage the acquisition of another language; to ensure that high-performing leaders are in schools; and to ensure that student outcomes are maximised for every Malaysian Ringgit (Malaysia's official currency note) (refer to Figure 5-1 in Chapter 5 for the visual representation of the Shifts).

With the transformation of the education system, MOE asserts that it intends to raise the education system to "international education standards", to prepare "Malaysia's children for the challenges of the 21st century", and to meet with the "increased public and parental expectations of education policy" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-1). The Blueprint provides an extensive explanation of their "vision of the education system and student aspirations that Malaysia both needs and deserves, and suggests 11 strategic and operational shifts that would be required to achieve that vision." (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-1). In Shift Two, MOE describes the transformation of language education in Malaysia's education system and the initiatives which MOE has planned to implement for the transformation of the language education of Malaysia (a brief description is in Chapter 5).

While these assertions MOE has put forth are not relatively new, they have been a significant subject of discussion (due to the implications) among researchers such as Sajid (2005), Kelly (2009), Anderson , and Robertson et. al. It is also quite apparent that the Blueprint is a top-down policy measure as it is produced and distributed by MOE of Malaysia to the government schools. These government schools are then required to ensure that the initiatives are implemented of which the teachers become the main personnel to implement them in their classes and lessons. As such, I felt the Blueprint would be an appropriate document to analyse to respond to the overall question of this research. With that in mind, this study will analyse the Blueprint with

Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis which has taken pragma-dialectical approach to practical argumentation. Fairclough and Fairclough have integrated the approach into Fairclough's (Norman Fairclough, 2001) general dialectical relational form of CDA (see Sub-section 3.6 for more details on the argumentation analysis) or also known as argumentation approach. For the purpose of this research and for easy reference I will refer Fairclough and Fairclough's approach as argumentation analysis. I have also integrated Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor representation framework, specifically the socio-semantic inventory to analyse the representation of the English language teachers in the Blueprint (see Sub-section 3.7 for more details on Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor representation framework).

1.3   The Story of this Research

As I mentioned above, The Blueprint outlines 11 shifts required for the transformation of the education system and the second shift states that being proficient in English language is one of the items on the language education agenda. As such, by analysing the Blueprint, this study aims to provide an understanding of and insight into the shifts in the language of instruction in Malaysia's education system by observing the positioning and representation of the English language as well as teachers of the English language.

Identifying the positioning of English in the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) will shed light on and provide insights into the constant shifts in the language of instruction, with the hope that this will provide a clearer direction for MOE. Identifying a clearer direction will enable MOE to chart impactful initiatives to achieve student outcomes in terms of their proficiency in English.

This study also intends to analyse the representation of teachers in the Blueprint to find out how teachers' roles are perceived by MOE. I believe that teachers' roles and

responsibilities should be clearly identified and illustrated because, like identifying the positioning of English language in MOE, locating the roles and responsibilities of teachers would assist in achieving the student outcomes.

In order to address the aims and the intention of this study mentioned above, I intend to answer the following questions:

1. How is the English language and the teaching and learning of English language discursively constructed in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

2. What insights can be gained about the English language and the teaching and learning of English language in the Malaysian education system?

3. How have the teachers of English language been represented in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

This study takes a qualitative approach in analyzing the data gathered by employing Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis framework to analyse the text; using van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic inventory of social actor representation to analyse the representation of teachers in the text; and conducting one to one interviews with teachers and obtaining their response to an extract from the Blueprint by employing the think-aloud protocol method.

Upon the analysis of the Blueprint, I realise that the transformation of the education system in Malaysia, including the English language education, is to ensure that the Malaysian youth will be prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century and globalisation. Furthermore, it is also for Malaysia to be economically competitive in the global world, the education system of Malaysia has to have "be globally-competitive education system" because Malaysia states that "The state of the education system today is the best predictor of Malaysia's competitiveness tomorrow"

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 2–1). For these reasons, MOE introduced several phases, or Waves as MOE refers them to, for the transformation and also stated that these Waves will produce results and therefore, the transformation will be successful. While MOE views transformation is needed for the benefit of the country's economic future, I believe that the reason for such a transformation should be for the benefit of the nation and beyond economic purposes.

As such, I hope that this study will contribute to various bodies of knowledge, one of which is the impact of globalisation on education systems around the world, the positioning of teachers and the language of instruction of Malaysia's education system; and to illustrate the use of a Think-aloud approach with a political discourse approach. Eventually, I hope that with the results and the insights gathered from this research, they will inform and assist MOE in strategising the next course of action.

1.4   An Overview of this Thesis

I hope I have provided a comprehensive description of the context, the aims and objectives of this research as well as the rationale behind this research. In this section I provide a brief summary of what each chapter entails.

In Chapter Two, I provide a review of literature concerning globalisation, Malaysia's education policy and language education policy. I also discuss the various articles and arguments surrounding the issues I mentioned earlier and eventually, locate my research within this broader field.

The third chapter of this thesis puts forth the discourse approaches which I employ in analysing the Blueprint to address research questions one and two. I discuss both Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis – practical argumentation framework and van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic inventory of

social actors and the theoretical underpinnings which eventually become the theoretical framework for this research.

The research design and the source of data for this research are discussed and presented in Chapter Four i.e. the methodology chapter. Here, I present the frameworks I used for the textual analysis - Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) pragma-dialectical approach to practical argumentation which has been integrated into Fairclough's more general dialectical relational form of CDA (from hereafter, argumentation analysis) and van Leeuwen (2008) socio-semantic inventory of social actors; and the other methods I used to collect and analyse my data – face-to-face semi-structured interviews and Think Aloud sessions using the Think-Aloud Protocol approach. I discuss how I conducted my textual analysis with the argumentation analysis and socio-semantic inventory; and the interviews and the Think Aloud sessions. I also briefly explain where my data comes from and the number of interviewees involved.

For the findings from the analysis, I have separated them into two different chapters of which I discuss my findings of the textual analysis of the Blueprint in Chapters Five and Six while the analysis of the interview and Think Aloud session are in Chapter Seven. In Chapter Five, I present the results from the analysis with Faircloughs' argumentation analysis and the results of analysis with the socio-semantic inventory are in Chapter Six.

In Chapter Seven, I discuss the responses from the interviews first and the Think Aloud session, second. I also discuss the profile of the interviewees and the process of the interviews and Think Aloud session.

Lastly, in Chapter Eight I present my discussion and conclusion of the research which I relate to the literature review I brought forth in Chapter Two and Three and

ultimately, to the whole thesis. I end the thesis with the conclusion and recommendations.

1.5   Limitations of this Research

Like any other research, mine has its limitations. I do not claim that the interviews I conducted are a representative sample of teachers' experience and the reality of implementing initiatives and policy. My research is also not stating that the outcome is the sole representation of how MOE perceives the English language. As such, further studies comparing the teachers' actual experiences and policy implementation can be conducted to find out the success or failure of the implementation of a policy by carrying out a more in-depth and extensive research.

2 Globalisation, Malaysia's Education Policy and The Language Education of Malaysia

2.1 Introduction

According to Baker & Wiseman (2005), there is a belief that a country's "educational success" depends on a "nation's social, political, and economic future in the world system" (p.ix). Whether this belief is correct or otherwise, many countries continue to compare one education system to another globally. Baker & Wiseman (2005) further state that international comparisons are believed to reveal the processes that influence academic achievement. As such, locating the education system of a country in a global context informs policymakers of what should be done with schools.

This belief has led to countries reforming, revamping, transforming and changing their education policies as well as introducing new policies into the education system. Malaysia is no exception in wanting to change and transform the education system to develop Malaysian youth who are knowledgeable, competitive and are able to compete at a global level. Subsequently, the English language education of Malaysia undergoes a reformation as MOE believes that English language is the lingua franca that would allow the Malaysian youth to be globally competitive.

To have a better picture of the influence of globalisation on Malaysia's education and language education policies, I briefly discuss the discourses surrounding globalisation in relation to education, education policy and language education policy of Malaysia in this chapter. It is important to note that the discussion on the language education in Malaysia is to provide a background to this research and how it relates to this research

as whole. This discussion is not about which language should be the focus of Malaysia's language education.

2.2   Education Policy

2.2.1   Research in Education Policy

Education research is one of the resources which practitioners, policy makers and researchers draw upon for the latest practices in teaching and learning, the problems surrounding teaching and learning, solutions, the gaps in the field of education, and new developments and directions in the education field. Education research is a source for information for various reasons.

Ozga (2000) points out that education policy research itself can be a resource and an activity for teachers as it has the capacity to inform their own policy directions as well as encourage an independent outlook on government policy, taking Dewey's belief that education policy research contributes to fostering citizenship and "real democracy" (p.5). She has also argued that research in an education policy setting will foster the habit of conveying research practices into education workplaces to enable experimentation, scrutiny of results, evaluation, the search for improvement and teamwork to become natural resources for pedagogic work. However, Slavin (2002) argues for a rigorous evaluation of replicable education programmes to "build confidence in educational research among policymakers and educators" (p.16). Slavin (2002) also asserts that education research may not produce breakthroughs but it would produce improvements because "accumulated small advances", like how surgeries have become less risky over time, have improved practice (p.19). In other words, Slavin (2002) is claiming that an evidence-based education policy needs to be in place to win the confidence of policymakers and educators.

Researchers, according to Whitty (2006), are cautioned when presenting their research for policy-making to avoid their work being "shaped entirely by the Government's call for research that is directly useful to policy" (p.159). He also claims that education researchers should be allowed to produce works which may or not may be useful for policy makers. Nevertheless, as Hammersley (2002) points out that research increases "the confidence we can reasonably have in those beliefs" (p.150). Research should be used in policy in its entirety and not be "misinterpreted or distorted in order to suit the purposes of legitimation" (p.150).

Therefore, I believe education policy research is important and that it affects the education policy and education system of a country in one way or another. Policy research in education is vital to develop a collective understanding of problems and strategies to address them. This is critical in order to achieve results on the ground because consensus is a key ingredient to promote and encourage cooperative and synergistic action among the many parties who are involved in implementing policies within the education sphere (Mingat, Tan, & Sosale, 2003).

Education policy should be devoid of influences which direct the education system towards one that benefits political agendas or individuals. Instead, an education system should be based on a policy that benefits a country and its nation in all aspects such as development, economic stability and a nation's growth.

In relation to the Blueprint, I want an insight into how research has been drawn on |in the Blueprint and the implementation of the initiatives based on MOE's claim that the Blueprint is "the outcome of in-depth analyses, interviews, focus groups, surveys and research conducted with the support of Malaysian and international experts, Ministry officials, teachers, principals, and parents all across Malaysia." (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). MOE's claim here attests that they have done their

'homework' prior to the development of the Blueprint thus reflecting the notion of evidence-based education policy.

2.2.2   On defining education policy

Following Fimyar's (2014) advice that any researcher attempting to analyse education policy should select a working definition of policy, I will first present various definitions in the study of education policy and then attempt to present a working definition of education policy for this study.

Haddad (1995) views education policy as a product because policies are decisions which are made or have been made by individuals or a group of individuals which set or outline the directives to guide decisions made, initiate or delay actions; or they may also serve as guides for the implementation of previous decisions. Haddad further states that in terms of their scope, complexity, decision environment, range of choices, and decision criteria, policies differ from one another. Haddad (1995) may have given a very static interpretation of education policy, but if taking education policy literally, his definition of education policy is valid as education policy are statements of rules, guidelines and directives for an education system which the stakeholders and those involved would have to adhere to.

In contrast, Bell & Stevenson (2006) provide a dynamic interpretation of policy which focuses more on processes, and claims that it has to be observed in a wider context. Education policy is not a product of a set of rules alone. Education policy is about power and educational leaders and it is a product of negotiations, disputes, struggles and compromise among those competing. It aims to meet the demands and aspirations of individuals, organisations, stakeholders, government and the parties involved and associated with it.

While both Haddad (1995) and Bell & Stevenson (2006) have a concrete opinion on what education policy means, Ozga (2000) claims that there is "no fixed, single definition of policy" because the meaning of policy depends on where the researcher of a policy is coming from (p.xii). Nevertheless, Ozga (2000) takes a similar view to Ball (1994) that policy is a process because it involves negotiations, contestations or disputes between groups who are in or out of the authoritative circle.

As well as defining policy as a process, Ball (1994) views education policy as text and discourse. Ball (1994) states policy is a text because education policy is a representation of concerted negotiations, arguments, discussions and various discourses from authorities, people in power and policy authors; as well as influences from politics, interest groups, parliamentary processes and legislative formulation. In short, policy text is "cannibalized products of multiple (but circumscribed) influences and agendas" albeit these may not necessarily be clear, closed or complete (Ball, 1994, p. 16). Nevertheless, Ball (1994), adopting Giddens' view, states that while the writers of the policy have no control over readers' interpretation, they do make concerted efforts to "assert such control by the means at their disposal, to achieve a 'correct' reading" (Ball, 1994, 2006). Ball continues to stress that that effort and the effect policy has on readers has to be understood and that readers' attention to "writers' context of production and communicative intent" has to be acknowledged (p.44).

Drawing upon Foucault's (1972, pp. 208–209) interpretation of discourse, Ball, Maguire, Hoskins & Braun (2011) explain education policy as discourse as well because discourses are the "set of conditions in accordance with which a practice is exercised, in accordance with which that practice gives rise to partially or totally new statements, and in accordance with which it can be modified" (p.122). In other words,

education policies are representations of 'knowledge and power, discourses that construct a topic' and they are discursive formations i.e. "sets of texts, events and practices that speak to wider social processes of schooling" such as the construction of 'teacher' (Ball et al., 2012, pp. 122-123). Ball (2006) states that discourse is not limited to text, speech and words, discourse concerns "what can be said, and thought" and "who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (p.48). Discourses are also "collections of related policies, [which] exercise power through a production of 'truth' and 'knowledge' " (Ball, 2006, p. 48). Discourses control what can be read, observed, uttered, with whose authority, when and where. In the context of education policy, the people in power play an important role in developing, framing and shaping the discourses surrounding education policy.

The literature on the definition of education policy is varied and there is no unified way to provide a single definition due to the many variables it has. However, for the purpose of this study, I will take Bell & Stevenson's (2006) and Ball's (1994, 2006) definitions as well as Ball et al.'s (2012) position about education policy. Although I can understand Haddad's (1995) justification for a static definition of education policy, I believe education policy is more than just a set of rules, directives and guidelines. According to Ball (1994, 2006), education policy is text and discourse. It is text because policies are representations of negotiations, struggles, compromises and debates which subsequently form the policy; and it is discourse because these negotiations, struggles and debates all take place within power relations of those in authority, the recipients and participants within a system or government or organisation. Ball (2015) also views policies as discursive strategies; a set of "texts, events, artefacts and practices, [which] speak to wider social processes of schooling, such as the production of 'the student', the 'purpose of schooling' and the

construction of 'the teacher' " (p. 308). What Bell & Stevenson (2006) add is the view that education policy is not limited to power and educational leaders alone. Education policy is the voice of stakeholders, education leaders, authorities, organisations, the government. These voices are represented via discussions, conversations, outcomes, negotiations and conclusions, and eventually translated in forms of words and phrases i.e. text. Education policy also weaves in discourses beyond negotiations, discussions, disputes, struggles and compromises of participants of discourses. Hence, taking this definition leads to analysing the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025 from a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective (CDA). I will provide a background on CDA in Chapter 3 and relate the significance of a CDA analysis.

2.3   Globalisation and Education Policy

While I have presented the role of education policy research above, in this section, I will discuss globalisation and its effects on education and its policy, and subsequently, show how globalisation is located as a theme in the Blueprint. Globalisation is a key influence in many countries and their respective education systems, and Malaysia is no exception. Globalisation is the key theme that runs through the Blueprint and as such, I discuss globalisation to provide a background and relate its influence with my overall discussion of my research in the final chapter of this thesis.

2.3.1   On defining Globalisation

UNDP (1999) defines globalisation as follows: "Shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are linking people's lives more deeply, more intensely, more immediately than ever" (p.2). In other words, the world is becoming increasingly smaller, people are able to connect with one another easily and activities such as

trading between countries can be carried out with very few barriers. Borders between countries are shrinking and disappearing such that connections and relationships can be built without difficulties.

Keohane and Nye (2000) prefer to use the word globalism instead of globalisation. To them, globalisation is about interdependence i.e. the state of affairs or a condition which increases. However, they believe that interdependence can increase and decrease and hence, they prefer the term 'Globalism'. For them, globalism concerns the "state of the world involving networks of interdependence at multicontinental distances. The linkages occur through flows and influences of capital and goods, information and ideas, and forces, as well as environmentally and biologically relevant substances (such as acid rain or pathogens)" (p. 105). Thus, they concur that globalisation is about the increase of globalism. In short, globalisation suggests an increasing process, while globalism is a description of a particular state.

Fischer (2003) has a similar description as Keohane & Nye (2000) in terms of interdependency between people and their countries. Nevertheless, Fischer understands globalisation as an on-going process of interdependency among countries and the people and says that it is "complex and multifaceted" (p.2). Velde (2005), however, defines globalisation in relation to three economies which link one country with another i.e. through trading in goods and services, private cross-border investments and migration.

Ampuja (2015) argues, after presenting many arguments concerning the meaning of globalisation such as those of Rosenberg (2000, 2005) and Scholte (2005), that globalisation cannot be given a simple definition due to the many complexities and the many facets of globalisation. So, Ampuja presents globalisation in four arguments based on the works of globalisation theorists. The first is that it is a "process of

intensification of worldwide network and flows". Second, globalisation has a causal significance wherein it "enforces overall social and cultural transformation" (p.22). Third, globalisation itself is a spatiotemporal framework and lastly, this framework is influenced by the new media and communication technologies. In short, Ampuja weaves in neoliberalism theory into her definition of globalisation due to the hegemonic existence of neoliberalism in globalization itself. Neoliberalism, according to Thorsen and Lie (2006), is "a set of political beliefs which most prominently and prototypically include the conviction that the only legitimate purpose of the state is to safeguard individual, especially commercial, liberty, as well as strong private property rights". In other words, neoliberalism is ideology that imposes policies and principles that protects and safeguards individuals, commercial, liberty and private properties of an individual or a group.

Obviously, the discussion concerning the definition of globalisation has been on-going but from the many definitions and observations brought forth by theorists and experts as mentioned above, it is clear that globalisation describes the interdependency between and among countries and nations for various purposes such as economic, investments, social and education matters. However, globalization has resulted in competitions between and among countries in various aspects such as economy and education, which, as stated by Ampuja's (2015) whose argument I resonate with, that the meaning of globalization has to be extended to the causal significance that enforces transformation on the society and culture. Ampuja cites Held et al.'s (1999) description of globalization that while globalization is about "interdependence, integration, universalism and convergence" which brings the notion of shared communities, governance and fortunes, cooperation, interconnectedness and growing homogeneity or harmony, globalisation also "leaves open the possibility of hierarchy

and unevenness" as well as conflict (Held et al., 1999, p. 29). In other words, while globalization comes with a neutral description and the idea that it is inevitable, it is important to understand it has causal effects. Globalisation brings with it outcomes, changes or effects which may be detrimental or positive to a situation or an entity. For example, as Held et al. (1999) have pointed out with Buzan (1991) and Bull's (1977) arguments that interconnectedness may bring intense conflict instead of cooperation because interconnectedness may not be experienced by all peoples or communities on the same level or to the same extent.

In relation to this research, MOE did not specifically define globalisation and assumes that everyone including the readers of the Blueprint know what globalisation means and what it entails. Instead, MOE has described globalisation as global challenges, economic success and competitiveness. MOE provided a positive description concerning globalisation and asserts that their decision on aligning the transformation of the education system is the best decision for the country and nation through imaginaries and assumptions which I discuss later in this thesis. MOE seems to adopt a top-down approach in their policy measures as stated in the Blueprint which is based on neoliberalism as an economic ideology to support its decisions in the transformation. MOE cited globalization and 21st century era is the way forward in order for the nation to be competitive globally and thus, to ensure the country's economic growth and prosperity.

2.3.2 Globalisation and its effects on education policy

I have presented in the section above some of the many definitions of globalisation and concluded what globalisation is described as and what it brings. So, in this section, for the purpose of this research, I will discuss how globalisation affects education policy.

Bottery (2000) cites Waters's (1995) forms of globalisation: they are economic, political and cultural. Bottery (2000) further claims that there are three other forms of globalisation which need to be paid attention to: demographic, managerial and environmental globalisations. All educators, according to Bottery (2000), need to be aware of all these six forms of globalisation, but political, economic, demographic and managerial globalizations are the most influential on education because they have immediate effects on "financial viability and political stability of nation states" (p.13). Bell & Stevenson (2006) have stated that education policy is driven by many pressures and among them are globalisation and the demands of international competition particularly in economic growth. Here, Bell & Stevenson (2006) have specifically cited economic globalisation as having a "profound effect on many countries, in part, because no other global system appears to exist which allows alternative forms of activity and organization" (Bell & Stevenson, 2006, p. 41). In addition, economic globalisation leads to an increasing focus on "economic growth by both multi-national companies and nation states" (Bell & Stevenson, 2006, p. 41). As a result of this effect, there is an increasing concern with the efficiency and effectiveness of the economy as well as the emphasis on an individual as a consumer in both the public and private organisations. This, thus, contradicts with the values of traditional public sector in terms of care, trust and equity.

The impact of economic globalisation, according to Bell & Stevenson (2006), is on human capital wherein countries are being forced to improve all the skill levels of their labour force and subsequently, their education systems have to be reviewed. This is because human capital "is the sum of education and skill that can be used to produce wealth" and thus, the earning capacity and contribution of individuals are claimed to determine the economic performance of a country (Bell & Stevenson,

2006, p. 42). In other words, economic globalisation has a great impact on education policy as it pressures many countries to change or reform their policy to ensure that their country performs as well.

According to Baker & Wiseman (2005), the educational success of a nation is linked to its "social, political, and economic future in the world system" (p.ix). Moreover, in order to bring light to the "processes influencing academic achievement", international comparisons have to be conducted (p.x). So, for policymakers to know what should be done with the schools they would need to situate education in a global context. This evidently explains the reasons as to why globalisation is such a great influence on education policies.

Globalisation, according to Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger (2016), has resulted in economic competition among countries and, as such, finance driven reforms and competition driven changes to education policy occurred. Among the many consequences of globalisation are borrowed education policies in a country's education policy, the reinforcement of technological development in an education system, and the adoption of new concepts like life-long learning including international comparison of performance of education systems based on a widely accepted view that "educational success is a proxy for economic competitiveness" (Mundy et al., 2016, p. 1). Borrowed education policies refers to adopting a supposedly existing neutral global policy practiced and implemented in another country and applying it in a local context (Mundy et al., 2016; Steiner-Khamsi, 2016). Globalisation, due to economic competition, has resulted in education, as Sajid (2005) pointed out, being used to compete on an international platform for economic growth instead of being a platform for acquiring knowledge.

Ramirez, Meyer, and Lerch (2016) have also stated that globalisation has resulted in some countries forming and adopting education policies which are the current trend or led by supra-national structures, like the European Union, because these are seen to be a key to progress or excellence or due to normative standards like human rights or for transparency. Reformation of education policies also occurs based on the "premise that countries can learn from other countries and their 'best practices' " (Ramirez et al., 2016, p. 44). While some countries flourish under new policies or by adopting education policies of other countries, I believe not all new policies or policies of other countries are applicable in another. There are various elements which a country should consider such as the culture of society and the existing infrastructure that may affect the success or effectiveness of a policy.

While many countries, including developing countries, are taking advantage of globalisation and its processes, there are communities and societies "excluded because they lack the skills required to adopt new technologies from abroad and to deal with the rapidly changing conditions that globalisation brings about" (Woessmann, 2011, p. 310). Woessmann (2011) proposes that education policies should be more inclusive wherein disadvantaged children will be able to acquire knowledge and skills which would enable them to share the gains from globalisation.

As globalization became a favourable theme in economic markets, Sahlberg (2016) asserts that countries such as the U.S, New Zealand and Australia started to reform their education systems to be in line with globalization and as such, the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) started. This resulted in GERM features in the education systems i.e. competitiveness between schools, standardization of teaching and learning in schools, emphasis on reading literacy, mathematics, and science in schools, "borrowing of change models from the corporate world", and

"test-based accountability policies that hold teachers and schools to account for students' achievement in schools" (pp.133-136). However, Sahlberg (2016) argues that education systems of countries such as Singapore and Alberta, which have adopted only some of the GERM elements, are more successful than countries which have adopted GERM elements in their entirety. Moreover, Finland, which has not adopted any of the GERM elements, has been "a consistent high performer of PISA through to the latest PISA study in 2012" (p.142). In short, Sahlberg (2016) claims that to develop a successful education system, a country need not adopt the market principles promoted by GERM.

Nevertheless, globalisation appears to be a key driver for governments to adopt, reform or change their education policies. It is also obvious that globalisation is a current central theme for most education policies because of the dominant ideas about 'global competition' and the economic growth that it brings with it. These governments also believe that if an education system cannot prepare and equip their nation with skills and knowledge for the global era, they will not be able to compete with other nations. There are some governments who follow a current global theme without considering factors such as its feasibility in their country because the theme seems to be the current direction and not following the same direction could lead to being left behind or not competitive. This has resulted in some countries losing sight of a more beneficial goal to join the bandwagon of countries that equate a successful education system with economic competitiveness.

While education policies in many countries are being reformed and changed towards economic and technical imperatives to cater to global economic growth and competition, these countries are at the risk of becoming "the servants of global

markets, their education systems providing the human resources to feed them"
(Bottery, 2000, p. viii).

The arguments put forth above, in summary, state that the education system of each country needs to be globally competitive and for that to happen, changes or reformation of education policies are needed to ensure that a nation of a country is prepared to face challenges of globalisation and become globally competitive. MOE believes that Malaysian society will "enjoy greater economic prosperity" and have the "opportunity to improve their lives, become successful members of the community and active contributors to national development" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1–1) and obviously, MOE, like many education systems around the world (Robertson et al., 2007) such as Bologna (Kolokitha, 2016), and Argentina (Cardini, 2005), has used globalisation to legitimise the change and transformation of the education system in Malaysia.

However, there are concerns about how globalisation has affected education in terms of interfering with the integrity of education such as commoditising education and the commercialisation of education as highlighted by Kelly (2009). Sahlberg (2016) points out that global competitiveness has resulted in global competitiveness and ranking among schools and education policies and the consequences of that has led to unhealthy competition in education such as suspicion and less collaboration among teachers and schools. I concur with Sahlberg (2016) because I believe that developing or reforming education policy in the direction of globalisation should be to "help students develop constructive and critical voices", "empower a level of participation greater than that required purely for economic purposes"; "help the next adult generation to vocalize and search for ways of creating the good society"; be "concerned with issues of equality and justice"; and "ensure that those who work in

educational organizations are good role models for the younger generation" (Bottery, 2000). Moreover, global competitiveness may not be the answer to possessing and developing a successful education system as pointed out by Sahlberg (2016).

2.3.3   Malaysia Education Policy and Globalisation

Many countries are influenced by the dominant discourse concerning globalisation and as such their education policies have been changed, reformed and developed anew and Malaysia is no exception. The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) has stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint) itself that globalisation and competing at an international level are part of their rationale for the need for a transformation of the education system. One of the transformations it made in the policy is to adopt the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages to ensure that the English language proficiency level of the students is of an international standard. The CEFR is a framework that provides a common basis for "language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" and a definition of "levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (Council of Europe, 2010).

The impact of globalisation on Malaysia's education began a long time ago but the rapid changes due to globalisation started in the 1980s and 1990s (Yusoff, Hasan, & Jalil, 2000). Studies on how globalisation has affected education in Malaysia vary from research on the impact of schooling reform (Ismail, 2009), education data (Abdullah, 2013) and the impact of globalisation on higher education (Arokiasamy, 2011; Othman, M. Hamzah, T. Singh, Abdul Wahab, & Ismail, 2011). Nevertheless, research which looks at how globalisation in the 21st century affects the education

policy of primary and secondary schools in Malaysia appears to be unattainable. This research intends to, albeit not in entirety, bring insights to what discourses pertaining to globalisation are included in the Blueprint and how globalisation is being positioned in the education policy. The intention is to bring some light into what is the ultimate aim of the policy in relation to English language education in Malaysia's education policy.

2.4   Language Education of Malaysia

2.4.1   Introduction

As I have mentioned in sub-section 2.3.3, in part due to the influence of dominant ideas about globalisation MOE decided to revamp the education policy and subsequently, the language education of Malaysia. The language of instruction of the education system has gone through several shifts and that has resulted in some criticisms. In order to have a better perspective on this research and its aims and objectives, I present a brief discussion on the historical background of the language policy of Malaysia in this sub-section onwards. It is also important to note that this discussion has no intention of debating which language i.e. English or Bahasa Malaysia (Malay language) should be the language of instruction.

The conflict between Bahasa Malaysia and the English language as to which should be the language of instruction in schools has been an on-going debate for some time. The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), knowing the impact of acquiring the English language, has always given it a significant position in the education system. Giving English language a place in the language of education policy has its implications. Changes in the language of instruction have also made an impact on the education system and the teaching and learning of English.

With the above in view, providing a background to the relationship between English language, Bahasa Malaysia and the education system of Malaysia is essential to understand the conflict between English language and Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction in the education system as well as to understand this study as a whole. As such, in this section, I will provide a description of the history of the language of instruction in Malaysia's education system, discuss the various studies which are pertinent to this topic of research and eventually, locate my study in the field of language education policy.

2.4.2   The history of the language of instruction of the education system of Malaysia

The language of instruction in the education system of Malaysia has been through a few shifts since the post-independence period (1957 – 1970) of Malaysia, or Malaya as it was formerly known at that time. Prior to that period, there were schools for each ethnic group i.e. Malay, Chinese, English and Tamil schools. Each of these schools had their own curricula, language of instruction, teachers and books (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division, 2008).

After Malaya gained independence from the British Empire, the leaders and the locals saw the need for a new education system, one with a common education system, to replace the one left by the British. The change in the education system began with the Malay medium primary schools being renamed as national schools and Bahasa Malaysia becoming both the language of instruction and the national language in 1957 (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division, 2008). Malay became the national language for several reasons. The fact that the Malays were the dominant ethnic group and referred to themselves as "sons of soil" or *bumiputera*, while the rest, i.e. the Chinese and Indian communities, were of immigrant ancestry, became the

major influence in choosing the Malay language as the national language. The social and economic imbalance at that point of time was another reason for the Malay language to become the national language. The English-medium schools, which were located in urban areas, were attended by the Malay elites and by the non-Malays, while the rest were in Malay medium schools. This resulted in a gap in wealth because those who were able to converse in English had the advantage of having professional mobility. It was believed that by making Malay the national language, it would provide the Malays with linguistic capital and economic opportunity (Gill, 2005; Watson, 1980).

Soon after the Malay medium primary schools were renamed as national schools, the other schools i.e. the English, Chinese and Tamil schools were termed as national-type primary schools or vernacular primary schools, and in these schools their individual vernacular languages remained as the language of instruction. Malay and English then became compulsory subjects in these national-type schools (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division, 2008; Omar, 1985). Beginning in 1968, the English national-type schools were converted into national schools in stages and five subjects were taught in Malay for Years One to Three pupils (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division, 2008).

On the 13th of May 1969, a racial riot broke out in Malaya between the Chinese and Malays. This led to the term Malay language being replaced with *Bahasa Malaysia* or "Malaysia language" to provide a sense of unity and national ideology (Omar, 1982b); as well as to "enable all ethnic groups to identify with and be emotionally attached to" the language (Hashim, 2009, p. 38). In 1970, *Bahasa Malaysia* became the medium of instruction in all English-medium primary schools. Soon afterwards, in 1976, all national-type English-medium schools had been converted to national Malay-medium

schools. The Tamil and Chinese-medium primary schools, however, were still allowed to use their respective languages, provided 15 or more parents demanded them (Watson, 1980). In these schools, the English language was taught as a subject.

2.4.3   Bahasa Malaysia and the English language in Malaysia

When Bahasa Malaysia became the national language, most scholars claim that at this point, the English language was accorded the status of a second language and taught as a subject alongside Bahasa Malaysia in all Tamil- and Chinese-medium primary schools (Hall, 2013; Pandian, 2002; Tsui, 2004). However, why English language was retained (albeit as the second most important language) and became a core subject in the education system of Malaysia was limited to putting the educational standard at a vulnerable state (Omar, 1979) and that English is perceived as an "international language of communication in the economy" (Darmi & Albion, 2013, p. 181) However, Omar (1982, 1992) claimed that English was accorded the status of second most important language because the Malaysian language policy can be viewed from Fishman's (1968) concept of nationalism vis-a-vis nationism. Nationalism for Bahasa Malaysia and nationism for the English language (Omar, 1992). Nationalism is defined by Fishman (1968) as transforming "fragmentary and tradition-bound ethnicity" to "unifying and ideological nationality" (Fishman, 1968, p. 3). Nationism is defined as "where the political boundaries are most salient and most efforts are directed toward maintaining or strengthening them, regardless of the immediate sociocultural character of the populations they embrace" (Fishman, 1968, p. 5). In short, Bahasa Malaysia was accorded the status of the national language to promote unity and nationalism, while the English language was identified as the second most important language for Malaysia for a political purpose, practicality and efficiency's sake because English language was seen as being essential in rising to become a

"developing and industrialised nation and to take its place in internationalisation" (Omar, 1992, p. 66). Omar (1992) further explains that nationism through English is common especially for developing countries which were former British colonies or protectorates.

Ozog (1990), on the other hand, asserted that English was not given any official status. Instead, it was to be taught as "an effective second language". This lends a contradiction to the status of English in Malaysia. Nonetheless, what is most certain is that English appears to be a very important language to Malaysia, one that Malaysia would not do without.

Ozog (1990) also observed that the situation in Malaysia is different from that in Indonesia or Brunei. In both of these countries, the indigenous Malays are the majority, and do not view their national language, Bahasa Indonesia and Malay, respectively, as being threatened by an outside force. In Malaysia, the Malays want to be proficient in English, and the prestigious status that comes with it is much desired by them. At the same time, the language is viewed as a threat to the national language and the Malay culture itself. Ozog (1990) did not conclude with a reference to the other two races – Chinese and Indian, although these two were mentioned in his article. Ozog (1990) claimed that the Indians and Chinese made up the majority of students in the English medium schools and that they felt that their culture was under threat when the language policy was leaning towards Malay becoming the national language and that this was tied up with the political power of the Malays.

Tan (2005), on the other hand, claims that English is viewed as important and as an international language that must be acquired to compete internationally by way of analysing reactions from comments and reports in 57 articles from the New Straits Times (NST), Business Times (BT) and Bernama taken from the period April to July

2002. Tan acknowledges that his research is not representative of the views from the public but it does provide a "window to the issue at hand" (p.53). With that in view, this is where my study will provide a different view about how English is perceived in Malaysia, particularly from the eyes of Ministry of Education Malaysia.

While Tan (2005) puts forth an account of the status of English in Malaysia, Puteh (2010) states that Bahasa Malaysia has a challenging task in being a national language and in promoting national integration because English is the current lingua franca and therefore, candidates who are fluent in English have the upper hand in working for international companies and working in other countries. Moreover, the private sectors in the working arena in Malaysia prefer to use the English language as the language of operations and to employ English speaking graduates. Another factor is that the private education sectors are not obliged to comply with the Education Act as the Government does not enforce the national language policy onto them and as such, these private institutions use English as the language of instruction instead. It is interesting that although Bahasa Malaysia became the official language of instruction in schools, the vernacular primary schools were not subjected to the ruling. This obviously reveals that the Malaysian government has to ensure that a policy and its implementation should encompass all parties involved in order for a policy to be successful.

 Hashim (2009) stated that having a divisive school system has not solved the problem of uniting the diverse cultures because the ethnic groups are in different schools, they are not under one system and they are using their ethnic languages for other subjects instead of the national language. Moreover, Chinese and Tamil parents believe that sending their children to these schools will preserve their cultural as well as linguistic

heritage; due to the education policies, some ethnic groups feel discriminated against as certain ethnic groups dominate certain schools and even universities.

Puteh (2010) highlighted the ambiguity of the Malaysian government believing that Bahasa Malaysia as the national language would promote national integration, but yet allowing "non-national medium" schools to operate in Malaysia.

Both authors, Hashim (2009) and Puteh (2010), have highlighted a confusing situation. Bahasa Malaysia is selected as the national language of Malaysia for unity and nationalism, yet there are schools using languages other than Bahasa Malaysia i.e. Tamil and Mandarin as the language of instruction. This, thus raises questions on the Government's reasons for allowing the existence of vernacular schools, when selecting Bahasa Malaysia as a national language was to unite the various racial backgrounds and to promote nationalism among the people of Malaysia.

Nevertheless, despite the competition between Bahasa Malaysia and the English language and the other languages, English is still positioned as the second important language after Bahasa Malaysia that Malaysians need to acquire and will continue to be in the education system due to it being seen as an international language.

Furthermore, MOE claims that the English language will enable one to compete on a global level and that it is still widely used in the private sectors in Malaysia itself. In fact, MOE has placed in the Blueprint, the transformation of the English language education at the same level as (if not, a level after) Bahasa Malaysia emphasising that both languages are important for the country. The English language, specifically, is to ensure that Malaysians, particularly, the youth, will be well equipped to compete at a global level. Malaysia's relationship with the English language began its role as an instrument of linguistic imperialism when the British Empire colonised Malaya during

the 1800s and since then, despite Malaysia gaining her independence in 1957, the English language continues to become the second most important language. Interestingly, the acquisition of the English language when it first arrived in Malaysia was limited to a selected few as the British Empire, during that time, were not in favour of making the Malays, particularly, fluent or being able to speak the language at all. The British Empire felt that enabling the Malays to learn and acquire the language would compromise the British Empire's political and economic power over Malaya. The same scenario is reflected in India when the British Empire colonised India during the nineteenth century (Pennycook, 2017). Viswanathan (1989) claimed that the British felt that spreading of the English language widely in India caused more problems for the British in terms of creating a new group of people who felt they had 'moral autonomy, self-sufficiency and unencumbered will that caused more problems for British rule than expected' (p.143).

In the early nineteen hundreds, English language was seen as the language of the Elitist in Malaya. English schools then were in urban areas and access to such schools were limited to the affluent Chinese and Indians as well as Malays. Those who new English were normally given positions in the administration and thus, English language came with a prestigious connotation at that point of time (Omar, 1985; Pennycook, 2017). This prestigious connotation and the accessibility to economic power which came with English language, although not clearly stipulated, could be the reason to why the leaders of Malaya at that time, decided to retain English language as a subject in the education system despite. Ironically, despite gaining independence and wanting to not be under the British rule, Malaysia does not seem to be entirely free from being colonised. Malaysia has positioned the English language in the education system for global competitiveness leads to Malaysia being caught in the

recent phenomenon called neo-imperialism. Neo-imperialism according to Phillipson (2008) is a new form of colonialization which takes the form of other elements such as trade, language and supremacist ideologies instead of former methods such as political control to control certain aspects of a country. In the context of language, Phillipson concludes with Harvey's (2003) observation on the American empire that English is a "capitalist neo-imperial language that serves the interests of the corporate world and the governments that it influences so as to consolidate state and empire worldwide." (Phillipson, 2008, p. 33). As such, it appears that colonisation by way of language returns in a full circle for Malaysia.

2.4.4   The teaching and learning of language

The switch from English to Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction led to the implementation of a common content syllabus for teaching English in 1971 in all national primary schools and national-type schools in West Malaysia and this syllabus was referred as "The English Syllabus for Use in Standard One to Standard Six of the Post 1970 National Primary Schools" (Foo & Richards, 2004). However, for vernacular primary schools, the language of instruction remained in their vernacular languages and both Bahasa Malaysia and English were taught as subjects; English was only introduced in Primary 3. The result of the change led to teachers teaching in Bahasa Malaysia and textbooks being made anew.

This new syllabus adopted the structural-situational approach in teaching and was extended to the secondary syllabus called The English Syllabus for *Tingkatan* / Form One to Form Three of the Secondary Schools in Malaysia in 1973, and The English Language Syllabus in Malaysian Schools *Tingkatan Empat* (Form Four)—*Tingkatan Lima* (Form Five) in 1980 to ensure continuity. However, in keeping ahead with the current developments post-1990, for the upper secondary forms, the structural-

situational approach was replaced with the task-oriented situational approach with a slant towards a communicative syllabus (Foo & Richards, 2004; Pandian, 2002).

The structural-situational approach according to Abraham, as cited in Pandian (2002), focused on learning grammar discretely and normally, the learning objectives are a list of language structures and words. The language structures are presented verbally, and usually in a context or situation. Language drills are employed as practice for the new structures. The approach was very teacher-centred. The students learn the sentences in isolation and found it hard to use the language in meaningful sentences despite doing well in classroom activities.

The task-oriented situational approach with a slant towards a communicative syllabus, otherwise referred to as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, concentrated on using meaningful communicative activities to teach and learn the English language with the aim of getting the students engaged in real-life communication in the English language (Darmi & Albion, 2013).

In the effort to change the education system and the language of instruction to promote unity and nationalism due to the pluralistic society of Malaysia, the students' proficiency in English suffered (Omar, 1996; Foo & Richards, 2004; Omar, 1982). This scenario further led to various changes in the education system – changing the syllabus and approaches in teaching as well as the emphasis. The teaching of the English language emphasised oral activities and the introduction of the new syllabus in 1983 - *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah* (Primary School New Curriculum) and *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (Integrated Secondary School Curriculum) - focused on skills and knowledge to enable students to enter the job market or continue their education after school. The changes were associated with aims that would enable the pupils to converse, express their ideas, and question well

and with ease in the English language (Foo & Richards, 2004). By the millennium, with the rapid growth in information and communications technology (ICT) and the beginning of globalisation, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and the Cabinet decided that English would become the language of instruction for two subjects - Science and Mathematics (Foo & Richards, 2004; Gill, 2007; Hashim, 2009; Heng & Tan, 2006).

This resulted in the introduction of an elective paper, English for Science and Technology (EST), in the year 2003 as a prelude to the introduction of a new language policy i.e. English as the language of instruction for the subjects of Mathematics and Science (Heng & Tan, 2006). The introduction of EST as an elective subject and using English as the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics were met with a mixture of reactions. Heng & Tan (2006) quoted from Harakah Pas Newsletter that the Chinese educationists had cited that the change in the language of instruction would be a threat to characteristics of Chinese schools and cultural identity, and eventually the demise of Chinese schools.

They further stated that members of national language associations such as GAPENA, PENA, and the Malaysian Linguistic Society as well as the Malay nationalists were also against the change in the language of instruction, as it would be a threat to the "Malay-ness" in terms of downgrading the national language Bahasa Malaysia, and erode Malay language dominance (p.313). Furthermore, their view was that it would not solve the low proficiency in the English language. Instead, it would lead to learning difficulties among the Malays. For the Indian community, on the other hand, Heng & Tan (2006) indicated that although the Indian community's views were muted, they echoed the same reservations the Chinese community had cited in their defence for resisting the change i.e. that the change was a threat to the alternative

language schooling and it would have minimal impact on English proficiency.
Malaysian Emeritus professor, Khoo Kay Kim, was also cited by Heng & Tan (2006) to the effect that using English to teach mathematics and science would make very little impact on the English language proficiency among the students.

Then, the Ministry of Education announced the reversal of the language of instruction for the subjects Mathematics and Science from English to Bahasa Malaysia which would effectively take place in the year 2010. The reversal was to be carried out in a gradual progression and by 2016, all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 would be learning Mathematics and Science in Bahasa Malaysia. The reversal was based on several grounds as cited in a press release dated 8 July 2009 on the announcement of reversal made by the former Deputy Prime Minister, who is also the Minister of Education, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd Yassin:

- English was used as the language of instruction during the teaching of Science and Mathematics subjects by only a limited number of teachers.

- Overall, English was used between 53-58% of the time allocated to teach the subjects Science and Mathematics.

- Only a portion of English language teachers were found to be proficient in the language during the English language proficiency test for teachers in 2008.

- There was a decline in the percentage of students in urban and rural schools who obtained grades A, B and C for Science in the *Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah* (UPSR) 2008 exam from 85.1 to 82.5 and from 83.2 to 79.7 respectively. It was the same for Mathematics - the percentage of students from urban schools declined from 84.8 to 80.9 and students in rural school, from 80.9 to 77%. (*Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah* (Primary School Achievement Test) or UPSR as it is better known is a national examination

that is administered at the end of Year 6 (12 years old), the final year of

primary schooling (Malaysia Educational Planning and Research Division,

2008, 2014).)

- The gap in the level of performance for both subjects, Mathematics and

  Science, between schools from urban and rural areas has since widened.

Apart from the above, the former Minister of Education also cited a *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2007* report comparing performance across different countries which found that the position of Malaysian students in the subject Science had dropped from the 20th position in 2003 to position number 21 in 2007. Moreover, although not specifically indicating which studies, the Minister of Education claimed that research carried out by local universities found no significant improvement in the level of English language proficiency among the students in both primary and secondary schools throughout the country since the inception of using English as the language of instruction. This scenario was attributed to the fact that many of the students, who are mostly from rural areas, had low proficiency in the English language and this hampers their learning of both Mathematics and Science (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2009).

The Ministry of Education, acknowledging the importance of both languages, i.e. Bahasa Malaysia and the English language, decided to implement a new policy named as *Memartabatkan Bahasa Melayu, Memantapkan Bahasa Inggeris* or in English, To Uphold Bahasa Malaysia & to Strengthen the English Language (MBMMBI). With the implementation of this policy, many improvements have been made such as introducing the Literacy and Numeracy Screening programme wherein Primary One students are assessed on their proficiency after learning English for six months, adopting the phonics approach in the teaching and learning of English in the

classroom and adding more contact hours from eight periods to 10 periods for English language lessons.

Surprisingly, despite the reversal, the MOE executed and distributed a circular concerning a pilot programme entitled Dual Language Programme (DLP) for the year 2016. The circular revealed that a pilot programme on using English as the language of instruction for subjects Science, Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Design and Technology was to be carried out. The programme involves students in primary schools, specifically Years One and Four as well as Secondary schools - Form 1 (MOE, 2015).

The question arises as to the reason for launching this programme as it seems to be a replication of *Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik Dalam Bahasa Inggeris* (The teaching and learning of science and mathematics in English) or PPSMI policy. The only difference is that this programme is a pilot project, it is being carried out on a smaller scale with only 300 schools involved and that it has been extended to other subjects, that is, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Design and Technology.

These shifts in the language policy in education illustrate that the goal posts have constantly been changing. Although the reasons for the shifts as explained are valid, it does appear that the Ministry of Education are willing to change policy frequently, reverting to former policies or imposing new policies whenever a desired outcome is not achieved.

2.4.5   Language Education Policy Gone Wrong

These constant shifts have drawn criticisms from scholars as the shifts have resulted in many issues concerning the implementation of programmes or initiatives, policy

acceptance, and expectations vs reality. These issues appear to be the probable cause of a failed policy.

Psacharopoulos (1990) explains a few reasons for a policy to fail, including social rejection of the policy, for example, parents boycotting a policy; if a policy is too vague, it can be misunderstood or misinterpreted; and policymakers or the government would also have to observe the pre-requisite factors such as feasibility financing as neglecting them would lead to partial implementation of the policy. Although Psacharopoulos (1990) states a disclaimer saying that the definition of success or failure is subjective, the implementation of English language as the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics in the language education policy of Malaysia does appear to echo his characterisation of a failed policy.

In the case of Malaysia, the policies implemented did not meet the expected aims and objectives due to the misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the policy aims, the pre-requisite factors were not taken into account before the policy was implemented and some of the stakeholders did not welcome the policy.

Firstly, when the policies were misinterpreted, Ali, Hamid, & Moni (2011) stated that the planning of the *Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik Dalam Bahasa Inggeris* (The teaching and learning of science and mathematics in English) or PPSMI policy was implemented with little consideration of the micro-level work involved during the planning and implementation of the policy. Ali et al. (2011) observed the lived experiences of the stakeholders, the policies and the outcomes and found the teachers leaned towards teaching keywords in English to the students more than using English as the language of instruction and communication. The reasons the teachers cited for this situation included to make content accessible to the students and to enable the students to perform during exams.

This observation was also reflected in Tan & Ong (2011) who studied the impact on PPSMI of teacher beliefs on classroom practices and student learning. While these observations resonated with one of the aims and rationales for PPSMI, that is to assist students in mastering the terms and terminology in science and mathematics as many books, articles, research studies and sources of information are in the English language, the other aim of PPSMI was left neglected. The PPSMI was also implemented to build a strong foundation in their English proficiency to enable the students and nation to compete at an international level (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2002). Unfortunately, the teachers and students appear to have either a different interpretation of the aims and rationale behind the PPSMI policy or they may have chosen to ignore the other aim of PPSMI.

Secondly, the pre-requisite factors or rather a background check on the feasibility of the policy implementation were not fully addressed; i.e. teachers' language proficiency, readiness to teach in English and proposed activities and approach were not verified to be suitable in the local context. Geok (2012) discussed the reality of the English for Science and Mathematics initiative. The researcher questions whether expecting Mathematics and Science teachers to teach their subject areas in Standard English is realistic when most of the mathematics and science teachers were taught and had learnt Mathematics and Science in Bahasa Malaysia. He mentioned that these teachers code-switch when teaching the subjects and are often corrected by their students. Teachers who were taught in English had less difficulty in teaching the subjects in English while teachers who were taught in Bahasa Malaysia lamented the difficulties in doing so. He also stated that although the integration of language objectives with academic objectives in lesson plans has helped teachers learn English in a meaningful context, teaching teachers international phonetics and grammatical

rules during language partner workshops would help in improving their proficiency and pronunciation in the English language.

Ali et al. (2011), on the other hand, pointed out that although the new policy - *Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia dan Memperkukuh Bahasa Inggeris* or To Uphold Bahasa Malaysia To Strengthen The English Language (MBMMBI) - emphasises active learning and social and cultural appreciation in learning both English and Bahasa Malaysia, there was no indication that the approaches and activities would be feasible in the local context. The argument raised in Ali et al. (2011) highlights a very important consideration, because for any policy or even a project that is planned to be implemented or to start, the foundations, the elements that support the policy, or project, have to be in place and must be solid in order for it to be successful.

Lastly, when a policy is not welcomed, hostility towards it would be expected. Heng & Tan (2006) asserted hostility occurred among some parties upon the inception and during the implementation of PPSMI. One of the issues highlighted was the English for the Teaching of Mathematics and Science (ETeMS) programme which was mooted by English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC) in Malaysia – a unit set up in 2002 to provide in-service language training for school teachers. The EteMS programme was met with some resistance from principals in schools and teachers. Principals in schools felt the programme was not of importance and teachers who were more experienced and felt they were proficient in English, viewed it as "deep humiliation" as they were forced to go for the programme (p.316).

In sum, the issues discussed above show that the reality and actual conditions of acquiring and learning a language, such as teachers' English proficiency and resistance, the local linguistic ecology and interpretation of the policy were given very little attention and could have, therefore, contributed to the failed implementation of

the policy. These issues reflect the contention made by Psacharopoulos (1990) that is for a policy to be successful, the policy should be explicit and interpreted correctly, it should be accepted by everyone involved with the policy and that, before a policy is implemented, the actual conditions, pre-requisites, and feasibility of implementing a policy should be thoroughly examined and analysed.

2.4.6 Impact of Reversal in the Language of Instruction

The result of the shifts in the language of instruction also raised some concerns among scholars. Hashim (2009) revealed that a thorough examination of the changes in the language of instruction appears to have been neglected.

Hashim (2009) stated that when the language of instruction in the teaching of science and mathematics was changed to English, teachers were sent to undergo intensive trainings and courses. However, the reversion has resulted in their newly acquired knowledge and skills being wasted. Hashim (2009) also highlighted that although the impact and its magnitude on the proficiency of the students' language were deliberated and debated, investments such as the training of teachers to teach in English and new textbooks, to facilitate the policy change were not deliberated upon the reversion.

Hashim (2009) has highlighted an issue that suggests the amount of energy, money and time spent to assist and support the changes in the language of instruction were not taken into account upon the reversal of the policy. The reversal took place without considering that the investments made would be wasted.

2.4.7 Conclusion of Language Education of Malaysia

The shifts in the language education policy have indeed invited a lot of criticisms on the policy of the language of instruction in the education system. The criticisms are arguments and debates among the stakeholders i.e. teachers, academicians, media and

society. It is understandable that the government wants the nation to be at a competing level internationally and at the same time, retain the national language for unity and nationalism. However, the constant shifts in the language education policy have not benefitted the students as highlighted by Keong (2015) who notes that the constant changes have resulted in students' grades going lower in 2007 and 2011. It has led to investments being wasted as changes had to be made to the textbooks, teaching materials and the like.

The training programmes that were provided to support the change were wasted as the skills which were acquired by the teachers could no longer be in use (Hashim, 2009). What I have also observed is that the rationales given for the reversal are valid but the reasons behind the rationale or scenario were not addressed. Moreover, a move to improve the initial implemented policy before replacing it with another did not seem to be an option. MOE seems to prefer replacing one policy with another without carrying out a thorough examination of the implicated issues, deliberating on the problems and finding solutions that solve the issues relating to the implemented policy.

Nevertheless, what is obvious is that the research discussed above has identified issues around the results of the implementation of the language policies in education, the intention of the language policy, the arguments about the status of English and Bahasa Malaysia in the language policy and the influences pertaining to the shifts in the language policy. These studies are pivotal and important to the understanding of language education policy formations and at the same time provide evidence on the impact of language policy to the education field (Burns & Schuller, 2007; Lingard, 2013). In this respect, it is my intention to examine and analyse the positioning of English language in the education policy specifically in the Malaysia Education

Blueprint 2013 – 2025 or the Blueprint from a critical discourse analysis (CDA) perspective.

In view of the recent developments of English language as a lingua franca, it has been noted that English has become the dominant language in trade and modernisation, to gain knowledge and compete globally as well as to communicate globally. Subsequently, mastering the language is essential in order to be effective (Jenkins, Cogo, & Dewey, 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Ku & Zussman, 2010; Kuiper, 2007). The Ministry of Education had acknowledged the importance of being proficient in the language to compete globally as well as to gain new knowledge especially in the information technology era, and the Science and Mathematics field. However, the constant shifts in the language of instruction in the education policy suggests a different scenario.

I have also discussed the historical aspects of the language of instruction and the changes, specifically between Bahasa Malaysia and English; the revocation of the PPSMI policy – English language as the language of instruction for mathematics and science in 2010; and the implementation of MBMMBI in 2012. Providing the historical aspect of the language education is essential to have an understanding of the background to this thesis as the Blueprint was developed after the implementation of MBMMBI policy and the revocation of PPSMI. One of the shifts in the Blueprint concerned the transformation of the language education of Malaysia's education system including the teaching and learning of the English language. Moreover, one of the initiatives listed in the Blueprint concerns carrying out MBMMBI initiatives to strengthen the delivery of English language lessons (refer to page 4-13 of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025 (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013)).

Moreover, the narration of the historical aspect is to show how English language became the language after Bahasa Malaysia and the relationship Malaysia has with English language. In this aspect, Malaysia was formerly colonised by the British empire and while Bahasa Malaysia was identified as the national language for, among many purposes, the unity of a nation and keeping the harmony in a country, the English language is still kept as the other language for the nation to acquire and master even after Malaysia gained independence from the British empire.

The historical aspects of English language education are presented in this thesis to also provide an insight into the changes in the language education policy and language of instruction as well as the pedagogical approaches used to improve the English language education.

2.5   Conclusion

Globalisation is not a new issue but it is still a favourite theme among policymakers and countries with regards to the education system. Policymakers continue to reform and make changes to the education systems in the name of globalisation without considering its impact – good and bad, on their nation and their country or whether their country really needs to reform their system to be aligned with globalisation or whether they should reform their education system according to what would be best for their country and nation at that moment of time.

The language education of Malaysia has indeed gone through several changes and for two apparent purposes i.e. for nationalism and unity; and globalisation. These purposes are two opposing forces as they are favouring a different language policy. Wanting to preserve Bahasa Malaysia as the national language for unity and nationalism and yet needing to ensure that the nation is proficient in the English language in the name of globalisation can be quite an arduous task for MOE but MOE

is determined that both are accomplished as they are addressed in the transformation of the education system.

Obviously, globalisation is an important theme for MOE for the reasons which MOE has put forth i.e. economic purpose and competitiveness. The context and rationale of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 is based largely on globalisation as MOE envisions a successful education system because MOE believes that "Education plays a central role in any country's pursuit of economic growth and national development" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). As such, the Ministry of Education is determined to make the changes in order to meet with the challenges that come with globalisation. One change that has been an on-going issue with Malaysia is the English language education and language of instruction in the education system which have gone through several changes in the name of improving the level of English language proficiency among the Malaysian youth.

While I have mentioned that this research does not intend to debate which language should be the language of instruction – English or Bahasa Malaysia, MOE has placed globalisation as the key circumstances and justification for the transformation of the education system and language education of Malaysia. Globalisation was initially concerned with interconnectedness and relationship between and among countries in various aspects such as trade and government ties, however, global competitiveness between and among countries emerged amidst this connectiveness and relationship (Abri, 2011; Ampuja, 2015; Mundy et al., 2016). While this competitiveness can be seen as positive, it has become the driving factor for many countries to push for changes and reformation in their country to ensure that their country can be or is at par with the rest of the world. This has also led to many education systems adopting market driven principles in the name of globalisation to ensure that they are able to

produce a nation that is competitive enough for globalisation (Ramirez et al., 2016; Vulliamy, 2010). Many governments advocate globalisation as their justification to reform and change their education systems as they believe that in order for the country to be globally successful their education system has to be aligned with global expectations. The problem lies when a government does not assess their current education system and makes changes according to what they deem as the best for the country and the nation (Bottery, 2000; Kelly, 2009; Sahlberg, 2016). These governments lose sight of what is more important for the country and the benefit of the nation.

3 The Discursive Approach to Education Policy

3.1 Introduction

In analysing an education policy such as the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint), identifying and selecting the most appropriate approach in analysing the policy text is important to deliver a substantiated and credible analysis for the research. The Blueprint consists of initiatives and plans which MOE has deliberated on and discussed prior to the formation of the Blueprint. As such, I have chosen Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis as the method of analysis because it analyses argumentation texts and the Blueprint is a policy document which arises from a deliberation process and includes an implicit argument in favour of the initiatives proposed. In this chapter, I will provide a brief background to CDA, the CDA approach I have selected, and the rationale behind the selection.

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis or CDA has been in existence since the 1990s and its initial advocates, namely, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak, have been developing various theories, approaches or frameworks and its principles ever since (Wodak, 2009). The development of frameworks, its principles and theories have resulted in CDA becoming an established paradigm (Billig, 2003; Toolan, 1997; R. Wodak, 2009).

CDA is about being critical when explaining the social phenomena and attempting to change them. It is critical because CDA views itself as an intervention in social practices and relationships (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011). This is because CDA views discourse as a form of social practice: a product of society which is

dynamic and changes, a force that can constantly shape, influence and reconstruct social practices and values either in a negative or positive manner (Bloor & Bloor, 2007).

In addition to that, being critical means to analyse and reveal complexities, and challenge reductionism, dogmatism and dichotomies. Furthermore, it clarifies and explains the opaque structures of power relations and ideologies within the discourses; and also proposes alternatives (Kendall, 2007). It makes the hidden elements visible and apparent and intends to show the overlapping linguistic-discursive practices in the discourses (Kress, 1991).

Wodak (2013b) states that being critical can imply making the implicit explicit as well as being self-reflective and self-critical. Making the implicit explicit means revealing the hidden relationships between discourse, power and ideology, challenging the surface meanings and not taking anything for granted. Being self-reflective and self-critical, on the other hand, does not mean CDA is about being critical of others alone. CDA aims to investigate spoken and written discourses and their relationship with social and cultural conditions, ideologies, powers within, struggles that exist within power, and investigating how these elements play a significant role in discourse and in its emergence (van Dijk, 1993).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I believe being critical when analysing texts is important to provide a robust analysis and study as well as bring forth to the audience an explicit outcome pertaining to the policy discourses and its relationship with a society and parties involved because knowing the underlying messages and ideologies will enable the audience to look beyond what is put forth and what a policy entails.

3.3   The Characteristics of CDA

CDA is observed to be a multidimensional method of analysing texts by identifying the features of the text through discourses; analysing the discursive practices from the production and interpretation of texts and the interrelationships between them – i.e. the interdiscursive nature of texts; and analysing social and cultural practices (Fairclough, 1995; Fairclough, 2001).

Van Dijk (2015) claims that CDA has the tendency to be characterized as a social movement of politically committed discourse analysis because CDA is a discourse analytical approach to research that primarily studies how social power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. CDA is a critical theory of language that views language, as social practices, as being related to certain historical contexts, in which social relations are "reproduced or contested and different interests are served" (Janks, 1997, p. 329). As such, CDA focuses on authentic everyday communication that can be found in institutions, media, politics and so forth. It identifies a dialectical relationship between certain discursive acts embedded within situations, institutions and social structures.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) believe that CDA is grounded on eight principles and they are:

1   CDA addresses social problems

2   Power relations are discursive

3   Discourse represents society and culture

4   Discourse does ideological work

5   Discourse is historical – related to previous, contemporary and subsequent discourses

6   Relationships between text and society are mediated

7   Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory

8   Discourse is a form of social action.

Apart from the characteristics mentioned above, Graham (2018) states that the ethics of CDA are its "stock in trade". "Evaluative resources" are gathered and drawn upon and extended "when identifying texts, issues, and aims of analysis". Moreover, they are the "basic ground for analysis, and for methods of analysis" (p.201). CDA is critical theory oriented and very rigorous when texts and discourses are analysed. Thus, CDA becomes unbiased when it is used to conduct research on texts and discourses (Graham, 2018).

Ultimately, CDA aims to unveil pervasive and repeatedly "obscured structures of power, political control and dominance, as well as strategies of discriminatory inclusion and exclusion of parties in language use" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, & Liebhart, 2009, p. 8). Furthermore, CDA intercedes with both the dominated, afflicted and the dominating groups (Wodak, 2001). Eventually, CDA aims to reveal the truths and assist those who need a voice in political and social injustice (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, & Liebhart, 2009).

With that in mind, CDA attempts to provide an illustration and create awareness to the public concerning the reciprocal influences that language and social structure have on human beings (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000). Ultimately, CDA believes in addressing the truth in what is spoken or written and consequently, revealing the alleged implications. It aims to make a difference to those who are at the receiving end especially, the unsuspecting reader.

To conclude, CDA believes that discourse is socially shaped and influenced by the social practices i.e. institutions, events, situations, relationships between and among

people and groups of people, culture, social identities, historical relationships between

and in discourses, historical background of the discourses and its social entities.

Therefore, CDA aims to analyse and investigate discourses to reveal the implicit

ideas, notions, messages, agendas alike and make them explicit; disclose the unknown

to the affected public sphere; clarify the representations, intentions, decisions,

relationships between the linguistic structures and the discursive events and social

practices; and finally, where possible, provide solutions to social problems.

3.4   The Critiques of CDA

Like any other approaches, CDA is not without criticisms. Blommaert & Bulcaen

(2000) begin their article with a background illustration of CDA and a reference to

Fairclough's (1992) framework. They raise two issues. The first concerns CDA's

methodologies and theories being very limited in the analysis and they propose that

CDA include other paradigms of methodologies and theories. The second relates to

the treatment of context wherein they propose the inclusion of ethnography to

contextualise data and historicity of texts.

It is in my opinion that the arguments brought forth are unfounded as there are various

frameworks within the CDA paradigm which are grounded on various theoretical

models, research methods and epistemological assumptions and each have their own

agendas, as attested by Wodak (2013a) who states that CDA cannot be regarded as a

"discrete academic discipline in any traditional sense" because although it has a

designated set of theories, it does not have a fix set of methods. This issue was further

attested in Breeze's (2011) article in which she highlighted that CDA draws on a wide

range of theories about language and society and therefore, researchers are required to

define the methods and theories substantially while readers are free to adopt a critical

stance pertaining to the theoretical apparatus adopted by the researcher. On the issue

of proposing CDA to include ethnography to contextualize data and also the historicity of texts, Wodak (2001) has since developed a framework, which is based on triangulation of data wherein she incorporates the analysis of history, conducts and analyses interviews and observations etc.

Although there was no specific indication that Blommaert and Bulcan's arguments were based on Fairclough's framework, only Fairclough's (1992) framework was mentioned quite extensively. With that in mind, the arguments raised pertaining to the issues stated above appeared to refer to Fairclough's (1992) framework and hence, raising issues based on one theoretical framework is debatable as it would be assuming that Fairclough's framework is a representation of all the theoretical models while his framework is limited to the beliefs, assumptions and theories he has adopted. It overlooks the fact that CDA has various theoretical models to choose from, depending on the agenda of the research.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that although CDA has a range of frameworks to choose from, the goals and aims of each framework are the same i.e. to uncover the hidden messages, truths, agendas through the relations between linguistic features and structures and the social practices based on theories and research methods (Fairclough, 2010).

Many of the criticisms regarding CDA are in Breeze's (2011) article which she listed quite substantially as below:

a. The diverse range of theories and methods which CDA researchers draw from can result in lack of coherence, unsystematic application of indiscriminate methods or mixing concepts, to name a few.

b. CDA does not conduct analysis that is extensive and exhaustive to provide a more comprehensive and convincing interpretation and explanation.

c. Critiques argue that there is no validity of the reader's interpretation made through CDA.

d. Critiques argue that CDA claims that most of the time the texts are only analysed and interpreted within the interest of the researcher.

e. CDA is also considered as an approach which deconstructs and analyses discourses from a negative perspective and hardly from a positive paradigm.

Breeze responds to the criticisms by acknowledging the reality of some of the criticisms while expressing the view that the obligation of presenting and providing an almost impeccable interpretation and analysis lies on the researcher in being ethical and impartial in conducting research, and readers being critical themselves and not accepting what is presented by the researcher at face value or as absolute truth.

I found Breeze's article very detailed in the descriptions of each issue brought forth and it has highlighted the issue of CDA being negative in its views. She has acknowledged that most of the CDA research is negative and proposed that exploration of emancipatory discourses or positive changes in social language use would be more useful. For this current research, it is not my intention to limit the analysis to a negative description, instead I plan to analyse the document as highlighted by Martin (2004) and Luke (2002) in Breeze's article that researchers of CDA should move beyond "ideological critique" and provide a constructive and productive analysis.

3.5 Justification of CDA as a tool for policy analysis

While considering which approach would best complement the study, there are a few issues which have to be taken into consideration concerning the text itself. The text, the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint), is a text that illustrates the

various initiatives that have been based on and derived from the education policy of Malaysia.

It is important to understand that education policy per se is a document which illustrates a government's principles and intentions as well as goals and aims pertaining to educational issues. More often than not, the education policy document includes acts and statements which are then translated into other forms or maps and as pointed out by Trowler (2003), education policy is "a specification of principles and actions, related to educational issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals" (Trowler, 2003, p. 95). Ball (1994), on the other hand, believes that policy is 'both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the "wild profusion" of local practice' (p.10).

It is also important to note that policies come in various forms and not necessarily as a legislation document but in other kinds of text, such as speeches and press releases by a government minister and papers by senior policymakers, as pointed out by Rizvi & Lingard (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The Blueprint is an example of a policy that takes the form of initiatives and is the epitome of how Ozga (2000) describes policy documents, as a 'vehicle or medium for carrying and transmitting a policy message'. (p.33)

The Blueprint also represents the Government's voice, the government here meaning the Ministry of Education Malaysia and the Malaysian Government itself. Subsequently, my analysis will show that the dominant voice would be the Government, while the teachers, students, school leaders, parents and stakeholders are always being referred to but do not seem to have a voice. Moreover, van Dijk (2001) claims that words of those in power are denoted as truth while those who are not, are

viewed as irrelevant, untrue or are not of any value and in this case, the Ministry of Education Malaysia is in power.

CDA is critical when analysing discourses; and reveals the complexities in structure of sentences wherein hidden elements, messages, ideologies and powers are made apparent, makes implicit messages and hidden agendas explicit; puts texts and discourses through a rigorous process of analysis. Moreover, CDA attempts to create awareness to the public concerning how language is used in the social structure. Also, CDA, according to Mogashoa (2014), emphasises analysis of original texts and discourses located in key institutions such as schools and offices of education departments. Hence, the nature and characteristics of CDA make it the preferred approach to analyse the Blueprint.

3.6 Fairclough & Fairclough's Argumentation Analysis Framework

The Blueprint is not a typical policy text. It is a document which entails the initiatives, intentions, plans and directions which the Ministry of Education of Malaysia intends to take. For this research, I subscribe to Ozga's (2000) description of policy text as a "vehicle or medium for carrying and transmitting a policy message" (p.33) and that it should include all forms of materials within the discursive parameters of policy including budget statements and bills. The Blueprint, being a policy document, is inherently political and implicitly makes arguments to support the initiatives, intentions, plans and directions proposed. As such, the argumentation needs to be analysed to observe how English language is represented in the Blueprint.

I have chosen to analyse the text with Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis - structure of practical reasoning, because their framework analyses political discourse from a critical perspective. Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) view political discourses as forms of practical argumentation, argumentation for or against

an action, an argumentation that grounds a decision. The rationale behind this belief is that politics is "most fundamentally about making choices about how to act in response to circumstances and goals" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). In other words, statements made are arguments which are practical, aim to provide a solution, and support the view that the action proposed or stated should be carried out. Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) argumentation framework: political discourse analysis - structure of practical reasoning (argumentation analysis from here on) is drawn in part from pragma-dialectics, a tool or a framework that is used to analyse argumentation that takes place in practice normally in a political discourse, which makes its method of analysis more rigorous in nature and therefore, suitable for this research (a more detailed explanation about pragma-dialectics can be found in Sub-section 3.6 of Chapter 3 of this thesis).

The Faircloughs' argumentation analysis dissects an argumentation according to elements of goals, circumstantial premise or context, the means-goal premise, claims for actions and values. This structure of practical reasoning allows me to observe how the agent arranges and structures their reasoning and argument for an action or a proposal and thus, to understand their style of argument in convincing the audience that their proposal or action is acceptable or reasonable and the best resolution available.

Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) define arguments as "a set of statements (explicit or implicit), one of which is the conclusion (claim) while the others are the premises" (p. 36). They adopt van Eemeren and Grootendorst's (2004; 1992) 'pragma-dialectics' definition of the general goal of argumentation i.e. to come to a reasonable consensus between people with different opinions, adopting a critical conception of reasonableness. Argumentation is a procedure wherein the standpoint is

tested for its acceptability by questioning the argument critically. This procedure, according to Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), is based on a "critical rationalist conception of reasonableness" (p.53). So, the pragma-dialectical approach in argumentation theory means a normative approach which takes an external and analytical perspective on the object of study. In short, the pragma-dialectics approach critically evaluates and analyses an argument for its reasonableness and acceptability from its context, social verbal actions, language use and verbal interactions. They further assert that since practical argument – specifically deliberation - is their focus, this involves making a reasonable decision which may not be the best or most rational but has been examined by a "dialectical procedure of systematic critical testing" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, p. 63).

They have also drawn upon Walton's (2006, 2007a, 2007b) dialectical approach i.e. systematically questioning the practical reasoning critically wherein defeating the argument and challenging the conclusion are attempted. The Faircloughs further state Walton's (2007a) claim that practical reasoning can be criticised in three ways: 1. challenge the premise(s); 2. ask critical questions that can defeat the link between premises and claim and 3. produce a counter-argument to rebut the original claim. They argue that Walton does not clearly show how critical questions can lead to defeating and rebutting, and suggest that the most effective action would be to question whether the action will have negative consequences which will undermine the goal(s), because they believe that is the only critical question that can both refute the argument's claim and defeat its validity.

In other words, the Faircloughs' framework analyses and evaluates practical reasoning. It analyses arguments from goals and circumstances to claims for action, as well as negative consequences of these actions (pp. 48 and 51). These arguments

are then evaluated from three perspectives namely logical, rhetorical and dialectical. However, Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) adopt a predominantly dialectical approach in evaluating practical reasoning "which subordinates rhetorical considerations to a primarily dialectical perspective" (p.63). In other words, the reasonableness of each practical reasoning, argument or claim made is evaluated and analysed. The Faircloughs' structure of practical reasoning critically questions the elements of an argumentation, notably, the action and the consequences and the reasonings put forth while taking into consideration the context, and the historical background.

The Blueprint illustrates plans and initiatives of the transformation of education system of Malaysia which the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) intends to implement. The Blueprint was proposed and developed for various reasons including the claims that parents' expectations have risen and employers have voiced concerns about the education system's ability to prepare the future generation for the challenges of the 21st century era (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). The Blueprint contains initiatives and plans which MOE claims are the result of "in-depth analyses, interviews, focus groups, surveys and research conducted with the support of Malaysian and international experts, Ministry officials, teachers, principals, and parents all across Malaysia" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1–4). MOE has also claimed that they consulted educationists, professionals, international experts and agencies (OECD, World Bank and UNESCO), Ministry Officials, teachers, principals and stakeholders in developing the initiatives in the Blueprint. MOE has also claimed that the Blueprint has gone through 3 phases of reviews and evaluation with National Dialogues and Group Transformation Programme (GTP) Education Labs before the final version of the Blueprint was printed. This suggests deliberations were conducted prior to the Blueprint being printed and distributed and

what is presented in the Blueprint are the initiatives and plans that are presented as crucial for the transformation of Malaysia's education system. Apart from that, the goals and objectives as well as the background and context of the transformation of the educations system of Malaysia are also described in the Blueprint. According to Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), argumentation has elements of goals, claims for action, means-goal premise, circumstantial premise and values (a more detailed explanation can be found in the next section and in the methodology chapter of this thesis), all of which are illustrated in the Blueprint. As such, Fairclough and Fairclough's political discourse analysis – structure of argumentation framework would be a more applicable framework than other approaches to CDA for this research.

As mentioned earlier, the Faircloughs' structure of practical reasoning framework analyses political discourses from a critical perspective i.e. it incorporates CDA within the framework itself. As discussed, CDA consists of several approaches which critically analyse and investigate texts for hidden ideologies and messages, uncover representations and notions, and disclose the unknown, hidden relationships, intentions and ideas to the audience. In Faircloughs' argumentation framework, this is achieved by teasing out the claims, means-goal premise, the goal premise, values and the circumstantial premises which are in the text. Subsequently, this reveals the nature of the argumentation, the hidden values, and the representations, untangles the complexities in the arguments, and at the same time reveals the intentions, hidden ideologies and notions.

Nevertheless, I am aware that the structure of practical reasoning has been critiqued for various reasons, as highlighted in Fairclough & Fairclough's (2013) counter argument against Finlayson (2013), Hay (2013) and Coleman (2013). The critiques

put forth include Hay's (2013) claim that the Faircloughs' PDA focus on argumentation and deliberation alone narrows down the domain of political discourse analysis in that it does not acknowledge the "political moment in all discourse and the discursive moment in all politics". Another critique comes from Coleman (2013) who asserts that the political scene and its actors are a 'performance' and therefore, political discourses should consist of 'dramatistic' interpretation to reveal the truth. The Faircloughs' PDA, according to Coleman, does not account for the performance aspect of discourse, i.e. "words that make things happen" and "practices that make words happen", including aspects like instabilities and improvisation (p. 335).

The Faircloughs disagree with Hay's claim that there is a political moment in all discourses, and agree with Searle (2010) who links "political to the public sphere and to a particular institutional order". The Faircloughs also disagree with Hay's assertion that political discourse is not solely about argumentation, and neither is it solely about deliberation and persuasion. The Faircloughs have justified extensively with evidence from their theory and explanation in Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) against their critiques (see Fairclough & Fairclough, (2013) for a more detailed explanation). For Coleman's critique, the Faircloughs have asserted that their PDA is another form of contribution to the field of political analysis and not a replacement for other political analysis frameworks.

While it is obvious that the critiques concern the philosophical stance and what the Faircloughs' form of PDA should be, I would argue that the examples illustrated in their book are limited to a certain type of political texts i.e. political debate and speeches as well as a corpus of comments in a discussion forum, while the text that I am analysing is a Blueprint – a form of education policy.

Moreover, in contrast with the examples illustrated for Faircloughs' structure of practical reasoning framework whereby the speaker convinces the listeners to accept and agree to the plans or solutions, the Blueprint illustrates (and argues for) the plans and initiatives which have been discussed, deliberated and agreed upon for the transformation of Malaysia's education system as I discussed earlier in this thesis. The Blueprint is also different from the examples of political texts presented with Faircloughs' framework in terms of its genre.

Nevertheless, the Blueprint is almost similar to (if not, the same) any political text as the Blueprint has the same the elements of argumentation, such as goals, means-goals, values, claims for action and circumstantial premises, and of a hortatory genre. Therefore, applying the structure of practical reasoning framework to the Blueprint will add to other works of research which uses Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) argumentation framework as an analytical tool of political texts and illustrate that it can be used to analyse another form of text.

I have also found that the analysis of social actors in the Faircloughs' model concentrated on the speaker or the text producer, while details on the representation of other social actors could not be identified or located. As such, I decided in addition to employ van Leeuwen's (2008) representation of social actors framework to analyse the representation of the other social actors in the Blueprint, namely the teachers, to answer my second research question - How have the teachers of English language been represented in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

3.7 Van Leeuwen's Socio-semantic Inventory

In achieving my objectives for this thesis, I need to analyse the representation of English language teachers in the Blueprint to provide a more robust and comprehensive study and therefore, an analytical framework was needed to ensure so.

While studying the Faircloughs' argumentation framework I found that, although their analyses provided an analyses of the social actor, the sample provided was focused on the text producer while the social actor which I intended to focus on was a subject of the text producer i.e. the English language teachers.
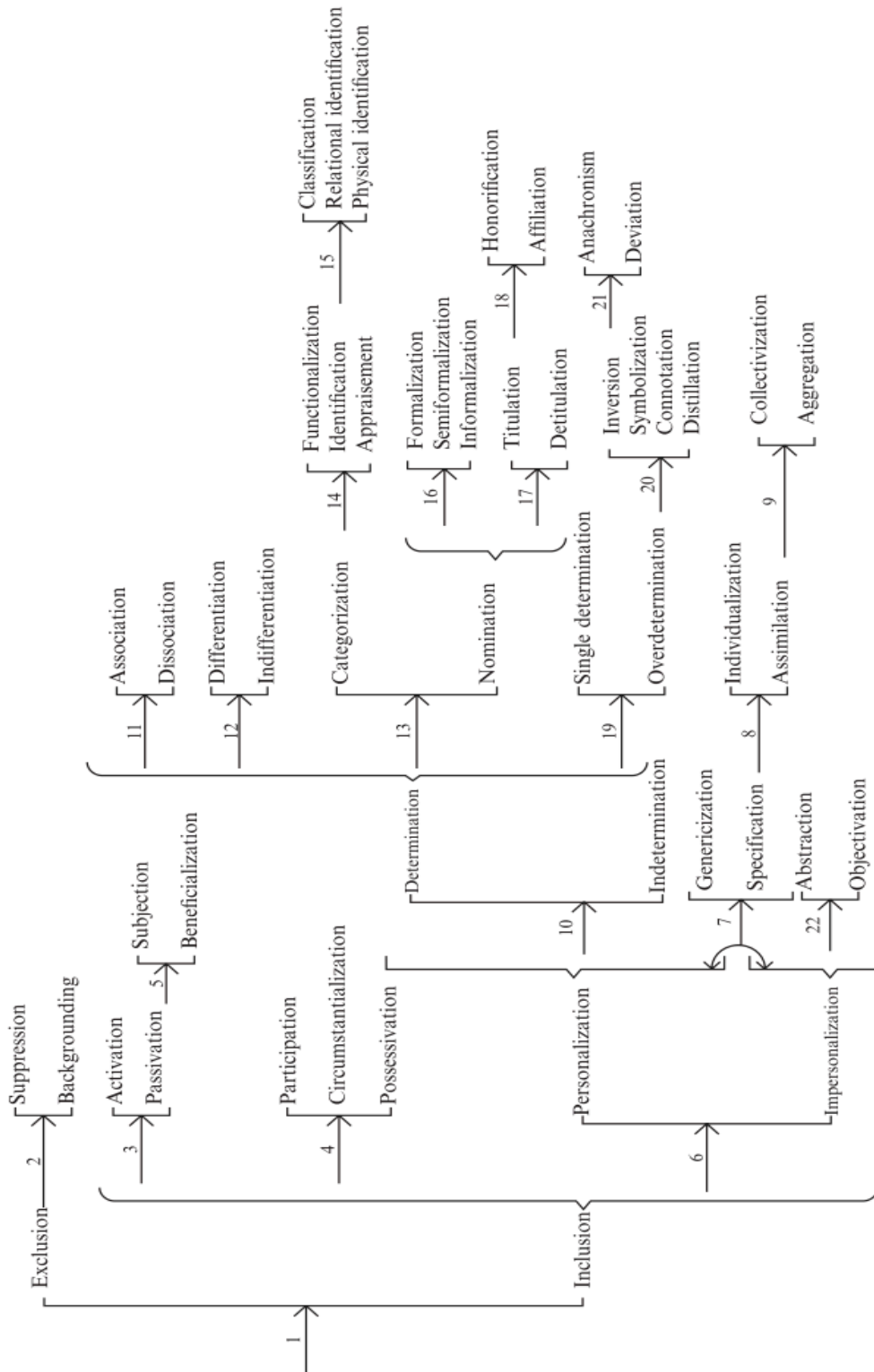
Figure 3-1: Van Leeuwen - Social Actor Network (2008)

Moreover, I wanted a more systematic and robust framework for me to work on and utilise to ensure that I have maximised my data. As such, I decided on using Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor's framework – socio-semantic inventory.

Van Leeuwen who pioneered the work on interaction between the verbal and visual in texts and discourse; and the meaning of images (Wodak, 2001). Van Leeuwen's (2008) CDA framework is based on various proposed ideas derived from the works of Foucault, Halliday and Bernstein. The framework adopted the concept of discourses as semantic constructions proposed by Foucault wherein certain "aspects of reality serves the interests" of specific historical and/or social contexts, and "from Halliday's 'concept of "register" as a semantic variety of language, a social dialect which is distinct in its semantics rather than in its phonology and lexicogrammar" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. vii).

Van Leeuwen views social practices as ways of doing things which are socially influenced by prescription or traditions, or by experts or role models or even through technological resources used (van Leeuwen, 2008). He further explains that social practice encompasses elements of participants, performance modes, eligibility conditions (referring to participants), presentation styles, times, locations, eligibility conditions (referring to locations), resources (tools and materials) and finally, eligibility conditions (referring to resources). Van Leeuwen's framework resonate the same fundamental view as Fairclough's CDA, that is discourse is a social practice (of which Fairclough's CDA is integrated into the Faircloughs' argumentation analysis framework), and as such, they both complement each other which makes the combination of both frameworks effective for this research.

Van Leeuwen (2008), preferring not to begin describing social actors linguistically i.e. with linguistic operations like nominalization and passive agent deletion, or linguistic

categories like categories of transitivity, outlines a socio-semantic inventory. His inventory maps how social actors can be represented. He asserts two reasons for the inventory. Firstly, the lack of bi-uniqueness of language wherein social actors can be represented in various forms i.e. metaphorically, impersonally, literally or through possessive pronouns, depending on the context the social actors are situated in. In short, generally, social roles of language are not related to linguistics when it should be as discourse is social practice. However, Van Leeuwen states that Halliday addresses this lack of bi-uniqueness to a certain extent with his theory of grammatical metaphor wherein "certain linguistic realizations are "literal" or "congruent," others "metaphorical" or "incongruent" (Halliday, 2014, p. Ch.10). Van Leeuwen takes Halliday's concept and extends it to sociological by preferring to question whether representation of verbal processes of actors are "impersonally or personally, individually or collectively, by reference to their person or their utterance, etc.— without privileging any of these choices as more "literal" than others, and without thereby also privileging the context or con- texts in which one or the other tends to occur as more normative than others?" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 24). Secondly, that meanings belong to culture and not language. When observing the representation of social actors, there are three considerations: culture, context and the situation they are in. In other words, to analyse social actors, limiting analysis to linguistic aspects alone is not enough, instead, one has to consider the immediate context or situation the actor is in as well as the context of culture.

Van Leeuwen's socio-semantic inventory (refer to Figure 3-1), which is presented as a system network. It is a list of discursive strategies that show how social actors are represented and according to Van Leeuwen it is "grounded in linguistics" and therefore, they are tied to "specific linguistic or rhetorical realizations" (van Leeuwen,

2008, p. 25). As such, it allows me to systematically identify the categories which best describe the social actors represented in the text. This system network allows me to see how social actors are treated in the text, e.g. who is backgrounded or excluded, who has been included, specified, activated or subjected, and therefore, gives insight into how the text producer perceives different social actors and the relationships between them.

Ultimately, once the text and the English language teachers in the text have been analysed, the analysis of the English language teachers is integrated with the outcome from the argumentation analysis – i.e. how the teachers function or the representation of the teachers affect or is affected by or portrayed or used in the argument. In the context of this research, the focus is to analyse the positioning of the English language teachers in their arguments and therefore, the results from the social actor analyses will be integrated with the outcome from the argumentation analysis and eventually provide an insight into how MOE perceives the English language.

3.8   Conclusion

As mentioned in sections 3.1 and 3.5 of Chapter 3 of this thesis, the Blueprint is a policy and therefore, political, and implicitly makes arguments for the proposed plans, initiatives and outcomes. As such, in ensuring that the overall aim of this research is achieved, i.e. to find out what English language means to MOE, a thorough analysis that produces a justified and substantiated outcome has to be conducted. In doing so, a structured and rigorous method of text analysis has to be conducted to produce such an outcome. While analysing the arguments with Fairclough and Fairclough's argumentation analysis framework allows me to observe why, how and what is being used in an argument and eventually reveal the embedded ideologies and messages of a

policy text, Van Leeuwen's social actors framework will allow me to observe how, what and why the text producer positions an actor in an argument of a policy text. Combining both frameworks allow me to observe how a social actor, particularly, the English language teacher, is portrayed in an argument for an action. For example when MOE described the circumstances for upskilling the English language teachers' English proficiency with a number (aggregation) to represent the number of teachers who did not meet the minimum proficiency standard – "When a sample of over 7,500 English language teachers took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language." This example shows that MOE uses the number to strengthen the argument by offering statistical evidence to support the circumstantial premise and ultimately, underpin its claim for action.

As illustrated above, the characteristics of both Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis - structure of practical reasoning (PDA) and van Leeuwen's socio-semantic inventory of social actor representation proved to be the best suited methods of analysis which eventually, help achieve the aims and objectives of this research.

4 Methodology of This Study

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present the operationalisation of the various concepts that I used during data analysis as well as the data collection process. I begin with presenting Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis and how I analysed the Language section of Chapter Four of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025. Then, I discuss van Leeuwen's (2008) representation of social actor framework and the procedure for analysing the English language teachers in the text. Next, I proceed with presenting my other methods of data collection – interviewing teachers and conducting a Think Aloud session with them. I will also discuss how I analysed the teacher interviews and Think Aloud responses. Finally, I conclude with discussing how I used my data to address my research questions.

4.2 Textual Analysis

4.2.1 Introduction

I have outlined the theoretical underpinnings of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis and van Leeuwen's (2008) representation of social actor (using the socio-semantic inventory) frameworks in the previous chapter. This section focuses on how the argumentation analysis was operationalised when I conducted my analysis. For easy reference, I briefly explain what argumentation analysis and representation of social actor frameworks are about in the respective sub-sections and then, continue to describe the methodological steps taken to analyse the text.

4.2.2 Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) Structure of Practical Arguments framework
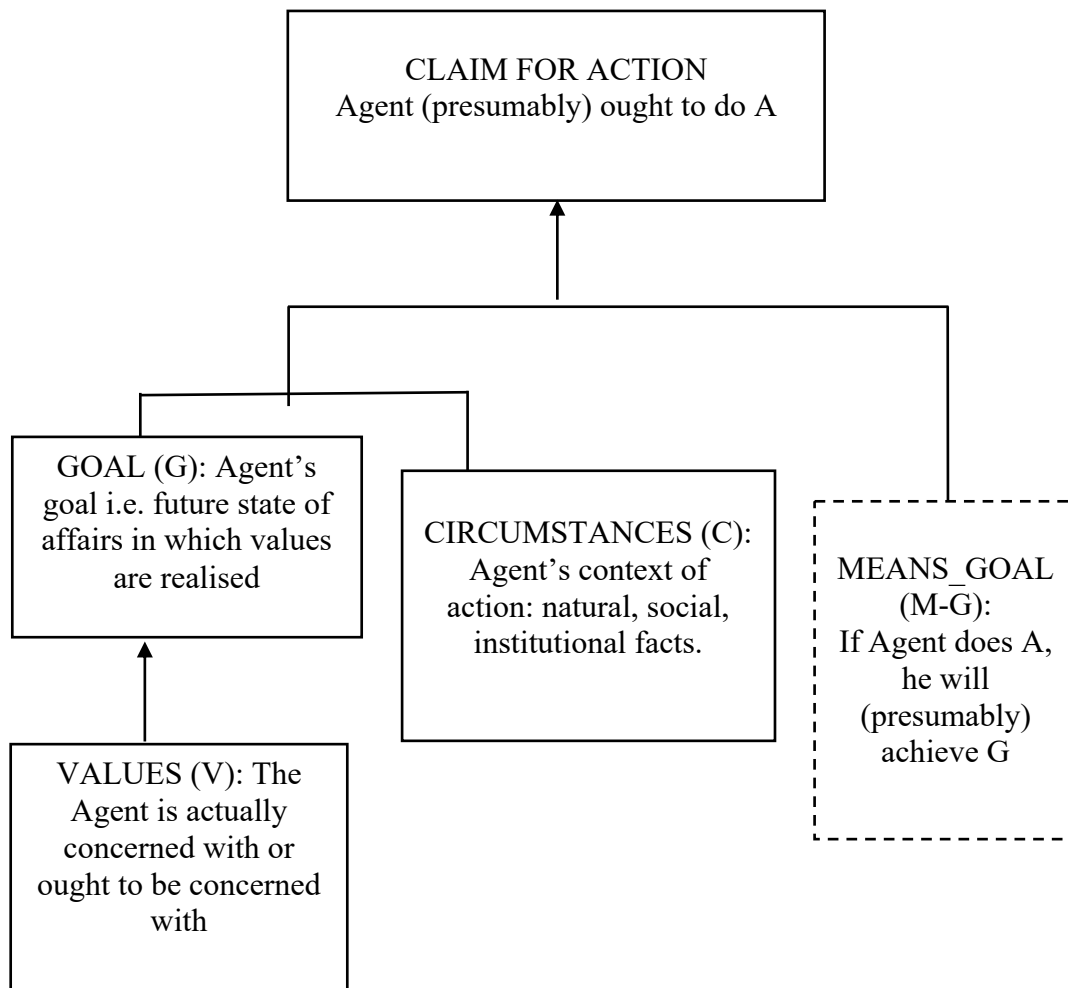
Figure 4-1: Argumentation Analysis Framework

Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) stated that their argumentation analysis framework (refer to Figure 4-1) believes that political discourse mainly consists of forms of argumentation i.e. practical argumentation (a claim), argumentation for or against an action, an argumentation that grounds a decision. The rationale behind this belief is that politics is "most fundamentally about making choices about how to act in respond to circumstances and goals" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, p. 1). Practical argumentation supports people's decisions on how to act in response to a crisis and how to develop strategies for pursuing an action or policies, which hopefully will help

in restoring balance and rationality. As such, their argumentation analysis analyses this practical argumentation and deliberation put forth especially in a crisis to reveal the nature of the argumentation, the hidden values, the representation of the practical argumentation and untangle the complexities in the argumentation. Deliberation is another key feature of practical arguments wherein the reasons are weighed and conclusion comes after all conditions of risks and uncertainties as well as facts are considered.

For Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), a practical argument is summarised as below:

- There is a circumstance

- The circumstance has led the agent to propose a goal (the goal is based on values)

- There are actions that need to be carried out in the circumstances to achieve the goal

- Therefore, the actions have to be carried out for the goal to be materialised.

A practical argument has a set of premises to claim what should be accomplished. The premises are a Circumstantial premise which depicts the existing state of affairs, and a Goal premise, which provides an alternative or a solution to the state of affairs to be achieved, based on a Value premise (the concerns and values on the basis of which an entity is arguing from). A Means-Goal premise (in a dotted box in Figure 4-1) states that the action in the Claim for Action premise or conclusion of the argument is the means for achieving the goal. In other words, the Claim for Action premise is the solution to the existing state of affairs. Refer to Figure 4-1 for the graphic representation of the framework.

In analysing an argument, a researcher has to identify and locate the respective premises accordingly in the text and then, conduct a normative and explanatory

critique with critical questions to determine whether the argument for the proposed solution is the right thing to do, whether the Claims for action are the right way to achieve the goals or solution or whether it is right to change the current state of affairs. Normative critique, according to Fairclough (2013), describes, evaluates and assesses existing realities put forth as the argument or solution to a problem of a group or societies. Fairclough further states that explanatory critique, apart from evaluating and describing existing realities, explains the evaluation and description of the realities. For this thesis, I have conducted both the critiques because by providing a rigorous analysis, I hope to provide a robust research.

In short, the argumentation analysis framework is a systematic approach which locates and evaluates the claims for action, means-goal premise, goal premise, circumstantial premises and values in texts. Apart from that, it allows me to detect recurrent themes or subjects in some of the elements of the framework, as well as where the social actors are placed e.g. in the claims for action or in the goal premise. So, I am able to identify the roles the social actors take in the argument structure.

4.2.3 Operationalisation of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis

The examples Fairclough and Fairclough analysed were texts from political speeches and forums. The Blueprint is of a different genre - it is a printed text, produced in the form of a coffee table book - and as such I approached the text in a slightly different way. According to the examples provided by Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), the first step taken when analysing is to provide an overall description of the text to the audience. Next, the text is dissected according to the framework wherein the Faircloughs identified the elements of framework i.e. the claim, the circumstantial premise, goal, means-goal, values and consequences. The Faircloughs termed this

stage of analysis 'Argument Reconstruction'. This stage discusses the findings by identifying the parts of text which reflect the elements of the framework. Then, the next stage is termed 'Argument Evaluation' wherein the arguments in the text are critically questioned and evaluated. Finally, the discussion on the arguments ends with a conclusion.

Upon reading the examples and the analyses provided by the Faircloughs, I found that having the discussion of 'Argument Reconstruction' and 'Argument Evaluation' separately was a bit confusing because I have had to constantly refer to the argument reconstruction to understand which part of the discussion the 'Argument Evaluation' was referring to. As such, I decided that for easy reference and to be able to connect the parts of discussion of both stages with ease, for this thesis, I have combined the argument reconstruction with the evaluation as explained hereafter.

Firstly, I skimmed through the Blueprint to observe the layout of the book. I found the whole book to be a form of argument because the elements were very apparent. Chapters One and Three provided the overall circumstances, Chapter Two provided the overall goals, values and means-goal premises and Chapter Four and onwards were the actions for the transformation of Malaysia's education system.

Due to the layout of the Blueprint, in my analysis chapter of this thesis, I begin the analysis with an overall discussion of the first three chapters of the Blueprint because they are related to the main focus of this thesis i.e. the English language education of Malaysia's education system. I decided to illustrate a structure of argument graphic representation of the transformation to provide an overall picture to the audience of this thesis for easy reference. However, it is important to note that I am not going to analyse the overall discussion in-depth because it is not my main focus and that would be another thesis subject. While I do not discuss the analysis in great detail I do make

references to the goals and circumstances as they are related and they are the basis of the transformation of the English language education of the education system of Malaysia.

Then, I analyse the Language section of Chapter Four of the Blueprint in more detail because it specifically discusses the transformation of the teaching and learning of the English language. The Language section discusses the details of transformation of all the languages that are taught in the education system but the focus of the language section is more on the national language i.e. Bahasa Malaysia, and of course the English language. So, I concentrate on the texts which concern the teaching and learning of English language.

Analysing the text using the Faircloughs' argumentative analysis framework proved to be quite challenging because firstly, the text was not of the same genre as the examples provided in Fairclough and Fairclough's explanation on political discourse analysis structured i.e. the text for this research is a policy that is laid out in the form of a coffee table book and the examples used by the Faircloughs were political debates and speeches as well as a corpus of comments in a discussion forum,. Secondly, the structure of the text was naturally different from the examples due to the genre of the text and therefore, some of the arguments were not obvious and that the elements of an argument were not explicit enough to be identified easily. As such, it was quite difficult to conduct the analysis when an example of the same genre was unavailable for reference. In the beginning I analysed the text line by line. However, I found some arguments were not explicit enough to be easily identified as an argument and therefore, I had to read the text several times carefully. In some parts of the Language Section, the arguments were within arguments and as such, again I had to dissect them

carefully. I also found the elements of the argument to be scattered at various parts of the section and not grouped together for an argument.

So, then I decided to read the text as whole and looked at how the Language section was structured first. Upon looking at the structure only then I could observe the elements of an argument of which MOE had first and foremost, placed the goal and the actions for transforming the language education at the beginning of the Language Section. I also found that the text had arguments within arguments and that an action itself is an argument. I was able to dissect the action according to the structure of argument i.e. identifying the goal, circumstantial premise, claims for action, means-goal and values. Apart from that, I found that the circumstantial premise for the overall transformation of the education system is circumstantial premise for an action. After dissecting and identifying the text according to the elements of the structure of argument, I then proceed with evaluating the text as suggested by Fairclough and Fairclough. According to them, the main aim when evaluating an argument is to challenge the argument, test its validity and/or to rebut the claim as suggested below:

    a. Critical questions that challenge the rational acceptability of the premise or their truth.

    b. Critical questions that can defeat the argument.

    c. Critical questions that can rebut the claim.

As I mentioned earlier, I did not follow the sequence suggested by the Faircloughs when structuring my discussion. Instead, for each element of the structure of argument, I explained the content and then I discussed the evaluation of the argument. I evaluate arguments which are pertinent to the research question only, i.e. how is English language represented in the Blueprint. While I critically question the premises, I have had to keep in mind the responses from the interviews and Think

Aloud sessions and relate them to each other upon finding arguments which reflected these responses. For instance, in relation to the claims for actions – initiatives, I located issues with the implementation of the initiatives which the teachers I interviewed spoke of.

Dissecting the arguments according to the Faircloughs' argumentative analysis framework was challenging because some of the examples of elements were located in various places of the Blueprint and the Blueprint is different from the examples provided in Fairclough & Fairclough (2012). Nevertheless, I find the structure of argument framework proposed by the Faircloughs to be an efficient and structured way of identifying how an argument is organised and structured effectively, thus, enabling me as a researcher to analyse the underlying messages and the approach of the text producer in convincing the reader of their intentions and actions.

4.2.4   Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of van Leeuwen's framework are presented in the previous chapter and so, in this section, I briefly explain the framework and discuss the reason for applying the framework in this research.

Van Leeuwen views social practices as ways of doing things which are socially influenced by prescription or traditions, or by experts or role models or even through technological resources used (Van Leeuwen, 2008). As such, Van Leeuwen relates analysis of social actors to sociological factors such as nomination and agency, because they are "involved in the realization of representations of social actors" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 51). Applying Van Leeuwen's representation of social actors framework allows me to identify, systematically, the social actor (in this case, focusing on the teacher) with the categories and relate it to the text i.e. identifying

their roles in the text, which actors have been included, excluded, specified, activated or subjected, and how a social actor is treated in the text.

Ultimately, with van Leeuwen's framework, the research question concerning the representation of the teachers of English language can be answered. In the example provided by Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) when they explained the operationalisation of the framework, although the structure of practical reasoning framework locates the social actors in the respective premises and where they have been repeated, the analysis of representation of social actors in the text was limited.

4.2.5 Operationalisation of Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Framework

In this section, I present how I conducted my analysis on the representation of the English language teachers in the Blueprint. I conducted my analysis with, firstly, drawing a checklist of the categories of representation of social actors from the framework in the form of a table (see the example in Table 4-1 below).

Table 4-1: Checklist - Excerpt

Statements from text	Categories	Textual Context	Purpose/Notes
Strengthening the delivery of English language lessons, for example, via the Oral Proficiency in English language for Secondary School (OPS English) Programme or through a "set system" of teaching and learning where students are grouped based on their proficiency levels; (p. 4-9)	Exclusion by backgrounding	Claims for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	Emphasis is on the solution or action
Introducing Bahasa Malaysia and English language remedial interventions and support programmes for students who do not meet the required proficiency level; (p.4-9)	Exclusion by backgrounding	Claims for action - initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	Emphasis is on the solution or action

The table has four columns and each column represents an item from the analysis. The first box (from left) contains the statements from the text. The second box shows the way teachers as social actors are represented in this textual abstract, using the categories of representation from van Leeuwen's socio-semantic inventory (2008) and

the third box displays textual context which is the context of the statements for example as a circumstantial premise or as a claim for action. The textual contexts of these statements are elements from Fairclough & Fairclough (2012) political discourse framework such as circumstantial premise and claims of action, initiatives of the Blueprint and purpose e.g. aims and programmes which I have identified based on the text. I then relate the textual context with the categories of representation from van Leeuwen's socio-semantic inventory to which I interpret as the purpose or the reason why the social actor is represented as the identified category. My interpretation is documented in the last box of the table.

I began my analysis by scanning through the text – The Language section of Chapter 4 of the Blueprint to identify for statements which were related to the English language teachers, for example, the policies or initiatives they have to carry out and the changes made to their role as teachers. Upon identification, I identified the categories stated in van Leeuwen's (van Leeuwen, 2008) Socio-semantic Inventory which best matches the statements. Then, I located the context of these statements and finally, I interpreted the reasons and purpose of why the teachers were represented accordingly based on the context of the text and document and the linguistic cues.

4.2.6   Data for Textual Analysis – The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025 (Blueprint)

I begin this section with the background of the transformation of Malaysia's education system which resulted in MOE developing the Malaysia education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 (from hereafter, Blueprint).

MOE claims that the Blueprint was the "result of extensive research and public engagement" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-1) and as such, the details, the background and arguments are formed and presented differently from the examples given in Fairclough & Fairclough (2012). The approach of the Blueprint,

MOE claims, is "ground-breaking in many ways" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-2) because MOE has consulted "various experts and international agencies to evaluate and assess the performance of Malaysia's education system" as well as other Malaysian government agencies (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-2). MOE has also claimed that over a period of 15 months, they have consulted a "broad range of stakeholders, from educationists and academics to parents and students" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10). MOE claims to have carefully considered many aspects including the stakeholders' suggestions, "international evidence to identify and prioritise the factors that would make the most difference in system, nation, and student improvement" and that the "benefits of implementing the proposal had to outweigh the financial and operational downsides" prior to the formation of the Blueprint (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10). In short, the content of the Blueprint, MOE claims, is a representation of the many voices of experts and stakeholders involved in forming and developing the initiatives, purpose and rationale of the transformation.

Although they did append in the Appendices section the reports of the National Dialogue Feedback and the extensive research which MOE stated had been carried out, these were not the original texts of the deliberations, discussions, feedback and dialogues. Therefore, I cannot analyse the statements directly made by the experts or stakeholders about the transformation. Instead, I can only put together a critical analysis and discussion on the way they are represented in the Blueprint.

The examples illustrated in Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) book are limited to a certain type of political text i.e. political debates and speeches as well as a corpus of comments in a discussion forum, while the text that I am analysing is a Blueprint – a form of policy printed in a coffee table book. In contrast with Fairclough &

Fairclough's (2012) examples whereby the speaker convinces the listeners to accept and agree to the plans or solutions, the Blueprint describes the plans and initiatives which have been discussed, deliberated and agreed upon for the transformation of Malaysia's education system and they are presented in statements which assert the actions and solutions taken as the best based on what has been discussed and concluded. I find these statements to be arguments which reassures the reader, specifically Malaysian parents, students, practitioners, and Malaysians in general, that the circumstances and the current context necessitate the transformation of the English language education. The arguments in the Blueprint consist of the same elements prescribed by the Faircloughs in their argumentation analysis framework. Therefore, applying the framework to the Blueprint will further diversify the implementation of the Fairclough and Fairclough framework to other forms of political texts and illustrate that it can be used to analyse another form of text.

As such, for this research, I have referred to various sections of the Blueprint for various purposes. For the main textual analysis, I selected the 'Language' section of Chapter Four of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025, pages 4-9 to 4-15.

4.3   Interviews and Think-Aloud Session with the English language teachers

4.3.1   Introduction

I conducted interviews and Think-Aloud sessions with teachers before I conducted a textual analysis of the Blueprint. The reason for interviewing and conducting a Think-Aloud session is to gain insights into what teachers have experienced when implementing, if not all, some of the initiatives and their opinions concerning the initiatives and subsequently, contribute to my third research question i.e. 'What insights can be gained from these analyses about the teaching and learning of English

language in Malaysia's education system?'. In this section, I will explain the type of interview I conducted and what a Think-Aloud session is about. I will also include the reasons for conducting both methods and their operationalisation.

4.3.2   Interviewing

I interviewed 5 English language teachers who were also asked to give their verbal responses on an excerpt during the Think-Aloud session (The details of the English language teachers can be obtained from Sections 4.6.1 and 7.2). Interviewing, being the most widely used method and a central resource in research (Edwards & Holland, 2013), enabled me to gain insight into teachers' perspectives and experiences.

My purpose of interviewing the English language teachers was not to provide a representative sample but to provide an insight into the teachers' reception of the initiatives stipulated in the Blueprint, the teachers' accounts of how the initiatives were implemented in schools as well as an insight into their experiences in the implementation of the initiatives and policy. Interviews allow complexities, accounts and experiences, which are often unseen in texts, to emerge (Tracy, 2013). Interviews give access to insights of people's experiences, their perspectives or opinion and their justifications (Edwards & Holland, 2013; Seidman, 2012; Tracy, 2013), but they are susceptible to various issues such as biased or untrue responses as the respondents may give socially desirable responses, or there may be bias in the interviewer's questions and direction of the interview (Phellas, Bloch, & Seale, 2011; Silverman, 2014).

Nevertheless, this phenomenon can be mitigated by analysing the content of the interview as well as the production of the responses, as in the 'how' and 'when' of their responses (Silverman, 2014). The type of questions and how the questions are formulated have to be carefully considered to avoid the interviewer from imposing

bias onto the interviewees and the interviewees giving biased or desirable responses (Phellas et al., 2011).

As I wanted the teachers to provide an honest account of their experience and to give their opinions on the implementation of the initiatives I adopted the approach which Alvesson (Alvessson, 2003, p. 16) put forth - the "romantic" approach. This approach to interviewing establishes a "rapport, trust, and commitment" between the interviewer and the interviewee to advocate a more "genuine" human interaction. This is crucial because it enables the researcher to "explore the inner world (meanings, ideas, feelings and intentions) or experience the social reality of the interviewee" (p.16). As such, I decided to interview teachers whom I knew on a personal level because the rapport that is needed has already been built.

In conducting the interviews for this research, a few considerations had to be taken with great care to ensure that the interviews went smoothly and that the recorded interviews could be used as data. The interviews were carried out in various forms including face-to-face and telephone interviews. While I conducted most of the interviews face-to-face, I have had to conduct some as telephone interviews due to several factors including time limitation, feasibility, the convenience of the interviewees, logistics, travel expenses and time difference. It is also important to note that the interviewees were all in Malaysia and commuting proved to be difficult for me as it would be time consuming and expensive to fly in and out to conduct interviews. When I conducted one of my interviews via the telephone the voice quality during the conversations was clear but some parts of the recorded conversation were quite muffled. Fortunately, the muffled parts were not crucial to the research. Most of the interviews were carried out at venues which were agreed upon by the interviewees and myself. I wanted the interviewees to feel relaxed and not intimidated

in order to gain as much information from them as possible, and allow them to present their opinions or perspective without them feeling uncomfortable or restricted. Before the interview session started, each interviewee was given a brief background on the research and what the interview would be all about. The interviewees, generally, were very nervous about being interviewed on the Blueprint as they felt that they were being observed on their knowledge of the Blueprint. I had to reassure them that the interview is not to test their knowledge of the details in the Blueprint and that the recorded interview will not be given to the MOE. I had to also assure them that their identity will not be compromised in the thesis or any other document. Once I had informed them on those matters, the interviewees became less nervous and apprehensive. (It is important to note that due to this concern that the teachers have I will only append only samples of transcripts and analyses of the interviews and Think Aloud sessions in the Appendices).

While I wanted a set of questions to be answered by all the interviewees, I had also wanted the flexibility of discussing issues, events or topics related to the initiatives, Blueprint and education in Malaysia, if they should arise in their responses but were not questioned about. For that reason, I decided on a semi-structured interview to cater to this anticipation. A semi-structured interview allows flexibility when eliciting unrestricted responses and affirming the responses or facts within a certain boundary to prevent the conversation or discussion from going off at a tangent (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Newton, 2010). Semi-structured interviews also allow interviewees to respond on their own terms, according to the way they think and use language (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

Topics, events or issues which unexpectedly appear are expected to add some value to the analysis and discussion as well as richness to the data of the research. The

opinions of the interviewees on the initiatives and the status of English language within the ministry were also solicited.

As my research involves interviewing individuals, I had to seek the approval of the Research Ethics Committee of Lancaster University. The Research Ethics Committee granted me the clearance to conduct my interview for the purpose of this research. It is also a requirement that I obtain approval for conducting research in Malaysia with the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Office Malaysia (EPU). With the approval from EPU, I was able to obtain approval from the various divisions of the state education departments of the Ministry of Education Malaysia to interview the teachers.

The English language teachers I interviewed were attached to the Ministry of Education Malaysia and in various schools. I am unable to divulge more information like which schools they are currently teaching at and the students' age to protect their identify. These teachers, despite me knowing them on a personal basis, they were a bit apprehensive on being interviewed as it concerns the policy because they are afraid that their responses will be revealed to the administration and they do not want their reputation and career will be at risk. I reassured them throughout the interview that their professional details will not be revealed or disclosed to anyone.

My research concerns a sensitive issue i.e. pertaining to potential critique of the Blueprint and the Ministry of Education Malaysia; and the interviewees are attached to MOE. The inclination of the interviewees to respond with a desired response is high. While asking questions which are not biased is within my control, ensuring unbiased responses from the interviewees, I felt, would be beyond my control given the interviewees' apprehension of talking about the Blueprint and their concern that what they say may not be welcomed by the ministry. So, I decided to give a brief

explanation on the research to the prospective interviewees before they agreed to the interviews. They were not obligated to agree to the interview if they were not comfortable with the topic. On the day of the interview, I gave them a verbal assurance as well as a consent letter and teacher participant information sheet (refer to Appendix 2 for the sample of the teacher participant information sheet and Appendix 3 for the sample of the consent letter) for them to sign informing them that their names would not be revealed and a verbal assurance that the full transcripts would not be appended in the thesis. In addition, I forwarded to them a transcript of the interview for them to agree and acknowledge the content of the interview. Fortunately, during the interviews which I had conducted, the responses from the interviewees did not appear to be biased or desired responses. Some of the interviewees voiced their opinions and responded to the questions with care. They voiced their dissatisfaction on some issues and admitted the truth on some questions with carefully chosen words and in a very diplomatic manner. There were some interviewees who were forthright and very frank in their responses. Some of the interviewees were very positive about the initiatives put forth but they expressed their grievances honestly.

4.3.3   Think Aloud session using think-aloud protocol approach

In the quest to get an insight into the teachers' thoughts or feelings when reading a section of the Blueprint, I decided to use a think-aloud protocol to generate their responses to the Blueprint and be able to compare it to my analysis. The Think Aloud session occurred after I interviewed the teacher.

The think-aloud protocol is an approach that makes participants verbalise their thoughts, feelings, and cognitive processes while performing a task (Vandevelde, Van Keer, Schellings, & Van Hout-Wolters, 2015). As think aloud protocol is used during

a task or after, it is viewed as an optimal methodology to capture thought processes (Ericsson, 2006). Although there have been debates concerning the validity of the method (Durning et al., 2013), my intention is just to observe how the teachers react towards the content and the linguistic elements of the selected text.

There have been studies in the areas of CDA and other qualitative fields which have integrated stimulus texts in their focus group interviews wherein the participants are given stimulus texts or visuals and asked to respond to the stimulus e.g. Mcloughlin (2008), Bischof, Comi and Eppler (2014) and Tadajewski (2016). However, the participants were required to respond verbally and in groups, and research where people responded to stimulus texts individually and verbally using a think-aloud protocol could not be located. Therefore, collecting data using the think-aloud protocol with individual participants responding to stimulus texts to elicit their thoughts provides added value to the research field of methodology of research. For Bichof, Comi and Eppler (2014), the activity only triggered the participants to think-aloud but they claimed that these verbalizations of thoughts provided "valuable information and can be used in addition to the analysis of transcripts and completed templates" (p.124). This claim resonates with the rationale behind my intention of conducting a Think Aloud session with the interviewees.

The participants for this approach are the same teachers who were interviewed and they were provided with an excerpt from the Blueprint which addressed the initiatives and plans for the teachers of English language (see Appendix 6). I had also prepared a few questions (refer to Appendix 5) for the teachers to refer to if they needed some assistance in what to say. Although I did not want to restrict them in their responses, I felt that a list of questions would help them as they may not be accustomed to such an approach of eliciting and verbalising their thoughts and opinions. While there were

some of the teachers who used the questions, there were also those who did not. Due to unforeseen circumstances, only one of the five interviewees were interviewed via the mobile phone. I had also requested the interviewee to respond to the selected excerpt for the Think Aloud session but unfortunately, I did not receive the response. As the purpose for the Think Aloud session is to gain an insight and not a representative sample I did not pursue the matter.

Initially, I had anticipated that the teachers would respond by verbalising how they felt about the way teachers were addressed in the excerpt and also express their disappointment in the way teachers were being treated because of the expectations from MOE and what the teachers have to go through as part of upskilling their English language proficiency. In my list of suggestions, I proposed that they verbalise their feelings towards words or phrases that caught their attention. However, the teachers mostly responded to the content – expressing their discontentment with the initiatives and how they were implemented. Only one teacher found the word "redeployed" worrying which I will address in the analysis chapter. Nevertheless, their responses were still valuable to the research as they added to the insights and also substantiated some of their responses when I interviewed them.

4.4 Transcribing and transcription

As mentioned earlier, the interviews and Think Aloud sessions are to provide an insight into the views of the teachers as the implementers of the initiatives, and their opinions on the implementation of the initiatives. With that in mind, the data from this interview does not aim to be a representative sample of the views of all teachers for this thesis.

Coates & Thornborrow (1999) claim that transcription has to be as detailed as possible to make it accessible to the readers and other researchers as well as to pick up on what

has not been analysed or to argue. I do agree that the transcription should illustrate a comprehensive account of the interview as this would provide an almost actual description of how the interview went. Nevertheless, there will be some exceptions, specifically in the context of my research. My research deals with a highly sensitive issue wherein the identity of the interviewees has to be anonymous as to avoid their position as members of MOE from being jeopardised.

Bucholtz (2007) and Ochs (1979) also pointed out that there are variations in transcription because each transcription conducted depends on the research goals i.e. if the goal is to analyse the sound patterns of the dialect of a language, the transcription would be a fine-grained phonetic transcript (Coates & Thornborrow, 1999). The outcomes from the interviews and Think Aloud sessions are analysed for their content and as such they have been transcribed using standard orthography. Therefore, an extensive and detailed transcription of the interviews is not provided, nor will it be enclosed as an appendix. I will, however, provide some important details to make them accessible to the readers and other researchers such as verbal responses, and translated meaning, as these details affect the content of the interview. I will also use the same transcribing protocol with the audio recorded verbalisation of responses from the Think Aloud session.

A broad transcription was conducted and standard orthography was used as my focus is on the content of the interview. However, in some circumstances such as the use of Bahasa Malaysia words in the interview, I will provide the English translation in the brackets. I will provide the following details for the transcription:

1. Ellipses is provided '…' in the transcription such as Extract 7-39 in Chapter 7, to represent responses (responses are words, phrases and acknowledgments such as 'already' and 'a-hah' that do not represent the content or contribute to

the focus of analyses and discussion) or exchanges (exchanges are questions from myself and responses from the teacher) which do not contribute to or represent the focus of the content and therefore, they have been omitted from the transcript.

2. Full stops are provided in the transcription to signal pauses to prevent the impression that the responses are continuous sentences and at the same time to provide an almost authentic illustration of the interview.

3. Although interviews were conducted in English some words in L1 (the standard Bahasa Malaysia language as well as dialect words) emerged and therefore, they will be spelt out following the Bahasa Malaysia orthography and the English translation will be provided.

4. Transcription was done verbatim despite grammar errors/mistakes. However, the grammar will not be analysed as the focus is on the content of the interview and verbalised responses from the Think Aloud session.

4.5   Collection of Data

4.5.1   Data Source

The data for this research was collected from three different sources as listed in Table 4-2 below:

No	Data Specification	Targeted Personnel	Method of analysis
1	Blueprint – Language Section of Chapter Four of Blueprint (Appendix 1)	N/A	Fairclough and Fairclough's (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012) Political Discourse Analysis – Structure of Arguments (PDA) and van Leeuwen's (2008) Representation of Social Actor framework.
2	English language	5 teachers from Malaysia	Interview with teachers

No	Data Specification	Targeted Personnel	Method of analysis
	teachers - key people in implementing the initiatives in order to achieve MOE's aims and objectives.		(Sample of transcript in Appendix 8)
3	Think Aloud session – verbalised responses to Excerpt from Blueprint (Samples of transcript in Appendix 9)	4 of the 5 teachers who were interviewed An excerpt from the Blueprint was provided.	They were asked to verbalise their thoughts on the excerpt into the voice recorder provided. A list of suggestions were provided on what they might want to say.

Table 4-2: Collection of Data

A detailed description of the teachers interviewed is discussed in the analysis - Chapter 7.

4.5.2   Analysis Procedure of Interview and Think Aloud Data

In analysing the data from the interview, I decided to analyse the data according to themes. The themes for the interview are drawn from the interview questions while the themes for the Think Aloud session were drawn from the participants' responses. Firstly, I read through the questions I asked and then grouped together the questions which were similar in terms of subject matter. Finally, I decided on a title that best summarises the subject matter the questions were referring to. Ideally, according to Creswell (2014) the number of themes should be kept small – between five to seven themes while Rowley (2012) proposes that the main themes should be kept between six to eight themes. I used a qualitative computer data analysis programme called ATLAS.ti to organise the speech texts according to their respective themes. The

themes were coded according to colours. In the sub-sections below I will describe how I conducted my analyses for the interviews and Think Aloud data.

4.5.2.1   Interview Data

As I mentioned above, the themes for the interview were drawn from the interview questions. Initially, I had only seven themes but as I reviewed the transcription, I had to have eight themes because of one issue i.e. the Dual Language Programme (DLP) which came from one of the interviewees. The issue became a separate discussion that warrants a theme of its own because of the depth of information the interviewee provided. The themes are as below:

    I.   Responses to the initiatives

    II.   English in the era of globalisation

    III.   It seems to be English but ….

    IV.   Teachers in the eyes of MOE

    V.   The Dual Language Programme

    VI.   Opinion on the reversion

    VII.   Teachers' awareness of the Blueprint

    VIII.   Other Insights

Among the themes, only two themes, namely, Responses to the Initiatives and The Dual Language Programme, have sub-themes. These sub-themes emerged from the data as I was analysing the transcription.

The aim was to categorise the speech extracts according to the themes. I began with reading through the transcript and divided the transcript into parts according to the themes. Then, I began to analyse the transcription closely and identifying the speech texts which were relevant to the respective themes. As the themes were according to the interview questions, locating the speech texts which matched the themes was quite

straightforward. However, some of the speech texts relevant to the themes were found at other parts of the transcription.

Upon completion of identifying the extracts and matching them according to the themes, I exported the findings into a report using ATLAS.ti. Then, I read through the speech texts again and found that I had to have a separate theme for the Dual Language Programme because the discussion concerning the programme was quite lengthy and among the teachers I interviewed, this was the only teacher who discussed the programme because the school had it implemented. Moreover, it is a programme which is in conjunction with the MBMMBI policy. I also found that there were several sub-themes for the Initiatives and The Dual Language Programme.

After that, I transferred the speech texts into tables according to their respective themes as illustrated in Chapter Seven. The tables allowed me to compare one interviewee's response to another and eventually, discuss the analysis of their responses.

4.5.2.2   Think Aloud Data

While the themes for Interview Data are from the interview questions, the themes for Think Aloud data are derived from the responses of the interviewees. The themes that emerged are as below:

   I.   Cambridge Placement Test (CPT)

  II.   Set System

 III.   1BestariNet System

 IV.   Self-Directed Learning & Interactive Online Tutoring

  V.   Alternative Pathways

After transcribing their responses, I read through the transcription closely. I found that not all of the interviewees identified and responded to the same subject matter.

Nevertheless, it was interesting to find that some subject matters affected most of the interviewees while some affected only one interviewee. The themes were identified based on the subject matter that the interviewees responded to.

After identifying the themes, I used the ATLAS.ti software programme to analyse the data with the themes and using colour codes to identify them. The parts of speech were then categorised according to the themes and the report was exported. Next, I transferred the speech texts into tables for the same reason I stated in sub-section 4.5.2.1. Interview Data i.e. to compare one teacher's response to another

4.6   Conclusion
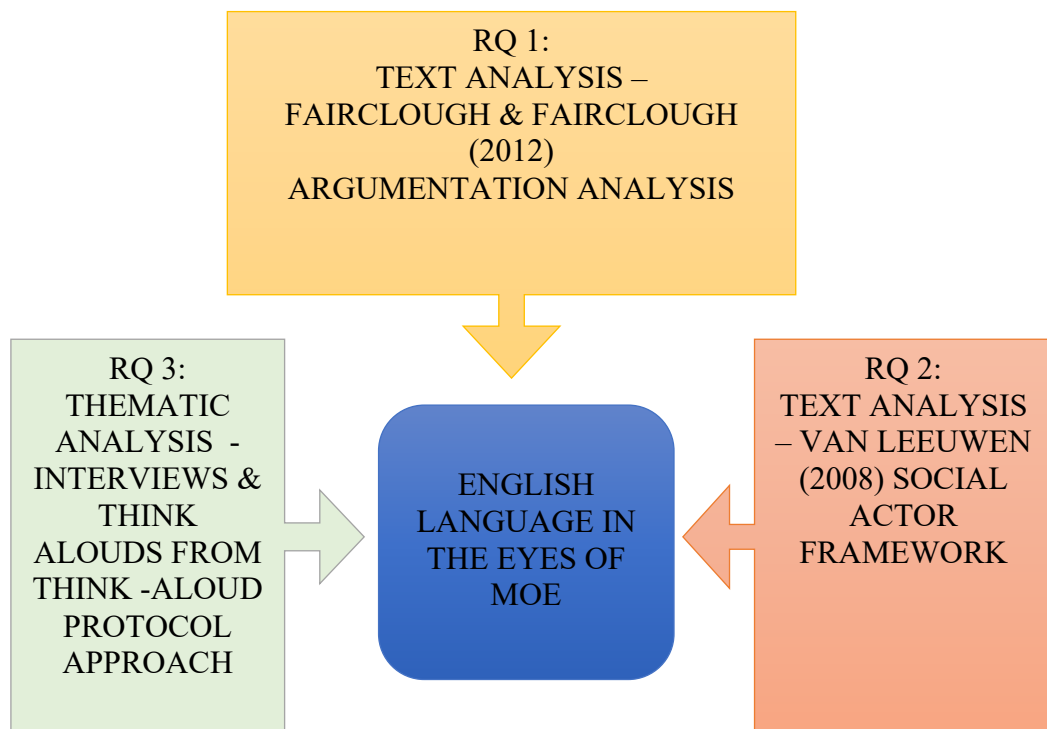
Figure 4-97: Research Design

I conducted this research using three methods of research i.e. text analysis, interviews and the think-aloud approach, to find the answer to the main aim - what English language means to the Ministry of Education Malaysia. I conducted the interview and think-aloud protocol sessions first and then only the textual analysis of the text and social actors.

For text analysis, I employed Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis – Practical Reasoning, which incorporates CDA, albeit not their framework in its entirety, to show how MOE frames the initiatives and policies to project English in various ways. For example, English language is the lingua franca that will enable them to compete globally and meet the challenges of the 21st century. It has also shown how the discourse convinces readers that what is being presented is the best way to transform English language education, although, but as the interviews have revealed, some of the initiatives were not applicable or viable in certain areas.

For the social actor analysis, I used van Leeuwen's social actor network revealed how English language teachers were being represented in the Blueprint.

I conducted interviews with teachers to give an insight into what teachers are experiencing with implementation of the initiatives. Obtaining teachers' verbalized responses through the Think-Aloud protocol sessions about an excerpt from the Blueprint revealed what the teachers were thinking about the initiatives at the point of encountering the text which subsequently resonated with their responses during the interview. These sessions were conducted prior to the textual analyses of the text and social actors due to the time constraint and the travelling time to Malaysia.

Drawing from these three sources of data helped me to identify the issues that surround the English language, observe how English language is perceived by MOE and eventually answer the research questions and achieve the main aims of this research as illustrated in the visual representation Figure 4-2

5   Analysis of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter I intend to show how the English language and the teaching and learning of English language in the Malaysian education system are constructed by providing a close text analysis of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 (Blueprint). I will use Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis which integrates critical discourse analysis (CDA) with their practical reasoning framework (see Chapter 2) to analyse the arguments surrounding the transformation of the English language education in the education system of Malaysia, which eventually reveals how the English language and the teaching and learning of the English language are discursively constructed in the Blueprint.

SHIFTS

	SHIFT 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD	ENSURE EVERY CHILD IS PROFICIENT IN BAHASA MALAYSIA AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND IS ENCOURAGED TO LEARN AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	DEVELOP VALUES-DRIVEN MALAYSIANS	TRANSFORM TEACHING INTO THE PROFESSION OF CHOICE	ENSURE HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOL LEADERS IN EVERY SCHOOL	EMPOWER JPNs, PPDs, AND SCHOOLS TO CUSTOMISE SOLUTIONS BASED ON NEED	LEVERAGE ICT TO SCALE UP QUALITY LEARNING ACROSS MALAYSIA	TRANSFORM MINISTRY DELIVERY CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITY	PARTNER WITH PARENTS, COMMUNITY, AND PRIVATE SECTOR AT SCALE	MAXIMISE STUDENT OUTCOMES FOR EVERY RINGGIT	INCREASE TRANSPARENCY FOR DIRECT PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

SHIFT 1 – PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
- Benchmark learning of languages, Science and Mathematics to international standards
- Launch revised Primary (KSSR) and Secondary (KSSM) Curriculum in 2017
- Revamp examinations and assessments to increase focus on higher-order thinking skills by 2016
- Strengthen STEM education
- Enhance access and quality of existing education pathways, starting with vocational track
- Raise quality of all preschools and encourage universal enrolment by 2020
- Increase investment in physical and teaching resources for students with specific needs
- Move from 6 to 11 years of compulsory schooling

SHIFT 2 – ENSURE EVERY CHILD IS PROFICIENT IN BAHASA MALAYSIA AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND IS ENCOURAGED TO LEARN AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
- Roll out the KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum for National-type schools, with intensive remedial support for students who require it
- Expand the LINUS programme to include English literacy
- Upskill English language teachers
- Make English language SPM paper a compulsory pass and expand opportunities for greater exposure to the language
- Encourage every child to learn an additional language by 2025

SHIFT 3 – DEVELOP VALUES-DRIVEN MALAYSIANS
- Enhance Islamic and Moral Education with greater focus on unity and fostering stronger bonds among students
- Develop students holistically by reinforcing requirement to participate in 1 Sport, 1 Club and 1 Uniformed Body
- Enhance and expand RIMUP from 2016 to facilitate interaction across school types

SHIFT 4 – TRANSFORM TEACHING INTO THE PROFESSION OF CHOICE
- Raise the entry bar for teachers from 2013 to be amongst top 30% of graduates
- Revamp the IPG to world class standards by 2020
- Upgrade the quality of continuous professional development (CPD) from 2013
- Focus teachers on their core function of teaching from 2013
- Implement competency and performance-based career progression by 2016
- Enhance pathways for teachers into leadership, master teaching and subject specialist roles by 2016
- Develop a peer-led culture of excellence and certification process by 2025

SHIFT 5 – ENSURE HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOL LEADERS IN EVERY SCHOOL
- Enhance selection criteria and succession planning process for principals from 2013
- Roll out a New Principal Career Package in waves with greater support and sharper accountability for improving student outcomes

SHIFT 6 – EMPOWER JPNs, PPDs, AND SCHOOLS TO CUSTOMISE SOLUTIONS BASED ON NEED
- Accelerate school improvement through systematic, district-led programmes rolled out across all states by 2014
- Allow greater school-based management and autonomy for schools that meet a minimum performance criteria
- Ensure 100% of schools meet basic infrastructure requirements by 2015, starting with Sabah and Sarawak
- Ensure all government and government-aided schools receive equitable financial support

SHIFT 7 – LEVERAGE ICT TO SCALE UP QUALITY LEARNING ACROSS MALAYSIA
- Provide internet access and virtual learning environment via 1BestariNet for all 10,000 schools
- Augment online content to share best practices starting with a video library of the best teachers delivering lessons in Science, Mathematics, Bahasa Malaysia and English language
- Maximise use of ICT for distance and self-paced learning to expand access to high-quality teaching regardless of location or student skill level

SHIFT 8 – TRANSFORM MINISTRY DELIVERY CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITY
- Empower JPNs and PPDs through greater decision-making power over budget and personnel from 2013, and greater accountability for improving student outcomes
- Deploy almost 2,500 more personnel from the Ministry and JPNs to PPDs in order to better support schools by 2014
- Strengthen leadership capabilities in 150-200 pivotal leadership positions from 2013
- Design new functions and structure for the Ministry, with implementation from 2016

SHIFT 9 – PARTNER WITH PARENTS, COMMUNITY, AND PRIVATE SECTOR AT SCALE
- Equip every parent to support their child's learning through a parent engagement toolkit and online access to their child's in-school progress
- Invite every PIBG to provide input on contextualisation of curriculum and teacher quality from 2016
- Expand Trust School model to 500 schools by 2025 by including alumni groups and NGOs as potential sponsors

SHIFT 10 – MAXIMISE STUDENT OUTCOMES FOR EVERY RINGGIT
- Link every programme to clear student outcomes and annually rationalise programmes that have low impact
- Capture efficiency opportunities, with funding reallocated to the most critical areas such as teacher training and upskilling

SHIFT 11 – INCREASE TRANSPARENCY FOR DIRECT PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY
- Publish an annual public report on progress against Blueprint targets and initiatives, starting from the year 2013
- Conduct comprehensive stock-takes in 2015, 2020 and 2025

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p.E-15 & E-16)

Figure 5-1: Shifts for Transformation of Malaysia's Education System

The Blueprint is presented in a table book form with a semi-matte cover and there are pictures of children in Malaysia on the cover. The Blueprint illustrates to its readers, which include teachers and parents, the aims and objectives, the rationale behind the transformation of the education system and the '11 shifts' (Refer to Figure 5-2) – the initiatives which MOE plans to implement. All of these have been discussed and deliberated on by the stakeholders and policymakers prior to the production and distribution of the Blueprint. Hence, some of the elements of the argumentation framework, discussions and deliberation on the options, plans or steps taken are neither illustrated nor are they explicitly visible in the text. Instead, the text producer explains what will be carried out and has been carried out, what has been planned in order to achieve the aims or goals of MOE. I wish to highlight that the values that drive the goals for this transformation are not explicitly stated but it can be inferred through the aspirations of desiring an excellent education system i.e. making quality education accessible for all Malaysians, fostering unity among the Malaysian youth, equity for all students – reducing achievement gaps, providing education of international standard for all Malaysians, and efficiency in delivery of education. In terms of student aspiration, the values behind the goals are developing their character, values and a strong sense of national identity.

CLAIM FOR ACTION
- A transformation of the current education system.
- 11 shifts to transform the system.
- Delivering the Roadmap.

MEANS-GOAL
- The country requires a transformation of its basic education system in order to realise its aspirations and meet the human capital needs of the future.
- The Ministry has identified 11 shifts that will need to occur to deliver the step change in outcomes envisioned by all Malaysians.
- A solid combination of knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality, and national identity are critical in preparing students to succeed and thrive in an increasingly globalised world.
- The Malaysian education system will need to undergo a complete transformation if it is to meet the ambitious aspirations set out in this Blueprint.
- In order to properly address the needs of all Malaysians, and to prepare the nation to perform at an international level, it is important to first envision what a highly-successful education system must accomplish, particularly in the Malaysian context.
- Malaysia's expenditure levels should be maintained but the efficiency and effectiveness of how funds are allocated and spent should be reviewed.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISE
- To meet the challenges of the 21st century, building on the foundations of the previous seminal reports and policies, and focusing on the ways to develop and further pave the way for the education system's continuous growth and improvement.
- Globalisation demands that Malaysia's talent needs to compete with the best internationally.
- Education is the key to a nation's success and future as well as the country's economic growth.
- Return on investment is not as high as desired.
- Poor performance in international exams e.g. TIMSS and PISA

GOAL
- Malaysia possesses a globally-competitive education system that produces globally-competitive talent.
- Every Malaysian student achieves their full potential.

VALUES
- Education should be accessible to all and Foster unity
- Equity for all students
- Students should be provided with quality education
- Education should be delivered with efficiency and develop character and values and a strong sense of national identity in the students and citizens.

Figure 5-2: The Summary of Argumentation of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025

In this chapter I will firstly provide an illustration of the goals, aims and rationale behind the transformation of the education system of Malaysia (see Figure 5-1 for a graphic representation). These goals, aims and rationale are taken from the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 specifically the Executive Summary and Chapters One and Two. I will also provide a brief description of the arguments made by the MOE for the transformation of the education system, following Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) practical reasoning framework.

However, I will not engage in an in-depth discussion on the broader arguments for transformation, as my research concentrates specifically on the English language and the teaching and learning of the language. My reason for, nevertheless, providing a brief description of the argument made for the transformation of Malaysia's education system is because the goals, aims, and rationale for the transformation frame the main focus of this research i.e. the English language and the teaching and learning of English language. It is also because I will be referring to those elements where applicable.

In view of the focus of this research, the main text that I have analysed has been selected from areas of the document salient to the teaching of English language, particularly Chapter Four of the Blueprint – Language Section (Appendix 1). The Language Section has several sub-sections and discusses all the languages taught in schools including the English language and ethnic languages. As such, discussions concerning the teaching and learning of the English language are located in all the sub-sections of the Language Section. The sub-sections are as follows:

1   Assessing language proficiency in Malaysia

2   The Roadmap: Creating language proficiency at scale

3   Wave 1 (2013 - 2015): Strengthening the current system

- Develop Bahasa Malaysia into a Language of Knowledge
- Strengthening the teaching of the English language
- Setting the stage for structural change

4   Wave 2 (2016 - 2020): Introducing structural change

5   Wave 3 (2021 - 2025): Scaling up structural change

Secondly, I will analyse the arguments made for the transformation of the teaching of English language in the education system of Malaysia using Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) argumentation analysis. In this part of the analysis chapter, I will 'dissect' the arguments salient to the teaching and learning of English language and illustrate the elements of the practical reasoning of each argument put forth by the Ministry of Education Malaysia in the Blueprint. The elements are identified following the practical reasoning framework i.e. the goals, the actions, the means-goal premises, the circumstantial premises and the values premises. The arguments will be illustrated and accompanied by a graphic representation.

Finally, I will discuss my findings and attempt to answer my research question number one (1) - How is the English language and the teaching and learning of English language discursively constructed in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025? Eventually, my discussion will provide a response to the overarching question of this research which is, how is the English language viewed by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE)?

5.2   The Argument for the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025

5.2.1   The Circumstances

In Chapter One of the Blueprint, MOE provides several contexts as circumstantial premises in attending to the situation which has called for the transformation of the education system of Malaysia. MOE portrays the context, firstly, with education being

constructed as salient to a country by stating that it "plays a central role to any country's economic growth and national development" (p.1-1). However, the statement is made without any references to support it. Instead, MOE puts forth several presupposition statements and imaginaries to justify the need for the transformation of the education system of Malaysia to the readers of the Blueprint. Presuppositions, here, mean statements or ideas which are assumed to be the truth and that the idea or statement is common belief and knowledge to the people involved in the conversation (Stalnaker, 1973). Imaginaries are, according to Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), discursive representations of what would happen to the world in the future or rather "future possible world" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). MOE begins describing the context with an imaginary (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, pp. 103-109), stating that education is important to a country because it prophesies the future of the country. Then, MOE asserts this notion with statements such as: "The future success—both socio-cultural and economic—of the nation depends on quickly and significantly improving the outcomes of the nation's education system" and "There is no better predictor of a nation's future than what is currently happening in its classrooms" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-1). Next, MOE further uses positive consequences and impacts with presuppositions - that in the current global economy "a nation's success depends fundamentally on the knowledge, skills and competencies of its people" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-1) and education is "fundamental to nation building and unity" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-1). Next, MOE illustrates these claims with a presupposition about education having a positive impact on society wherein "nations with higher education levels tend to enjoy greater economic prosperity" (2013, pp. 1-1) and thus, impacting society:

It provides individuals with the opportunity to improve their lives, become successful members of the community and active contributors to national development. Through interacting with individuals from a range of socio-economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds—and learning to understand, accept and embrace differences—a shared set of experiences and goals for Malaysia's future can be built. It is through these shared experiences and aspirations that a common national identity and unity is fostered.

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013)

MOE ends the first context with another positive consequence by stating that it is imperative that the education system produces "youth with common dreams and goals, towards the development of a brighter future for Malaysia" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp, 1-1).

The second context concerns expectations from parents and employers whereby the education system is being scrutinised and debated by the public, "as parents' expectations rise and employers voice their concern regarding the system's ability to adequately prepare young Malaysians for the challenges of the 21st century" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-1). Again, the evidence to support this claim is not provided at this point.

The third context that MOE has taken into consideration is the students' performance in assessments. MOE compares how successful the education system was in producing "students and schools that are comparable to the best internationally" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-2) for the past 50 years, with students entering top-tier universities abroad and winning at international competitions (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-2), to the performance of students in the PISA 2009+ assessments wherein Malaysians' performance in "three areas was well below both the international and OECD averages" (Kementerian Pendidikan

Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-4). MOE then states that the Government acknowledged that the "Malaysian education system must continue evolving to keep up with the nation's increasing aspirations, as well as to keep up with peer countries" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-4) and that individuals have to be "critical, creative, and innovative thinkers" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-4) in the globalised world and economy. In other words, MOE has put forth several assumptions:

a. Education is the key to nation building and unity

b. The current global economy's definition of a successful nation is based on the knowledge, skills and competencies of its people

c. A successful education system will produce students who enter top-tier universities abroad and win international competitions

d. The future of Malaysia depends on the youth's sharing common goals and dreams

e. The education system of a country reflects a nation's future

f. The PISA assessment is a good test to benchmark students' performance against international standards

g. Keeping up with peer countries on international assessments is important

h. Scoring well on international assessments correlates with being critical, creative and innovative thinkers.

These assumptions are the foundation for a transformation of the education system of Malaysia. MOE asserts that the Blueprint is the result of "in-depth analyses, interviews, focus groups, surveys and research conducted with the support of Malaysian and international experts, Ministry officials, teachers, principals, and parents all across Malaysia. In addition, through the National Dialogue conducted

between April and July of 2012, almost 12,000 members of the public and different stakeholder groups were engaged for their input and suggestions" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-4). Thus, MOE presents assurances to the readers that the Blueprint is not a document that is biased and based on one party's point of view and belief.

In summary, MOE has portrayed positive scenarios as the circumstantial premises whereby education is important for economic growth, and claimed that national development such as education predicts the future of a country, and that the impact education has on economic growth will improve national development. At the same time, Malaysian students' poor performance in global competitive assessments is taken as a context for MOE supporting the need for transformation of the education system. While it is understandable that these contexts are important for a country and provide the basis of the argument for reforming the education system, I question the rationale behind the focus on those issues alone when other issues, such as sustainable development and societal and environmental values, which are equally important, especially in the era of globalisation, were not taken into consideration.

In addition, the statements made by MOE regarding how education is the "best predictor" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 2-1) of a nation's future and fundamental to nation building and unity, as well as the claim that the "knowledge, skills and competencies" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-1) of a country's nation are vital to a nation's success in the current global economic climate, were not supported with evidence but portrayed as the truth for the readers of the Blueprint. Such statements, although without evidence, are persuasive, thus they compel the readers to believe that a reformed education system is vital for the good of the country and nation.

Apart from that, MOE also ended the positive scenarios with a statement that asserted that it is imperative that Malaysia has an education system which produces youths who share common goals and dreams to develop a brighter future for Malaysia. Here, MOE again uses a statement that presupposes all the youths should share the same goals and dreams towards developing a brighter future for Malaysia, when in reality, every individual is different from another and not everyone shares a common perception of an issue or idea.

5.2.2   Aspirations and Vision

In the Executive Summary chapter and Chapter Two, the future of the education system and the hopes and aspirations as well as the context for each Malaysian child are laid out. MOE has indicated 21st century challenges and globalisation as the direction of the aspirations and aims and as the context of the transformation of the education system in the Executive Summary chapter, Chapters One, Two and Three. These directions have also been reiterated throughout the Blueprint such as in Chapters Three and Four. Hence, the reiteration of these two directions suggests that MOE considers them as important themes and that it is imperative the education system is reformed to ensure that every Malaysian child is ready to face these challenges and globalisation, thus enabling them to compete globally.

The Blueprint does not literally spell out what the 21st century challenges are, but they can be deduced from the topics that emerged in the Blueprint such as the context of the transformation of Malaysia's education system wherein the students' performance was below the international and OECD average in the PISA assessment. PISA assesses students' higher order thinking skills and ability to solve problems in real world settings, all of which are essential skills in the 21st century (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 1-4).

The discourse on 21st century education is nothing new and it has been evident since the 1980s with articles like "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986) and "Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century" (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1989) being among the earliest. Among the discourses on 21st century teaching and learning are: (1) the challenges that teachers and schools face in meeting with the demands of 21st century education (Power, 1997); (2) technological competencies for teachers and students in 21st century education (Pineida, 2011); and (3) as well as how 21st century learning goals in education are assessed and the implications (Pellegrino, 2014). There are also discourses on the skills of the 21st century such as "critical thinking and problem-solving skills, communicative skills, information and media literacy skills, contextual learning skills" which are evolving with the demands and changes in technology, current state economy and societies of the world (Kaufman, 2013, p. 79); and to which Kaufman (2013) further asserts that the ability to actualize and use the skills, and also being creative and innovative, are essential in today's economy and "an influence on society and its economic future".

OECD (2009) has defined 21st century skills as the ability to "perform tasks and solve problems", including possessing attitudes and knowledge. Evidently, in the case of Malaysia, MOE is concerned with having an education system that produces students who possess such 21st century skills and are ready to face the challenges of the 21st century era. I agree that the Malaysian students should be equipped with 21st century skills to face the forthcoming challenges. However, I believe an education system should also prepare the students with knowledge, skills, values etc. which are not limited to a certain time but also ones that are applicable for current and future situations.

MOE intends to have an education system that is able to produce students who are not only academically excellent but also possess qualities such as strong ethics and spirituality, being knowledgeable, having leadership skills and a sense of national identity as well as having 21st century skills (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10). MOE wants to possess an education system that is ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century and a globally competitive education system to produce globally competitive students as illustrated in Chapter Two of the Blueprint. Therefore, MOE outlines in the Executive Summary chapter and Chapter Two, the aim for an excellent education system that is accessible to all students regardless of ethnic group, socio-economic status, geographical location, or gender, to maximise the students' potential. MOE also aims for an education system that is comparable to international standards and one that promotes unity and national building among the students. MOE also aims for an education system that is "in the top third of countries in terms of performance in international assessments" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 2-2) such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). This stems from the PISA tests in 2009 and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2011 wherein Malaysian students did poorly despite previously improving over several decades (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-5).

Evidently, putting forth the above situation hints at Malaysia's education system not being on a par with international standards. This also reveals that MOE finds high standards in students' performance in tests, notably at international level, to be important to achieve. Having improved in performance on a national level alone is not enough for MOE. Being able to compete and perform in internationally acclaimed

tests is one of MOE's major concerns and becomes a circumstantial premise within which the goals are set.

Therefore, in order for MOE's goals to materialise, the actions taken to transform the education system are to embark on the 11 shifts (See Figure 5-2) (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-15) which have been identified as illustrated in Figure 5-2 with a Roadmap. The means-goal premise for this action is that the education system of Malaysia has to undergo a transformation and that it requires these 11 shifts to take place to realise Malaysia's "aspirations and meet the human capital needs of the future" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 2-1) as well as "deliver the step change in outcomes envisioned by all Malaysians" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10) and that "the Malaysian education system will need to undergo a complete transformation if it is to meet the ambitious aspirations set out in this Blueprint" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-27).

5.2.3 Conclusion

In Section 2.3 of Chapter Two, I discussed globalisation and its link with education policy. Malaysia has obviously used globalisation and the era of 21st century, specifically in aspiring the nation to be competitive on a global level, as the main circumstances for their argument of a transformation of the education system. The circumstances discussed in Section 5.2.1, and the aspirations and visions in Section 5.2.2 feed into MOE's argument for the transformation of the education system like scoring excellent results in international examination such as the PISA exam and possessing an excellent education system. MOE substantiates and validate their argument and decisions for the transformation with the circumstances and aspirations and visions to convince and assure the readers of the Blueprint of their decision and that they will produce results with their claims of action, specifically the Eleven Shift.

5.3   Overview of the Language Section of Chapter Four of the Blueprint

As mentioned earlier, my research concentrates on the English language education in the Malaysia education system. As such, I will discuss in detail the arguments which address this matter. The transformation of the teaching and learning of English language in the education system of Malaysia falls under Shift Two which states the goal as "Ensure every child is proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English language and is encouraged to learn an additional language". The transformation of the teaching and learning of English language is further described in the Language section of Chapter Four.

Upon close examination, arguments in this section are embedded in larger arguments. For example, one of the claims for action in the Language Section is The Roadmap. The Roadmap illustrates the planned changes and initiatives that will take place to affect the transformation of the education system of Malaysia. The changes will be carried out in stages, or as what MOE has termed them as - Waves, and each wave has a certain time frame. The Roadmap itself has an argument put forth and this will be explained further in detail as this section develops.

I wish to mention here that there is a separate document for the Roadmap of the teaching and learning of English language which was produced in 2015 and illustrates the plans and initiatives of the reformation of the English language education in Malaysia's education system. It is referred to as "English language education reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025." I will denote this as the 'EL Education Reform' document while the Roadmap that is discussed in the Blueprint will be indicated as 'Roadmap'. I wish to also stress that I will not elaborate or analyse the EL Education Reform document as my research concentrates on the Blueprint.

Nevertheless, from time to time I will refer to it in my discussion in this thesis where needed and applicable.

5.3.1 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and Malaysia's English language Education.

Figure 5-3: Page 4-10 of Language Section of Chapter Four of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025

Proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia will remain the cornerstone of Malaysia's national language policy and the focus will be on ensuring that students across all ethnic groups are universally able to learn and converse effectively in the national language. Additionally, exposure to the English language will be increased and the quality of English language teaching will be raised. In recognition of the social and economic value of multiculturalism, steps will be taken to strengthen access to the learning of Chinese language, Tamil, Arabic and other leading global languages. This practice is already reflected in the education system, where all students learn Bahasa Malaysia, English language as well as other additional languages.

The aspiration of the education system is to create students that are at least operationally proficient in both Bahasa Malaysia and English. All students will also be encouraged to learn an additional language to the level of independent proficiency. As defined by CEFR, independent proficiency indicates the ability to hold one's own in social discourse. By 2025, the Ministry aims to meet the following targets:

- 90% students achieve a minimum Credit in Bahasa Malaysia at SPM

- 70% students achieve Cambridge 1119-equivalent minimum Credit in English at SPM level; and

- 30% students achieve independent proficiency in an additional language.

Assessing language proficiency in Malaysia

There is widespread operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia amongst students, with 75% of students achieving at least a Credit in the 2010 SPM. Bahasa Malaysia also consistently has the strongest pass rates out of the core subjects in UPSR, PMR, and SPM. In National schools and private schools registered under the Ministry, Bahasa Malaysia is the medium of instruction with over 80% of curriculum time in Bahasa Malaysia. This ensures full immersion in the language and equips students with the ability to develop and express complex ideas in Bahasa Malaysia.

To achieve the aspiration of 90% students achieving at least a Credit in Bahasa Malaysia at SPM level, disparities in performance between the various ethnic groups will need to be addressed. Bumiputera students perform strongly with 84% achieving at least a Credit in SPM Bahasa Malaysia. However, only 63% of Chinese students and 57% of Indian students reach the same level of achievement (Exhibit 4-6). This is primarily due to the lower exposure to Bahasa Malaysia in National-type schools. 96% of Chinese and 56% of Indian students attend National-type schools where content subjects are taught in Chinese language or Tamil. As instruction time allocated for languages at National-type schools is split between Bahasa Malaysia, English language, and Chinese language or Tamil, students receive fewer instructional hours in Bahasa Malaysia compared to National school students. To compensate for this, the standards of the Bahasa Malaysia curriculum and assessment are slightly lower for National-type school students.

EXHIBIT 4-6

English and Bahasa Malaysia performance (2010 and aspiration for 2025)
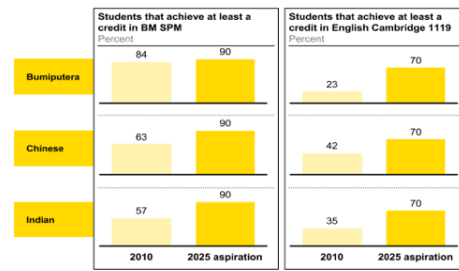
SOURCE: Examination Syndicate

Compared to Bahasa Malaysia, Malaysian students' performance in English language is weaker. Only 28% of students achieve at least a Credit benchmarked to Cambridge 1119 in English language SPM. While performance in English language also varies by ethnicity, all three major ethnic groups fall significantly short of the 70% proficiency target. Only 23% Bumiputera, 42% Chinese, and 35% of Indian students achieve at least a Credit benchmarked to Cambridge 1119 (Exhibit 4-6). English language results are also the lowest of the core subjects at UPSR, PMR, and SPM level.

Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among English language teachers. When a sample of over 7,500 English language teachers took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language. There is also a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching. Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately 30% of current English language teachers were not originally trained to teach English while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects. Lastly, international research also indicates that Malaysia's 15-20% instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency.

The provision for the teaching of other languages besides Bahasa Malaysia and English language is relatively good. Approximately 20% of primary school students attend National-type schools with instruction in either Chinese language or Tamil and an additional 2% attend religious schools with some instruction in Arabic.

As per the Pupil's Own Language Policy, all government schools are required to offer mother tongue language as a taught subject when at least 15 students request it. Under the KSSR, every child may also choose to learn an additional language depending on availability of teachers. Currently, 15% of students pass the optional Chinese language, Tamil or Arabic papers at SPM and there are many other students who opt to learn other languages like Japanese, French, German, and Spanish.

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11)

Figure 5-4: Page 4-11 of Language Section of Chapter Four of Malaysia Education System 2013 - 2025

At this juncture, MOE benchmarks "operational proficiency" against the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which defines "operationally proficient" as "linguistic fluency required to participate fully in professional and academic life" (see page 4-10 to 4-11 of the Blueprint (as per Figure 5-4)). MOE attaches the CEFR framework on page 4-10 of the Blueprint as a reference for the readers.

The CEFR is a framework that provides a common basis for "language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" and a definition

of "levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (Council of Europe, 2010).

The move to adopt CEFR into the Malaysian context is explicitly explained in *English language education reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025* (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015) document wherein, in summary, MOE listed various reasons for its use. Firstly, the need for international standards. The CEFR "has received international recognition as by far the leader in its field" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015, p. 62). It is claimed that it is being used in many countries across the world (but the countries are not mentioned in the Blueprint) and that many countries have aligned their English language education system against international standards. Secondly, the CEFR is to be used as a benchmark for the system against other language programmes in countries across the world "to find ways of improving performance" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015, p. 64). Subsequently, MOE intends to align the English language education system of Malaysia with the "standards of top-performing systems" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015) all over the world. Finally, adopting CEFR in the system would ensure that the value of a grade is a reasonably accurate equivalent to a grade worldwide.

MOE does acknowledge that the CEFR cannot be taken off the shelf and applied directly and needs to be understood in detail by all the stakeholders including teachers and administrators. The CEFR has to be adopted and adapted according to the needs of the education system. Ministry of Education Malaysia (2015) has further acknowledged that CEFR has received criticisms such as "CEFR takes a utilitarian or instrumental approach to language learning" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015) and that "the CEFR is foreign" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Nevertheless, MOE claims that these criticisms were not "serious shortcomings", as such

shortcomings, MOE further claims, would have been highlighted by Byram & Parmenter (2012). Therefore, MOE concludes with "Malaysia can go ahead with some confidence" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). While it is commendable that MOE has gone into great lengths of explaining the rationale behind adopting CEFR into the English language education system, referencing solely Byram & Parmenter (2012) to attest the absence of serious shortcomings of adopting CEFR in the system seems to provide minimal support for this decision.

The CEFR, states that it does not advocate that the level of competency should follow the performance of an "idealised 'native-speaker', or a 'well-educated native speaker' or a 'near-native speaker'" (Language Policy Programme Education Policy Division Education Department Council of Europe, 2017, p. 35). CEFR also contends that it was designed to promote "plurilingual, intercultural and inclusive education" (Language Policy Programme Education Policy Division Education Department Council of Europe, 2017). Nevertheless, CEFR was designed and developed for European countries in mind and does not appear to consider the cultural, history, social values and norms as well as linguistic norms of a country in its assessment principles. The CEFR is an international reference for teaching, learning and assessment which was initially developed for European countries and yet, since its inception, it has been adopted and adapted by countries outside Europe, McNamara (2011) contends that second language speaker A may need to converse with another second language speaker, who may not be from the same country as A, in an English language as a lingua franca situation. As such, difficulties of mutual understanding may emerge and cause grave consequences because both second language speakers are not aware of each other's culture or history which influences and affects the accent features, lexical choices and sentence structures. Therefore, using the CEFR as a guide

for the level of proficiency in a lingua franca and second language speakers environment may not be appropriate for assessing the learners' English language proficiency. In summary, while CEFR may, at the moment, be the best available international reference for teaching, learning and assessment for language learning, it lacks engagement with specific cultural norms which is essential if the intention is to be competent in a global environment.

To summarise, while benchmarking the level of proficiency of the English language against an international level is commendable, considerations of how the language is likely to be used in real life situations were not taken into account.

5.3.2 Introducing the Initiatives for the Transformation of the English Language Education

LANGUAGE

The Ministry aims to develop students who are proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and the English language, and who are encouraged to learn an additional language. Measures taken will include:

- Implementing a new KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum for students whose mother tongue is not Bahasa Malaysia in national-type schools or *Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (SJK)*;
- Introducing LINUS 2.0 with an expanded scope to address English language literacy;
- Strengthening the delivery of English language lessons, for example, via the Oral Proficiency in English language for Secondary School (OPS English) Programme or through a "set system" of teaching and learning where students are grouped based on their proficiency levels;
- Intensifying testing and upskilling of all English language subject teachers based on the Cambridge Placement Test and the Aptis Test
- Testing and upskilling of Bahasa Malaysia subject teachers focusing on National-type schools;
- Introducing Bahasa Malaysia and English language remedial interventions and support programmes for students who do not meet the required proficiency level;
- Making it compulsory for students to pass the English language subject paper at SPM from 2016; and
- Providing access to learning an additional language at primary and secondary level.

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-9)

Figure 5-5: The Goals and Claims for Action of the Language Section

MOE begins the *Language* section by introducing the initiatives in a list of 'measures to be taken' to suggest that the actions are necessary to achieve the goals. Both the claims for action and the overarching goal have been placed at the beginning of the language section which suggests prominence (see Figure 5-5 above). The argument which MOE puts forth for the transformation of the English language education is discussed and summarised in Figure 5-6 below. Positioning the measures which will be taken immediately after the aims illustrates that a decision has already been made and these are what MOE has planned to implement. Thus, this sequencing assures the

readers and those interested in the Blueprint that MOE has a well-laid, effective plan.

This also shows that MOE is serious about ensuring such a transformation takes place.

The measures to be taken are derived from the Roadmap and therefore, I will not

discuss them at this point as I will address them further in Section 5.4.

CLAIM FOR ACTION

The Roadmap intends to

- Introduce LINUS 2.0 with an expanded scope to address English language literacy;
- Strengthen the delivery of English language lessons, for example, via the Oral Proficiency in English language for Secondary School (OPS English) Programme or through a "set system" of teaching and learning where students are grouped based on their proficiency levels;
- Intensify testing and upskilling of all English language subject teachers based on the Cambridge Placement Test and the Aptis Test;
- Introduce Bahasa Malaysia and **English language** remedial interventions and support programmes for students who do not meet the required proficiency level;
- Make it compulsory for students to pass the English language subject paper at SPM from 2016.

MEANS-GOAL
The 11 shifts need to occur to address and deliver the changes in the education system of Malaysia (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013)

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISES

- English language is a second language, and used in many parts of Malaysian professional and social life. This makes " the country well-positioned to develop a nation of people who are at least ' operationally proficient' in more than one language." (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10)
- Globalisation – students need to participate fully in professional and academic life and maximise their employability in the global workforce.
- Student performance in the English language is weak.
- Students' low performance in English is due to English language teachers who are not proficient in the language.
- There is a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching.
- Malaysia's instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency.

GOAL (Overarching)
The Ministry aims to develop students who are proficient in the English language.

VALUES
Students should be proficient in the English language to progress to a global level.

Figure 5-6: The Argumentation for the Transformation of the English Language Education of Malaysia's Education System

5.3.3 The Circumstantial Premise of the Transformation of English Language Education

After introducing the initiatives, MOE discusses the context behind the need for a transformation in the teaching and learning of English language which I have identified as the circumstantial premise (refer to Figure 5-6 above). The list below contains the circumstantial premises for the transformation and a detailed discussion of each circumstantial premises follows after. It is important to note that while some of the circumstantial premises listed below are verbatim, some are summarised from the Blueprint because they are located in various parts of the text. The verbatim texts are italicised for easy reference.

a. English language is a second language, and *used in many parts of Malaysian professional and social life. This makes "the country well-positioned to develop a nation of people who are at least 'operationally proficient' in more than one language."* (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10)

b. Globalisation – students need to *participate fully in professional and academic life* and *maximise their employability in the global workforce.*

c. Student performance in the English language is weak.

d. Students' low performance in English is due to English language teachers who are not proficient in the language.

e. There is a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching.

f. Malaysia's *instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency.*

a. **English language is a second language, and *used in many parts of Malaysian professional and social life. This makes "the country well-positioned to develop a nation of people who are at least 'operationally proficient' in more than one language."*** ((Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10)

MOE, firstly, puts forth the point that the English language is a second language and because the language is being spoken widely in Malaysia, Malaysia can develop a people who are able to speak the language proficiently. MOE further asserts with an embedded claim for action, using an impactful word 'imperative' in the statement, "it is **imperative** that Malaysia capitalises on its inherent advantages to strengthen its position in the global economy" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10) (Refer to Figure 5-3) to convince readers into believing that an action is needed to ensure success – in this example, Malaysia needs to take advantage of the position Malaysia is in to be competitive in the global economy. To further substantiate their claim, MOE uses another impactful word, 'increasingly' in the next statement concerning the education systems in neighbouring Asian countries such as China, South Korea, and Singapore wherein they are "**increasingly** focused on developing students that are proficient in their national language, and the English language to maximise their employability in the global workforce" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10) (Refer to Figure 5-3) to suggest an urgent need.

b. Globalisation – students need to *participate fully in professional and academic life* and *maximise their employability in the global workforce.*

MOE, then, chooses globalisation as another circumstantial premise for the need for transformation in the teaching and learning of the English language. MOE portrays that it is necessary that Malaysians should be able to converse in the English language proficiently. There is no elaboration on Malaysia's position in the global economy and this leaves the reader to assume a position. Then, the increasing focus on the English language of education systems from neighbouring countries i.e. China, South Korea, and Singapore, to maximise employability in the global workforce, is used as another circumstance supporting the need to develop students' language proficiency in English. Evidently, as part of globalisation, MOE has put forth global competition and the need to compete as a rationale behind the goal to convince readers that a transformation of teaching and learning the English language is very much needed. In addition, while MOE has listed the countries which are increasingly focussing on the level of English language proficiency among their students, no evidence is being appended to substantiate the claim.

c. Student performance in the English language is weak.

The next circumstantial premise concerns students' performance and the scenario concerning the teaching of English language. MOE uses statistics to show the low performance of students in the English language SPM 2010 (or as it is formally known, Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia, a written exam which the Fifth Formers (youths of aged 17) will complete at the end of the school year). i.e. only 28% of students achieved "a Credit benchmarked to Cambridge 1119"

(Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11) (Refer to Figure 5-4).

MOE further illustrated the various student performances in English language among the three major ethnic groups i.e. Malay, Chinese and Indians by indicating the percentages of performance of each ethnic group as another context to support the students' performance. While I understand the need to show the overall students' poor level of performance in the English language, MOE's intention or motive for illustrating the level of English language proficiency performance according to the ethnic groups is not clear. Apart from that, MOE uses statistical results and a graph to illustrate the context to convince the readers of the Blueprint that a transformation is due.

d. Students' low performance in English is due to English language teachers who are not proficient in the language

MOE asserts that the low students' performance is "driven by low proficiency among English language teachers" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11) (Refer to Figure 5-4). To substantiate this assertion, MOE claims that when a sample of "over 7,500 English language teachers took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language." (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11) (Refer to Figure 5-4). In short, MOE has indicated that the teachers' level of proficiency is the cause of the students' poor performance in the English language SPM paper. While the number of teachers used in the sample is stated, the "significant number" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-13) is not revealed. Moreover, relating the students' proficiency to this "significant number" (Kementerian

Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-13) of teachers with low level proficiency, but not with research that actually illustrates or proves that teachers' level of proficiency does affect the students' proficiency, is questionable and unfair to the teachers. In addition, a teacher's level of proficiency may affect a student's proficiency in terms of grammar and pronunciation but it cannot be the only reason for a student's low performance as there are other aspects which may hamper a student's language proficiency, such as techniques of teaching and the student's inhibitions.

e. **There is a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching.**

The other context which MOE reveals is a mismatch between "subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11). MOE provides the percentage of current English language teachers who were not originally trained to teach English as 30% "while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11). MOE claims that the mismatch is due to unavoidable circumstances but does not elaborate what the circumstances are. It is rather disturbing to find that MOE does not state who is responsible for this mismatch while MOE identifies explicitly that teachers' proficiency level is the cause of students' low proficiency performance in the English language SPM paper.

f. Malaysia's *instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency*

Lastly, MOE quoted an international study that illustrated 15-20% instructional time in the English language, i.e. the percentage of instructional time spent in English language lessons, is not sufficient for students to build "operational proficiency" in the language (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11). MOE did not elaborate on whose "international research" it is using to validate their context but it is used as an assertion and presented as the 'truth' to the readers. While the assertion that limited instructional time is insufficient to build a CEFR operational proficiency level may be true, I query whose argument this assertion is taken from (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11).

MOE has used various means of illustrating the circumstantial premises to convince readers of the Blueprint that the transformation of the teaching of English language is needed and inevitable. From the above mentioned, MOE has used statistical evidence e.g. the percentage of students showing low proficiency performance in the English language SPM 2010 paper and of current English language teachers who were not originally trained to teach English; globalisation and examples from neighbouring countries such as Singapore and China which are also giving attention to the English language education; identifying reasons for students' low proficiency performance; international standards as benchmarks and cultural heritage. Some of the contexts put forth were not entirely credible but MOE has positioned them as the 'truth'.

5.3.4   The Means-Goal Premises

The means-goal premise specifically for the transformation of English language education is not explicitly stated in this section but I found two means-goal premises –

one is in the Executive Summary chapter of the Blueprint on page E-10, while the other is on page E-12 of Chapter Four.

On page E-10 of the Executive Summary, MOE provides an explanation of how the 11 shifts were formed and developed to transform the education system of Malaysia in the Executive Summary chapter. MOE explains that "a broad range of stakeholders, from educationists and academics to parents and students" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10) were consulted over the course of 15 months "on what would be required to deliver on the aspirations identified" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, p. E-10) and these aspirations are explained in sub-section 5.2.2 of this thesis. However, only a few details are given of the content of these consultations or the underlying rationale for the specific initiatives like LINUS 2.0 for English language. The LINUS 2.0 programme is a literacy programme which is an extension of the LINUS programme for *Bahasa Malaysia* and Mathematics. The LINUS for Bahasa Malaysia and Mathematics is a programme that begins in Year One. Students are assessed for their literacy level in Bahasa Malaysia and Mathematics. If they do not meet the standard requirement, they will go through the LINUS programme during schools hours until they reach the standard level of competency. The LINUS 2.0 programme is a similar programme but concentrates on English language and the students who are identified for this programme will learn English language through the Phonics approach. The aim of the LINUS 2.0 programme for English language is to enhance the rate of literacy in English among the lower primary school students (Azman, 2016; Bokhari, Md Rashid, & Heng, 2015).

The nature of this text, i.e. the Blueprint, also lends itself to the absence or limited number of the means-goal premises as the text itself does not deliberate the actions or the initiatives. Instead, the Blueprint just puts forth what is planned as discussions had

taken place prior to the development of the text. As such, statements which describe how a plan, if put in place, will be achieved were not illustrated. Instead, a list of initiatives and plans are described to show what MOE has planned for the transformation. Nevertheless, in some parts of the text, the means-goal premise is illustrated such as, "To overcome lower levels of Bahasa Malaysia proficiency in National-type schools, the Ministry rolled out a new KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum in 2011 for Year 1, and will complete the full rollout to all years by 2016" on page 4-12 of Chapter Four.

5.3.5 The Values

The values which facilitate or support the goals are not stipulated explicitly but they can be inferred from the text. The values can be inferred from some of the argument elements such as circumstantial premise or the claims for action. For the Language section, the values that support the goals are embedded in the goals for learning languages and can be concluded as follows:

1. Malaysians should possess a unique shared identity through the national language, Bahasa Malaysia

2. Malaysians should be proficient enough in the English language to work in a globalised economy where English is the lingua franca

3. Malaysian should be given the opportunity to learn another language

In the argument for the transformation of the English language education, the value identified is students should be proficient 'operationally proficient' in the English language to work in the globalised economy where English language is the language of communication.to progress to a global level.

5.4 The Roadmap for the Transformation of Teaching of English Language

CLAIM FOR ACTION

3 Waves
- Wave 1 (2013 - 2015): strengthening the current system
- Wave 2 (2016 - 2020): introducing structural change
- Wave 3 (2021 - 2025): scaling up structural change

. MEANS-GOAL

- This will, however require … improving the teaching of English language over the next three years.
- Once these improvements have been made, the Ministry will turn its attention to building a system that creates widespread proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language.
- Structural changes that go beyond merely improving the quality of English language teaching to creating a more immersive English language environment will be required.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISES

- Globalisation – need for students to participate fully in professional and academic life and maximise their employability in the global workforce.
- Student performance in the English language is weak.
- Students' low performance in English is due to English language teachers who are not proficient in the language.
- There is a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching.
- Malaysia's instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency.

GOAL

Every child who is in the Malaysian education system should be independently proficient in the English language, as defined by the CEFR, and the teaching of English language should be improved over the next three years

VALUES

There should be equal opportunities for all students. Teachers should be competent and efficient in their teaching of English language.

Figure 5-7: The Argumentation for the Roadmap of Transforming the English Language Education of Malaysia's Education System

While the above analysis discussion in Section 5.3 addresses the overview of the Language Section of Chapter Four in the Blueprint, this section focuses on the Roadmap, which outlines in more detail the measures which MOE is taking. As I mentioned earlier, the Roadmap for reformation of the English language education illustrated in the Blueprint has its own set of arguments and the measures taken for the transformation of the teaching and learning of English language are from the Roadmap. As such, I will illustrate the argument for the transformation of the English language education in the Roadmap and the measures to be taken in this section.

The goal for the Roadmap is to develop students who are "independently proficient in the English language, as defined by the CEFR". The goal to develop students to obtain "independently proficient" level of proficiency in the Roadmap is different from the targeted level of proficiency mentioned in Section 5.3 of this thesis wherein MOE states that Malaysian students are expected to be "at least operationally proficient in both Bahasa Malaysia and English" and according to CEFR, "operationally proficient" is "able to fully participate in professional and academic life" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10). Here, the problem does not lie in the expected level of proficiency but it lies in the consistency of what MOE expects because the goal should not be a moving goal post. The Blueprint is targeted for students in pre-school to post-secondary students and according to the Roadmap teachers and students should not be confused as what is expected of them because with a specific goal, teachers can plan the appropriate steps and lessons for the students to reach the expected goal and students can map their learning in order to achieve the goal. However, having two different goals in the document will lead to confusion because teachers and students will not know which to choose as each goal will result in different outcomes. As a result, the probability of MOE not meeting the

targeted outcome is there and subsequently, the initiatives put forth could go to waste. The same targeted level of proficiency should be reiterated throughout the whole document to avoid confusion.

Then comes the means to achieve this goal, to improve the teaching of English language in the next three years as asserted by MOE – "This will, however require raising Bahasa Malaysia standards in National-type schools, better supporting students that are falling behind in Bahasa Malaysia as well as improving the teaching of English language over the next three years."

The actions which have to be taken in order for the goals to be achieved are planned in three 'waves', namely, Waves One, Two and Three, and each wave is given a timeline. The measures taken are addressed in these waves. Each wave has the initiatives planned out and described in detail. MOE further states that only after the success of each wave will the next wave commence or continue i.e. Wave Two will only commence if the outcome of Wave One is successful.

The context or circumstantial premise for the Roadmap specifically is not evidently stipulated in the Blueprint. Therefore, as the measures taken are from the Roadmap and as MOE had planned to carry them out, I have considered that the circumstantial premise for the Roadmap is the context for the transformation of English language teaching and learning outlined above, including globalisation, student performance in the English language is weak and English language teachers are not proficient in the language (see Figure 5-7 above).

The values are not explicitly stated either, but can be inferred from the Waves. The inferred values come from the support including remedial support given to all students especially who are struggling with the English language; and the non-proficient English language teachers. MOE is concerned with equal opportunities for all students

and that English language teachers become efficient and competent in their teaching of English language teaching. The graphic representation of the Roadmap argument is in Figure 5-7.

Now I will discuss the Waves separately, wherein the discussion is focused on the teaching and learning of the English language. Again, here while the Waves are the claims for action of the Roadmap, each wave has its own argument.

5.4.1   Wave One

In Wave One, for the teaching and learning of English, the goal is to improve English language teaching and lesson delivery. The means to achieve the goal for Wave One is implicit due to the nature of the Blueprint (as I highlighted in section 5.1), that states deliberations on the actions taken were resolved earlier. The circumstantial premise for Wave One would be the same as the one for the Roadmap and the transformation of English language teaching and learning because the context of Wave One is not stated explicitly. MOE plans to carry out two actions for the teaching and learning of English language in Wave One and they are firstly, strengthening the teaching of English language and secondly, setting the change for structural change. The argumentation of Wave 1 is summarised in Figure 5-8 below.

CLAIMS FOR ACTION

1. Strengthening the teaching of English language
   - Only teachers of English language who meet the minimum requirement of level of proficiency will be teaching in schools.
   - A series of MBMMBI initiatives
   - ELTC will be strengthened and support the effective training of English language teachers and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes.
   - OPS English programme which focuses on improving students' listening and speaking skills
   - LINUS programme for English literacy – follow LINUS for Bahasa Malaysia
   - New "set system" to help secondary school students struggling with the English language.
   - 1BestariNet system in schools and the use of ICT models to bring more effective English instruction to students
2. Setting the stage for structural change - to create capacity for increased exposure time to the English language

MEANS-GOAL

This will, however require … improving the teaching of English language over the next three years.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISE

- Globalisation – need for students to participate fully in professional and academic life and maximise their employability in the global workforce.
- Student performance in the English language is weak.
- Students' low performance in English is due to English language teachers who are not proficient in the language.
- There is a mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching.
- Malaysia's instructional time in English language may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency
- A number of teachers will need to be redeployed

GOAL

Wave 1: improving English language teaching and lesson delivery

VALUES

- Students should be empowered to compete globally.
- Teachers should become more efficient and competent in their line of duty.

Figure 5-8: The Argumentation for Wave One

For the action - strengthening the teaching of English language, MOE listed various initiatives. MOE elaborated extensively on ensuring only teachers of English language who meet the minimum requirement of level of proficiency will be teaching in schools. MOE plans to test the English language teachers' level of proficiency by getting the teachers to complete a Cambridge Placement Test (CPT). Here MOE has projected predicted outcomes i.e. the next course of action for teachers who do not meet the requirement, and ways to address the shortfall of teachers during the absence of teachers who have to attend the course and those who are re-deployed. If English language teachers do not achieve the minimum level of proficiency requirement, they would have to go through intensive English language courses for a required period of time. If these teachers, after attending the course, still do not meet the minimum level of proficiency, they will be re-deployed and not be allowed to teach English.

For the shortfall of teachers, the replacements would be from primary sources i.e. existing "English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-13). If there are no teachers available from primary sources, retired teachers will be called in. MOE puts a positive note to end the matter on the shortfall of teachers for the initiative, "Over time, the matching of what teachers have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching will also be improved. It is estimated that this should inject an additional 2,000 English language teachers into the system" (2013, pp. 4-13). The circumstantial premise for this particular claim for action is based on a pilot study which identified four states that had teachers who did not meet the required level of proficiency. Unfortunately, these four states were not listed in the Blueprint.

Ensuring that only teachers with the expected level of English language proficiency are allowed to teach the subject is MOE's major concern as this issue is elaborated quite extensively compared to the other actions. There are six paragraphs in the Strengthening the teaching of the English language section of Wave One (see page 4-13 of the Blueprint in Appendix 1) on this subject matter alone, compared to the other initiatives which were listed in four paragraphs but briefly explained. MOE discussed the next course of action if the first one does not work i.e. when the teachers who attend the first proficiency course, do not obtain the minimum level of proficiency, they would have to go for another proficiency course. If one teacher still does not meet the minimum level of proficiency after several proficiency courses, the teacher concerned will be redeployed. Also, MOE states that the shortfall of teachers due to redeployment would be resolved with teachers from a primary source. MOE acknowledges the negative consequences of teachers not making the mark during the first round of courses, and teachers being redeployed, by providing solutions. The solutions are to place teachers who meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency, take in existing English language teachers who are currently not teaching the subject, and employ new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs. However, if these teachers are not sufficient to fill in the gap, retired teachers will be hired. While providing solutions for the shortfall of teachers shows that MOE has thought through this matter, assuring the readers of the Blueprint that everything is under control, the suggested solution of taking in existing English language teachers who are currently not teaching the English language may result in a shortfall in other subjects. Thus, this could create another predicament and dilemma for MOE to resolve.

The other claims for action to achieve the goals are listed below:

1. "The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of English language teachers and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013)

2. "… launch a series of MBMMBI initiatives" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013)

3. The OPS English programme which "focuses on improving students' listening and speaking skills and is in the process of being scaled up following a successful pilot" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-13). Teachers will also undergo training to support this programme.

4. LINUS programme for English literacy – schools are to replicate the LINUS for Bahasa Malaysia programme but the approach in teaching English language in the LINUS programme is with using the Phonics method.

5. New 'set system' to help secondary school students struggling with the English language.

6. 1BestariNet system in schools and the use of ICT models to bring more effective English instruction to students.
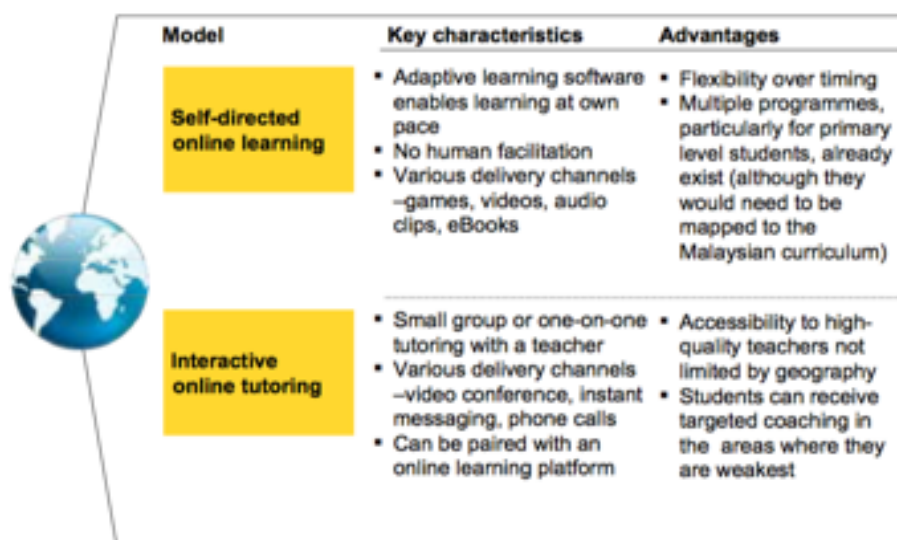
Actions numbers 1, 2, and 4 are briefly mentioned, while the other claims are supported further with a description. For the OPS English programme, MOE indicates that it will be scaled up following a successful pilot project. According to Ku & Zussman, the OPS English programme is a programme that focuses on the teaching of listening and speaking skills to "improve the English oral and aural skills of Malaysian students so as to prepare them to be globally competitive Malaysian"(Ku & Zussman, 2010) (sic). The project will also train teachers to ensure that they can use the tools effectively during lessons. For the set system, students will be assessed with

a diagnostic test to gauge their level of proficiency. Students will then be placed in classes containing 20-30 students and lessons will be tailored to students' skill level and learning requirements.

For the ICT models initiative, two models are presented namely self-directed online learning and interactive online tutoring, and the advantages of both models are presented in graphic form as Figure 5-8 (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-14):

Figure 5-9: Exhibit 4-8

The second claim for action for improving English language teaching and lesson delivery is expressed in Wave One, "Setting the stage for structural change" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-14). The goal is the same as the action i.e. to set the stage for a structural change in the education system and the action that has been planned to achieve the goal is to refine the structure of the system "to create capacity for increased exposure time to the English language" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). Here, MOE states the means in achieving the goal – "To

truly transform English language proficiency levels and achieve the 70% target, the structure of the system will need to be refined to create capacity for increased exposure time to the English language" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). The consequences for this claim are "extensive operational implications on teacher recruitment and training, curriculum development, and potentially, school hours" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). This consequence is a positive one although it may incur cost and more manpower which MOE has acknowledged and informs the readers of. However, MOE puts forth two conditions in ensuring that the goal is achieved and the action will be carried out in Wave Two. These conditions are as follows:

- Delivery of existing English language classes needs to be significantly strengthened; and

- Parents should desire an increase in exposure to the English language.

It is puzzling that MOE has put forth a condition which hints at MOE being uncertain and having some reservations about the implementation of the initiatives and the parents' commitment. In addition, I question what will happen or what is MOE's next course of action if those conditions are not fulfilled because MOE did not illustrate any indication of what would happen if the conditions were not met. Thus, it suggests that MOE does not seem to want to fully commit itself to the next course of action. On another note, the value drawn from Wave 1 is that it is important for students to be empowered in order to communicate effectively and compete globally. It is also vital for teachers to be efficient and competent in their profession.

5.4.2   Wave Two

Claims for Action

- to create widespread bilingual proficiency with many initiatives such as introducing after-school remedial classes in Year 4 – 6 to students who are 'at risk of falling behind in English language'
- increase exposure time to the English language during school hours
- encourage schools to offer 'greater English language exposure to students outside of existing school hours if requested by parents, such as grammar, creative writing or drama classes delivered in English',
- make English language a compulsory pass subject paper for the SPM examinations (*Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* – a national secondary school exam at the end of Form Five) from 2016

GOAL
Wave 2: introduce structural change

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISE
After the successful execution of Wave One.

MEANS-GOAL
Only when the education system is able to deliver universal operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and provide high-quality instruction in the English language as a second language will the education system be in a position to begin to create widespread bilingual proficiency.

VALUES
Students or citizens should be bilingual in order to compete globally

Figure 5-10: The Argumentation for Wave Two

In Wave Two, the goal is to introduce structural change after the successful execution of Wave One (Refer to Figure 5-10 above). The condition that a successful execution and implementation of Wave One has taken place is the circumstantial premise of Wave Two. For this purpose, the action MOE wishes to take is "to create widespread bilingual proficiency" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-14) with many initiatives such as introducing after-school remedial classes in Year 4 – 6 to students who are "at risk of falling behind in English language" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-14), increasing exposure time to the English language during school hours as well as encouraging schools to offer "greater English language exposure to students outside of existing school hours if requested by parents, such as grammar, creative writing or drama classes delivered in English" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013), making English language a compulsory pass subject paper for the SPM examinations from 2016 and to increase the number of language options in schools and offering them to more schools. The means-goal premise is stated in the claim that "Only when the education system is able to deliver universal operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and provide high-quality instruction in the English language as a second language will the education system be in a position to begin to create widespread bilingual proficiency" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). The value for the goal of Wave Two is that no student should get left behind when learning the English language and students should become competent and confident in the English language.

5.4.3 Wave Three

CLAIMS FOR ACTION
- Implement models that have been most successful in creating operational proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language and improving access to an additional language
- ensure that students receive high quality instruction in English language
- an adequate supply of trained teachers are available
- students that fall behind are adequately supported

GOAL
Wave 3: In striving towards achieving the targets of 70% operational proficiency in English language

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PREMISE
Only after a careful analysis of the success of the structural changes introduced in Wave 2

MEANS-GOAL

In striving towards achieving the targets of 90% and 70% operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language respectively, attention will be given to ensure that students receive high quality instruction in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language, that an adequate supply of trained teachers are available and that students that fall behind are adequately supported

VALUES
Students should not be deprived of quality English language education that will enable them to compete in an English speaking global platform.
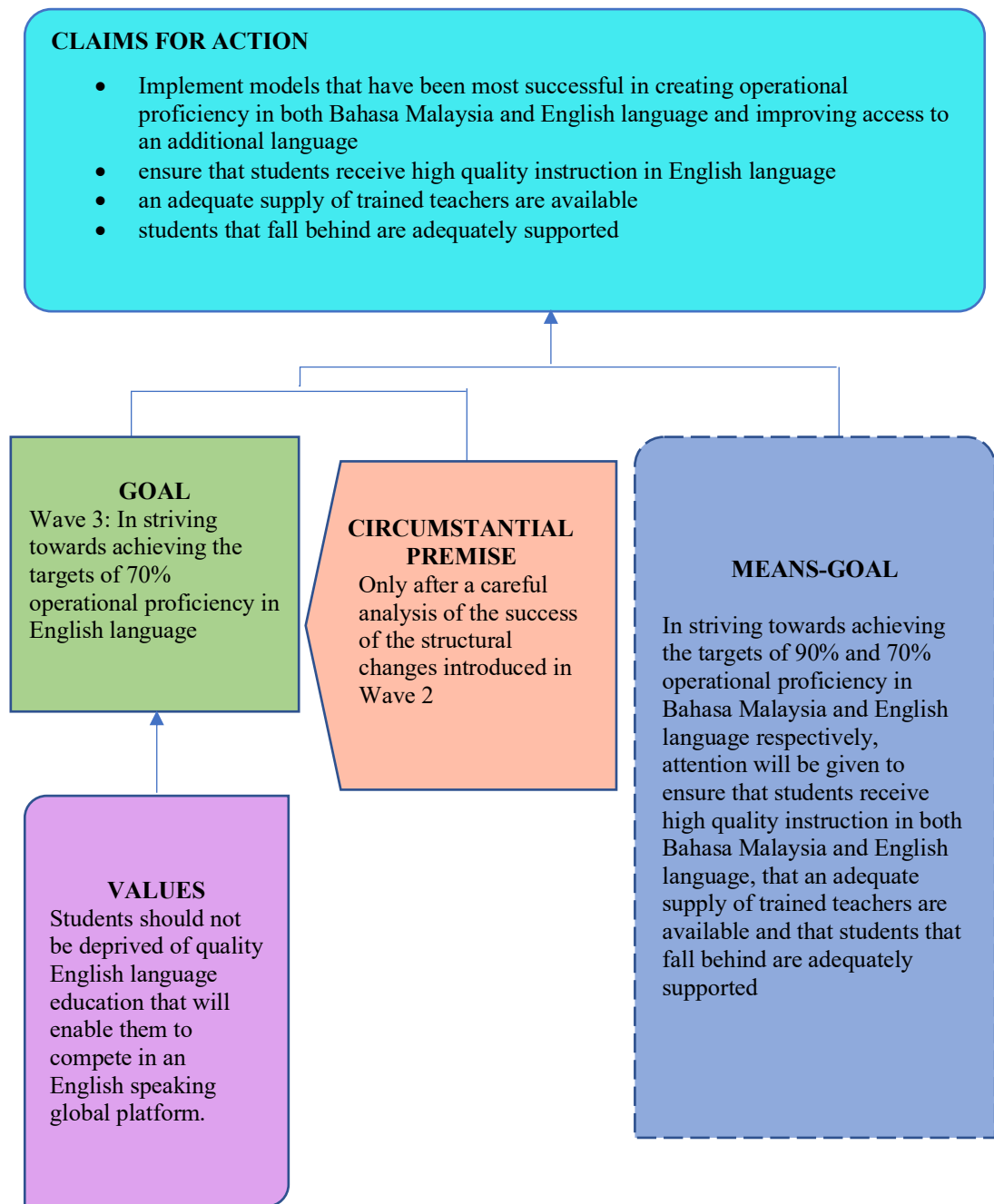
Figure 5-11: The Argumentation for Wave Three

The circumstantial premise for Wave Three (Refer to Figure 5-11) is that it will come

after a careful analysis of the success of structural changes which will be conducted

through a thorough National Dialogue with a goal of striving towards achieving the

target of 70% operational proficiency in English language and achieved with "models that have been most successful in creating operational proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language and improving access to an additional language" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-14). With that aim in view, MOE's actions are to "ensure that students receive high quality instruction in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language" (pp.4-14), "an adequate supply of trained teachers" will be provided and students who "fall behind are adequately supported" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-15). Similar to Wave Two, the circumstantial premise of Wave Three is conditional wherein the implementation of Wave Three is subjected to the success of the structural changes to the teaching and learning of English language in Wave Two. Hence, the same reservation applies i.e. what happens if the implementation of Wave Two is unsuccessful because MOE did not state what would the next course of action be if the implementation of Wave Two does not go as planned. The absence of a contingency plan would result in a waste of invested effort, time, money, and resources.

One of the actions is to employ models which have proven to be successful in creating operational proficiency in the English language. Here, MOE used the superlative adjective 'most' in the sentence "...models that have been most successful in creating operational proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language…" (p.4-14) to what seems to be an assurance to the readers that only the best and effective models will be employed by MOE. However, the statement appears to be rather vague because firstly, the term 'model' was used with no accompanying description which leaves the reader to assume that MOE was referring to the models of teaching and learning of language. Secondly, another adjective is used- 'successful' - to describe the degree of effectiveness but without stating whose attestation or standards are these models being

benchmarked against. Thirdly, while employing the models which have been effective in obtaining the desired results may be a wise decision, it may hinder the use of models which are better and probably more advanced in the long run.

5.5   Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, there are two dominant themes in the whole Blueprint which are explicitly stated as the circumstantial premises or contexts of the transformation of the English language teaching and learning and they are firstly, globalisation - more specifically the need to be competitive in the globalised economy platform, and secondly, 21st century skills and challenges. Although 21st century skills and challenges are not specifically mentioned in the Language section, MOE has emphasised that English language proficiency is needed to communicate on the global platform, of which the ability to converse in the English language proficiently is one of the 21st century skills that is required.

MOE views the English language as being primarily a means for competing on the global economy platform and feels that the proficiency of the language should be of an international level. Undeniably, the English language is an important language to master to engage with the world and for economic reasons wherein being able to communicate in English effectively and with "an acquired proficiency" has significant impact on trade flows (Ku & Zussman, 2010, p. 251). Nevertheless, I believe MOE should look beyond that as the English language can be used as a means for other efforts as well such as social interaction on a global scale and global sustainability. MOE should also view English language as a means to develop students holistically and not limited to the global economy alone. There are other global issues which need the use of English language among nations from various countries.

MOE justifies the plans and initiatives of transforming the education system of Malaysia on the basis that many parties including stakeholders and international agencies were consulted prior to the launch of the Blueprint. In other words, MOE is also stating implicitly that the plans and initiatives were not decided without consultation and deliberations concerning the decisions, plans, and initiatives that have been made. As such, what is stipulated in the Blueprint is the best outcome, providing plans and initiatives to achieve the goals and aspirations of MOE. In addition, this also means that MOE did not decide on the subject matter in entirety. While I do acknowledge that MOE went to great lengths to develop a comprehensive Blueprint, there are some issues which could have been done differently to produce a much better Blueprint in terms of including more explicit details such as stating references to provide a more justified reason or conviction.

On another note, after analysing the arguments put forth by MOE above, MOE has described English language and English language teaching in several aspects. For MOE, the nation's English language proficiency level has to be of an international standard i.e. operational proficiency level (defined in terms of the CEFR). Being able to converse proficiently professionally and socially in English is equated with being competitive globally and indirectly, MOE is suggesting that English language is the language needed to compete globally. MOE has put forth these notions in their circumstantial premise for the Blueprint, specifically for language education. MOE suggests these notions at two platforms – global and local.

On a global platform MOE reasoned that Malaysia is a "well-positioned country to develop a nation who are at least 'operationally proficient' " (based on CEFR's level of proficiency) in English. MOE also asserts that "it is imperative that Malaysia capitalises on its inherent advantages to strengthen its position in the global economy".

Moreover, neighbouring Asian education systems in China, South Korea, and Singapore are increasingly focusing on developing people who are proficient in English too. In other words, MOE argues that to compete and be competitive in the global economy platform, the nation has to be proficient in the English language. Otherwise, Malaysia will be left behind and economically not competitive.

On a local platform, MOE argued the need for a change is vital in the English language education as the proficiency level of the students need to be addressed. MOE has asserted three contexts and they are, firstly, a claim that students' poor performance in the English language proficiency is the result of teachers' low proficiency in the English language. Secondly, the mismatch "between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching" and finally, the claim that instructional time for English language is insufficient for students to achieve "operationally proficient" level. In other words, MOE has described that the level of English language proficiency among students in Malaysia needs to be of a certain level to compete globally.
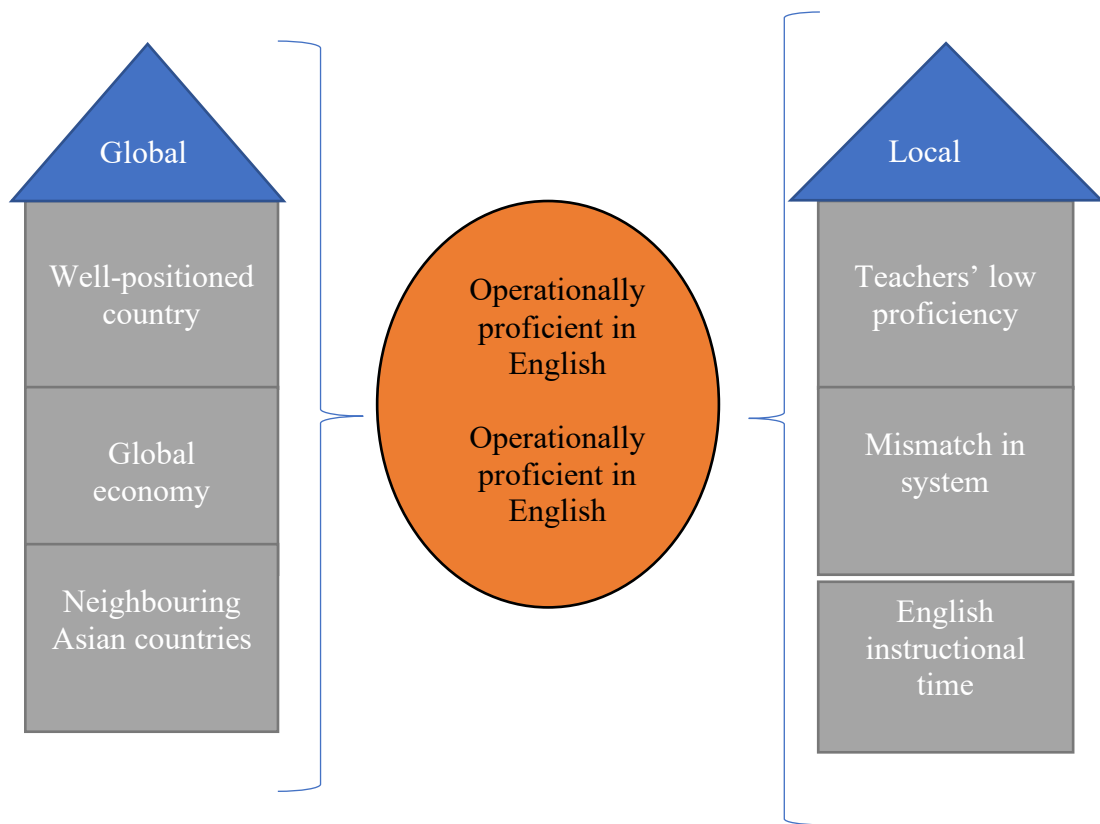
Figure 5-12: Circumstances of Transformation of English Language Education

In short, MOE has used a global context and the context of English language education (refer to Figure 5-12 for a graphic representation) in Malaysia to portray the situation in order to substantiate the need for the transformation and also implicitly informs the readers that it is important for the nation to be at an expected level of proficiency, i.e. the CEFR 'operationally proficient' level of proficiency. However, as I have highlighted in Section 5.4, the expected level of proficiency in the introduction is different from the one in Wave One. MOE needs to be consistent on the expected level of proficiency for the English language. The expected level of proficiency will determine the implementation and direction of the teaching and learning of English language by the teachers and those involved. Moreover, the level

of the expected proficiency will guide the students' effort and commitment; students will know what is expected of them and their target, thus driving their focus to meet the expected level of proficiency.

Nevertheless, MOE did not define explicitly what is meant by proficiency i.e. whose proficiency and proficiency in what skills. MOE has identified CEFR as the benchmark for the level of proficiency but as I earlier argued in section 5.3.1, CEFR is designed specifically for the Europeans but in the global world, there are other countries aside from EU countries which Malaysians will be dealing with like China, Japan and Thailand for instance. Adopting CEFR as benchmark to assess students' level of proficiency may not be the best solution if MOE envisions Malaysian students to compete globally because as I mentioned in sub-section 5.3.1, each country has its own cultures, societal norms and figures of speech which can affect a person's speech or text. However, CEFR's description of level of proficiency does not encompass all cultural and societal norms and as a result it would not be a fair assessment on the student's level of proficiency.

MOE has also equated English language proficiency with performance during tests and examinations. MOE has stated that the students' current performance in the SPM English language paper is low. The results of the SPM exam are normally used as an entrance qualification into universities and employment. Benchmarking proficiency against a written exam alone is not justified because when testing language proficiency of an individual, all the language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing skills should be tested and evaluated. Another example where MOE equates English language proficiency with tests and examinations is the move to make the SPM English language paper a compulsory pass in SPM. I understand that probably the motive of MOE making the SPM English language paper a compulsory pass paper is

to motivate the students to do well but what concerns me is that students are driven to obtain a pass by learning the language to pass the test, instead of learning the English language as a skill and language to communicate.

The transformation of the English language education is based on the context of low proficiency level among students and on this, MOE claims that teachers' low proficiency level is the culprit. Aside from that, the teaching of the English language impacts the learning of the language. In short, MOE views the teacher's language proficiency and the teacher's pedagogical aspects as impacting the learning of the language the most while structural changes such as instructional time and exposure time to the language are secondary. MOE has claimed that "Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among English language teachers" of which MOE has explained extensively what will be carried out to counter this issue in the first wave. MOE has also listed the number of initiatives concerning teachers' pedagogical aspects in Wave One, while the rest are subjected to successful execution of the initiatives and plans, positive feedback from stakeholders.

In summary, MOE views the English language as vital by positioning it with globalisation and the 21st century era as a circumstantial premise or context which requires transformation of the English language education. MOE also takes the view that the teaching and learning of English language will make a key impact on the English language proficiency by locating it in the claims of action or the initiatives for English language education and upskilling the teachers' proficiency in the English language.

6   English Language Teachers in The Blueprint

6.1   Introduction

My second research question is 'How have the teachers of English language been represented in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025?'. This section will present the analysis of how MOE views English language teachers and how MOE communicates their role as teachers in the teaching of English language in the Blueprint. As I have stated in the Methodology chapter, I will analyse how the teachers are represented with van Leeuwen's (2008) framework. I will firstly present the results of the analysis below with examples from the text and at the end of this chapter, my conclusion will ensue.

In the Blueprint document, Chapter Five reveals the initiatives for all teachers and school leaders. However, as my research is focused on the teaching of English language in schools, I am concentrating on the representation of English language teachers in the Language section of Chapter Four in the Blueprint (Refer to Appendix 1).

6.2   Presentation of Analysis

In presenting the results of my analysis, I will firstly identify the category and present the definition of the category in relation to the theory. Next, I will describe in which textual context it was found and how it was presented in terms of the example of the category and finally, I will discuss my interpretation of the purpose of using the category in the text. From the analysis, not all the categories of representation have been used by the text and as such, what I have presented here are the ones which I have identified that matched the criteria as stated in Van Leeuwen's (2008) social

actors inventory network. It is also important to note that some examples from the text are categorised in two or more categories of representation as they match the criteria of both categories. However, they are discussed separately in their respective sections.

6.3   Results of Analysis

In this section I present the results of the analysis wherein I list the categories of representation found in the text, one by one, and discuss them in relation to the statements made in the texts. Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor network has been explained in the Methodology chapter. I will recap the framework simply and briefly here. Van Leeuwen's (2008) representation of social actors network provides a framework which analyses how a social actor is represented in a text. For example, English language teachers in the Language section of Chapter Four were commonly found to be included and passivated by subjection wherein the teachers are at 'the receiving end' for not obtaining the required standard level of proficiency of the English language as the following sample illustrates:

> "Teachers will be grouped into three categories based on their results—proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency."

As we can see from the use of the word 'teachers' in the example above, teachers are included as social actors in the text and at the same time teachers are treated like objects whereby, based on their English language proficiency results, they will be categorised into groups and required to undergo what has been assigned to them – in this context, these English language teachers will have to undergo immersive training. The text is merely telling the readers what will be done to teachers. Teachers are the object of the sentence itself. Such a representation suggests, while teachers are

acknowledged for their role in the transformation of the education system, specifically, in the English language teaching and learning, they are to follow and adhere to what has been instructed by the administrator. This situation also suggests competitiveness among teachers and how they are being subjected to such a group based on their results. MOE has identified and placed them into groups of a status quo which reflect a neoliberal management strategy wherein teachers are pitted against each other to compete, their competencies are measured and rewarding either positively or negatively.

At first glance, teachers are acknowledged by MOE but, upon close examination, although teachers are mentioned in the text, how they are being represented reveals how teachers are not considered as an equal partner in the education system. I will describe how teachers are acknowledged for their role as teachers in the education system of Malaysia first and then, show how teachers are not represented as partners in the system.

6.3.1   Inclusion

Representations of inclusion concern social actors who are mentioned explicitly in a text (van Leeuwen, 2008). Van Leeuwen's (2008) further claims that social actors are included in a text to "suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended" (p. 28). 'Their' here refers to the text producer. English language teachers in the Blueprint are included in the text and in various textual contexts such as when MOE addresses the circumstantial premises of the transformation of the English language education system in Malaysia and the claims for action which relate to the initiatives of the transformation of the teaching and learning of English. The inclusion of teachers in each textual context is for various reasons or purposes, for example to acknowledge their role in the transformation of

English language teaching and learning, i.e. their involvement in the changes, as implementers of the initiatives, as the agent of change and as affecting students' performance. I will now discuss the textual contexts in which teachers were included, one at a time, explain the purpose of the inclusion and provide the statements depicting the inclusion of social actors.

6.3.1.1   Inclusion in circumstantial premise

Table 6-1: Representations of Inclusion - Circumstantial Premise

Statement from the Text
1. Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among **English language teachers** (p.4-11)
2. When a sample of over 7,500 **English language teachers** took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language (p.4-11)
3. There is also a mismatch between subjects that **teachers** were trained to teach and the subjects **they** end up teaching (p.4-11)
4. Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately 30% of current **English language** teachers were not originally trained to teach English while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects (p.4-11)

In the circumstantial premise, teachers were included for several reasons. Statement 1 in Table 6-2 above is a passive sentence which places the 'English language teachers' at the end of the sentence. Passive sentences focus on the result of an action or a situation and in this sentence, the focus is the students' low performance in the English language. However, English language teachers are included here to show that the low proficiency performance among students appears to be the result of the English language teachers' low proficiency. Thus, this denotes that MOE blames the teachers' level of proficiency for students' low performance in the English language. This statement also implies that if the English language teachers possessed an advanced level of proficiency, the students' performance in English language would be of a

higher standard. In addition, as this statement is a circumstantial premise, MOE is reasoning that a change is required to ensure that the level of the students' proficiency performance improves.

Statement 2 substantiates statement 1 by claiming that a significant number of teachers did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language. This statement further contributes as a circumstantial premise and attests the need for the transformation of the English language education of the education system of Malaysia.

For Statement 3 in Table 6-2 above, teachers are included to describe the fact that they are embroiled in a mismatch situation whereby teachers who were trained to teach a subject ended up teaching subjects which they are not trained for. Indirectly, this reveals an operational problem that needs to be addressed and thus, it becomes a circumstantial premise supporting a transformation of the English language education to fix this problem. In statement 4, English language teachers are specified to identify them in the situation. Statement 4 substantiates Statement 3 whereby the percentage and number of teachers involved in the 'mismatch' are stated to validate the problem. Statement 4 is indirectly stating that the number of unqualified teachers teaching English language is due to the mismatch. Statement 4 is also identified under the category – Representation of Assimilation by Aggregation and the discussion pertaining to its significance is in Sub-section 6.3.4.

Interestingly, the authority that is responsible for the mismatch is excluded from the paragraph and only the English language teachers are identified specifically, thus, they become the focus of the issue. Based on my knowledge and my experience of being an English language teacher and an English language teaching trainer for 11 years with MOE, the State Department will assign the subject teacher to a school where a teacher

who specializes in the identified subject is needed and when the teacher arrives at the school, she will be assigned to the classes which have been identified by the school principal, headmistress or headmaster. Therefore, the authority that is responsible for assigning teachers to teach the subjects they are trained for is either the state department or the administrator of the school, i.e. the head of the school, or both. It is interesting to find that the teachers' level of proficiency was identified and stipulated as the reason for the students' low performance in their proficiency. Yet, when it comes to the authority that is responsible for assigning the teachers according to the subjects which they were trained for, no authority was identified in the text, thus they were excluded.

6.3.1.2   Inclusion in claims for action

Table 6-2: Claims for Action - Upskilling teachers' English language proficiency

Upskilling teachers' English language proficiency
1. The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language **teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT (p. 4-13)
2. **Teachers** will be grouped into three categories based on their results— proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency (p.4-13)
3. There is likely to be a small, fourth group of **teachers** whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed (p. 4-13).
4. A pilot study involving 7,500 **teachers** from four states showed that a significant number of **teachers** did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and a small number of teachers will need to be redeployed (p. 4-13).
5. **Teachers** in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning learning process (p. 4-13).
6. **Teachers** in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015 (p. 4-13)

Upskilling teachers' English language proficiency
7. **Teachers** who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements (p. 4-13)
8. As the average non-proficient **teacher** only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that most who adhere to the training regime will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. Those who still do not meet the proficiency standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed (p. 4-13).
9. Redeployment of **teachers** who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers (p. 4-13).
10. These gaps will be proactively filled with **teachers** that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency (p. 4-13).
11. To fill these gaps as rapidly as possible, the Ministry will hire **teachers** using alternative pathways (p. 4-13).
12. The primary sources of these new **teachers** will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs (p. 4-13).
13. If primary sources do not produce sufficient **teachers**, secondary sources such as retired teachers will be tapped (p .4-13).

Representation by inclusion, as well as being located in the circumstantial premises, is also found in three instances of claims for action: upskilling teachers' English language proficiency, improving their pedagogical and methodological skills, and addressing the shortfall of English language teachers.

Firstly, teachers are mentioned most frequently in the initiatives for upskilling the teachers' level of English language proficiency, as listed in Table 6-3 above. This frequency can be seen on page 4-13 wherein the inclusion of teachers is mainly in the first half of the *Strengthening the teaching of the English language* section of Wave One. This suggests that MOE wants to bring the readers' focus to the plans that they want to implement to improve the teachers' level of English language proficiency and to assure the readers that MOE is serious about only having teachers with high levels of English language proficiency to teach the English language. In view of the above matter, it also denotes that teachers' English language proficiency is of importance and further substantiates MOE's view that in order to be an effective and competent

English language teacher, the proficiency level is important and has to be of the minimum standard that is deemed acceptable by MOE. Thus, MOE positions the situation as a circumstantial premise justifying the need for a transformation in the English language education.

Table 6-3: Claims for Action – Supply of Teachers

Supply of Teachers
1. If primary sources do not produce sufficient **teachers**, secondary sources such as retired teachers will be tapped (p.4-13).
2. Over time, the matching of what **teachers** have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching will also be improved (p.4-13).
3. It is estimated that this should inject an additional 2,000 English language **teachers** into the system (p.4-13).
4. In striving towards achieving the targets of 90% and 70% operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language respectively, attention will be given to ensure that students receive high quality instruction in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language, that an adequate supply of **trained teachers** are available and that students that fall behind are adequately supported (p.4-15).

Secondly, teachers are also mentioned in the claims for action relating to the supply of teachers i.e. filling in the shortfall of trained English language teachers which is due to redeployment (see statements in Table 6-4 above). MOE has positioned the word 'teachers' as the subject of the statements below to acknowledge that teachers take an integral role in the transformation of the English language education in the Malaysian education system and that they are part of the solution to the shortfall of teachers. The inclusion of teachers in this situation also asserts that MOE is reassuring the readers that MOE is prepared and already has a plan to counter the situation.

Table 6-4: Claims for Action – Teachers' Pedagogical And Methodological Practices

Teachers' Pedagogical and Methodological Practices
1. The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of English language **teachers** and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes (p.4-13).
2. Additionally, **teachers** will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills (p. 4-13).
3. This system will allow **teachers** to tailor pedagogical styles according to students' skill level and learning requirements (p.4-14).

Finally, teachers are also included when MOE discusses the teaching and learning of English language in the classroom which hints at how MOE is very concerned with teachers' English language teaching and learning skills in the classroom as stated in Table 6-5. However, only a limited number of statements which included teachers were found in the initiatives concerning transforming the teaching and learning of English language in the classroom.

In summary, teachers were mostly included in statements found in the circumstantial premise and the claims for action which concentrate on the upskilling of teachers' proficiency and the supply of trained English language teachers. This reflects how much teachers' English language proficiency is important to MOE and that providing qualified English language teachers to teach is MOE's priority.

6.3.2 Representation by Functionalization

As stated earlier in the introduction of Section 6.3, English language teachers are also acknowledged for their role in the education system through representation by functionalization wherein "social actors are referred to in terms of an activity, in terms of something they do, for instance, an occupation or role" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 42).

Table 6-5: Representation of Functionalization

Textual Context	Statement from the Text
Circumstantial Premise	1. Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among English language **teachers**. 2. When a sample of over 7,500 English language **teachers** took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 3. Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately 30% of current English language **teachers** were not originally trained to teach English while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects (p. 4-11).
Claim for action – solution for shortfall of teachers	4. Over time, the matching of what **teachers** have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching will also be improved (p. 4-13). 5. It is estimated that this should inject an additional 2,000 English language **teachers** into the system (p.4-13).
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	6. The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language **teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT(p. 4-13). 7. **Teachers** will be grouped into three categories based on their results—proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency (p. 4-13)
Claim for action – initiatives for teachers' pedagogical and methodological practices	8. The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of English language **teachers** and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes (p. 4-13). 9. Additionally, **teachers** will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills (p. 4-13).

Representation by functionalization happens when a social actor is included in the text and categorised in terms of an activity that the actor does, for example, an occupation or role. In this case, the word 'teachers' is identified as the representation of functionalization which was used throughout the Language section on page 4-13 of the

Blueprint. MOE acknowledges teachers' presence in the education system by identifying them with their profession. The representation by functionalization can be located in the circumstantial premises and claims for action for initiatives concerning upskilling teachers' level of English language proficiency, shortfall of teachers, and teachers' pedagogical and methodological practices. By positioning them in these statements and textual contexts in this way, MOE acknowledges teachers as professionals, in terms of their role in the education system and in transforming the English language education. Examples of such statements are listed in Table 6-6 above. For further examples of representation by functionalization, please see Appendix 7.

However, despite this reference to teachers as a professional group, there is also evidence in the text that teachers are not positioned as equal partners in the Malaysian education system. Teachers have also been excluded in some parts of the text, and represented with assimilation by aggregation and collectivisation as well as represented with passivation by subjection and beneficialisation. I will discuss these representations and their effects below.

6.3.3   Exclusion by Backgrounding

Exclusion is representation of social actors where they and activities in the text are either excluded in entirety, meaning no traces of their existence, or they are mentioned elsewhere in the text. When social actors and their activities are not explicit in a specific area of a text but are found elsewhere in other parts of the text, this form of exclusion is referred to as backgrounding. However, if the social actor and the activity is not found anywhere in the text, the representation is referred to as exclusion by suppression.

In this Blueprint, teachers are excluded by being backgrounded in various parts of the Language section of the Blueprint. In the next sections, I will discuss examples of how teachers are excluded by backgrounding in the textual contexts of claims for action, circumstantial premises, and goals.

6.3.3.1   Exclusion by Backgrounding in Claims for Action

Table 6-6: Representation of Exclusion by Backgrounding

Claims for Action	Statement from Text
Initiatives for pedagogical and methodological practices of teaching English	1. **Strengthening the delivery of English language lessons**, for example, via the Oral Proficiency in English language for Secondary School (OPS English) Programme or through a "set system" of teaching and learning where students are grouped based on their proficiency levels; (p. 4-9) 2. Introducing Bahasa Malaysia and **English language remedial interventions and support programmes for students** who do not meet the required proficiency level; (p. 4-9)
Initiatives for English language education	3. Making it compulsory for **students to pass the English language subject paper** at SPM from 2016; (p. 4-9) 4. In Years 1 to 3, the **existing LINUS programme** has been expanded from Bahasa Malaysia literacy and numeracy to include **English literacy**. (p. 4-13)

Firstly, in illustrating the claims for action around the initiatives for pedagogical and methodological practices of teaching English and English language education, it is apparent that English language teachers are excluded by backgrounding to bring the reader's focus onto the initiatives and plans for transforming the teaching and learning of English language in the classrooms. All the activities and programmes of the initiatives mentioned in the statements require teachers to be involved and to implement them and yet, MOE only lists the activities and programmes for the transformation of the English language education. The word 'teachers' cannot be located. For example, the statements in Table 6-7 above.

Statements 1 and 2 in Table 6-7 above are referring to the delivery of the English language lessons, and remedial interventions and support programmes, respectively. Teachers will be the ones who will carry out the lessons, remedial interventions and support programmes. The same can be observed in statements 3 and 4 wherein teachers will be the ones teaching and preparing students for the exams as well as carrying out the LINUS programme.

MOE's intention in focusing on the initiatives and plans is to emphasise that MOE has taken action and that they have addressed the issues in the education system. Not mentioning the teachers specifically also suggests that the readers are presumed to know that the teachers are the implementers of these initiatives and plans and they will receive directives to implement these initiatives and plans. However, if the teachers were mentioned in their statements, it would acknowledge the significance of the teachers and their role in ensuring these initiatives are implemented successfully and that teachers are a significant drive in the implementation of the initiatives.

6.3.3.2   Exclusion by Backgrounding in Goals

Another textual context in which the representation of teachers is excluded by backgrounding is in the goals for the transformation of English language education. The goals in which teachers are excluded by backgrounding are in Table 6-8 below:

Table 6-7: Representation of Exclusion by Backgrounding - Goals

The Goals for Transformation of English Language Education
1. **Developing individuals that are equipped to work in a globalised economy** where the English language is the international language of communication; (p. 4-10)
2. The aspiration of the education system is to **create students that are at least operationally proficient in** both Bahasa Malaysia and **English**. (p. 4-11)
3. **70% students achieve Cambridge 1119**-equivalent minimum Credit in English at SPM level; (p. 4-11)
4. As a first priority, every child that goes through the Malaysian education system should be operationally proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and **independently proficient in the English language, as defined by the CEFR.** (p. 4-12)
5. Once these improvements have been made, the Ministry will turn its attention to building a system **that creates widespread proficiency** in Bahasa Malaysia and **English language,** as well as universally encouraging students to learn an additional language. (p. 4-12)
6. Structural changes that go beyond merely improving the quality of **English language teaching to** creating a more immersive English language environment will be required. (p. 4-12)

In the examples of Table 6-7 above, MOE states the goals for the transformation of English language education which, undeniably, require teachers' involvement as the implementer and enabler but unfortunately, the teachers' involvement is not explicitly acknowledged.

6.3.3.3   Exclusion by Backgrounding in Circumstantial Premise

In the circumstantial premises of the text, the statements are concerning the current situation with English language education in terms of, among others, the instructional time, and delivery of English language lessons, initiatives and instructions. Teachers again are not explicitly mentioned in these statements as the examples in Table 6-9 below show. This suggests that MOE wants to focus on the situations which have led to the need for the transformation of English language education.

Table 6-8: Representation of Exclusion by Backgrounding - Circumstantial Premise

Circumstantial Premise	Statements from Text
Instructional time	1. Lastly, international research also indicates that Malaysia's **15-20% instructional time in English language** may be insufficient for students to build operational proficiency. (p. 4-11)
Delivery of lessons	2. Such a programme can only be embarked upon if three criteria are met: 3. **Bahasa Malaysia standards** in National-type schools are equal to those of National schools; 4. **Delivery of existing English language classes** is significantly strengthened; 5. Parents want an increase in **exposure to the English language** (p. 4-14)
Delivery of initiatives	6. **Successful execution of Wave 1 initiatives** is a necessary prerequisite for embarking upon deeper structural change in Wave 2. (p. 4-14)
Delivery of instructions	7. Only when the education system is able to deliver universal operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and **provide high-quality instruction in the English language as a second language will the education system be in a position** to begin to create widespread bilingual proficiency. (p. 4-14)
Delivery of English language teaching standards	8. Having focused on **increasing English language teaching standards and creating universal English literacy** in Wave 1, the Ministry will continue to raise proficiency in Wave 2. (p. 4-14)

In summary, MOE excluded teachers by backgrounding them in the text to place the focus on areas or topics which they want to put forth. In this matter, although teachers are still involved in the initiatives for the transformation of the English language education in one way or another, MOE focused more on the initiatives rather than on the people who will be implementing these initiatives.

6.3.4 Representation through Assimilation by Aggregation

Representation through assimilation by aggregation occurs when social actors are referred to as groups and are quantified in either "definite or indefinite quantifiers which either function as the numerative or as the head of the nominal group" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 38).

Table 6-9: Representation of Assimilation by Aggregation - Circumstantial Premise

Circumstantial Premise
1. When a sample of over **7,500 English language teachers** took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a **significant number** did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language. (p. 4-11)
2. Due to unavoidable circumstances, **approximately 30% of current English language teachers were not originally trained to teach English** while approximately **3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects**. (p. 4-11)

In this analysis, it was found that MOE uses numbers and percentages to show the number of teachers involved in several textual contexts i.e. circumstantial premises and in the claims for action of several initiatives that MOE intends to carry out. In statements which express the circumstantial premises (see Table 6-10), MOE has also employed numbers and percentages to show the number of English language teachers involved in the CPT exams (statement 1) and to describe the difference between teachers who are trained to teach English but are not teaching the subject and teachers who have not been trained to teach English but are teaching the subject (statement 2). The term 'significant number', an indefinite quantifier, has also been used in Statement 1 to describe the results of the teachers' level of proficiency for CPT, instead of stating the figure or percentage.

Table 6-10: Representation of Assimilation by Aggregation - Claims for Action

Claim for action	Statement from the Text
Initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	1. The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all **61,000 English language teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT. (p. 4-13)
Initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	2. A pilot study involving **7,500 teachers** from four states showed that a **significant number of teachers** did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and **a small number of teachers** will need to be redeployed. (p. 4-13)
Solution for shortfall of teachers	3. It is estimated that this should inject an additional **2,000 English language teachers** into the system. (p. 4-13)

In the claims for action, MOE employed numbers to describe the involvement of teachers in two different initiatives i.e. upskilling teachers' English language proficiency and shortfall of teachers (see Table 6-11 above). Again, the term 'significant number', an indefinite quantifier, was used to describe teachers who did not achieve the minimum level of English language proficiency (Statement 2 in Table 6-11).

The use of aggregation in the Blueprint suggests that MOE is attesting their assertion to convince readers that their claim is supported by research and numbers, thus substantiating their actions in addressing the issues. While it appears that MOE is providing readers with numbers and percentages as well as indefinite quantifiers as statistics to substantiate their claims and justify their actions, upon a closer look at the statements, it is interesting to find that MOE did not state the exact numbers of the

teachers who did not obtain the minimum standard of proficiency and teachers who will be redeployed. Instead, numbers of English language teachers in Malaysia who would be sitting for CPT, "The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all **61,000 English language teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT". (p. 4-13); teachers who were involved in the pilot study – "A pilot study involving **7,500 teachers** from four states showed that a **significant number of teachers** did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language" (p. 4-13) and an additional number of teachers – "…this should inject an additional **2,000 English language teachers** into the system." (p. 4-13) are stipulated. Hence, this raises the question of transparency in substantiating the need for the teachers sitting for CPT and being subjected to redeployment. On the other hand, highlighting the numbers of certain groups of teachers and not indicating the other groups of teachers indicate that MOE wants the focus to be on the highlighted groups of teachers only to substantiate their argument for claim for action.

6.3.5 Representation through Assimilation by Collectivisation

Representation through assimilation by collectivisation refers to groups with first-person plurals or homogeneous group names (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 38). MOE employed representation through assimilation by collectivisation in two textual contexts namely, circumstantial premises and claims for action of initiatives such as upskilling teachers' English language proficiency, shortfall of teachers and English language education.

Table 6-11: Representation through Assimilation by Collectivisation - Claims for Action

Textual Context	Statement from Text
Circumstantial premise	1. Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among **English language teachers.** (p.4-11)

Textual Context	Statement from Text
Circumstantial premise	2. When a sample of over 7,500 **English language teachers** took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language. (p.4-11)
Circumstantial premise	3. Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately 30% of current **English language teachers** were not originally trained to teach English while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects. (p.4-11)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	4. The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 **English language teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	5. Teachers will be grouped into three categories based on their results—**proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency**. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	6. The Ministry will consider rewarding the **best performers** under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or *Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan.* (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	7. There is likely to be a small, fourth group of **teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed.** (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	8. **Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard** will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	9. **Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard** will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling	10. **Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course** will be

Textual Context	Statement from Text
teachers' English language proficiency	given up to two years to make the necessary improvements. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	11. **As the average non-proficient teacher** only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that **most who adhere to the training regime** will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. **Those who still do not meet the proficiency** standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	12. The primary sources of these new teachers will be **existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs**. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – solution to shortfall of teachers	13. These **pools of talent** have the advantage of having already completed teacher training and can quickly start teaching. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – solution to shortfall of teachers	14. If primary sources do not produce sufficient teachers, secondary sources such as **retired teachers** will be tapped. (p.4-13)
Claim for action – initiatives for education English language	15. The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of **English language teachers** and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes. (p.4-13)

Teachers are referred to through assimilation by collectivisation in statements to denote various groups of teachers involved in the transformation of English language education, for example, teachers who are not proficient in the English language, primary sources of new teachers, teachers who teach in the rural areas and do not meet the minimum proficiency standard in the English language (see Table 6-12 above). Evidently, the representation of teachers through assimilation by collectivisation serves to distinguish one group of teachers from another, such as teachers who meet the proficiency standard and those who do not meet the minimum level of proficiency and categorise them.

These representations of groups of teachers are in statements which disclose what happens to them in a situation and how they are involved in the situation. In the circumstantial premise, the groups of teachers are identified as English language teachers, English language teachers who were not originally trained to teach English but are teaching the subject, and teachers who are trained to teach the English language but are teaching other subjects (see Statements 1-3 in Table 6-12 above). In Statement 1, English language teachers with low English language proficiency are identified as the group that has been the cause of low proficiency among students. The group of teachers in Statement 2 is identified as the sample of teachers who are involved in the CPT exams. Statement 3 describes two groups of teachers i.e. English language teachers were not originally trained to teach English but are teaching the subject and teachers who are trained to teach the English language but are teaching other subjects. The intention of the statement is to discern two types of teachers who are involved and to highlight an operational issue.

In the claims for action relating to upskilling teachers' English language proficiency, the shortfall of teachers and English language education, teachers are identified in various groups. One example is that teachers are identified as either non-proficient or proficient teachers in the initiatives for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency. The statements which describe the initiatives for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency refer to non-proficient teachers in various manners such as "requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency" and "fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language" (refer to Statements 5 and 7 respectively). All the statements which refer to teachers as non-proficient have described the consequences of not being proficient. Proficient teachers, on the other hand, are hardly referred to (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia,

2013). The only instance where teachers who are proficient are explicitly acknowledged is when MOE discloses that teachers who achieve the minimum standard of proficiency will receive the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects. This leaves one to wonder whether teachers who are proficient are of little significance to MOE.

I believe the intention of differentiating the two groups of teachers specifically the proficient and non-proficient teachers and highlighting the non-proficient more is to show that MOE is addressing the problem which MOE claims to be the reason for students' low performance in the English language. MOE has also identified them as non-proficient teachers to show that such teachers will be dealt with and that non-proficient teachers will not teach the language. Teachers whose level of proficiency reaches the minimum standard should be acknowledged equally if MOE views having a minimum proficiency standard as an important criteria to have as English language teachers. As Ampuja (2015) suggested, neoliberalism is weaved into globalisation and this scenario suggests the competitiveness or market driven strategy which MOE is adopting in ensuring the transformation of English language education is successful. Therefore, the aim of developing students who can compete at a global level is achieved. Teachers are pitted against each other to promote success and competition and those who do not perform will face consequences while those who achieve success will be rewarded in the name of globalisation.

6.3.6 Representation through Passivation by Subjection and Beneficialisation

Teachers are also represented by passivation with subjection and beneficialisation in the Blueprint. According to van Leeuwen (van Leeuwen, 2008), passivation by subjection occurs when the social actors are shown to be 'undergoing' the activity or being at 'the receiving end of it' and are treated as objects in the representation,

while actors who are passivated by beneficialisation are social actors form a third party who, positively or negatively, benefit from the action.

6.3.6.1   Representation of passivation by subjection

Table 6-12: Representation of Passivation by Subjection - Claims for Action of Upskilling English language teachers' proficiency level

Claims for action	Statement from the Text
Initiatives of Upskilling teachers	1. **The Ministry will test** the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language teachers by the end of 2012 using the CPT (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 2. **Teachers will be grouped** into three categories based on their results—proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 3. There is likely to be a small, fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and **who will be redeployed**. A pilot study involving 7,500 teachers from four states showed that a significant number of teachers did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and a small number of teachers **will need to be redeployed** (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 4. Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard **will be required to attend** an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 5. Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard **will be put through an intensive English training course** by 2015. The English training course comprises an 8-week immersion programme and 8-week self-learning course. The immersion programme is an in- person, face-to-face course with 30 hours contact time each week. The self-learning course is a modular, computer-based programme with 30 hours of self-directed learning per week. In total, the English training course will provide 480 hours of lessons each time it is taken (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). 6. Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course **will be**

Claims for action	Statement from the Text
	given up to two years to make the necessary improvements. As the average non-proficient teacher only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that most who adhere to the training regime will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. Those who still do not meet the proficiency standard **will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed** (p. 4–13).
	7. **Redeployment of teachers** who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers. These gaps will be proactively filled with teachers that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency (p. 4–13).
	8. To fill these gaps as rapidly as possible, **the Ministry will hire teachers using alternative pathways**. The primary sources of these new teachers will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs (p. 4–13).
	9. If primary sources do not produce sufficient teachers, secondary sources such as **retired teachers will be tapped** (p.4–13).
	10. Additionally, **teachers will undergo training** to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills (p. 4–13).

Representation through passivation by subjection is employed when MOE describes the claims for actions that will be taken towards improving the teachers' proficiency and as such, the teachers will undergo or will be put through the action. For example, in sentence 1 of Table 6-13 above, MOE describes what they will do towards the English language teachers. In this context, MOE "will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language teachers…". They describe the action by placing 'The Ministry' at the beginning of the sentence which identifies MOE as the doer and the teacher as the entity who will be 'undergoing' the action or the object of the action. This creates a distance between the Ministry and teachers which suggests the authority MOE has over the teachers. In another example - sentence 2, the actions that will be

taken against the teachers are described with a sentence that shows what will be done to the teachers wherein the teachers are treated as objects (although the phrase 'The Ministry' is not used): "**Teachers will be grouped** into three categories based on their results…". Other examples of statements on the actions and initiatives taken by MOE towards teachers on how teachers are treated as objects are included in Table 6-13. Statement 11 is also identified under the category of 'passivation by beneficialisation' to show that apart from 'undergoing' an action, the teachers will benefit from the training wherein they will gain new knowledge and tools to teach listening and speaking in the classroom (Refer to Sub-section 6.3.6.2).

6.3.6.2   Representation through passivation by beneficialisation

In representation through passivation by beneficialisation, the passive agent receives benefits (be it positive or negative) from an action that is carried out or through a verbal process (van Leeuwen, 2008).

Table 6-13: Representation of Passivation by Beneficialisation

Claim for action	Statement from the Text
Initiatives for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	1. **The Ministry will consider rewarding the best performers** under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or *Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan.* (p. 4-13)
Initiatives for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	2. **Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course** for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process. (p. 4-13)
Initiatives for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	3. **Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard** will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015. (p. 4-13)

Initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	4. Additionally, **teachers will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools** to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills. (p. 4-13)

In the context of this Blueprint, the teachers are required to go through an activity and eventually gain a new skill or the activity is expected to boost their performance. Representations through passivation by beneficialisation were mostly found in the claims for action relating to upskilling teachers' English language proficiency, while only one such representation was found in the claims for action relating to pedagogical and methodological practices in English language education as listed in Table 6-14 above (for a more extensive list, please see Appendix 8). With regard to the initiatives of transformation of pedagogical and methodological practices in English language education, teachers are asserted to gain new methods and techniques of teaching English language after going for training – "…teachers will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools…". This text example can also be located in the category of 'passivation by subjection' (Sub-section 6.3.6.1) wherein the teachers are identified as going through an activity   In the claims for action of upskilling teachers' English language proficiency, it is suggested that teachers receive benefits which include monetary reward – "The Ministry will consider rewarding the best performers ..." if they obtained the minimum proficiency standard in the English language Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), and that their English language proficiency should improve after attending English language courses – "Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course…" and "Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course…". Nevertheless, teachers are also passivated by beneficialisation, receiving benefits in

negative form if they do not meet the minimum proficiency requirement after going through several courses, i.e. they will be redeployed and would be given other subjects to teach: "Those who still do not meet the proficiency standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed."

While the positive benefits which English language teachers receive from the initiatives are believed to reward them, raising their skills and performance, there are some who might be demotivated when they receive the 'negative' benefits i.e. redeployment as this suggests that they are incompetent as English language teachers. Moreover, it might tarnish their reputation as teachers when they are redeployed to other schools. Although it is understandable that MOE wants to provide the best English language teachers for the students, the impact of the action may be more detrimental than what is expected.

6.3.6.3 Conclusion

Both representations have been employed by MOE in their claim for action to suggest that MOE has decided that the best actions to take are as prescribed in the statements in Tables 6-13 and 6-14 and as such justifying their argument that these are their options which would be best suited for the circumstances.

One of the statements - "Additionally, **teachers will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools** to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills. (p. 4-13)" fell in both representations as they fulfilled the criteria which qualified them for both categories. Both statements are identified as claims for action made by MOE which suggests that MOE is justifying the action by illustrating that an action that will be taken upon the teachers and the 'benefits' the teachers will receive after 'undergoing' the actions.

The statements employed by MOE suggest that the teachers are will be undergoing these activities or as I would term as 'correctional' activities and for some teachers, gain 'benefits' positions teacher as objects and not given the liberty to decide what can be done to help the situation. It is also suggested that the role teachers play are restricted to only as the ones who undergo a situation or an event or activity and receive 'benefits' – good or bad.

6.3.7   Representation through Identification by Classification

According to van Leeuwen (2008), representation through identification by classification occurs when the social actor concerned is identified and classified as a certain type of group of people by a specified society or institution.

Table 6-14: Representation of Identification by Classification

Claim for action	Statement from the Text
Initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	1. Redeployment of **teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015** could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers. (p. 4-13) 2. These gaps will be proactively filled with **teachers that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency**. (p. 4-13) 3. The primary sources of **these new teachers will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs**. (p. 4-13)

This category of representation was found to be used in the claim for action of upskilling teachers' English language proficiency and providing a solution for the shortfall of teachers. The teachers have been classified into five different types of teachers for different reasons. One reason is to identify teachers who will be redeployed i.e. "teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015" and the other reason is to fill in the gap as a result of redeployment wherein the teachers were identified as meeting "the minimum competency bar in English proficiency." (Refer to

Table 6-15 above). These teachers who are supposed to fill in the gap are further identified as "existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject" and "new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs". These statements reveal that MOE has classified these two groups of teachers according to the level of performance deemed appropriate by MOE. Nevertheless, MOE did not reveal or illustrate the details of levels of performance to show what MOE means by not meeting the proficiency standard or meeting the minimum competency.

6.3.8   Representation through Impersonalisation by Abstraction

Table 6-15: Representation of Impersonalisation by Abstraction

Claim for action	Statement from the Text
Initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	1. Redeployment of teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a **small shortfall** of **English language teachers.** (p. 4-13)
Solution for shortfall of teachers	2. These **pools of talent** have the advantage of having already completed teacher training and can quickly start teaching. (p. 4-13) 3. If **primary sources** do not produce sufficient teachers, **secondary sources** such as **retired teachers** will be tapped. (p. 4-13)

Representation through impersonalisation by abstraction was mainly found in the claims for action of providing a solution for the shortfall of teachers (see Table 6-16). Representation through impersonalisation by abstraction happens when social actors are represented by means of a quality assigned to them by and in the representation. In this Blueprint, teachers have been represented using several representations which MOE has identified and assigned teachers to. In the claims for action associated with providing a solution for the shortfall of teachers, MOE has impersonalised teachers by referring to them with terms such as "pools of talent", "primary sources", "secondary sources" and "small shortfall" as the statements in Table 6-16 above suggest. The use

of the impersonal terms suggests a distance in the relationship between MOE and teachers, thus, indicating that although teachers are involved in the transformation of the English language education MOE does not view teachers as partners.

For statements 1 and 3, they are also identified in Representation of Functionalization (Appendix 7). Identifying these statements in both representaiotn categories – Funcationalization and Impersonalisation by abstraction implies that while teachers are acknowledged for the work and role in the Ministry, they are also treated in an impersonal manner by MOE. Positioning them in the claim for action further implies that the teachers are treated as objects despite being acknowledged for the role that they play as they are just objects to be used in the solution that MOE has decided on.

6.3.9 Representation by Differentiation

Table 6-16: Representation through Differentiation

Textual Context	Statement from the Text
Claim for action - Initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	1. Teachers will be grouped into three categories based on their results—**proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency**. (p. 4-13) 2. The Ministry will consider rewarding the **best performers** under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan. (p. 4-13) 3. **As the average non-proficient teacher** only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that most who adhere to the training regime will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. **Those who still do not meet the proficiency** standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed. (p. 4-13)
Claim for action - Solution for shortfall of teachers	4. These **pools of talent** have the advantage of having already completed teacher training and can quickly start teaching. (p. 4-13) 5. If **primary sources** do not produce sufficient teachers, **secondary sources** such as **retired teachers** will be tapped. (p. 4-13)

Textual Context	Statement from the Text
Circumstantial premise	6. Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately **30% of current English language teachers were not originally trained to teach English while approximately 3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects**. (p. 4-11)

MOE has also employed representation by differentiation in many instances throughout the Blueprint. Representation by differentiation, according to van Leeuwen's (2008), "explicitly differentiates an individual social actor or group of social actors from a similar actor or group, creating the difference between the 'self' and the 'other,' or between 'us' and 'them'," (p.40). MOE has identified several groups of teachers for various reasons. located in three textual contexts. Among the reasons why MOE has used differentiation are to identify which teachers will be redeployed (Statement 3), which teachers will have to go for English language training courses (Statement 1), which teachers will receive a reward (Statement 2) and which teachers are involved in an operational predicament (Statement 5) (refer to Table 6-16.

6.3.10 Representation by Activation

According to van Leeuwen (2008) activation happens when social actors are represented as the "active, dynamic forces in an activity" (p.33). In the Language section of the Blueprint, only one instance of representation by activation was found to represent the teachers i.e. "This system will allow **teachers to tailor pedagogical styles** according to students' skill level and learning requirements." (p.4-14). This system refers to the 'set system' whereby students are placed in groups according to their levels of proficiency. This statement is located within the initiatives of English language education. MOE has employed this category of representation to show an

initiative which MOE believes will transform the English language teaching and learning environment. Thus, being the only example where teachers are given an active representation, this suggests that teachers are given a very limited amount of autonomy i.e. to tailor their pedagogical styles for language learning despite playing a crucial role as the implementers of policy. One of the objectives in the Blueprint is to raise and strengthen the teaching profession and quality (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). However, limiting teachers' autonomy to tailoring their pedagogical styles for language learning only does not seem to be in line with MOE's objectives because, according to Sachs (2001), to promote teacher professionalism among teachers, teachers should be given more autonomy in their profession as it would allow teachers to be more active in the teaching profession. Moreover, by allowing teachers to be active in policy making or reconstructing teaching as an activist profession would enable teachers to "rethink their professional identity" (S. Thomas, 2005, p. 58). As such, MOE should probably acknowledge teachers' active participation apart from being implementers of policy and teaching in the classroom.

6.4   Discussion and Conclusion

MOE views English language teachers as important and vital to the education system particularly in the implementation of initiatives, programmes and policies, delivery of lessons and achieving the aims and objectives of the education system. In the Language section of Chapter Four of the Blueprint, through representation by functionalization and inclusion, teachers are acknowledged explicitly and as professionals, particularly when MOE informs the reader about what is planned for them: i.e., getting teachers to sit for the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT) to ascertain those who would require proficiency courses and eventually, if they do not meet the minimum standard level of proficiency, redeploying them. English language teachers

are also acknowledged explicitly when MOE describes the circumstances of the transformation of English language teaching whereby MOE claims that teachers are the cause of low proficiency performance among students.

However, upon close examination, many of the dominant patterns of representation in the text do not construct teachers as autonomous professionals. Teachers are frequently passivated by subjection wherein they are treated like objects and described as experiencing activities which MOE will conduct and implement e.g. when MOE describes the actions which will be taken upon teachers when their level of English language proficiency is tested, and when they are unable to achieve the English language proficiency standard. Moreover, teachers are only acknowledged explicitly in one particular section, outlining what MOE plans to address, the English language teachers' proficiency, while in the other parts of the Language section concerning the teaching of English language, only the action of being a teacher – teach or teaching, is mentioned. At times, only the programmes or initiatives are mentioned but teachers' involvement can be inferred because teachers are the implementers of the initiatives or programmes, such as "Comparable support will be provided for the teaching of additional languages. Introducing LINUS 2.0 with an expanded scope to address English language literacy;" and "Introducing Bahasa Malaysia and English language remedial interventions and support programmes for students who do not meet the required proficiency level". Moreover, English language teachers are also represented through assimilation by aggregation whereby these teachers are quantified in groups and treated as numbers when it comes to MOE justifying their claims, statements and their actions (refer to sub-section 6.3.4).

MOE expresses the belief that the proficiency level of English language teachers is the cause of the students' level of performance in proficiency by asserting this explicitly

with a declarative statement, "Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among English language teachers." This is further substantiated with reference to a sample study of teachers who sat for the CPT and teachers who did not obtain the standard proficiency level. While teachers' proficiency levels are blamed for students' low proficiency in the English language, the people who are responsible for the mismatch between "subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching" were not identified.

Another noticeable observation is how MOE names the groups of English language teachers to distinguish one group from another i.e. some have been addressed according to their levels of proficiency, while some are addressed impersonally. MOE has employed a few categories of representations such as assimilation by collectivisation and identification by classification. While it is understandable that MOE names these groups to identify which group of teachers MOE is referring to, these groups of teachers are susceptible to being labelled. For example, in the statement, "There is likely to be a small, fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed" which identifies that a group of teachers whose English language proficiency has been identified as "grasp of English is too weak" will be "redeployed". While it may not be the intention of MOE to label these groups of teachers, categorising the teachers accordingly can lead to other teachers identifying them as incompetent or the affected teachers feeling embarrassed by the situation. The feeling of being embarrassed is due to the redeployment which one of the teachers raised during the Think Aloud session (sub-section 7.6.1) wherein a teacher who was redeployed felt that they were being 'dismissed' from their current position as an English language teacher and became another teacher of another subject.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, some statements were identified in two categories. The positioning of the teachers in two categories asserts how MOE views or treats the teachers. In some statements, like the ones which were identified in representations of functionalization and impersonalisation by abstraction suggest that although teachers are acknowledge for the role that they play – as implementers of policy, they are not considered as partners in the policy or the Ministry.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that English language teachers are represented as implementers of policy but not part of the policy and neither are they represented as an integral part of the teaching and learning process of students and the education system. English language teachers need to be considered as partners and their involvement is crucial to improve the system and its structure. The teachers' involvement can bring light to what is important for the students and the education system. Their presence and involvement are vital as without teachers, there would not be an education system because teachers are the ones who will be conducting the teaching and learning as well as implementing the policies. Moreover, if MOE wants to raise the teacher quality and transform the education system of Malaysia, MOE should promote teaching as an autonomous profession by giving teachers an active role and voice in the policy making process, as well as giving teachers, (as suggested by Thomas (2005a) who quotes Sachs (2003)) the role of "activist teaching professionals" to become more "responsive and responsible, strategic and tactical, creating an environment of trust and mutual support as they engage in collective and collaborative action" (Thomas, 2005, p. 58).

7   Analysis of Interviews and Teacher's Response

7.1   Introduction

This chapter consists of two analyses, namely, an analysis of interviews with the teachers and the teachers' responses on an extract. The analysis of the interviews with the teachers is discussed in the first part of this chapter, while in the second half is the discussion of teachers' responses.

7.2   Background of Interviewees

In this section, a description of each interviewee is provided to illustrate the behaviour and background of each interviewee at the point of the interviewing session. The interviewees are coded as T1 – T5 as illustrated in Table 7-1 below.

Table 7-1: Summary of Interviewees

Interviewee	Background Summary
T1	T1 has been an English language teacher for the past 16 years in a Malaysian government secondary school. At the start of the interview, T1 was apprehensive. T1 was concerned about giving incorrect information about the initiatives in the Blueprint. As the researcher, I had to assure T1 that the interview was not to test the interviewee's knowledge on the Blueprint or the initiatives. The interview was more on what the interviewee knew and their opinion on certain issues. As the interview progressed, although T1 was very careful in their choice of words, they appeared to be more relaxed and warmed up such that the views came without any hesitation or inclination that they were expressing an expected response.
T2	T2 has 18 years of teaching experience of being an English language teacher. T2 is a friend of T1 and was a willing participant. At the start of the interview, T2 was very worried about making mistakes during the interview. I, as the researcher, had to pacify and assure T2 that the interview was based on their knowledge and opinion alone. T2 is a very enthusiastic character. As the interview session progressed, T2 became at ease and their passion and enthusiasm about teaching and education emerged. T2's

Interviewee	Background Summary
	proficiency level of English is intermediate level and there were some words and phrases which, to a non-Malaysian, would be difficult to understand. Towards the end of the interview session, T2 asked me to ensure that all that was discussed would reach the top management so that action can be taken.
T3	T3 has 13 years of experience teaching in a Malaysian government school. T3 has a witty and jovial character. While the interview was in session, a number of times T3 questioned whether the responses given would lead to trouble with the top management of MOE. However, T3 did not appear to be affected by this and continued to convey opinions. I, as the researcher, kept pacifying and reassuring that T3's identity will not be revealed in the thesis or in any document. Interestingly, there were times when T3 revealed that they do not feel themselves to be a capable teacher and felt the efforts they made were futile. T3 also disclosed that they could not meet the expectations of the top management. At first, I had assumed that T3 was confessing their own inability to teach or had low self-esteem. However, as the interview continued, I realised that they were referring to the inability of obtaining A's as requested by the top management because the students they were teaching cannot even utter simple phrases.
T4	T4 is a teacher who has 16 years of experience teaching in an urban school. T4, like the rest, was quite nervous at the start of the interview session. I had to reassure them that their identity i.e. name and name of the school would not be revealed. As the interview went on, T4 became more relaxed and started to share their experiences and viewpoints. T4 chose their words carefully to convey their opinions.
T5	T5 has 12 years of experience, teaching in an urban school where students are from low income families. Although I assured them that personal details would not be revealed, I felt their responses appeared to be guarded throughout the interview. T5 appeared to be very positive about the initiatives and programmes conducted by MOE. Criticisms of the initiatives were very limited. I am unsure whether T5 is naturally a positive person or did not want to appear to criticise MOE's efforts. Nevertheless, the interview was fruitful and gave insight into certain matters.

7.3   The analysis of the interview with the teachers

It is important to note that, although my interviews focused on their responses to the Blueprint, the teachers also discussed issues relating to English language education on a broader perspective. For example, the PT3 exam and PBS (*Pentaksiran Berdasarkan Sekolah or School-based assessments)*. PT3 stands for *Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga* or, in English, Form 3 Assessment. PT3 is conducted at the end of Form Three (students aged 15). PT3 under normal circumstances determines whether a student can be placed in the Science stream wherein they undertake Science subjects i.e. Biology, Physics and Chemistry, or they enter the Arts stream whereby the students pursue subjects like Commerce and Accounting. I believe that as most of the teachers I interviewed have not read the Blueprint (refer to sub-section 7.3.1 below for a detailed explanation), the teachers assumed that all the new programmes and changes are the initiatives stipulated in the Blueprint because some of the changes and new programmes came at the same time and after the introduction of the Blueprint in September 2013.

Moreover, I understand that the MOE has not limited the initiatives to what is listed in the Blueprint itself from the statement it has made on page 4-9 – "Measures taken will include" which denotes that there are other initiatives which will take place. As such as I could not limit the teachers to discussing the initiatives listed in the Blueprint alone. Nevertheless, their discussions on these initiatives do lend an insight in the management of the implementation of initiatives and policy in schools.

It is also important to note that there are initiatives the teachers put forth which are stipulated in the Blueprint but are not located in the Language section of Chapter Four of the Blueprint per se such as critical thinking i.e. KBAT (*Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi – Higher Level Order Thinking Skills*) as these forms of initiatives are on a

broader scale of improving Malaysia's education system. As such, initiatives such as these encompass all subjects offered by MOE.

In addition, a few interview questions put forth were pertaining to initiatives and policy which are not mentioned in the Blueprint but are related to the initiatives described in the Blueprint such as concerning the reversion of language of instruction – from English to Bahasa Malaysia for Science and Mathematics subjects. The reason for including these issues and initiatives in this analysis is because they provide additional insights into the positioning of the teachers in the education system as well as the experiences of a teacher as implementers of the policy and initiatives of MOE. The analysis of interviews with the teachers resulted in the emerging themes below:

I.   Teachers' awareness of the Blueprint

II.   Responses to the initiatives

III.   English in the era of globalisation

IV.   It seems to be English but ….

V.   Teachers in the eyes of MOE

VI.   The Dual Language Programme

VII.   Opinion on the reversion

VIII. Other Insights

I discuss the themes one by one in the sub-sections below and relate each theme to the relevant extracts from the interview. As the focus of this analysis is the content of the interviews, only the pertinent extracts are illustrated to substantiate the discussion. The extracts will show only parts of speech which reflect the discussion and ellipses '…' are placed where appropriate to signal phrases and words which have been omitted to enable easy reading. Due to the sensitivity of this topic and the teachers' apprehension about this interview, I will only append a sample of transcription in its original form in

Appendix 8. Upon completion of the discussion of the themes, I end the analysis of the interview with a discussion and conclusion section.

7.3.1 Teachers' Awareness of the Blueprint

The majority of teachers who were interviewed were aware of most of the initiatives as they have been briefed during meetings by their respective principals and the relevant authorities, while T5 expressed that she needs to refer to the Blueprint from time to time. Although most of the teachers have claimed they have not read the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 book, they are aware of the changes, new implementations, programmes and the likes because they are able to articulate some of the programmes and initiatives as illustrated in Extract 7-1 below.

Extract 7-1: Teachers' Awareness of the Blueprint

Teacher	Transcript
T1	R: … can you let me know how much you know about Malaysian education Blueprint. what do you know about it T1: So far what we are told that ah in terms of English language per se … and there are also changes to the … syllabus for the …students there's also changes in the assessment system whereby ah it is more of … school based assessment rather than our … real exam normal exams… and another thing regarding this Blueprint there's also … something … for the teachers in the sense that they are really … looking into this the teachers' proficiency(.) they even offer rewards if the teachers … are at a certain level T1: To tell you the truth … (.) there was not even a moment where we are actually looking at the Blueprint together and (.) look at it and understanding what is it all about
T2	T2: About the Blueprint err I've been inform from my … administration … we have planned through it … how our education … make some development
T3	T3: … to tell the truth …I did not know it was documented in such a way…what we do have … circulars … sent to schools …giving us instructions on what to do … any changes in … syllabus or … policy … that's how we on the ground receive … actual books … you call it the Blueprint the actual book form we have never receive R: Ok alright … so you do know of the latest … developments the initiatives that they want to … implement in the school regarding English language

Teacher	Transcript
	T3: …as far as the instructions provided yes … the most recent one would be … the new KSSM (*Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* - Standard Based Curriculum for Secondary Schools) thing going on it's going to go on something next week or something …they'll be having English language teaching centres calling in for courses …for a whole new revamp of the syllabus … starting next year
T4	T4: Mmm honestly I don't know much I think but I have heard of that … term so I think my principal has actually mentioned about it in the meeting but we didn't actually discuss … we didn't go through so I don't know that much about it R: You don't know much about it T4: Ya ya ya R: Ok in the Blueprint there are some initiatives T4: Mmhmm R: And there are some developments new things have been … implemented … are you aware of those things or would you know or could you list them out so far T4: Ahmmm no maybe I have heard about it but I don't exactly know … what it's all about … English language teaching … well honestly now … they are actually focusing more on not … it used to be the PBS … the PBS and…PBS is *Pentaksiran Berdasarkan Sekolah* … at first that was a few years ago so at first they said there would be no exams for the form 3 students so it will based on the PBS *Pentaksiran Berdasarkan Sekolah* (*School Based Assessment*) so … they are supposed to teach students … not following the old syllabus yeah
T5	R: How much do you know about the Malaysian Education Blueprint T5: … I would say that … I I still have to refer to the Blueprint all the time R: Ok T5: If if you asked me off hand … I can only *apa* (*what*) tell you what I understand from it R: Sure whatever you understand from it T5: … ok … so what I understand from this … the education … Blueprint right R: Yup yes T5: … what I understand is that … there are several … *gelombang* (*waves*) … from 2015 right up to 2025 … and we are currently at the second wave … they are emphasising a lot on 21st century education … and … they want the children the children to be able to … learn independently … whereby the teachers are becoming the facilitators … it's no more teacher centred it's more of student centred … and … they also emphasise on life long education where whereby … anyone can study at any age any time

They are being made aware of the developments, changes and implementations through circulars as T3 had mentioned, while the rest are briefed about them by their superiors or the education officers from time to time. Surprisingly, T3 claimed that it was the first time to have known such a book wherein the initiatives are documented. The local newspapers had reported the launch of the book which was organised by MOE. The probability that the book did not reach the schools is there despite the fact that I was informed, verbally, by the education officers involved with the Blueprint that the Blueprint was distributed to all schools. However, a quick search through the various State Education Departments via their respective websites, shows that the Blueprint is easily available for download. The Blueprint is easily accessible for downloading and viewing online via MOE's website too.

7.3.2 Responses to the Initiatives

In general, some teachers who were interviewed did not appear to oppose the initiatives outlined in the Blueprint outright, while some explicitly agreed with them. Nevertheless, there were some concerns expressed with some of the initiatives and these included deliberations on the feasibility and viability of the initiatives in practice, reasons why some programmes which had been implemented earlier were discontinued and then introduced as another programme and indecisiveness in the execution of their programmes or initiatives.

7.3.2.1 The Positive Outcome of Initiatives

Extract 7-2: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T4

> T4: My friend … she's very positive about it … if you are positive about it it can be fun like you learn a lot of new things that you can … carry it out in class with the (.) students …so it is like you are refreshing … your ideas

T1, T4 and T5 acknowledged and described the initiatives as having an encouraging impact on the students and the teaching and learning in schools. T2 acknowledged that the initiatives were good but did not provide any examples. Instead, T2 described the issues that arose with the implementation of the initiatives. T3, on the other hand, appeared to have accepted the initiatives although they did not explicitly indicate that the initiatives were good. Nevertheless, T3, like T2, related the problems that arose when the initiatives had begun. T4 relates how their friend finds the English language courses for teachers who did not pass the CPT exam to provide a means of gaining new ideas to teach in class as illustrated in Extract 7-2 above.

Extract 7-3: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T1

> T1: … we have followed the Blueprint … there are some changes happening and positive change … there is a certain target for it … as teachers we do see the target … it is successful in you know targetting what it wants
> R: Ok … has it actually made any impact in your teaching or or in your teaching of in the classroom? has it changed your ways of teaching or the way … the other teachers are teaching or how the students are … receiving the language
> T1: … I think so because in the Blueprint itself … apart from the (.) obvious ones

For T1, the initiatives have brought some positive changes to the system as revealed in Extract 7-3.

Extract 7-4: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T5

> T5: … that extra hours of … teaching actually help … because … we manage to cover the syllabus we managed to finish the syllabus and then on top of that we get to do other activities … outside of the textbooks …we get to do other activities and the students are more I would say … they have more … contact time when … they learn language

T5, on the other hand, found the initiatives very helpful. The extra contact time allows the students to be exposed to the language more and teachers to complete the syllabus as in Extract 7-4.

Extract 7-5: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T5

> T5: … there's emphasis on speaking listening and speaking … where you get the people to speak … so that … they are not just … just talking like reading from a textbook … they can actually use it in the real world … when they go out they can actually use whatever that they have learned the phrases the words they can actually use outside

Moreover, T5 finds that there is an emphasis on listening and speaking skills. Therefore, students are able to apply what they have been taught in real world instances as T5 claims in Extract 7-5 above.

Extract 7-6: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T5

> T5: … that one is very helpful because the pupils they … learn faster actually when they learn through phonics … because … they can … they can recognise the alphabet … through the sound ... even if they are not really sure of the alphabet when you say the sound they'll recognise the alphabet so actually … they learn faster and they learn to pronounce the word … better also

T5 also finds the introduction of Phonics and integration of critical thinking into the system beneficial because Phonics (refer to Extract 7-6) has helped the students to read faster while the integration of critical thinking makes the students form their own thinking on issues instead of just accepting what is presented to them.

Extract 7-7: The Positive Outcome of Initiatives - T5

> T5:   So actually their … problem is in their … thinking skills … they suddenly have to think creative … think of something where there is no answers they have to come up with their own … or their opinion then … there's a bit of a struggle there
>
> R: Ok … that's one of the initiatives right having the … KBAT (*Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi – Higher Level Order Thinking Skills*) …
>
> T5:   Yes yes
>
> T5:   Actually … the teachers are also learning … new ways or new approaches to teach this KBAT element because all this while we realise that that we have been … spoon-feeding them so it's time to let them … think on their own … come up with … their opinion

Moreover, the teachers themselves are developing new skills to ensure that students will acquire and develop critical thinking skills as stated by T5 in Extract 7-7 above. The Phonics teaching approach is not stipulated evidently in the Blueprint but it is a teaching approach which is being employed in the LINUS 2.0 literacy programme which I have briefly explained in sub-section 5.3.4

7.3.2.2   Vagueness in the Initiatives

Extract 7-8: Vagueness in the Initiatives - T1

> T1:   … as for my opinion … sometimes it is not really clear what is actually wanted … out of the students and also what is wanted … out of the teachers (.) we know that they have courses for us we know that they offer us … some sort like an incentive … if we pass certain level (.) but then where does it go … it doesn't really develop the teachers (.) it's just more or less … looking at your level (.) and there are cases where teachers are being burden by more courses that they have to take in order for them to (.) improve their proficiency in …English

T1 opines that the initiatives, particularly the courses for English language teachers, are a 'bonus' as an individual and also as a teacher. However, they also find that some of the initiatives are vague, for example the English test – the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT). Teachers are required to sit the CPT to ascertain their level of proficiency but as illustrated in Extract 7-8 above, T1 questions what happens after the

exam. Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency requirement are required to go for classes, but for teachers who pass the exams, what happens afterwards? T1 finds that there is no clear indication as what is expected out of teachers and students with the implementation of the initiatives.

7.3.2.3   Identifying an Effective Teacher

T1 and T3 appear to have inferred from the Blueprint that MOE views CPT as a means of defining an effective teacher, a point on which both disagree. T1 pointed out in Extract 7-9 below that there should be a balance between being proficient and knowing how to teach:

Extract 7-9: Identifying an Effective Teacher - T1

T1: But still … there should be balance between … being proficient in the language and also how to tackle your students' heart because … for example if you're a proficient … speaker … would be a problem as well when it comes to rural students who do not even know how to say their name properly … in English

T3 echoes T1's opinion on the CPT test, arguing that an effective teacher should not be defined by a proficiency test as illustrated in Extract 7-10.

Extract 7-10: Identifying an Effective Teacher - T3

T3: … I think the Cambridge Placement test … as a teacher you need two things in order to be effective at your job one is language the one is skills … in imparting the said language so the CPT tests your language level that's it so when it comes to the teaching skills itself I don't think we have actually … addressed said issue alright because on a personal level … I am fairly confident with my ability in the language but my ability to take the said language and impart to the students to make them better … I may not be as good (.) as people expect me to be

7.3.2.4   Implementation of Initiatives

In this section, it is important to note that DLP and PT3 are not mentioned in the Blueprint specifically but, DLP is part of MBMMBI (*Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia dan Memperkukuh Bahasa Inggeris* or To Uphold Bahasa Malaysia To

Strengthen The English Language policy) which is mentioned in the Blueprint (refer to page 4-13 of the Blueprint); and PT3 (a new format of examination for Form Three students which has integrated critical thinking questions) is in conjunction with MOE's aim in developing higher-order thinking skills in students.

Extract 7-11: Implementation of Initiatives - T1

> R: … now we know that … there have been changes in the language of instruction for science and maths … from like science and maths in English and then it goes back to science and maths in Malay
> T1: Ya exactly
> R: aand then if I'm not mistaken … they just came up with last one … in December. that some schools … were selected (.) for aaaa
> T1: D L P
> R: Yeah DLP dual language programme… what are your thoughts on that?
> T1: alright (.) I kind of think that … the Ministry … is (.) rather indecisive in that matter (.) why change it after all it's just the same thing

Both T1 and T4 are not well-versed with the Blueprint but because both DLP and PT3 exams were implemented after the launch of the Blueprint, the teachers, I believe, assumed they were both stipulated in the Blueprint. Nevertheless, as DLP and PT3 exam are related with the initiatives and the aims, albeit not stipulated in the Blueprint, their responses do provide an insight into the reception and the implementation of DLP and PT3 exam in their schools.

Two teachers, namely T1 and T4, question the implementation of some of the initiatives, one of which is the Dual Language Programme. T1 queries the introduction of an initiative that is the same in content but repackaged anew as the Dual Language Programme (DLP) after the PPSMI policy was discontinued (refer to section 2.4 of Chapter 2 of this thesis for a more detailed explanation). At this juncture, T1 opines that MOE is being indecisive in making their decisions as illustrated in Extract 7-11 above.

Extract 7-12: Implementation of Initiatives - T4

> T4: In school when they change the … people at the top … the officers or what the ministers the programme will change and then it will be creating problems I think that the programme … should be carried out in a certain period of times … only then we can see the result not just like ok next year change the officer …that's what happen when we read in the newspaper … or on tv suddenly … the new officer said … we never asked you … to have a special room for the files

T4 views the implementation of the PT3 exam as a 'mess' and the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT) for teachers quite stressful. T4 relates that initially schools were informed that there were no exams for the Form 3 students, instead the schools are to carry out school-based assessments or PBS (*Pentaksiran Berdasarkan Sekolah or School-based assessment)*. The PBS also came with its own issues wherein there was a lot of paperwork, preparation and contradictory instructions as shown in Extract 7-12 above.

Extract 7-13: Implementation of Initiatives - T4

> T4: … then it came out that in the newspaper said… there will be exams … so … now we are like ok so which one are we supposed to focus on … PBS or the exam … but even when we went for the briefing for the format of the exam … they are told that the format of the exam is not fixed … they can change it any time they want … the first year it was hell PT3 exam … I think it was such a (.) a mess

T4 further relates that the teachers discovered that PT3 exams was announced in the newspapers and teachers were not informed directly. The teachers were provided with little information about the format or structure of the exams and they were only informed on the actual format of PT3 two months prior to the exam. The situation left the teachers with limited time to prepare and coach the students for PT3 (Refer to Extract 7-13 above).

Extract 7-14: Implementation of Initiatives - T4

> T4: I'm not sure I think … the second year … information that I got from … another teacher … said that her English language teacher's from Hungary … and the complaints that they were telling … about the English language teacher … because this friend of mine she's a senior teacher … she's already gotten a master's … in Linguistics ok … she felt incompetent and then she said what did I do wrong …we didn't know why her name was listed to go for the classes but she still went *la*…there was … so many complaints … on the Hungarian teacher so … one of them… brought it up to the *Jabatan* (division) the *Jabatan* (*department*) and nothing's much being done ahh and one of the complaints was that the English language teacher aahh from Hungary … treated the teachers like kids … teachers are adults right they are not like students in school so the English language teachers ahh who were brought in … from *Kementerian la* (*Ministry*) … so they said that … MOE are looking down on the English teachers in Malaysia

For the CPT exam, T4 relays that the results of the exam came a year later and they were required to sit for a second test. If they were to fail the test, they had to go for a course. The teachers who had to attend the course were not exempted from school duties and at the same time they had assignments to complete and submit. T4 related the colleagues' experience in attending the course and found the handling of the course was not conducted professionally. The teachers who attended the course, where the language teacher was Hungarian, felt that they were treated like students instead of adult learners. The experience made the teachers feel like MOE looked down on them as depicted in Extract 7-14 above.

7.3.2.5   Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives

In general, the teachers welcome the overall thrust of the initiatives, but they query some aspects of their implementation. They believe the initiatives would help improve the teaching and learning of the English language. However, they find that some of the initiatives are not feasible or viable in some schools for various reasons such as the location of the school and the facilities available.

Extract 7-15: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives - T2

> T2: Ok err generally the initiatives is very good but the application is very difficult ok because … if you live in the town … especially students … they can develop well especially in oral and written but those in rural areas is quite difficult because of the surrounding … the facilities that is the major problems that we face now
>
> R: I see ok have you ever … taught in an elite school
>
> T2: Yes
>
> R: Yes what is the … proficiency there from your point of view
>
> T2: … I can say … I don't have much problem with them … because … English is … written and spoken at home and at school but … a few years back I started English in rural areas is quite difficult because … they have oral and written session only in school so they do not … have much development in their language development
>
> R: … do you see … based on your experience … your communications with other teachers and all has it been successful (.) the initiatives?
>
> T2: Yes of course I… very successful but I have mentioned earlier it's only based on areas
>
> R: Ok certain areas you're saying?
>
> T2: Certain areas …so English only in towns … not in the rural areas … rural areas … so … the students very difficult to develop

T2, T3 and T5 shared their views that while some of the initiatives were good, they could not be carried out in some parts of the country for various reasons. T2 feels that the implementation of the initiatives was challenging especially for schools in the rural areas, as illustrated by T2's description in Extract 7-15. T2 opines that the implementation of initiatives would be more successful in schools in the urban areas due to the surroundings, society and available facilities.

Extract 7-16: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives - T3

> R: So what are … your opinions on the latest development or the latest improvements that they have implemented so far based on your knowledge the circulars and all
>
> T3: … I think … ultimately what they want to do … is they want to change the SPM (SPM is the national exam for Form Five students at the end of the year) policy itself … ultimately they want English to be on par with right now *bahasa Melayu* (*Malay language*) and … history… where at SPM level … you are passing is considered compulsory … because right now… even if you don't pass English you can still get the SPM certificate … so ultimately what they are trying to do is to reach that level but personally … based on what I know … if we minimise … the target language exposure at school level then we may not be able to achieve the level of English (.) that we want … minimise as in only one subject is taught in fully English …while the rest taught in … mother tongue … that means less exposure in the target language therefore … we have

> to rely on aa students' own efforts to be exposed in English which is of course
> unreliable in itself … they may go home and not read English books they may
> not watch English … on tv English … programmes on TV … so the lack of
> exposure from there means ... the level of English probably would not change
> any (.) time in the near future

T3 feels that although the intention is to place English at the same level of importance
as Bahasa Malaysia, reducing exposure to English impedes the learning of English as
T3 illustrates with reference to the scenario in school and the students in Extract 7-16
above.

Extract 7-17: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives - T5

> T5: I think it's a good plan … but … I think … it's not ready in the sense
> physically … schools are not well equipped to actually to take on this this
> challenge because … one thing the classroom is too large too many students in
> one classroom … so … it's impossible sometimes … to actually implement …
> all these … in the classroom if it was … a bit more conducive if they have the
> tools and equipment … most probably it'll be a success …

For T5, there were various issues that were preventing the success of the
implementation of initiatives. T5 divulges that, while the initiatives are good they can
be impractical as there are too many students in a classroom and that schools are not
fully equipped with the appropriate tools and equipment, and that makes some of the
initiatives difficult to conduct or implement as illustrated in Extract 7-17.

Extract 7-18: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives - T5

> T5: Yes and also if … they encourage us to use … the virtual learning … VLE
> Frog (Frog VLE is a Virtual Learning Environment platform which is provided
> for the students in Malaysian government schools) … whereby you can …
> assign their homework and stuff … online and then the kids can actually use
> games and do homework inbox it back to us … it's I think it's doing very well
> in the in the … urban schools … because they have access to internet and they
> have … the gadgets … I would say most of the kids … have either the
> handphone or their tabs or something like that but the kids … here in in this
> school … they only depend on the computer la … other than that not everybody
> has not even … access to the internet … so … that's the setback … if they have
> access to all these … I think their exposure will be better *la*

T5 further states that the initiative pertaining to the use of technology in the classroom would be applicable in some schools and strata of society as depicted in Extract 7-18. However, in the case of T5's school, the students, apart from access to the school's computer laboratory, would have to go to cyber cafes to have access to computers and internet. In addition, T5 shares that only a handful of students own mobile phones.

Extract 7-19: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives - T1

> T1: Sometimes you have done it actually like for … example project based learning … you have done that in class you ask the students to come out with their own magazines … newspapers school newspaper … sometimes I … ask my students to come out with planning a trip … so this are all project … based learning it's just that (.) before this it was never … labelled as project based learning but now …a when they have this course for 21st century learning we do know that this is something that we have done that we have incorporated it and we are on the right track

Another issue that was brought up concerns the implementation of the 21st century teaching and learning as an initiative. Although this issue is not listed in the Blueprint, as T1 is not well-versed with the Blueprint, again I believe T1 mentioned this as they have assumed it is part of the initiatives. T1's response on this matter provides a window into the other initiatives which are not listed in the Blueprint but are related to the changes and reformation which MOE intends to perform.

T1 argues that that it was being implemented in the classroom even before MOE had insisted teachers on using it. So, to T1 it is nothing new, instead it is given a label as T1 relates in Extract 7-19 above.

Extract 7-20: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives – T3

> T3: aahh this year we are we were introduced to the twentieth 21st century classroom concept … so it was the concept was basically colourful classrooms more group work centred activities … tables which are facing each other instead of facing the teacher … it's basically … an old concept being made anew … and being made colourful … see in my school (.) in certain classes (.) the colourful things … it lasts for approximately two hours after that the kids will take tear and … y'know that kind of level so when they force us to adopt set system … it doesn't work everywhere

T3 also brought up some concerns regarding the implementation of 21st century teaching and learning in the classroom (see Extract 7-20). T3 related that the classes in his school were asked to be more colourful, implement more group work centred activities and arrange the desks and chairs in 'island' concepts instead of the traditional concept wherein students face the teachers. T3 also shared that implementing a colourful classroom would not be successful because such a concept will not last more than two hours. Students would have torn them apart within the first two hours the class gets decorated. T2 shares that it would not work in certain areas. T3 also echoes the same opinion as T1 by saying that 21st century concept is 'an old concept being made anew'.

Extract 7-21: Feasibility and Viability of Initiatives – T5

> T5: … they are emphasising a lot on 21st century education … and … they want the children … to be able to … learn independently … whereby the teachers are becoming the facilitators … it's no more teacher centred it's more of student centred … and … they also emphasise on life long education … whereby … anyone can study at any age any time … so … they want the students … to be holistic that means they … are well developed … in every way in study academically … not only in one aspect …
> R: Ok alright what's your opinion on the initiatives how do you feel about them
> T5: Aahhh aahh about the English which one
> R: no no about the initiatives that they have put forth you know like you were saying more of 21st century learning using of IT in the classroom
> T5: I think it's a good plan … but … it's not ready in the sense physically … some schools are not well equipped … to actually … take on this this challenge because … one thing the classroom is too large too many students in one classroom … so it's it it's impossible sometimes to … actually implement … all these … in the classroom if it was be a bit more conducive if they have the tools and equipment … most probably it'll be a success *la*

T5, on the other hand, comments that a lot of emphasis is on 21st century teaching and learning, whereby students are able to learn independently, lessons adopt a more student-centred approach and a more holistic approach to education (see Extract 7-21),

T5, while they believe it is a 'good plan', suggests that some schools are not ready for the 21st century education. T5 elaborates that schools are not well-equipped with facilities and that the number of students is just too high to implement a 21st century teaching and learning environment.

In a nutshell, the initiatives are very much welcomed by the teachers. The teachers opine that the initiatives will help in the teaching and learning of English language. However, there are some concerns which they feel were not considered to ensure the success of the implementation of the initiatives.

7.3.3 English in the Era of Globalisation

The teachers were asked where English should be positioned in the education system in this era of globalisation. While the teachers agreed that English is an important language to master as it is the dominant language in the era of globalisation, they expressed their concerns about the current treatment given to the English language within the Malaysian education system. T2, T3 and T4 compare the importance of the English language to the national language - Bahasa Malaysia, while T1 finds that communicative English should be the focus and T5 states that the language to communicate in foreign countries is English.

Extract 7-22: English in the era of globalisation - T1

T1: Ok me as a teacher I always tell my students you will get nowhere without English… the reason is simple … you can get an A for English we know that for sure (.) you can be a top scorer you can be … the first ranking student in school but … I've seen a lot of students blew their chances during scholarship interviews … just because … their English is … not impressive...when you go to interviews when the … interviewer uses English they don't come out as impressive … even though they are really … good in studies… they are still not given any chance to get the scholarship so anyway I can say that … for my students it is really important for you to have English … not just SPM English A … but of course … the ability to speak as … a good speaker of English

> R: … you would say basically English is important to master (.) in order to get far
> T1: Important to master but I think in the future what you need is just communicational English

T1 exemplifies the importance of mastering the language by relating the dialogues T1 always has with students about how the students who can converse well in the English language are at an advantage in securing scholarships. From T1's illustration in Extract 7-22, it can be deduced that the students appear to be high achievers. Their exam results for the English paper reveal that their written performance in English is excellent but their spoken English appears to be the one of the main obstacles in securing a scholarship as they are unable to convey or express their thoughts, convictions, or ideas well during interviews. This suggests that English language is very much a prerequisite in securing a scholarship and certain sectors in Malaysia place English as an important language of communication. Subsequently, T1's belief that communicative English should be the focus appears to be justified.

Extract 7-23: English in the Era of Globalisation - T2

> T2: Ok *bahasa Malaysia* is our mother tongue …so English is … language … make us more advance … so the usage of English must be (.) like in India right … even though … they have their own language India their English is very important language … the main language like last time they have our schools science … English medium … so we can do like that

Echoing T1's belief that being able to converse well in English would be an advantage, T2 believes that English would allow one to become more 'advance' (sic). T2 also indicates that the treatment of Bahasa Malaysia and English in Malaysia should be the same as how India places Hindi and English at the same level of hierarchy. T2 also hints at the value of having English as the "main language", like when the PPSMI (*Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa*

Inggeris) or Teaching and Learning of Science and Mathematics in English policy was in effect (refer to Extract 7-23).

T3, on the other hand, asserts that in general English is important until it becomes a 'political rhetoric' as people start relating learning English and being proficient in the language to nationalism and patriotism. He retorts at the belief that being good in English means one is 'less a patriot' by asserting that such a belief illustrates 'trouble in the horizon'. T3 argues that being able to converse in English is important because English is the language of communication and trade.

Extract 7-24: English in the Era of Globalisation - T3

> T3: Yes English is important now but I I read a particular study on the internet I don't know whether this is true or not … until another 80 years after that Mandarin will take over because currently even now Mandarin is already the most spoken language in the world … and ch China's possible … command of future economy means English will be decreased … as a language of trade but that is in the future right now the facts still remains English … is the global language … it's the language of trade it's the language of communication right (.) I don't see the reason why e English needs to be pushed aside

Interestingly, T3 puts forth another notion on the language of the era of globalisation at this point of the interview (refer to Extract 7-24). T3 asserts, albeit disclaiming his words with "I don't know whether this is true or not", that the language of the era of globalisation depends on the language that is widely spoken and which country is at the helm of the world's trade economy. T3 further suggests that China might possibly be the country that gains control of the future world trade and therefore, Mandarin would become the language of trade in the future, subsequently replacing English.

Extract 7-25: English in the Era of Globalisation - T4

> T4: mmm I think like of course it is important right … of course … our national language *bahasa Melayu* (*Malay language*) should be number one right …but English is also important aahhm maybe should be at par with the national language … because … *bahasa Melayu* ya we are using it in our country and of course it is a symbol of …us as being Malaysian right … it is our roots right but English is aahhmm used when they go out from Malaysia

> … we still want … *bahasa Melayu (Malay language)* is number one maybe they don't want they don't want to see like English is taking over right *bahasa Melayu* right … but I think we should be … almost at the same level as *bahasa Melayu*

T4, like T2 and T3, compares the importance of the English language to the Bahasa Malaysia wherein T4 believes English is as important as Bahasa Malaysia and therefore, the emphasis should be equal because when one steps out beyond Malaysia, the lingua franca to communicate with the locals of another country would be usually the English language. See Extract 7-25 above:

Extract 7-26: English in the Era of Globalisation - T5

> T5: … maybe in Malaysia Malay is very important because of our … formal meetings and all this but when … you step out of Malaysia still English is used-*la* …when other language is not important
> R: … so you would say I I would say from what you've told me that you feel that English is important and therefore the MOE should has have some emphasis on English as …
> T5: yes
> R: a language of
> T5: … maybe they should if they are going to take English seriously… exam time they should say it is compulsory to get a credit for English …like … how they make BM (*Bahasa Malaysia*) very it's like you must get a credit for BM

T5's view resonates with T4's, in Extract 7-26, wherein they state that the usage of the Bahasa Malaysia is limited to Malaysia only. T5 also believes that English is important to master, and that MOE should emphasise English language seriously. She suggested that English be made a compulsory subject to obtain a credit for in the exam system, like the way Bahasa Malaysia is being treated.

Drawing from the conversations concerning English language in the era of globalization with the teachers on this topic, it was observed that the teachers feel the English language should be given a lot of emphasis as it is the lingua franca when one goes to another part of the world. They understand that the Bahasa Malaysia language is of a significant importance as it is the national language. However, English

language is the lingua franca to communicate effectively with the outside world, and to go beyond the boundaries of Malaysia. Furthermore, being able to converse in the English language is an added advantage as one is opened to obtaining opportunities such as a study scholarship and job opportunities. The conversations also support the ideology that English is the language of global communication and the ticket that would bring an individual to a step further in their career, education, development and everything else. Nevertheless, the MOE appears to have a different take on the matter despite understanding that English is the lingua franca in most parts of the world.

7.3.4   It seems to be English but ….

The teachers I interviewed are of the opinion that MOE views English language as important, but they have reservations on how MOE seem to be handling the matter. T1 feels that MOE appears to view English as important because of the incentives handed out to the teachers by MOE i.e. a monthly incentive of 5% of a teacher's salary was given on top of the basic salary [during the PPSMI (the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in English) policy] and RM5000 for obtaining the grade C1 in the CPT (Cambridge Proficiency Test) and these incentives were given to English language teachers only (Refer to Extract 7-27).

Extract 7-27: It seems to be English but …. - T1

> T1: So I feel that … are trying to imply or they are trying to give the idea that … English is important (.) because … if you look … at the Blueprint … the incentive it was never given to other teachers … it was only given to English teachers… even during the PPSMI time…. apart from the umm maths and science teachers we the English teachers also got some incentives out of it … there was something like 5 percent out of our salary even now … and it's not it's not little what they are spending for English… mm as for the incentive for teachers who are actually got … I don't remember C1 or C2 the which is the highest level they give out five thousand ringgit and that's a lot of money

Extract 7-28: It seems to be English but …. - T2

> T2: … here I must agree with MOE … ok … they aa always focus English very good but the application … the human force the attitude of the students the surrounding right mm

T2 agrees that MOE views English as important, but the implementation of the initiatives and programmes pertaining to the teaching and learning of English say otherwise as illustrated in Extract 7-28 above.

As mentioned earlier, the teachers who were interviewed believe that MOE views English as important and T4 and T5 are no exception. Nevertheless, each of them questions how MOE treats the matter. T4 claims that while MOE seems to understand the importance of English, a lot of attention has been given to Bahasa Malaysia instead, signalling that English is not the preferred focus and no actual efforts for English have been observed as T4 shares in Extract 7-29 below.

Extract 7-29: It seems to be English but …. - T4

> T4: Aaahhh mmm I think is maybe they are focussing more on the national language like bahasa Melayu (Malay language) is important … of course we understand that right it's the national language but English is also important but they I think they have they have not given enough attention in that …I I understand that it not our mother tongue right … because we are Malaysians ahhhmmm but … they should like give us ahmm courses ok for the English teachers … because I think so far courses … will be held only if they have like you know changing of textbook … changing of textbook then they'll be calling teachers for briefing … ok but there is not many courses to I don't know … like for example to give us ideas … maybe call us to ask for …ask for our opinions on handling the English language yeah in school yeah
> R: … basically you're saying that MOE… know English language is important but they have not like
> T4: Done much about it

Extract 7-30: It seems to be English but …. - T5

> T5: … I think … they emphasise … the usage of English … because of the exam of the exam because of the public exam especially … and … to get into the universities …more to academic wise … it's … so that … you get a better chance of … furthering your studies … I think that's where they see English because if

> they are going to do more for English … maybe they they are afraid that … they might sideline Malay …they are a bit afraid to focus … too much on English

While T4 feels the effort made by MOE does not resonate with the portrayal of the English language being the focus of MOE, T5 finds MOE focuses on English for the purpose of exams and entrance requirements into universities. T5 also feels that MOE should emphasise the importance of the English language less, in order to avoid being seen as focusing too much on English and ignoring Bahasa Malaysia, see Extract 7-30 above:

Extract 7-31: It seems to be English but …. - T3

> T3: I think aahh if you want to talk about the development … of English in general for the country then politics will play a part … I am member of the … debate council … debate council so one of … our strongest supporters is a particular minister…who is part of the government coalition … he's a Malay … so on tv he says different… but when he meets us … it's a different story altogether… behind the scenes he's actually a very strong champion of the English language … he wants to introduce the deb-the English debate culture all over the country stuff like that but in front on the on tv it's a different thing because it's all about *semangat Melayu* (*Malay spirit*) and stuff like that … so it's a a different story so English it it depends on who is helming the government …if the person is someone like … if I may say the name out loud aaa Ibrahim Ali …who is … *perkasa* … president so probably English would not be so (.) aaa important … but u-under the previous aa deputy … prime minister … Datuk Seri Datuk Seri Muhyiddin … then aa suddenly English gain ground … there were efforts to make English better … I think the idea of making English a compulsory pass subject is his idea … so in that sense politics is involved it depends on who is giving the orders

T3, on the other hand, feels MOE is politically driven wherein the person at the helm of MOE, usually the minister of education, is the one who drives the belief of MOE; if the current person in charge views that English is important and crucial, then English will be high on the agenda of MOE. T3 illustrates this point by providing an example of T3's encounter with a minister in Extract 7-31 above.

Upon observing their responses, I can conclude that the teachers are of the view that MOE is aware of the importance of mastering the English language but MOE appears

to be giving mixed signals on the matter due to their approach in handling the issue. Thus, this hints at some tension between the teachers and MOE in ensuring what has been planned is achieved.

7.3.5 Teachers in the eyes of MOE

Teachers cannot be separated from an education system because they are the ones who carry out the teaching and ensure that policies are being implemented in schools. When the teachers were asked to illustrate how MOE viewed teachers based on what their knowledge, observation, readings and experience, each of them shared different perspectives. Nevertheless, they are of the opinion that MOE views teachers as crucial and important but, for some of the teachers, the treatment given to teachers is seen as less than appropriate.

Extract 7-32: Teachers in the eyes of MOE

Teacher	Evidence
T1	T1: Not to say what is it all about but looking into it and understanding what is the whole idea the whole concept in the Blueprint… but we ah as a teacher I only see the blue the Blueprint as an agent of change to education for example it'll bring change to me as a teacher… by err introducing new courses…this new concept, this new approach ahmm and as a teacher I feel (.) that it is an obligation for me to actually carry out what the Blueprint wants out of the education
T2	R: How do feel that the-the way MOE describes teachers and all how do you feel as a teacher T2: Ehmmm sorry to say ya … hmm being English teachers … we have better … treatment-*lah* (-*lah* is a filler that is used among Malaysians when they converse in Malay, English or their own mother tongue or other languages) better treatment ok … by … our MOE …and then … sorry to say aa for me aa English is for me to go further
T3	T3: … professionally teachers get … more burden …than … there's always the issue of clerical work …being done by teachers a lot of clerical work is being done by teachers that's number one but to to counter that argument teachers are getting higher pay …than ever before aa-our pay is …increasing … but I think … the problem is the information exposure the internet because right now we have the ability to make comparison …with other countries recently read an article saying if you list the countries down with the best

Teacher	Evidence
	education the top ten would be countries in which teachers … are the welfare is well taken care of instead of the countries lower in the list right . there are even statements saying that in countries like Finland who are in that top ten list the teachers are being paid more than doctors right (.) so in in that sense … I don't think … whatever the government does to help aaahhh ease the burden of the teachers it would not have that much of a positive effect because of the sense of comparison that we have because we know what is what is happening in Finland we know what is happening in Japan … where teachers are respected until now and then we have comparison with history so I don't think … they can do anything actually teachers as a breed of people will consider (.) themselves being victimised (.) even under the current situation i-in general that's that's what I think in general hmm R: So you would say that the Ministry is very very aahhmm for the teachers helping out the teachers (.) you said T3: They are trying … but again I don't think ….whatever they do it doesn't matter what they do the the damage has been done … I don't think aaa it's going to get any better … there is a rift now right especially when you consider the politics of it … the government has always been strongly supported by teachers y'know especially UPSI (Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris – Sultan Idris Education University) these these legendary mm almost mystical organisations when it comes to teaching they've always been supporting the government but you can see the cracks they are not supporting the government anymore aah because of as I said (.) y'know the point of comparison is made and the teachers are unhappy with their burden aahhh maybe if if y'know if I want to make teachers sound greedy they are unhappy with the increment that they receive but I think the damage has been done the the close relationship that the government have always had with the teachers (.) it's irreparable I don't think it's going to get any better the relationship … no matter what the government does
T4	T4: … the teachers felt like you know they were treated like kids and and and of course it their disappointment also goes to the MOE *la* …because you know R: So basically from what I gather from what you said your MOE has teachers in a very ahmm basically they they have they want the teachers to be excellent better T4: Hmmm R: They have that amount of respect for them T4: Yup R: But … how they go about it has to be done in a tactful way T4: Yes *tulah* (that's it) they should you know …they they they also should think of *yelah* (yes) the the teachers ego you know because we are not kids … how to handle about it … in a respectful manner

Teacher	Evidence
T5	T5: Hmmm as a teacher I I think we have a we have a very very ahmm important role here because aahh we are the first we are actually the the one like the middle man …aahh like the messenger … it's how …we take the the elements in the Blueprint and interpret them and implement them to the students how well we do that that's how well the plan is going to be successful I feel that aahh our our role is very crucial actually

The interviewees' responses when asked about how MOE perceive teachers are as illustrated in Extract 7-32 above.

T1 views the Blueprint as the agent of change and feels that teachers are obliged to ensure that the initiatives are carried out accordingly. T2, on the other hand, feels that MOE relies on teachers to carry out the initiatives, programmes and policies and that English language teachers are often given better treatment than others. While T1 feels that MOE views teachers as the implementers of the initiatives and T2 feels MOE gives preferential treatment to teachers, T3 feels that MOE treats teachers as clerks instead of teachers due to the amount of documentation work given to teachers. The work given has become such a burden to the teachers that it has caused a strain in the relationship between MOE and teachers; so much so that, although MOE is trying to compensate for this with an increment, teachers are still unhappy with the situation. T4 responded to the question in a different manner. In illustrating how teachers feel about the treatment given by MOE, T4 gave an example of the treatment the teachers, who did not achieve the expected CPT results, received throughout a course they had been required to attend. T4 illustrated by narrating the teachers' experience with the English language instructor who was assigned to them, wherein the instructor had treated them like children and with little respect. T4 related that the teachers felt MOE looked down on them. Apart from that, T4 also felt that MOE has a lot of respect for

the teachers as well as wanting them to be excellent, but that MOE has to find a tactful way to go about it.

Finally, T5 feels that teachers are the middleperson, the messenger between MOE's initiatives, i.e. the Blueprint, and the students. How well the plan materialises depends on the teachers' interpretation of the Blueprint and therefore, the teachers' role is crucial in implementing the policy.

7.3.6 The Dual Language Programme

The discussion on DLP class arose when T1 was asked to comment on the shifts in the language of instruction for the subjects Science and Mathematics. In this sub-section, I will introduce what the Dual Language Programme is all about and then illustrate the findings from the conversation and finally, conclude the discussion.

7.3.6.1 Introduction

The Dual Language Programme (DLP) is a pilot programme that was instructed to begin in 2016 which had English as the language of instruction for the subjects Science, Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Design and Technology. DLP is a programme that is being conducted in selected schools all over Malaysia. These schools were selected based on certain criteria which included written requests and support from parents stating that they give their permission to allow their child or children to join the DLP programme and that there are at least 15 pupils who have requested a DLP class.

This programme is aimed at supporting and increasing the students' English language proficiency level by providing them with more exposure to the language during the teaching and learning of the selected subjects. By being proficient in the language, the students have more access to information in order to compete globally as well as being marketable individuals once they finish school.

7.3.6.2 Result from the Interview

Extract 7-33: The Dual Language Programme - T1

R: Yeah DLP dual language programme. k what are your thoughts on that?
T1: alright I kind of think that … the ministry … is rather indecisive in that matter. why change it after all it's just the same thing …like when we have PPSMI all all the teachers are kind of ready … already to teach science and maths in English because they go full they actually go full blast … they have courses every week you know they have to have English buddy we have to be like we English teachers have to be the buddy to another science or maths teacher … so … in the long run after a few years I think they are ready to teach it to teach the subject in English … some of them even have the problem of changing it back to *Bahasa Melayu* … ahh when it when the ministry change the policy back to *Bahasa Melayu* … and now it goes back to DLP … DLP is another PPSMI programme actually because emm but it is not something (.) compulsory... last time PPSMI something compulsory everybody has to do it

T1 opined that MOE is indecisive when it came to the language of instruction and finds the shifts and reversion as a 'hassle'. T1 questioned the changes, particularly, when DLP was introduced in December 2015 after the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics reverted to Bahasa Malaysia. T1 finds that, in principle, DLP is the same as the PPSMI (Teaching And Learning Of Science And Mathematics In English) policy as both use English language as the language of instruction but the differences lie in the name, and that it is conducted in selected schools and not compulsory for all the students to be involved as T1 explained in Extract 7-33 above.

Extract 7-34: The Dual Language Programme - T1

R: Ok so you're saying that this DLP programme has not made an impact on that on the whole proficiency (.) from what you see (.) from your observation but compare to when you have PPSMI (.) where it was full blown
T1: Mm
R: The English proficiency has aa
T1: Has somewhat improve
R: Somewhat improve
T1: Yes
R: Ok alright
T1: And emm maybe it's the age factor because these are form one students they are not really serious about their studies … whereby at that time PPSMI we are doing it on the form four and form five students (.) the form five we

> see that they are actually being emmm the impact is that they became good in English as well

T1 further shares that the DLP initiative has not made an impact on the English language proficiency among the students as compared to the PPSMI policy. T1 believes that the level of English language proficiency improved when PPSMI was enforced because everyone, including all the students, were involved and also the students' attitude towards learning the language contributed to the improvement. The students of Forms Four and Five were serious about learning as it would affect their Form Five Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Malaysian Certificate of Education) exam results as opposed to DLP wherein only the Form One is affected. The Form One students, however, tend to take learning lightly (see Extract 7-34 above).

Extract 7-35: The Dual Language Programme - T1

> T1: … dual language because certain subjects have still taught in BM and certain subjects like science and maths are taught in English (.) we choose them based on language is because we thought that when you have better language better English … then you'll be better in understanding science and maths in English

Interestingly, as mentioned earlier, T1 expressed that the change in the language of instruction and the introduction of DLP had become a hassle especially in choosing the students for the DLP class. The school selected the students for DLP class based on the students' level of English language proficiency, and performance in Science and Mathematics. T1 claimed that the school believed that being proficient in the English language will allow the students to have a better understanding of the subjects as seen in Extract 7-35.

Extract 7-36: The Dual Language Programme - T1

R: … you has it been any difference (.) I mean from the time they changed the English in science and maths in English and then they reverted and they're having the DLP.

T1: It's a hassle actually … because (.) uhmm like I said the Ministry is indecisive … why they change on the first place … you have PPSMI (.) you are ready already … you go full blast and everything … and suddenly you revert to BM … and now you come out with a new thing … called DLP but still it is PPSMI … alright? aa as far as I see umm as for the teachers the teachers emm I'm not sure about other schools but aa the teachers in my school they are really (.) they are mm-more receptive like for example when they have to do it they will do it … so … they will abide by the rules (.) when the ministry ask our school to have one DLP class we have selected the best teacher to actually teach … science and maths in English … but emm the problem lies in the students …because like … my school the students are mostly from (.) *pantai timur* (*east coast of Malaysia*) whereby … some are very good there are always cases whereby the students might be good in English …but they are not good in science and maths even though they are (.) good in English … the second case is that how do you select students to go into the DLP class … in the beginning (.) we had emm we had proficiency test … for all the students … somebody actually come out with this … this test … so the test is in English but it revolves around maths and science …so the students who actually take the test if they fair good in it then they will go into DLP class …

T1:   matter of you giving them the choice (.) giving the parents but actually … not the students the parents whether the parents want them to be in the DLP class or not …if the parents really know this … the child then there's no problem they know that the child is good in English or bad in English then they will know but there are certain parents … who feels like they the this parents feel the child is good in English …. so they put it in DLP class…but the problem with them is that this this child is good in English only but not really good in studying therefore they … don't do very good in their… science and maths

Nevertheless, T1 revealed that selection of students for the DLP class was challenging. Some of the students who are enrolled in the programme are proficient in the language but not competent in Science and Mathematics, while there are students who are not proficient in the language but very competent in Science and Mathematics. Some of the students were enrolled into the programme at the insistence of the parents despite not being proficient in English as illustrated in Extract 7-36 above.

Extract 7-37: The Dual Language Programme - T1

T1: … as for proficiency is concerned . I don't think there is an any impact (.) when they because they are learning science and maths in English right now (.) I

> can't give you the numbers but I can tell you this aa we've got complaints from teach teacher the t a teacher who's teaching science in that class … she's saying that how can this boy be in DLP class if he can't even present something which has already been learnt in science class
> R: ok in English you mean
> T1: in English so (.) like I said earlier on I don't see the impact on learning science and maths does not improve their English learning science and maths in English does not improve your English

According to T1, teachers have also complained that students, who are not proficient, have difficulty in presenting their discussions despite being very competent in Science and Mathematics as related in Extract 7-37.

Extract 7-38: The Dual Language Programme - T1

> T1: so now the impact of DLP class in my school ah looking at the results what happen is that DLP class is emm the result of this bad worse than the none DLP class

The result of this DLP, T1 further related, was that the performance of students who were not in the DLP class surpassed the students in the DLP class as depicted in Extract 7-38.

7.3.6.3 Discussion

Drawing from the insights which T1 shared on the DLP implementation in the school, it can be concluded that while the intention of implementing the programme includes raising the level of proficiency in English, and enabling students to compete globally, in reality there are issues with the implementation of the programme. The potential issues around the implementation of DLP are as follows:

1. The exam results of science and mathematics from the non-DLP class may be better than those who are in the DLP class.

2. Students in the DLP class who are not proficient in English language may have difficulties in presenting their classwork.

3. The selection of students who enter the DLP class may be challenging – should this include students who are proficient in English, and good at Science and Mathematics, and/or students who are proficient in English but not good at Science and Mathematics, and/or students who are not proficient in English but good at Mathematics and Science.

4. The school believes that only students who are proficient in English and good at science and mathematics should qualify for the DLP class.

5. The students may have become more proficient when PPSMI policy was enforced compared to DLP class.

The issues mentioned above appear to hinder MOE from achieving the aims and objectives of DLP as these issues create tension between the aims of MOE and the aims of the school. Based on these issues, the main problem is that while DLP aims at improving the English language proficiency, T1's school is more worried about the marks the students produce when sitting for Science and Mathematics tests, as those who are not in the DLP class appear to fare better in results in both subjects than those who are in the DLP class. In other words, teaching science and mathematics in English has resulted in lower marks for both subjects, which, ironically, was one of the reasons that PPSMI was aborted and MBMMBI was introduced. There was a significant drop in the results of both subjects in the UPSR (Primary School Achievement test) examination after the implementation of the PPSMI policy (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2012). While T1's school is trying to ensure that the DLP class does not affect the results of English, science and mathematics, the Dual Language programme had not considered the impact of the programme on science and mathematics in terms of the students' language in the DLP class.

Hence, the interpretation of the aims and objectives of DLP by the school opposes the aims and objectives of DLP whereby the focus of DLP is to raise the level of the students' English language proficiency while the school focuses on the performance of the science and mathematics. Therefore, as a researcher, the question that comes to mind is - is teaching maths and science in English the solution to improve students' language proficiency? Is MOE willing to improve the English language proficiency at the expense of the results of science and mathematics? Intriguingly, T1 views PPSMI as a better policy for improving the proficiency level of English compared to the DLP class.

7.3.7   Opinion on the reversions

Although the reversion from teaching Maths and Science in English back to teaching these subjects in Bahasa Malaysia is not listed as one of the initiatives in the Blueprint, programmes under the MBMMBI policy (To Uphold Bahasa Malaysia Strengthen the English Language policy or *Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Memperkukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris*) are one of the initiatives in the Blueprint (refer to sub-section 2.4.4 of Chapter 2 of this thesis). The implementation of the MBMMBI policy was to replace the PPSMI policy. As the reversal of the language of instruction and MBMMBI are related to one another and that MOE's perspective on the English language is in part demonstrated by the decisions made, it is such a significant aspect of teachers' experiences in relation to the English language that it was important to ask the teachers about the reversion.

The teachers, when prompted to give their opinion on the reversion from teaching Maths and Science in English back to teaching these subjects in Bahasa Malaysia, almost all were unhappy about this citing a range of reasons to explain their dissatisfaction about the change of language of instruction.

Extract 7-39: Opinion on the reversions - T1

> R: … alright so far how have you has it been any difference (.) I mean from the time they changed the English in science and maths in English and then they reverted and they're having the DLP
> T1: it's a hassle actually it's a hassle because … like I said the ministry is indecisive
> R: what is
> T1: mm why they change on the first place

T1 views MOE as indecisive in their decision about the change because MOE initially announced the discontinuation of PPSMI and yet, DLP was introduced in December 2015, albeit the programme was to be conducted in selected schools only (refer to Extract 7-39 above).

Extract 7-40: Opinion on the reversions - T1

> T1: like when we have PPSMI all all the teachers are kind of ready … to teach science and maths in English because they go full they actually go full blast … they have courses every week you know they have to have English buddy we have to be like we English teachers have to be the buddy to another science or maths teacher … so ahh in the long run after a few years I think they are ready to teach it to teach the subject in English. … ahh some of them even have the problem of changing it back to bahasa Melayu … when the ministry change the policy back to bahasa Melayu …now it goes back to DLP

T1 further relates that many teachers were sent to many courses when PPSMI was introduced and these teachers adjusted to the situation but now, they have been asked to teach both subjects in Bahasa Malaysia, which they have difficulty in doing (refer to Extract 7-40).

Extract 7-41: Opinion on the reversions - T1

> T1: back in PPSMI time . when it was done full blast … it gave that certain impact in English … when you you teach the students science and maths in English … they become better in English as well

T1 further adds that PPSMI had helped with the level of proficiency of English (refer to Extract 7-41 above).

While T1 finds MOE to be indecisive with their decision, T2 voiced their concerns that the students' future is at stake if the students are not proficient in English as they would be struggling, especially those who are pursuing doctoral and medicinal studies.

Extract 7-42: Opinion on the reversions -T2

> T2: last time when we started … science and maths taught in English I was happy … because …I'm teaching form 6 … when the students came for form six …they have already the knowledge they can apply form 6 easily … but for Malay students they they will face difficulties-*lah* to apply but now when they stop so we the form 6 teachers have the problems … especially … when you go to university further studies … all the terms in English

Being proficient in English would allow them to proceed to a higher level in their career as depicted in Extract 7-42. T2 also relates that when PPSMI was in force, the Form Six students who came were able to converse well and thus had no problem in managing Form Six.

Extract 7-43: Opinion on the reversions - T2

> T2: … I disagree because you see here aahh if we we think about long distance ok … if they want to further studies so … this might help them to be more advance and then they have to struggle … even now … if you go to the medication level all the instruction in English right? …regarding to that I'm feel so so sad … because of this policy … why not we remain … last time my children started with English … and then when come to form four stop … change to *Bahasa* so very quite sad having in English in primary school for six years … in English medium suddenly change to *Bahasa* (*Malay*) then everything change to *Bahasa* (*Malay*) ok so it's very sad

As the PPSMI has been discontinued, the students especially the Malays will have problems when learning in universities as many terminologies are in English which is illustrated in Extract 7-43. Apart from that, as stated in Extract 7-43, T2 also shared dissatisfaction with the reversion as T2 is able to observe the difference in their children. They cite their Form Six students as an example of a group who have difficulty in answering the MUET (Malaysian University Entrance Test) examinations ever since PPSMI was discontinued. T2 further argues that MOE did not consider the

future of the students when assessing the situation in the long run. Learning science

and maths in English will help the students, especially the Malays, to be good enough

in English that they are able to understand science and maths in the universities, as the

references for both subjects are in English. T2 can see the difference in their own

children wherein the children who experienced PPSMI are able to converse well in

English while those who are taught in Bahasa Malaysia do not converse that well.

Extract 7-44: Opinion on the reversions - T3

> T3: … this is … what I think aa initially when they change to English ahmm . I I totally agreed … with the change … right and then aa it changed back to BM …I was a bit disheartened … because I thought again aa exposure to the target language's very important …and then I I had this chance when I was continuing my own studies … I had this chance to meet a particular professor … so according to him he was involved directly with aahhmm the team that give the follow-up report … so they according to him … they did a study … on the effectiveness of English in science and mathematics … they found that it actually helps . their English proficiency … nationally … for example if according to the graph … English proficiency is at level 20 (.) after implementing err err PPSMI for … 5 years … it has gone up to 28 in ... general for example …but the only problem is it widens another graph … the graph of the difference in proficiency between … people living in the cities … and people living … outside of the cities … so it widens the gap … it makes city students smarter … aahh so hence when that happens … according to them one of their findings is this could lead to the curtailing of the opportunity for … non city kids to continue tertiary level education … because they cannot simply catch up to being as good as the kids from the city

T3, on the other hand, felt disheartened as they believe the more exposed the students

are to the target language, the easier it is for the students to learn the language.

However, T3 continued by describing an encounter with a professor who was involved

in the follow-up report on the PPSMI programme. The professor shared with T3 the

reason why PPSMI was abolished – the proficiency level of the students in cities was

rising but for those living away from the cities, their proficiency level was not

improving, which resulted in a disparity of level of proficiency between the two

groups. Hence, there was a possibility that it would hinder the chances of students who

live outside the city areas from continuing their tertiary education as in Extract 7-44 above.

While T1, T2 and T3 appear to have issues with the constant change in the language of instruction for science and mathematics, T4 does not seem to be affected by it. T4 discloses examples from school life to illustrate the scenario of the changes in language of instruction for science and mathematics. Non Malay students were not too happy with the change and therefore, some parents had opted to send their children to schools which continue to use English in their teaching of mathematics and science despite the instructions given by MOE to change back to Bahasa Malaysia. T4 further shared that as Malaysians, one has to know the national language i.e. Bahasa Malaysia and therefore, it should not be a problem for anyone to switch languages. Furthermore, changes happen, and everyone should be receptive to changes. Nevertheless, T4's statement, "…you know I can't actually like tell them like ya it's a the administrat- the education system sucks" reveals another opinion of T4 regarding the education system which suggests that T4 is not in agreement with what MOE is doing.

Extract 7-45: Opinion on the reversions - T5

T5: I I would say I I have to disagree with that because … although it's difficult in the beginning … you know the terms and all that they struggled with the terms aahh but I feel they should be learning in English … or at least they should be given … the option … to choose if they wanted to learn it in English … aahh it's not to say … that … we are putting … the Malay language aside … I think it's important that … they realise that … when … they go off for their tertiary education and all that … a lot of their research and a lot of … the references are going to be in English so they must be able to understand what they're reading … they must be able to understand … what they are researching and …they shouldn't give the excuse aahh they can't do it because of the language barrier …

Like T2, T5 clearly disagrees with the reversion and with the constant shifting of language of instruction for science and mathematics. T5 disagrees with the reversion as they believe that by learning English, the students will be able to understand the

many reference books in English and would not make the language a barrier as the reason for not being able to understand or comprehend books in English as illustrated in Extract 7-45 above. Also, the constant shifts in the language of instruction are not fair on the students as they might easily get confused.

7.3.8   Other Insights

While interviewing the teachers, a few interesting issues or aspects were raised by the teachers themselves. These issues or aspects were apart from the themes that were planned in the interview questions. Although they were unexpected, they provided an insight into the education system and state of affairs pertaining to the initiatives and the education setting. The insights are as follows:

Extract 7-46: Other Insights - T1

> T1: The thing is what we realise is that form five students who were who are actually from … the product of the PT3 emm is … really difficult to come to … a standardised level … because they are … being assessed … through their own schools …by their own teachers (.) so the level of the teachers differentiate some might think that their students are already good … whereby it is still not … at par with the students who are really really good ... like for example (.) if they are getting a for English it doesn't mean that they are going to be good when they are in their form 4 … because that a is only based on what the teacher knows … based on what the teacher feels is good

T1 argued for the need of a standardized assessment in assessing the students' language proficiency, as one teacher's assessment of a student's level proficiency differs from another teacher's (refer to Extract 7-46). In other words, a child's level of language proficiency, when assessed by Teacher A, may be graded as B. However, when the same child is assessed by Teacher B, the child may receive a C or an A, therefore, making it difficult to ascertain the correct level of language proficiency of a

student especially when they switch schools. In T1's case, the school could not locate

the level of language proficiency for students who had just enrolled in the school.

Extract 7-47: Other Insights - T3

> T3: Unofficially I teach in the mother tongue … to get them to at least understand the task … but y'know multiple research has shown that's not actually a good way to impart a second language that's not a good way to teach a second language but as long as at least y'know to me … exam we push aside if today they don't know how to say good morning tomorrow they do I'm ok … for the weak students as long as they get something … but you know the Malaysian system is very exam oriented right demands from higher ups from administration … is … to cater to that then it's impossible
> R: Ok so you're basically I mean from what I've … heard from you you're saying that for the child … for you to teach the child to get an a or … higher grade is not your way of doing it's not your forte it's not what you can do but in order for a child to be able to speak … but not target the (.) marks but more of conversing being able to talk and all you're able to do that
> T3: That's for the lower kids yes

T3 brought into the interview various interesting aspects surrounding the teaching of

English language. One of these is teaching English in the mother tongue wherein T3

says that although he is aware that teaching a language in the mother tongue is not the

best way, he does so unofficially in order to get the students to understand the task set

before them as illustrated in Extract 7-47.

Extract 7-48: Other Insights - T1

> T1: But I am not against the idea of using both languages in the class
> R: Owh ok
> T1: Because there are there are moments … when you actually need to use our mother tongue in the class

Teaching in the mother tongue is also an issue shared by T1 (refer to Extract 7-48)

because for T1, there are certain instances where teaching in the mother tongue is

needed.

Interestingly, with reference to Extract 7-47, T3 continues to share the view that the

administrators or those at the helm demand an exam oriented outcome compared to

T3's aims. T3 would like to see the students being able to utter, at the bare minimum, 'good morning' but T3 cannot accommodate the administrator's request of getting students to obtain As or a high grade in the exams.

Extract 7-49: Other Insights - T3

> R: So for you for this low proficiency kids exams (.) should not be the target … can I say that…for you (.) … you prefer not to get them those marks you're your target is more of getting them to be able to speak
> T3: On on a personal level yes (.) but I don't think I am allowed to … say that on an official level … because aa ultimately the school system … it's a race … this school wants to be better than that school this school wants to be better that school so the race all concentrates on numbers … as long as you can get more passes and more as … then you're good … so if you want to go there (.) teaching proficiency for the sake of proficiency it … is not possible … you can't teach proficiency for the sake of proficiency you have to teach proficiency for the sake of the exams

T3 further reveals in Extract 7-49 that they aim to get students with a low proficiency level to be able to speak the language but the administrators are looking at obtaining high grades because schools are competing with each other and therefore, numbers matter. Teachers are identified as good if they are able to get students to obtain good grades or marks. This instance suggests that the administrators equate success with numbers or marks or grades without considering whether the students are proficient in their speech or writing. This also reflects T3's vision for the students contradicts with the administrators' vision.

Extract 7-50: Other Insights - T3

> T3: So it's like this imagine you are a manager of a club
> R: Ok
> T3: Alright so you want to go after … the championship so you see your close rivals all buying paying … buying everyone's (.) buying … y'know everyone … getting players … which are going to help their club you haven't done anything … so two days before the transferring closes you panic buy someone … so you panic buy it's called the panic buy … I think that's what the government is doing (.) the government is going to foreign countries looking at their system like it now the representatives …I mean they go look at another country's system they like it they take it they come back to Malaysia and they try it out alright … so these trying out process usually takes years … and when it doesn't work it has detrimental effects … on the education system as well … so I think if they can

> streamline that process … right maybe … try it out in say one or two schools first something like that y'know … if they can streamline that process you go to other schools and you see their system … you think you can adopt … a set system or adapt it into a Malaysian aa condition then please go ahead but don't panic buy … there must be a process in which it can be done (.) slowly … to see whether it works or not

Another issue which T3 highlighted concerns MOE's reaction and behavior towards an approach or innovation or trend. Upon observing T3's description in Extract 7-50 above, T3 describes MOE's decision making as impulsive. They used the term 'panic buy' and a manager of a football club as an analogy to depict MOE's action of adopting an approach or innovation or trend without studying its feasibility or whether it is applicable in Malaysia's context.

Extract 7-51: Other Insights - T3

> T3: … I think there's always a delicate balance between English and Malay … Bahasa Melayu … when we try to push … English into a more prominent … language … as you said … medium of instruction … champions of Bahasa Melayu will shoot us down … and … in that sense we are at a loss …because we can't go against your mother tongue …can you? … even in the it's in the constitution … you don't mess with the constitution fine but I just want to say for the record our education … system …produce good … bilinguals in the sixties and in the seventies at the time when there was no standard of running water there was no guarantee of electricity … right so it wasn't as easy … as it is now but we produced good (.) bilingual speakers people who could switch from Malay to English like that (.) right why … because the only subject taught in Malay … is Bahasa Melayu (.) and agama … everything is English …that's why these people like my father …my father is … LCE (Lower Certificate of Education – a national exam for Form Three students at the end of the year. It was renamed as Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (Lower Certificate Education) when the language of instruction was changed to Bahasa Malaysia) graduate … didn't even go for SPM level MCE (Malaysian Certificate of Education – a national exam taken by all Fifth Formers who attend the government schools. It was renamed Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia when the language of instruction was changed to Bahasa Malaysia) he just LCE later and then he went to the army and he can switch Malay English Malay English Malay English like it's nothing y'know …right because of that so I think if if we can look back in history maybe these policy makers will not be so against …English being a medium of instruction if only … they can y'know (.) watch a few old tapes … that's all I have to say

While T3 discloses that the administrators are pushing for grades, T5 suggests that there should only be one main test in Year 6 while in the rest of the primary years, students should be given the freedom to learn freely and enjoy the learning process as illustrated in Extract 7-52. This depicts that students in primary schools have to sit for numerous exams and tests throughout and the learning process becomes daunting for the students.

Extract 7-52: Other Insights - T5

T5: … I think … they should do away with all the … assessments and just have one … at the end of their six years of schooling just have one just let them I feel we …just let them learn first …learn and experience and just … enjoy the learning processes because once you set exams for everything …that's where they lose their interest because it becomes a real chore for them

7.4   Discussion and Conclusion of the Analysis of the Interviews

It is obvious that the teachers welcome the initiatives stipulated in the Blueprint but they are not happy with the implementation of the initiatives because many issues especially administration and operational issues arose as a result of this implementation.

The teachers who were interviewed felt that the initiatives which MOE had planned as well as carried out for the education system are good and beneficial to the children. Nevertheless, the implementation of the initiatives was not thought through carefully. In some cases, such as the initiatives relating to ICT, the initiatives cannot be carried out effectively in some schools due to issues like geography and the financial standing of the society in certain areas as well issues concerning lack of proper infrastructure. MOE needs to look into these issues and ensure that every school is given equal

opportunities regardless of location to avoid depriving students from having the experience of using ICT as in some schools which have access to ICT.

Teachers find that English is important especially in the era of globalization and they also feel that MOE views English as important, but the way MOE handles English language education reveals otherwise. Firstly, the reversion of the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics i.e. from Bahasa Malaysia to English and then, to Bahasa Malaysia again is seen as problematic. Some of the teachers, like T1, T2 and T5, who were interviewed feel that the move in making English as the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics was good as the students were showing progress in their English language proficiency. However, reverting to Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction for both Science and Mathematics is cumbersome because a lot of investment has been carried out in ensuring the implementation of the policy work and students' proficiency is not as good as their peers who were taught Science and Mathematics in English.

Moreover, the Dual Language Programme (DLP) becomes a problem, especially to schools like T1's in deciding which students can enroll in the programme and the performance of the Science and Mathematics subjects. Obviously, T1's school objectives are different from MOE's objectives of implementing DLP. MOE's objective of the DLP programme in schools is to enable students to have access to English language through the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English whilst improving their proficiency in the language. However, T1's school appears to be more concerned with the students' performance in Science and Mathematics wherein the students who are not in the DLP class perform better than those in the DLP class. This suggests that there is a mismatch between the school's objectives and MOE's objectives in implementing DLP in the school. The school is more concerned with the

students' level of performance in the Science and Mathematics. Therefore, MOE needs to address this mismatch before such a programme like DLP takes place. This can probably be resolved by having dialogue sessions with schools that are involved which allows the schools to voice out their concerns and the administration issues which may arise. MOE could also provide some guidelines on the selection of students into the DLP class. On another note of this issue, as not all schools are involved with DLP programme, MOE has deprived some students in reaching their potential and their level of English proficiency because they cannot experience the DLP programme in their schools. For some which have the DLP programme, like the teacher I interviewed, have decided on who can learn in a dual language programme. While these schools provide a few reasons, such as limited seats, for being selective in choosing the students for the programme, These selection process has deprived some students from being better at English language and learning the language too.

Another issue with the implementation of the initiatives is the teachers' knowledge of the initiatives stipulated in the Blueprint. The initiatives are meant to be implemented nationwide and yet, the teachers I interviewed, mostly, know what has been conveyed to them verbally. However, among the teachers interviewed, only T5 informed me that they have seen and read it but needs to refer to the Blueprint from time to time. In addition, one of the teachers stated that the Blueprint was never received nor was it tabled to the school or the teachers. This suggests that there is a problem with the dissemination of information to the vital people i.e. schools and teachers. I acknowledge that it can be retrieved on MOE's website but as T3 had claimed, some of them were unaware of its (the Blueprint's) existence till I had mentioned it. The improper management of information dissemination can result in the objectives and

aims of MOE not being achieved as MOE wanted as the teachers are not in the know of things.

Finally, English language teachers appear to be receiving preferential treatment as they have been receiving monetary rewards for teaching English during the PPSMI policy and recently, best performers in CPT will receive a sum of money. Teachers are also considered to be important as they are the implementers and the middle person to carry out all the programmes and initiatives of MOE. Nevertheless, while T3 finds that teachers have not been treated fairly because teachers are burdened with a lot of clerical work, T4 states that because teachers are required to sit for the CPT, they feel MOE looks down upon them. Moreover, as highlighted by T1 and T3, teachers are being subjected to CPT tests to attest their language proficiency and proficiency courses or redeployment for teachers who do not achieve the standard requirement of English language proficiency level.

The teachers find the initiatives commendable but MOE needs to look at the feasibility and viability of the initiatives, thus find alternatives or solutions to ensure that the initiatives are implemented successfully. The shortcomings from the implementation of the initiatives are depriving the students as well as the teachers from achieving the aims and objectives of the transformation of the English language education. Moreover, not all students and teachers alike will be able to experience the positive impact of the initiatives which subsequently, results in inequality among the students and teachers.

7.5   Analysis of the Teachers' Responses

In this section I discuss the analysis of the teachers' responses wherein the teachers responded to an extract from the Blueprint. I have explained what a personal response is in the methodology chapter but to recap briefly, the personal response is a session

where I have applied a 'Think Aloud Protocol' method to gain some insights into what the teachers think about what is stipulated in the extract.

The extract is the sub-section, 'Strengthening the Teaching of the English Language' on page 4-13 of Chapter Four of the Blueprint (see Appendix 1) and the interviewees were required to respond to the excerpt by recording their thoughts out loud into an audio recorder. The idea was to capture what their thoughts were as they read the excerpt. The personal responses were conducted after the interviews. However, I was only able to obtain four (4) personal responses because one of the interviewees did not forward an audio recording.

When I planned to use this form of collecting data, I had hoped to observe the interviewees' reaction to the language use i.e. their comments on certain words or phrases and the content of the excerpt. Apart from that, it was also hoped that the interviewees would react to how teachers were being portrayed in the extract. However, after analysing their responses, I found that commenting on the content of the extract appealed to them more. Among the content that caught their attention are issues pertaining to the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). They did not express their feelings explicitly on how they have been represented in the extract.

Nevertheless, I am still happy with the responses that they gave as I was able to gain some insights which were not discussed during the interviews and a better understanding of how they felt about issues which had already been discussed during the interviews. Moreover, some of the responses they gave supported their points of discussion during the interviews. Therefore, I believe despite not obtaining what I had expected, the outcome was still favourable.

7.6   Outcome of the Teachers' Responses

In this section, I will describe the responses from the teachers based on the themes that emerged while I analysed their responses. The themes that emerged from the analysis are as below:

I.   Cambridge Placement Test (CPT)

II.   Set System

III.   1BestariNet System

IV.   Self-Directed Learning & Interactive Online Tutoring

V.   Alternative Pathways

After I describe the responses, I will end this chapter with a discussion and conclusion.

7.6.1   Cambridge Placement Test (CPT)

The excerpt describes the Cambridge Placement Test or CPT which all English language teachers have to undertake and in which they are expected to obtain a C1 or C2 grade. Failing to obtain the required grade would result in having to attend an English language course which was scheduled to be carried out in several phases. Teachers, while still teaching in their respective schools, are required to attend the course and complete the assignments.

The teachers made several comments concerning the CPT and they include the time duration of the course, the inappropriateness of the initiative and the monetary reward. With reference to Table 7-2, T1 acknowledged that she and three of her colleagues had taken the test and obtained the required results as well as receiving the monetary reward. T1 reiterates the reward as *bayaran insentif* or incentive payment. T1 also had admitted she did not have to attend the course but she has heard from her friends who did not pass the test that they would have to go for the Intensive English course.

T2, however, states their unhappiness that teachers in the rural areas would have to undergo intensive English training course if they did not meet the required proficiency standard because teachers in rural areas are not exposed to the language as much as those in the urban areas. Moreover, the students are not able to converse well in English and therefore, this scenario does not help these teachers in the teaching and learning process as depicted in Table 7-2.

Table 7-2: Cambridge Placement Test

Teacher	Response
T1	Ok I know about the CPT I took the proficiency test as well you know all the three teachers in my school took it and all of us got c the best is c2 is it c1 or c2 but whatever it is we got the 5000 ringgit *lah* each
	Mmm some are very … dear as well like for example the *bayaran insentif* like I have mention earlier on
	And the training course but I don't undergo the training course so I don't know what is it all about just that I heard some of my friends who still did not pass the course they have to go for another course
T2	Ok teachers in rural areas do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015 ok I'm not happy with this because teachers in rural areas they do not have much exposure for oral and written especially they also do not have good response from their students so which this cannot … help them to perform well in their … teaching and learning process
	Because we must know that … these teachers already have gone aahh have gone through the … teaching … English … academics for proficiency where are they graduated from the cert from the local universities … for example … if they did not perform well how come they will be qualified … the matter is only their surrounding that cannot make they perform well

T2 identified another aspect concerning the intensive English training course. They felt that 8 weeks of immersion programme and 8 weeks of self-learning course is too long because being teachers, especially in rural schools, they need to be in school, for the students are weak in the language and teachers have a heavy workload to attend to. T2 also feels that a course that requires them to attend face-to-face would be a better option than a self-learning course as illustrated in Table 7-3 below.

Table 7-3: Cambridge Placement Test - Teacher 2

T2: The English training course comprises an 8 week immersions programme and 8 week help self learning course teachers will be burden k especially those in rural areas about this programme because … as you know … is the problem … the … problems don't come from them … but about from their surrounding so … I think … the government … especially MOE … must have a face to face course … with the … the teachers and … shorten the course ok … if the teachers are given this such course especially … teachers in rural areas … number one they already have problem with the students number two they have a a lot of works to do especially in their teaching and … learning work and then after that … then they are given some more with the course so I hope … the government especially MOE must consider about this ok

T3, on the other hand, feels that it is unfair that teachers are forced to attend the intensive English training course part time and yet, are still required to carry out official duties as a teacher of his or her school as expressed in Table 7-4.

Table 7-4: Cambridge Placement Test - Teacher 3

T3: Seems a bit unfair you have to force teachers to do this after school hours but at the same time doing the typical … normal teacher tasks

In the excerpt, the redeployment of teachers who were still unable to obtain the required standard of proficiency after the intensive English training course was stipulated and it was this issue which affected all 3 teachers who responded to this aspect during the Think Aloud session (see Table 7-5 below). T1, T2 and T4 questioned the need behind the redeployment of teachers for several reasons. T1 feels redeployment is unfair as some of the English language teachers are trained English language teachers who possess an education degree in English language teaching and redeploying them would mean that they would be teaching subjects which they are not trained for. T1 is of the opinion that the teachers who did not obtain the desired grades may most probably be teachers who have not been trained as an English language teacher but are required to teach the subject as they have been instructed to teach the subject by their superiors. Moreover, T1 feels that trained

English language teachers are normally proficient in the language so blaming the teachers for not being proficient is unfair.

While T1 believes that it is the untrained English teachers who have problems with their proficiency, T2 argues that the language proficiency of these teachers may have deteriorated due to the surroundings of the school that they are teaching in i.e. the students' level of proficiency, and their limited exposure to English. T2 further contends that these teachers had enrolled in their first degree course with the required qualification, referring to the grade they had obtained prior to applying for the degree programme.

T4, however, found the term 'redeployed' worrying. The situation appears to portray that the teachers have suddenly been dismissed from the position which they had secured earlier. T4 also commented that while the teaching hours are not disturbed as the English training courses are held after school hours, the teachers would still have 'extra' workload to attend to aside from the daily teaching assignments.

Table 7-5: Cambridge Placement Test

Teacher	Response
T1	And then … it's a pity that some of the teachers who did not manage to pass the course they still … have to be redeployed and some of them needs to teach other subjects why in the first place became English did you become English teacher is it your choice or you have to be something you know can be questioned
	… I agree that if you want the teachers to be better they have to go for courses if they did not pass a certain level but I don't really agree for teachers who have to … teach other subjects ok for the reason that what I know most English teachers … do come from the background of English ok but I also know that there are some non-optionist ok I was thinking maybe these are the ones who did not pass the requirement because mostly when we take tesl of course we are generally good in English so I think the problem lies in teachers who are non-optionist not optionist on the first place we do have … to understand that some of them do not want to teach English but they are asked by their administrators to teach English so this is an idea you have to think about as well so it's not fair for you to blame solely on the teachers

Teacher	Response
T2	Ok … especially this section redeployment of teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers … the first important thing is they cannot participate well … in their job ok in their job … they do not have the good chances they do not have the opportunities to let's say … they teach good students very excellent students of course this will … make them to improve ok to be better in English ok because … they have to serve good groups of … students so … let's say … you teach in the rural areas it's not the same for those who teach in the elite schools ok of course those teachers… they are coming from the same university ok but when … they are placed in two different areas … I believe that their proficiency also … affected ok
	Cause … we must remember before they apply … for English course of course … they must have certain qualification in English …
T4	A small number of teachers will need to be redeployed that is a problem … ok redeployed is worrisome because the teachers *dah dapat keje* (have secured the position) and suddenly *macam kena buang* (as if they have been dismissed) what are they going to do … and then English training course four hours per week held outside school hours ya it will not disrupt the teaching and learning process but … like extra workload outside school extra workload besides the school work

7.6.2   Set System

In the excerpt, the Ministry intends to introduce the 'set system' to assist secondary school students who struggling with the English language. Students will be segregated according to their levels of proficiency via a diagnostic test. Lessons will be tailored to their needs and the number of students in the respective sets will be lessened. Only two teachers responded to this initiative and both gave differing reactions. T3 predicts it will not work as the 'set system' would require more teachers as the number of classes will increase due to the smaller number of students in a classroom, but there are not enough English language teachers to cater to such a need. T4, on the other hand, welcomes the idea as the smaller number of students appeals to her. Moreover,

T4 appreciates that exercises will be catered according to the level of the students' proficiency instead of a 'one size fits all' exercise as depicted in Table 7-6.

Table 7-6: Set System

Teacher	Response
T3	K it says here … students should be assign to a set with students of similar English proficiency level a set system fine sets should be smaller than normal … I see a problem there because we don't have that many English teachers in the system if the sets are smaller it would mean more number of classes requiring more number of teachers so it might not work
T4	… I agree with the set system … they will sit with the students of similar English proficiency … and I like the idea of having … twenty to thirty students in a class Yeap and … the exercises that we gave in class it can be based on students' skill level so we will not like generalise

7.6.3   1BestariNet system

With the inception of the 1BestariNet system, an internet system for all schools in Malaysia, the Ministry intends to use "ICT models to bring more effective English instruction to students". Nevertheless, T3 and T4 appear to have opposing reactions towards the initiative. T3 claims the system malfunctions a lot of times and T4, while acknowledging that it sounds interesting, says that a lot of time is taken up with the setting up of the equipment and most schools do not have Wifi. T4 further states that schools need a special room that is equipped with the hardware and the system to reduce the time of setting up equipment. This suggests that the schools have limited resources to ensure that this such an initiative can be carried out successfully. T1 asserts that they could not comment on the matter because T1's school has an internet connection problem which results in the school not having access to the available programmes (refer to Table 7-7).

Table 7-7: 1BestariNet System

Teacher	Response
T1	…one bestari net system … most schools are doing it under the frog VLE … which they say it's good I can't say for myself because … my school has a problem of internet actually ok so … we don't really do frog VLE I think that's about it
T3	Oh one bestari dot net system used to crash a lot
T4	Technology mediated instructional approaches in the classroom it's good it will be interesting it will be fun for the students ya but … most schools do not have … good … wifi yup and … sometimes the teachers will take time to hmm you know *pasang* (*set up*) all the … the tools the LCD so will take time … each school needs to have one special room which could is equipped with this technology … you know with the LCD and … laptop so the teacher will not waste time to set up the equipment

7.6.4   Self-Directed Online Learning And Interactive Online Tutoring

The Ministry is exploring introducing self-directed online learning and interactive online tutoring in schools. Two teachers reacted to the idea and both have some hesitations. T3 finds that both ideas are new in Malaysia and good ones to adopt but it will require some time for them to take off. T4, however, hesitates because not all students have access to laptops, computers or Wifi especially those in rural areas. Moreover, not all schools are well equipped or equipped with state of the art technology. Refer to Table 7-8.

Table 7-8: Self-Directed Online Learning and Interactive Online Tutoring

Teacher	Response
T3	This self-directed online learning personally I think it's not something that we in Malaysia practice too much but … it's the kind of culture that I think will be good for Malaysia but I think it's going to require time
T4	Self directed online learning and interactive online tutoring … not all students have laptops and wifi at home … especially for … rural areas ya … I guess interactive online tutoring or self directed online learning is a good way but maybe *sekolah kita tak cukup canggih* (*not sophisticated enough*) or not advance enough or not fully equipped with all these and the background of the students … should also be considered where they come from the lower income family that they

	do not have all these they don't have access to … wifi and you know internet

7.6.5   Alternative Pathways

The Ministry acknowledges that there will be a small shortfall of teachers due to the redeployment of teachers who do not meet the standard proficiency requirement. As such, the Ministry intends to fill in these positions with other alternative pathways i.e. English language teachers who have not been teaching the subject and newly graduate teachers from IPGs and IPTAs. T3 argues that the alternative pathway suggested in the Blueprint is nothing new. T3 appears to be expecting a different suggestion which the Blueprint has not fulfilled as depicted in Table 7-9.

Table 7-9: Alternative Pathways

T3: … just … this part that says they will look for teachers from alternative paths … so right now when the teachers go for training purposes then they will look for … to fill this gaps as the teachers are training there'll be gaps in the teaching … numbers so to fill these gaps the ministry will hire teachers using alternative pathways but from what they have described … they are not alternative pathways they are the normal ways of getting extra English teachers … from university teachers that have retired these are typical so what's the alternative pathway that is a bit unclear to me everything else is ok it's understandable

7.7   Discussion and Conclusion of the Teacher's Response

The teachers responded mostly to the initiatives concerning the teachers' level of proficiency. The teachers were not happy with the initiative for various reasons. Firstly, they feel it is unfair that teachers have to attend English language courses while having to teach at the same time. Teachers already have a heavy workload and having to cope with the course and the assignments would further burden them. Secondly, the circumstances that the teachers are in, i.e. being in an environment where English is hardly spoken, had contributed to the teachers' low proficiency in the

English language. Thirdly, teachers who will face redeployment would have to teach a subject which they have not been trained for. It is also unfair for teachers to be redeployed when some of them were not even trained to teach English in the first place. T4 found the term 'redeployed' worrying as it made teachers appear as if they have been dismissed from their position.

For the other initiatives, the teachers voiced their reservations especially concerning the implementation and the feasibility of implementing them. For example, they expressed concerns about the inception of the 1BestariNet system in schools. The teachers explained that some schools have limited resources and do not have internet connection which would evidently make the initiative unsuccessful, thus depriving students in these schools from having access to online educational activities available on the worldwide web. Apart from the 1BestariNet system, in relation to the proposed initiative - Self-Directed Online Learning and Interactive Online Tutoring, T4 claims that in the school she is attached to, the students are from low income group homes which do not have the means of owning a mobile phone or a computer.

The teachers have responded to the text based on their experience and knowledge of being the personnel on the ground. They are the personnel who implement all policies and initiatives of MOE. Evidently, while the initiatives are welcomed, the teachers have some concerns which they have voiced while responding to the text. MOE needs to review such concerns and the implementation of the initiatives to ensure a successful implementation. The concerns raised by the teachers are related to the feasibility and practicality of implementing such initiatives. These concerns mirror the issues raised by the teachers during the interviews I carried out and discussed earlier in this chapter.

7.8   Conclusion

While the interviews provided information concerning the actual situation which surrounded the transformation of English language education, the teachers' responses revealed the teachers' thoughts on the content of the Blueprint. Results from both analyses not only substantiated each other but they gave insights into the effects of implementing the initiatives. The three main aspects that were found in the analyses are firstly, teachers feel that some of the initiatives are not feasible and impractical due to various issues like the geographical aspects of some schools and lack of facilities; secondly, the implementation and the procedures of the initiatives need to be planned carefully to ensure a smooth implementation of the initiatives and the success of the initiatives; and thirdly, most of the teachers expressed their concerns regarding the CPT which teachers had to sit for and redeployment if they do not achieve the standard level of proficiency in English. The teachers felt it was unfair as some of these teachers were untrained English language teachers but were instructed to teach English and redeploying them would result in the teachers teaching a subject they might not be trained for as well. On another note, while MOE claims that they have consulted various parties i.e. stakeholders and organisations in the planning of initiatives for the transformation of English language education, the outcome of both analyses suggests a mismatch between what they perceive as the best solution or actions and what the teachers feel is essentially needed to improve and transform the English language education.

8 English for Global Economic Competitiveness

8.1 Introduction

For MOE, the English language is presented in the Blueprint as an important language for the students to acquire particularly in this globalisation era. Yet, English is a contested language especially as a language of instruction in the Malaysian education system. This thesis takes this as its starting point, drawing on findings from two data sets: argumentation analysis and social actor analysis of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025 (Blueprint), and thematic analysis of two types of data collected from teachers – interviews, and their responses to an excerpt from the Blueprint. In this chapter I discuss how English, for MOE, is crucial for Malaysian students to acquire and master to ensure that they are aligned with Malaysia's aim of being economically competitive and the issues that arise from the analysis which show the challenges MOE may face in achieving its aims. I begin with providing a brief summary of the findings and then present the pertinent issues which emerged from the findings and relate them to the discussions in the literature review. I then continue this chapter with the limitations of this study and finally, conclude this whole thesis at the end of this chapter.

8.2 Summary of Findings

8.2.1 Analysis of Blueprint Text

In analysing the Blueprint text, I chose sections from Chapter Four of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint) which are relevant to the aims and objectives of the research i.e. the sections which outline the aspirations, vision and context of the transformation of Malaysia's education system, as well as the Language

section of Chapter Four of the Blueprint. The purpose is to analyse and show how the English language and the teaching and learning of the language are represented in the education system of Malaysia. Subsequently, I answer my first research question i.e. How is the English language and the teaching and learning of English language discursively constructed in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025? To achieve this, I first employed Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis which integrates critical discourse analysis (CDA) with their practical reasoning framework.

Analyzing the text with Fairclough & Fairclough's (2012) political discourse analysis framework revealed that MOE takes the position that there is a need for a transformation of the English language education system because English language is an important language to acquire and that the steps proposed in the Blueprint by MOE are the actions which need to be taken in order for students to achieve CEFR operational level of English language proficiency. MOE frames the importance of acquiring the English language from two perspectives. The first is an overarching perspective whereby Malaysia aims to possess a globally competitive education system that produces globally competitive talent and in which every Malaysian student achieves their full potential. The second perspective lies in the students' English language acquisition i.e. the aim is to develop students who are proficient in the English language.

The argument of the Blueprint rests on three elements of the argumentation framework i.e. goals, a number of circumstantial premises and the claims for action. For the circumstantial premises, in relation to the education system as a whole, these are that: Malaysia's education system needs to meet the challenges of the 21st century and globalisation as Malaysia's talents need to compete with the best internationally, as

well as developing and paving the way for the education system's continuous growth and improvement; education is the key to a nation's success and future as well as the country's economic growth; the returns on investment in education are not as high as desired; and students perform poorly in international exams e.g. TIMSS and PISA. In relation specifically to English language education, the circumstantial premises are the need to meet the demands of globalization in terms of being able to communicate in English effectively where English is the international language of communication; the low level of English language proficiency among Malaysian students; a mismatch between the subjects teachers were trained to teach and subjects they end up teaching; the notion that teachers' English language proficiency is the cause of students' level of proficiency in English; and the claim that instructional time for English language lessons is insufficient for students to build operational proficiency in the English language.

MOE's aim of possessing an education system which produces individuals who are globally competitive, successful and on a par with competing countries drives the need for transformation of English language education. Improving standards of English is considered by MOE to be one of the strategies needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century and to compete globally. Intertextuality, presuppositions and imaginaries were employed in the circumstantial premises to substantiate these claims and implications, to convince the readers concerning the circumstances that lead to the need for transforming the English language education system of Malaysia.

This analysis also suggests that MOE is trying to portray that in order to be competitive on a global platform, the mastering of the English language is one of the directions Malaysian education has to take. To MOE, 'Malaysia's talents' need higher levels of proficiency in the English language to contribute to the country's economic

growth and to stay competitive globally, MOE has embarked on improving English language proficiency by transforming the English language education system. Currently, the level of English language proficiency is not at the level desired by MOE and therefore, a transformation of the English language education is constructed as being vital in ensuring the goals are achieved. It is claimed that the initiatives which MOE has identified and illustrated in the Blueprint, including the implementation of 21st century skills, will bring the level of English language proficiency to the level which MOE have defined as standard i.e. CEFR operational level of proficiency. While MOE clearly puts a case for desiring Malaysian students to achieve CEFR operational level of proficiency, looking beyond achieving the desired level of proficiency simply for the sake of competing globally and for economic growth may perhaps be a better direction for the country's future. There is value in adopting a more holistic view because learning a language and being proficient in the language can go beyond competing on a global platform and achieving economic success. Learning a language and being proficient allows an individual to discover and acquire knowledge and experiences from sources which are in the targeted language which perhaps may not be available in their own language. Moreover, it allows an individual to grow and connect socially and go beyond their comfort zone, thus, enabling an individual to learn and appreciate other cultures. Limiting students to achieving a targeted level of proficiency for specific purposes would hinder them from gaining new experiences, acquiring new knowledge and making new discoveries and reaching their full potential.

8.2.2   Representation of English Language Teachers

While the analysis of the Blueprint shows how English is positioned as an important language to acquire, primarily for reasons of enabling students to compete on an

international platform and thereby promoting Malaysia's economic growth, the analysis of the representation of English language teachers reveals how these teachers are positioned in the education system.

In analyzing the representation of the English language teachers, I employed the social actor representation framework of van Leeuwen's (2008) social-semantic inventory to answer my second research question i.e. How have the teachers of English language been represented in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

While the teachers are acknowledged in the Blueprint, they are not constructed as partners or associates in the development and implementation of policies and initiatives. As partners, the teachers would be involved directly as well as working side by side with the policymakers and the administrators in building and developing policies and initiatives. Constructing them as active agents would show their close participation as teachers and educators in the formation of initiatives and their implementation as well as the policy as a whole. Instead, teachers are acknowledged in only two elements of the argumentation framework i.e. the circumstantial premises and the claims for action. In the circumstantial premises, the contexts were the teachers' level of English language proficiency and the "mismatch between subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-11). In the claims for action, teachers were mentioned in the upskilling of the teachers' level of English language proficiency.

English language teachers are mainly represented using the following categories - functionalization, passivation by subjection, assimilation by aggregation and collectivization, and impersonalisation by abstraction. These teachers were represented using these categories for several purposes such as representing teachers as

professionals and implementers, claiming that teachers will receive benefits, assuring readers that the teachers' shortcomings are taken care of, identifying several groups of teachers involved in the initiatives and the number of teachers involved in the shortfall, and identifying teachers as the cause of the students' low level of proficiency in the English language. In all these categories they tend to take a passive role where they are, mostly, at the receiving end. MOE describes what will happen to the teachers, how teachers are involved in the issues, and what the teachers will receive upon implementation of an initiative. Moreover, as teachers tended to be at the receiving end, it suggests MOE, most of the time, takes on a more superior and managerial position towards teachers instead of constructing them as peers. MOE only once gives the teachers an active role wherein MOE describes what teachers will do, "teachers to tailor pedagogical styles according to students' skill level and learning requirements" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). When MOE describes the initiatives, the teachers are generally not mentioned and are backgrounded, although the initiatives would require the teachers to be involved in their implementation.

In summary, although MOE recognizes and acknowledges the role of the English language teachers as professionals and implementers, and their existence in Malaysia's education system, how they are represented in the Blueprint reveals a more limited perspective. Teachers' involvement in the education system is limited to being implementers of policies and initiatives, and teachers of the children, instead of being represented as partners by MOE. The teachers do not appear to be invited to contribute to the development of initiatives despite MOE claiming that teachers have been consulted for their contribution when the Blueprint was initiated.

8.2.3   The Interviews and the Responses

The third analysis is from the interviews and personal responses. Teachers were interviewed and asked to verbalise their thoughts into a recorder while reading an excerpt from the Blueprint. Their responses from the interviews were categorized thematically i.e. according to the interview questions, while personal responses were categorized according to the parts of the excerpt which caught their attention. They lend an insight into the reception and implementation process of the initiatives in schools and at the same time, partly contribute to answering my third research question, "What insights can be gained from these analyses about the teaching and learning of English language in Malaysia's education system?" Answers to my third research question are, apart from the interviews and personal responses, drawn from the findings of my other datasets i.e. text analysis of the Blueprint and analysis of the representation of teachers as social actors.

The interviews with the English language teachers and their personal responses revealed the teachers' perspectives as implementers of the policy of Malaysian education. The questions put to them revolved around the Blueprint, the initiatives and their experience as teachers of the English language when implementing the programmes and policy. In general, the teachers welcomed the initiatives and understood the reasons. However, the teachers had concerns about their implementation.

Firstly, some of the initiatives, like the *BestariNet* system, although regarded by teachers as a good initiative i.e. inculcating the use of IT in the teaching and learning of the English language, are not viable or practical in some areas of Malaysia due to the geographical aspects of an area or school and the financial standing of the community in an area. Secondly, in the case of the Dual Language Programme (DLP),

some of the schools (which were identified to take part in DLP) were not given explicit instructions on the implementation of the programme. The aims and objectives of MOE and the selected schools are not necessarily the same; the main aim of the selected school is to ensure that the results in Science and Mathematics are good, while MOE, with the implementation of DLP, wants students who are able to converse in the English language effectively. Thirdly, the teachers are not happy with the CPT, and having to attend English language proficiency courses if they do not obtain the standard level of proficiency. Moreover, the teachers were apprehensive about the redeployment exercise if they still do not achieve the expected level of proficiency in the English language. Some teachers were also unhappy with how the CPT was carried out as some of them felt they were good in the language, yet their level of proficiency was marked below the expected level of proficiency.

In the personal response, most of the responses, apart from providing a deeper insight into the teachers' thoughts on the initiatives and Blueprint, resonated with the teachers' feedback during the interview. Most of the teachers voiced their dissatisfaction regarding the CPT and teachers being redeployed as a result of not obtaining the standard level of English language proficiency. Apart from that, the teachers responded to various initiatives presented in the excerpt. While some teachers welcomed the initiatives, other teachers had reservations about them as there were issues such as the feasibility and viability of introducing and implementing the initiatives. This resonates with the concerns the teachers brought up during the interview.

8.3   English for global economic competitiveness

From the analyses that I have conducted I have found that the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) acknowledges the importance of acquiring and mastering the English

language and drawing from the analysis of the text, MOE views English language as being primarily for global competitiveness. Many countries around the world have rationalised and put forth similar views and have therefore transformed or reformed their respective education systems and Malaysia is wanting to accomplish the same. The context for the reformation and transformation of the education system of Malaysia centralises on the globalisation phenomenon. Globalisation, as defined by many authors I listed in section 2.3.1 in Chapter 2 of this thesis, is the process of interdependence of countries and nations on one another in economic growth due to various economies such as trade, migration and services. I have extended this definition with one of Ampuja's (2015) assertions that globalisation has causal significance in relation to society and culture. I extended the definition because interdependence concerns countries depending on each other for various purposes like trade and expertise which requires cooperation between and among countries.

Ironically, most studies (refer to sub-section 2.3.2 of Chapter 2 of this thesis) in the field of education contend that globalisation has resulted in economic competitiveness between and among countries. In section 2.3.2, I highlighted that due to globalisation, the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) began and many countries adopted the GERM principles when they wanted to reform or transform their education system to meet with the challenges of globalisation. However, in reality, an education system of a country need not follow GERM to develop a successful education system as pointed out by Sahlberg (Sahlberg, 2016). The issue I wish to highlight concerns how some countries assume that the GERM principles would produce an excellent education system for their country without referring to any concrete evidence that attests the assumption and yet, they adopt GERM principles to reform and transform their education system.

In relation to the Blueprint, there are a few concerns I wish to bring forth. Firstly, MOE has employed various discourses concerning globalisation, such as being globally competitive, students' performance in international examinations like TIMMS and PISA, developing a successful education system and focussing on the teaching of Mathematics and Science, as their circumstantial premise for the transformation and reformation of Malaysia's education system. These discourses appear to reflect the belief, as their circumstantial premise as a means to reform and transform Malaysia's education system is almost similar to the situation Sahlberg (Sahlberg, 2016) puts forth in his argument which I highlighted in sub-section 2.3.2 and above, wherein many countries have substantiated a reformation of their education system with the demands of global economic growth.

Secondly, MOE puts forward the idea that the acquisition of and proficiency in the English language will enable the students to compete in a global workforce setting and that neighbouring countries like Singapore and China are focusing on developing their students' English language proficiency for the same reason i.e. to compete in the global workforce setting. MOE has obviously used globalisation to substantiate the transformation of the English language education to ensure that the nation will be able to compete on a global level and cites other countries which have taken steps to develop their nation's English language proficiency for the same reason. Thus, as I mentioned in Section 2.3.1of Chapter Two, MOE uses a top down policy measure based on neoliberalism in the Blueprint as an economic ideology which ultimately, as Park and Wee (2012) 2012; Piller and Cho (2013) have stated, pushes the global spread of English. These concerns I have put forth here suggests that MOE is following the trend and belief that many countries are adopting to substantiate the changes they want to make in the education system. This seems to reflect T3's

observation which I discuss in sub-section 7.3.8 whereby MOE decides on a policy or an approach because every other country is implementing the same policy or approach in their education system without considering its feasibility or whether it is applicable in Malaysia's situation. This scenario also reflects Piller and Cho's (2013) assertion about South Korean higher education towards English as a medium of instruction that "...the ways in which the global spread of neoliberal free-market doctrines naturalizes the use of English as the language of global competitiveness" (p. 24). One more example is getting all schools to implement the use of IT for 21st century learning and teaching when this initiative could not be carried out successfully for reasons such as no internet access, and the financial standing of some students as highlighted by T1 and T5 to carry out the initiative. In Malaysia and Singapore, there is a colloquial term which is used to describe a person or a group when they would grasp at anything to not miss an opportunity and the term is 'kiasu'. MOE seems to be projecting this attitude as they are following the footsteps of other countries without considering the actual situation of the country such as infrastructure, available internet access and sufficient teachers. This was also highlighted by one of the teachers interviewed where they found MOE has the tendency of going for 'panic buys'. This resonates with the study of Ramirez, Meyer and Lerch (2016), which is also discussed in Chapter Two. They have claimed that globalisation has resulted in some countries adopting and forming education polices which are a current trend or led by supra-national structures such as the European Union.

Global competitiveness and meeting the needs of the 21st century are the overall themes that frame the direction of the Blueprint particularly in equipping students with 21st century skills, preparing Malaysian students to meet the demands of globalisation and being competitive on a global platform. MOE believes that it is critical and

necessary for 'Malaysian talent' to be successful on a global platform in order to thrive in the global economy. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.2 of this thesis, the education policy of many countries is influenced by globalisation and the demands of international competition, and Malaysia is obviously one of them. This, thus, supports Sajid's (2005) claims that education policy is being transformed and changed in the name of economic growth rather than to acquire knowledge. I believe education policy should be transformed, reformed or changed for the benefit of a nation, society and country.

In the Blueprint, MOE states Malaysian students need to be in the top tier or ranked highly in international exams like TIMMS and PISA as one of the circumstantial premises for the transformation of the English language education. Thus, one of the goals in the Blueprint is to develop students who are independently proficient in the English language to ensure that they are able to communicate effectively on a global platform. Indirectly, such a statement seems to suggest that MOE is claiming that a student would be a failure if he or she were not able to communicate effectively in English, and thus would not be able to compete on a global platform and acquire a 21st century skill.

In view of all that has been mentioned above, it is observed that MOE presents their goal - the acquisition and mastery of the English language - by supporting it with the context that portrays English language as important. They claim that obtaining success on every level i.e. producing the best education system, successfully competing on a global level and obtaining a higher tier grade in exams, especially international exams such as PISA and TIMMS, is the direction which MOE has to take to ensure economic growth and success. While being competitive is good for a country's economic growth, at times, it can compromise the students' well-being and intellectual growth.

Ultimately, MOE wants the students to be globally competitive and achieve excellent results in international exams like PISA and TIMMS, to build and possess an excellent education system and that students and teachers should have a high level of English language proficiency. Failing to achieve these, would result in the teachers and students concerned being penalised such as - as mentioned in the Blueprint – teachers would be required to undergo English language proficiency course or face redeployment; and students would have failed the entire SPM exam for failing their English language SPM paper. This scenario is similar to South Korea as discussed in Piller and Cho's (2013) paper concerning neoliberalism ideology influencing the change of education policy specifically English language instruction. A higher institution in South Korea had introduced and made English language as the only medium of instruction in the name of globalisation.

In addition, upon taking a closer look at the Blueprint, MOE's intention of producing a successful education system may be challenging to attain for substantial reasons I discuss below.

Firstly, MOE has claimed to have carried out extensive research prior to the development of the Blueprint. However, the analysis I conducted (refer to Chapter Five of this thesis) shows that they did not elaborate on research that validates their claims as indicated. In sub-section 2.2.1 of Chapter 2 of this thesis, I discussed how education research, under normal circumstances, ensures informed and unbiased solutions, improvements and suggestions to policymakers and practitioners, policy makers and researchers in education policy. MOE did not substantiate some of their claims with evidence-based research, instead they employed presuppositions in their claims to inform the readers of their intention and decisions. The absence of extensive research is not only limited to some of the claims but also to the initiatives as I pointed

out in Chapter Six when I interviewed the teachers, who asserted that very little considerations were made when the initiatives were developed and during the implementation.

Some of the initiatives for the transformation of the English language education system, according to the teachers interviewed, were impractical and not viable to be conducted in schools for reasons such as available facilities and geographical aspects, while the initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency was considered unfair. MOE attested in the Blueprint that they have consulted stakeholders – parents, teachers, students, educationists and academics - prior to the formation of the Blueprint and the inception of the transformation of Malaysia's education system and as such, one might expect that issues such as logistics and geographical issues would not have emerged during the implementation of the initiatives. Thus, this suggests that the consultation carried out with teachers was not done in a way which was enough to identify these problems concerning the initiatives and the implementation of the initiatives.

As a result of such a situation, the aims and objectives of the Blueprint – specifically in the teaching and learning of English - may not be attainable. This echoes a claim I highlighted in sub-section 2.4.5 made by Psacharopoulos (1990) for a policy to be successful, the actual conditions, pre-requisites, and feasibility of implementing a policy should be thoroughly examined and analysed before a policy is implemented. Secondly, in sub-section 7.3.6, the objectives and aims of the Dual Language Programme (DLP) were misinterpreted by the school which one of the teachers I interviewed was attached to. This misinterpretation created tension between the school's goals and MOE's. This misinterpretation of objectives and aims is not new because this happened when the PPSMI policy was in place, as highlighted in sub-

section 2.4.5 where Ali et al. (2011) revealed that science and mathematics teachers were prone to teaching the keywords in English more than using the English language as a language of instruction and communication. As this misinterpretation has been repeated, this suggests that it was neither highlighted nor brought to the attention of the policymakers and the stakeholders before the reformation of the education system took place. This form of misinterpretation of aims and objectives is another example of Psacharopoulos' (Psacharopoulos, 1990) assertion that misinterpretation of policy can result in the failure of policy implementation.

Thirdly, the teachers whom I interviewed provided insights into their experiences as English language teachers and the teaching and learning of the English language as well as the implementation process of MOE's policy and initiatives. They are the eyes and ears on the school grounds and therefore, can provide valuable insights and information which may be of value to policymakers and researchers. In the Blueprint, teachers were claimed to be consulted for their feedback, comments and suggestions but when I conducted a close analysis of the text, I found that the teachers were acknowledged as implementers of policy and professionals only but not as partners. If teachers were represented as partners, it would promote teacher professionalism and activism which would make teachers accountable for their role as educators and become more active in their teacher role and consequently, would strengthen the success and implementation of the education policy. Moreover, policymakers could gain insightful information that is vital for policymaking.

Fourth, the issue concerns policy borrowing or adopting education policies of other countries as mentioned in Chapter Two, section 2.3.2 of this thesis. Policy borrowing is defined as "conscious adoption in one context of policy observed in another" (Phillips & Ochs, 2004, p. 774). Mundy et al. (2016) argued that globalisation has

resulted in economic competitiveness wherein a successful education system represents the economic competitiveness of a country. The international comparison of education system performance is another reason for some countries to adopt education policies from countries which are more successful as the government believes that a successful education system is equivalent to economic competitiveness. In the case of Malaysia, MOE adopted the Common European Framework (CEFR) as a benchmark for the level of proficiency. Incorporating this benchmark in Malaysia's education system is to ensure that students obtain a grade that is internationally credible and accepted. MOE legitimises the claim that adoption and incorporation of the CEFR serves a need for an international benchmark for proficiency and it is also to ensure that Malaysians' English language proficiency is equally of international standards and subsequently to "maximise their employability in the global workforce" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013, pp. 4-10). MOE also stated the need to develop the same employee value proposition as countries such as Singapore and China. Employee value proposition is defined as what the employer expects from their prospective and current employees and the benefits the employee will receive in return. While MOE states that adopting CEFR as an international benchmark is to ensure that the Malaysia youth are able to speak the English language as fluently as their international counterparts when working at an international level, in my findings chapter, Section 5.3 of Chapter 5 -, I argue that McNamara (2011) contended that difficulties in mutual understanding can emerge and cause grave consequences if both speakers (second language speakers or otherwise) are not aware of each other's culture or history. The culture and history of where the speaker is from would influence and affect the accent features, lexical choices and sentence structures. So, obtaining a level of language

proficiency and competency of an international standard alone is not necessarily sufficient to prepare one to work at an international level.

To conclude, MOE established the context of the transformation of the English language education in the following situations: firstly, the English language will enable students to compete on a global level. Secondly, MOE claims that a successful education system will enable Malaysian students to obtain a level of proficiency that is equivalent to an international level of proficiency (i.e. CEFR operational level of proficiency) in the English language. Thirdly, MOE also contends the same belief which many have also advocated – "each nation's social, political, and economic future in the world system is directly tied to their educational success at home" (Baker & Wiseman, 2005). All of the above suggests that MOE perceives that a highly successful education system will ensure economic growth, success and competitiveness and for MOE, English is for global economic competitiveness. As such, MOE wants to transform and reform the English language education to develop students whose English language is at an operational level of proficiency. MOE has taken several measures to ensure that their aims and vision transpires. However, some concrete issues around the implementation of the initiatives appear to have received less attention, and this could impact the success of the transformation the success of the transformation of the education system. In addition, teachers need to be acknowledged, not only for their pedagogical expertise, but also as policy makers, to promote teacher professionalism and activism to ensure that the aims of the education policy are achieved.

MOE's notion as stated above is not new and many countries have the same perception. Neoliberalism under the guise of globalisation has heavily influenced MOE policymakers in the aims and goals of the education policy, of which resonates

with Piller and Cho's (2013) claim, which I mentioned earlier, that neoliberal free market ideology became a "covert language mechanism" (Piller & Cho, 2013, p. 23) and thus, English language became the language of competitiveness. I believe that MOE should consider looking beyond English for economic competitiveness because evidently, in pursuit of global competitiveness, the implementation process of the initiatives, according to the teachers, have not been considered nor planned properly although the initiatives were commendable and at the same time due to the lack of infrastructure in some areas of the country, these initiatives could not be implemented. On another note, English language has also become a neo-imperialism tool on Malaysia (and many other countries) which is ironic as Malaysia had wanting to be free from being colonised by the British Empire..

8.4   Suggestions when forming new policies and their implementation

I have highlighted several issues that emerged from the analyses in section 8.3 which reveals that, while MOE has presented their ideas, visions, aspirations and their intentions for the transformation of the English language education in the Blueprint and, at the same time claiming what is presented has gone through a rigorous process, the teachers' experiences during the implementation reveal a different story. Moreover, teachers have very little participation in the formation and development of policy despite the fact that they are the implementers of policies and initiatives and they have the closest contact with students and schools to provide feedback on the policies and initiatives and their effectiveness. Another issue concerns the overall aim of the transformation which is limited to the current demands i.e. globalization and enabling students to compete on a global platform.

Thus, my suggestion is that in any new policy or when transforming, reforming or revising a policy, the overall aim should be beyond short-term goals, current trends

and political agendas. It should be about building a better, well rounded nation to bring a country to another level of success. While there is nothing wrong in adopting policies of other countries, policy makers and government education officials should look into all aspects of feasibility, practicality and suitability of the policy by conducting a thorough and comprehensive research and investigation. The implementation of the policies should be given special attention and importance to ensure a policy is conducted and carried out efficiently to avoid waste of funds and manpower.

Teachers need to be acknowledged as professionals and implementers of policy, and given an active role in policy making, implementation and the education system. The process of obtaining background information, suggestions, and complaints when introducing new educational initiatives needs to be carried out thoroughly. All parties affected by the transformation should be ready in all aspects such as infrastructure, location, manpower and equipment to receive new policies and initiatives to enable a successful implementation of policies and initiatives. Assessing the viability and feasibility of a policy and initiative is required ahead of time to ensure that they are not implemented and formed in vain. Thirdly, teachers should be acknowledged as partners in the policy-making and education system.

Teachers are the eyes and ears of the advantages, limitations, issues, problems and shortcomings of policies in schools. Their voices should be heeded so that the new policies and initiatives are implemented successfully and benefit everyone. Teachers should be treated as partners as they are the ones handling the students and implementing the policies and initiatives. Teachers should be given the voice and their voices should be heeded because they know the actual situation of a school and its location. Fourth, MOE should consider aims, objectives and contexts which go beyond

ranking and competition. MOE should investigate what is best for the country's future
and the nation so that what is gained and obtained would benefit everyone in the long
run because one size does not fit all.

MOE has to consider many aspects when introducing and implementing new policies
and initiatives due to Malaysia's geographical, infrastructure and societal aspects.
Some of the initiatives were unsuccessful as some schools were ill-equipped with the
basics such as internet access to enable teachers to use 21st century teaching skills in
the classroom. In short, MOE needs to give due consideration, careful planning, and
consult many parties especially teachers to ensure an effective and holistic policy
which transcends time or is at least applicable in many situations and for use in the
future.

8.5   Conclusion and possibilities for further research

To conclude, I wish to reiterate that the overall aim of this research is to find out how
the Ministry of Education Malaysia perceived the English language in the education
system. In order to achieve this aim, the objectives of research were to analyse how the
English language is represented in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025
(Blueprint) and how the English language teachers' role is represented in the
Blueprint.

These objectives were achieved by answering the following research questions:

1. How is the English language and the teaching and learning of English language
   discursively constructed in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

2. How have the teachers of English language been represented in the Malaysia
   Education Blueprint 2013-2025?

3. What insights can be gained from these analyses about the teaching and
   learning of English language in Malaysia's education system?

From the analyses, MOE views English language as being primarily for global competitiveness because the findings that emerged from the analyses were geared towards competing at a global level. However, the insights gained from the interviews and Think Aloud sessions suggest that certain issues concerning the implementation of the initiatives and acknowledging the role of English language teachers (beyond implementers of policy and pedagogical experts) were overlooked which can result in policy failure and therefore, the transformation of the education system might not be successful.

On another note, MOE should reconsider viewing English language as a means for global competitiveness alone, as learning English language (or any language for that matter) and being proficient at the language is more than being able to compete at an international level. Acquiring English language and being proficient in the language can enable one to gain unlimited access to knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Possibly, when MOE does not limit its view to global competitiveness alone, the proficiency level of English language as well as the education system and student achievement as a whole will transform for the better as highlighted in Sahlberg (2016) that the countries which did not adhere to Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) have a more successful education system.

With the above in mind, my research intends to inform the policy makers, or anyone who is interested in education and language education, of the need to identify what English language means to an education system and how it can affect the initiatives and the overall aims of a policy to ensure that a policy is not skewed to a narrow agenda to avoid missing a bigger picture. In the Malaysian context, this research is to contribute to the field of policy analysis particularly, language education policy and an insight into the teaching and learning of English language.

Apart from that, I hope this research would lend an insight into the incorporation of Think-Aloud protocol as a method of analysis in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis as a means of gaining a reader's interpretation or train of thoughts when reading a text. Albeit, the incorporation of Think-Aloud protocol was on a small scale, I believe that it has contributed some insights into the subject matter and therefore, I suggest that a study on using the method in the field of CDA on a bigger scale be carried out to further observe its contribution to the field of study.

I wish to also suggest a textual analysis on the *English language education reform in Malaysia : The Roadmap 2015-2025* document which was developed and printed in 2015 by *MOE* as this document is an extension of the Roadmap for the English language education transfromation mentioned in the Blueprint.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Language Section of Chapter 4 of the Blueprint

4-9

the content covered in the prescribed textbooks. These tools could be utilised both during and after school hours and across multiple platforms.

Building public and student awareness

The Ministry intends to work with other government agencies (like MASTIC and MOSTI), the private sector and NGOs, to roll out a national public awareness campaign via television, newspapers and social media. From 2013, the Ministry will engage local terrestrial and satellite television stations to develop options for televising events like science fairs and robotics competitions such as is common in countries like South Korea. From 2014 onwards, the Ministry also plans to collaborate with television stations to improve Science and Mathematics programmes, for instance, by injecting more critical thinking elements into existing educational programmes and developing new, engaging educational programmes. Additionally, the Ministry will explore expanding its *pusat sains bergerak* programme to encompass schools in more rural and remote areas.

The Ministry will continue to collaborate with institutions such as museums and science centres to develop or scale up learning programmes for students. These programmes may be built into the curriculum, or delivered after-school as enrichment activities. Finally, the Ministry will run a campaign to educate the public about the diversity of career opportunities in STEM related fields so as to encourage more students to select STEM subjects.

Supporting with incentives

The Ministry will explore the viability of providing more incentives to encourage upper secondary students to enrol in the Science stream. This includes a tax relief for parents with children in the Science stream in Form 4, Form 5, Form 6 or Matriculation, and an increase in the monthly scholarship amount for STPM students in the Science stream. The Ministry will also explore setting aside a proportion of awards for outstanding STEM teachers. To give schools the incentive to encourage more students to enter the Science stream, the Ministry will consider introducing STEM-related KPIs like the number of Science students and quality of lab facilities.

Wave 2 (2016 - 2020): Building on the foundations

This wave will see the roll-out of the KSSM and revised KSSR curriculum. Additionally, from 2019 onwards, the Ministry will begin participating in the Grade 4 TIMSS assessment (equivalent to Year 4 in the Malaysian system) in addition to the Grade 8 assessment it already participates in. This measure will help the Ministry benchmark the Science and Mathematics performance of younger Malaysian students against international standards. During this wave, the Ministry will also encourage the development of inter-school learning communities to enable teachers to share their experiences in teaching the new curriculum, learn from each other and provide feedback to the Ministry.

In addition, the Ministry will upgrade existing Science equipment and facilities in schools to ensure that they are optimal for the effective teaching and learning of STEM. The Ministry also intends to upgrade existing Science rooms in primary schools by the end of Wave 2.

The Ministry will extend its STEM awareness programmes to primary school students and their parents. The Ministry intends to adopt an informal approach to strengthening interest in STEM education and careers by organising mobile Science fairs and centralised Science camps. These avenues will provide hands-on learning opportunities for students and parents to understand the benefits of STEM education and to discover that learning Science and Mathematics can be fun, relevant and enriching. The Ministry will also encourage teachers and students to take greater advantage of informal learning centres such as Petrosains and the National Science Centre.

Wave 3 (2021 - 2025): Innovating to the next level

The Ministry will evaluate the success of all initiatives from the first two waves and develop a roadmap for the future. It will introduce fresh initiatives and programmes as required.

LANGUAGE

The Ministry aims to develop students who are proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and the English language, and who are encouraged to learn an additional language. Measures taken will include:

- Implementing a new KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum for students whose mother tongue is not Bahasa Malaysia in national-type schools or *Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (SJK)*;
- Introducing LINUS 2.0 with an expanded scope to address English language literacy;
- Strengthening the delivery of English language lessons, for example, via the Oral Proficiency in English language for Secondary School (OPS English) Programme or through a "set system" of teaching and learning where students are grouped based on their proficiency levels;
- Intensifying testing and upskilling of all English language subject teachers based on the Cambridge Placement Test and the Aptis Test
- Testing and upskilling of Bahasa Malaysia subject teachers focusing on National-type schools;
- Introducing Bahasa Malaysia and English language remedial interventions and support programmes for students who do not meet the required proficiency level;
- Making it compulsory for students to pass the English language subject paper at SPM from 2016; and
- Providing access to learning an additional language at primary and secondary level.

The Representation Of English Language In The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 -2025. A CDA Perspective.

EXHIBIT 4-5

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

CEFR	Description
BASIC USER — Able to carry out "real life" tasks of a touristic nature	**A1** Able to use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Able to introduce himself/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. Able to interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help
	A2 Able to 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). Able to communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Able to describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need
INDEPENDENT USER — Able to effectively express views and hold one's own in social discourse	**B1** Able to understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Able to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Able to produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Able to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans
	B2 Able to understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Able to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Able to 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
PROFICIENT USER — Able to fully participate in professional and academic life	**C1** Able to understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Able to express himself/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Able to use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes. Able to produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices
	C2 Able to understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Able to summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Able to express himself/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations

SOURCE: Common European Framework of Reference

In general, the Ministry has three goals for the learning of languages:

- Fostering a unique shared identity between Malaysians anchored in the ability to be proficient in the use of a common national language, Bahasa Malaysia;

- Developing individuals that are equipped to work in a globalised economy where the English language is the international language of communication; and

- Providing opportunities to learn an additional language.

Malaysia is blessed with a multicultural heritage. While Bahasa Malaysia is widely spoken by all Malaysians, Chinese, Indian, and other ethnic minorities retain use of their mother tongue. Additionally, the English language, as a second language, is used in many parts of Malaysian professional and social life. This makes the country well-positioned to develop a nation of people who are at least "operationally proficient" in more than one language. Operational proficiency is defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as the linguistic fluency required to participate fully in professional and academic life (Exhibit 4-5). As the world grows more connected and competitive than it has ever been before, it is imperative that Malaysia capitalises on its inherent advantages to strengthen its position in the global economy. Neighbouring Asian education systems in China, South Korea, and Singapore are increasingly focused on developing students that are proficient in their national language, and the English language to maximise their employability in the global workforce. Malaysia needs to develop a similar employee value proposition.

The Roadmap: Creating language proficiency at scale

As a first priority, every child that goes through the Malaysian education system should be operationally proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and independently proficient in the English language, as defined by the CEFR. Students from National-type schools will be proficient in an additional language. This will, however require raising Bahasa Malaysia standards in National-type schools, better supporting students that are falling behind in Bahasa Malaysia as well as improving the teaching of English language over the next three years.

Once these improvements have been made, the Ministry will turn its attention to building a system that creates widespread proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language, as well as universally encouraging students to learn an additional language. Efforts to develop Bahasa Malaysia into a Language of Knowledge or *Bahasa Ilmu* will be intensified, building further upon current initiatives. Structural changes that go beyond merely improving the quality of English language teaching to creating a more immersive English language environment will be required. The Roadmap will be implemented in three waves from 2013 to 2025.

Wave 1 (2013 - 2015): Strengthening the current system

Wave 1 will focus on improving the existing system. Over the coming three years, the Ministry will focus on making the standards of the Bahasa Malaysia curriculum uniform across all schools, improving English language teaching and lesson delivery, and increasing the availability of additional language options for students not in National-type schools. Children struggling with literacy will receive additional support through the LINUS 2.0 programme and after-school remedial support for Bahasa Malaysia in Years 4 to 6 to enable them to keep up with their mainstream peers.

Improving Bahasa Malaysia standards

To overcome lower levels of Bahasa Malaysia proficiency in National-type schools, the Ministry rolled out a new KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum in 2011 for Year 1, and will complete the full rollout to all years by 2016. The new KSSR Bahasa Malaysia curriculum is specially designed for teaching students whose mother tongue is not Bahasa Malaysia and who do not experience the greater Bahasa Malaysia immersion available in National schools. This curriculum defines fewer learning requirements in the early years of primary education; converging to similar skill acquisition standards as in National Schools by Year 6 (Exhibit 4-7), with appropriate assessment.

Bahasa Malaysia teachers in National-type schools will be trained to deliver this new curriculum and to effectively teach the language to students whose mother tongue is not Bahasa Malaysia, for instance, by incorporating teaching techniques used in the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) and the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programmes. The Ministry will take similar measures to improve the curriculum and teaching of Remove or *Peralihan* classes. The goal is to ensure basic proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia for all students as they enter secondary school. Chinese language or Tamil will remain as the medium of instruction for all other subjects in National-type schools.

EXHIBIT 4-7

Difference between Bahasa Malaysia curricula in National schools and National-type schools under KSSR

Cumulative difference in number of Bahasa Malaysia learning standards¹ in National schools and National-type schools under KSSR
Percent
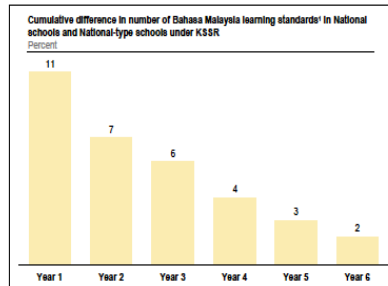
1 Learning standards are discrete standards that students are taught and expected to master as they progress from year to year. E.g., "Ability to count from one to ten in Bahasa Malaysia." Learning standards are cumulative, e.g., students in Year 2 are expected to have mastered Year 1 learning standards.
SOURCE: Curriculum Development Division

In addition to LINUS 2.0 in Years 1 to 3, the Ministry will introduce optional Bahasa Malaysia remedial classes in Years 4 to 6. Parents of students who have yet to meet the required proficiency levels will be strongly encouraged to send their children for remedial classes. Schools, in collaboration with parents, will have the flexibility to offer up to five hours of remedial classes per week, outside of school hours. This could include classes after school, on weekends or during the school holidays. The best Bahasa Malaysia teachers in each school will teach remedial and Remove classes. The Ministry will gradually expand remedial classes to all schools where there are groups of students falling behind.

The Ministry will test the proficiency of all Bahasa Malaysia teachers in National-type schools by the end of 2015, including non-option teachers. Teachers will be grouped in two categories: i) proficient, and ii) requires training to reach proficiency. There is likely to be a small, third group of teachers whose grasp of Bahasa Malaysia is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed. Non-option teachers in the first two categories will be encouraged to undergo the *Program Intervensi Tambah Opsyen* (PITO) to add on the Bahasa Malaysia option. Teachers may only undergo the PITO programme once and will continue to be posted to schools based on the Ministry's needs. If necessary, additional teachers will be provided to National-type schools facing a shortage of proficient Bahasa Malaysia teachers. The Ministry commits to continue providing Bahasa Malaysia teachers who are proficient in vernacular languages for Year 1 and 2 classes in National-type schools.

In addition, the Ministry will begin redesigning and realigning the Bahasa Malaysia curriculum and assessments along the four components of language proficiency as outlined in the CEFR, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening. The Ministry will also map Bahasa Malaysia grades in the SPM to CEFR grades to allow the Ministry to better evaluate its efforts to raise Bahasa Malaysia proficiency amongst students.

4-13

Develop Bahasa Malaysia into a Language of Knowledge

In line with the To Uphold Bahasa Malaysia Strengthen the English Language policy or *Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Memperkukuhkan Bahasa Inggeris* (MBMMBI), Bahasa Malaysia will remain the medium of instruction in National schools, including for Science and Mathematics. For National-type schools, Chinese language and Tamil will remain the medium of instruction.

Efforts to develop Bahasa Malaysia into a language of knowledge will be intensified. This includes encouraging academics to develop new bodies of work in Bahasa Malaysia, strengthening *Institut Terjemahan dan Buku Malaysia* to translate international research and key terminology into Bahasa Malaysia, and greater provision of training courses in Bahasa Malaysia by *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* and local universities. The Government will also send Bahasa Malaysia teachers abroad to train Malaysians overseas as instructors in Bahasa Malaysia to further spread and strengthen the language.

Strengthening the teaching of the English language

The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language teachers by the end of 2012 using the CPT. Teachers will be grouped into three categories based on their results—proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency. The Ministry will consider rewarding the best performers under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or *Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan*. There is likely to be a small, fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed. A pilot study involving 7,500 teachers from four states showed that a significant number of teachers did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and a small number of teachers will need to be redeployed.

Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process.

Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015. The English training course comprises an 8-week immersion programme and 8-week self-learning course. The immersion programme is an in-person, face-to-face course with 30 hours contact time each week. The self-learning course is a modular, computer-based programme with 30 hours of self-directed learning per week. In total, the English training course will provide 480 hours of lessons each time it is taken.

Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements. As the average non-proficient teacher only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that most who adhere to the training regime will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. Those who still do not meet the proficiency standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed.

Redeployment of teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers. These gaps will be proactively filled with teachers that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency. To fill these gaps as rapidly as possible, the Ministry will hire teachers using alternative pathways. The primary sources of these new teachers will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs.

These pools of talent have the advantage of having already completed teacher training and can quickly start teaching. If primary sources do not produce sufficient teachers, secondary sources such as retired teachers will be tapped. Over time, the matching of what teachers have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching will also be improved. It is estimated that this should inject an additional 2,000 English language teachers into the system.

The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of English language teachers and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes. The Ministry will also launch a series of MBMMBI initiatives to strengthen the delivery of English lessons. The OPS English programme focuses on improving students' listening and speaking skills and is in the process of being scaled up following a successful pilot. OPS English teaching and learning materials have been refined based on feedback from the pilot project. Additionally, teachers will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills.

Comprehensive English remedial support has been introduced. In Years 1 to 3, the existing LINUS programme has been expanded from Bahasa Malaysia literacy and numeracy to include English literacy. Additionally, the Ministry aims to increase differentiation of teaching approaches using the new "set system" to help secondary school students struggling with the English language. All students will take a diagnostic test according to their grade level. Based on test results,

11.69 x 11.69 in

students will be assigned to a "set" with students of similar English proficiency levels. Sets will be smaller than normal classes with each "set" expected to be between 20 to 30 students. This system will allow teachers to tailor pedagogical styles according to students' skill level and learning requirements.

Given the planned roll-out of the 1BestariNet system, the Ministry has started exploring the use of ICT models to bring more effective English instruction to students. ICT solutions have the dual advantage of offering personalised learning customised to individual needs and being quickly scalable. As discussed earlier in the chapter, one such model is the blended learning model which integrates face-to-face and technology-mediated instructional approaches in the classroom. In addition, the Ministry is exploring self-directed online learning and interactive online tutoring (Exhibit 4-8).

EXHIBIT 4-8

ICT models under consideration for English instruction

Model	Key characteristics	Advantages
Self-directed online learning	• Adaptive learning software enables learning at own pace • No human facilitation • Various delivery channels –games, videos, audio clips, eBooks	• Flexibility over timing • Multiple programmes, particularly for primary level students, already exist (although they would need to be mapped to the Malaysian curriculum)
Interactive online tutoring	• Small group or one-on-one tutoring with a teacher • Various delivery channels –video conference, instant messaging, phone calls • Can be paired with an online learning platform	• Accessibility to high-quality teachers not limited by geography • Students can receive targeted coaching in the areas where they are weakest

Setting the stage for structural change

Strengthening English language subject teaching within the current system structure is only the beginning of the journey. To truly transform English language proficiency levels and achieve the 70% target, the structure of the system will need to be refined to create capacity for increased exposure time to the English language.

Increasing English exposure time has extensive operational implications on teacher recruitment and training, curriculum development, and potentially, school hours. Such a programme can only be embarked upon if three criteria are met:

■ Bahasa Malaysia standards in National-type schools are equal to those of National schools;

■ Delivery of existing English language classes is significantly strengthened; and

■ Parents want an increase in exposure to the English language.

If all three criteria are met, the Ministry will offer the option of increasing exposure time to the English language in Wave 2.

Wave 2 (2016 - 2020): Introducing structural change

Successful execution of Wave 1 initiatives is a necessary prerequisite for embarking upon deeper structural change in Wave 2. Only when the education system is able to deliver universal operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and provide high-quality instruction in the English language as a second language will the education system be in a position to begin to create widespread bilingual proficiency.

In Wave 2, an improved LINUS programme and new Bahasa Malaysia remedial classes for Years 1 to 6 should significantly increase the standards of all students graduating from primary school. This coupled with similar standards of Bahasa Malaysia curriculum and assessments between National-type and National schools, will allow the Ministry to offer parents of children in National-type schools the option of sending their children for remedial classes during primary school or Remove class from 2017.

Having focused on increasing English language teaching standards and creating universal English literacy in Wave 1, the Ministry will continue to raise proficiency in Wave 2. After-school remedial classes will be introduced for students in Years 4 to 6 of primary school that are at risk of falling behind in English language. If the criteria for structural change are met, the Ministry will consider increasing the exposure time to the English language from the current 15-20%, for example via making an expanded Literature in English module compulsory at both primary and secondary levels, delivered within existing school hours. The Ministry will also explore the possibility of encouraging schools to offer greater English language exposure to students outside of existing school hours if requested by parents, such as grammar, creative writing or drama classes delivered in English. In line with the ongoing initiatives to improve students' English proficiency, the SPM English language subject paper will be made a compulsory pass from 2016. Further, the recently established English Language Quality and Standards Council or *Majlis Penarafan Standard dan Kualiti Bahasa Inggeris* will be responsible for monitoring English language proficiency among students and tracking the impact of these initiatives.

By 2020, the most popular additional language options such as Chinese language, Tamil, and Arabic will be offered at more schools. This will likely require training and deploying more language teachers. In addition, the teaching of additional languages will be integrated into instruction time at secondary school, as is the case in the revised KSSR. Larger schools may, subject to resourcing, offer several language options while smaller schools will explore leveraging the use of technology to increase the number of language options on offer.

Wave 3 (2021 - 2025): Scaling up structural change

The Ministry will carefully analyse the success of the structural changes introduced in Wave 2 and conduct a thorough National Dialogue to solicit feedback. If outcomes and feedback are positive, models that have been most successful in creating operational proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language and improving access to an additional language will be rolled out nationally.

4-15

In striving towards achieving the targets of 90% and 70% operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language respectively, attention will be given to ensure that students receive high quality instruction in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language, that an adequate supply of trained teachers are available and that students that fall behind are adequately supported. Comparable support will be provided for the teaching of additional languages.

GROUPS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

The Ministry will ensure that students with specific needs, such as students with special needs, indigenous and other minority students like *Orang Asli* and Penan, gifted students and students in under-enrolled schools have the opportunity to get a high quality education that is relevant to their needs.

There are a few groups of students whose circumstances or needs are different enough from the mainstream that they are likely to fall through the gaps and not reach their full potential unless specifically catered to. These groups include children in under-enrolled schools, students from indigenous and minority groups including *Orang Asli* and Penan, gifted children, and children with special needs. Programmes, schools, and initiatives that cater to the additional needs of these students will allow them to benefit equally from the Malaysian education system.

Special education needs

In Malaysia, students with special education needs include students with visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech difficulties, physical disabilities, multiple disabilities and learning disabilities such as autism, Down's Syndrome, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and dyslexia. The landscape of special education involves multiple stakeholders including parents, NGOs, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Human Resource and the mass media. These stakeholders play important roles as supporters, enablers, advocates and delivery partners in the education of children.

In line with existing policy, special education needs students can currently choose from three different schooling options:

- **Special education schools:** Schools for students with hearing, seeing and/or learning disabilities. There are currently 28 primary schools and 5 secondary schools in the system;

- **Special Education Integration Programme (SEIP):** Mainstream schools with specific classes dedicated to special education needs students. 1,315 primary schools and 738 secondary schools of this type currently exist in the system; and

- **Inclusive Education Programmes:** Mainstream schools that include one to five special education needs students in mainstream classes.

The Malaysian special needs education system can be analysed along five dimensions:

- **Early identification, intervention and healthcare support:** The systems, processes and facilities available for the early identification and treatment of developmental issues and ongoing healthcare support for special education needs students;

- **Curriculum flexibility, relevance and quality:** The degree of flexibility within the curriculum to allow for adaptation to the specific requirements of special education needs children, and the extent to which the curriculum equips them with life skills in preparation for adult/working life;

- **Teachers and other specialists:** The availability of a sufficient number of well-trained teachers, specialists and resource personnel to aid and educate special education needs students;

- **Infrastructure and finances:** The availability of a robust support structure in the form of technical aids, physical support infrastructure as well as sufficient funding; and

- **Public awareness and involvement:** Public awareness on issues relating to special education needs student and community involvement in their education.

Identifying special education needs early and providing healthcare support

UNESCO estimates that on average, 10% of the population in developing countries have special needs. In Malaysia, only 1% of the population has been identified as having special education needs, versus this global estimated average of 10%. This suggests an underestimation of the number of special education needs children in the country.

The current waiting time for the assessment and intervention of developmental issues in Malaysia exceeds six months. This is largely due to limited specialists (such as clinical psychologists, speech therapists, and audiologists), the underutilisation of screening tools (such as MoH's Health Record Books), and a lack of standardised approaches for detection. The Ministry intends to forge strong collaborations with the Ministry of Health to fast track early identification and diagnosis, and plans to improve inclusion programmes at the ECCE level.

Providing flexible, relevant and high quality curriculum

Only 6% of Malaysia's special education needs children are part of inclusive programmes. Currently, schools do not have the ability to assess or baseline their special education needs inclusion programmes and therefore do not know where they stand or how to improve. While the Ministry has developed a tailored curriculum for certain special education needs student groups (for example, *Kemahiran Asas Individu Masalah Penglihatan* for blind students and *Bahasa Isyarat Komunikasi* for deaf students), there is less support for students with learning disabilities such as autism.

Special education needs students are not readily employable due to the lack of a clear career pathway. In 2012, 1,934 special education

Appendix 2 Teacher Participant information sheet

Teacher Participant information sheet

Title: Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 – A CDA Perspective

Researcher: Tengku Enaliza Binti Tengku Zaman
            (Phone: 07514988990 E-mail: liza.zaman@gmail.com)

You are invited to take part in this research study. Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of this study?

I am carrying out this study as part of my PhD requirement in the Department of Linguistics and English Language. The aim of the study is to critically analyse the language use of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint) and the roles of teachers as implementers of the language policy.

What does the study entail?

My study will involve analysing the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (*Blueprint*) - from the language use perspective, and interviewing teachers attached to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE). The interview will be conducted by me, Tengku Enaliza Tengku Zaman using one of these methods: face-to-face, *WhatsApp* chat or e-mail. I have also planned to obtain your responses as teachers on an excerpt pertaining to the language policy stipulated in the *Blueprint* to observe your thoughts as you read the excerpt. The face-to-face interviews will be recorded on an audio recorder by me.

Why have I been invited?

I have approached you because you are a teacher who is attached to the Ministry of Education and you have an understanding of the subject matter as well as the education system in Malaysia. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in my study.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, it will involve the following: interview – it should last 60 minutes with around 10 - 15 questions to respond to. For the Blueprint

personal response, a short excerpt will be provided and you will be required to write down/record into an audio recorder your thoughts as you are reading the excerpt. You will be provided with some pointers to help you with the response.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

If you take part in this study, your insights will contribute to an understanding of the *Blueprint*, its intentions, the status of the English language and the roles of teachers in the Malaysian education system in respect of teaching the English language.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There will not be any major disadvantages in taking part in the research. Your participation will mean investing 30-60 minutes for an interview with around 10 - 15 questions to respond to, and responding to the excerpt for this research.

What will happen if I decide not to take part or if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If you decide not to take part in this study, this will not affect your position in the Ministry of Education and your relation with your immediate Department/Division.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time and you do not have to give a reason. If you withdraw within 1 month after the interview and the written-response session, I will not use any of the information that you have provided. However, if you withdraw after 1 month, I will use the information you have shared with me for my study.
What if there is a question I do not wish to answer?

If there is a question you do not wish to answer for any reason, just say so and we will move on to the next question.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any identifying information such as names and personal characteristics will be anonymised in the PhD thesis or any other publications of this research. Also, all the data obtained will be kept securely. Any paper-based data will be kept in a locked cupboard whereas the electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer. Meanwhile, files containing personal data will be encrypted.

Please note that I am required to request permission from the Ministry of Education Malaysia to interview people who are attached to the Ministry. Therefore, if you agree to participate, people from the Ministry of Education will know that you have been interviewed for this research. Having said that, in the thesis and in publications from this research I will not use your real

name, pseudonyms will be used, and I will make every effort to disguise identifying information in any quotes that I use from the interviews.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only. This will include my PhD thesis and other publications, for example journal articles. I am also planning to present the results of my study at academic conferences, or to the policy-makers upon request.

What if there is a problem?
If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact me, my supervisor or my Head of Department:

Tengku Enaliza Binti Tengku Zaman
Phone: +44 (0) 7514 988990
E-mail: liza.zaman@gmail.com

My supervisor:
Dr Karin Tusting
Phone: +44 (0)1524 510825
E-mail: k.tusting@lancaster.ac.uk

Head of Department:
Professor Elena Semino
Phone : +44 (0)1524 594176
E-mail : e.semino@lancaster.ac.uk

Further information and contact details
Tengku Enaliza Binti Tengku Zaman
Phone : 07514988990
E-mail : liza.zaman@gmail.com; e.bintitengkuzaman@lancaster.ac.uk

This study has been approved by Lancaster University's ethics committee (UREC).

Thank you for considering your participation in this project.

Appendix 3 Consent Letter

Lancaster University
Linguistics and English Language

Consent Form

Project title: *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 – A CDA Perspective*

I have read and had it explained to me by *Tengku Enaliza Binti Tengku Zaman* the information sheet relating to this project.

☐

I have had it explained to me the purposes of the project and what will be required of me, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to the arrangements described in the information sheet in so far as they relate to my participation.

I agree to the interview being audio-recorded.   ☐

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the project any time, but no longer than 1 month after the interview is conducted. If I withdraw after this period, the information I have provided will be used for the project.

☐

I understand that all data collected will be anonymised and that my identity will not be revealed at any point. I also understand that as part of the protocol, the Ministry of Education will be notified of my involvement in the interview. However, every effort will be made to protect my identity when any material from the interview is referred to in the research.

☐

I have received a copy of this consent form and of the accompanying information sheet.

☐

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4 Interview Questions

Participants: Teachers in schools

1. Could you please tell me about yourself, your current post and job specifications and how long have you been a teacher with the Ministry of Education?
2. How much do you know about the Malaysia Education Blueprint?
3. What is your opinion on the initiatives in the Blueprint?
4. In your opinion, how successful has the Blueprint been in carrying out MOE's language policy?
5. How has the initiatives made an impact on your teaching in the classroom?
6. What are your thoughts on the shifts of the language of instruction? What are your thoughts on the reversion of the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics?
7. Based on your experience teaching English to the students, have the initiatives helped in the English language acquisition among the students in Malaysia?
8. Based on your reading/knowledge/understanding of the Blueprint, how do you see your role as a teacher in the Blueprint and the education system?
    *These are questions for guidelines. Due to the nature of interviewing, the questions may vary depending on the participant's responses.

Appendix 5 Questions for Teachers during Think Aloud Session

Questions to think about while reading the excerpt.

1. What are the words/terms/issues which affected you or made an impact on you?

2. What were the things that came to mind as you were reading the excerpt?

3. Did you have any reservations on any of the issues/points in the excerpt? What were they?

4. Anything that you agree/disagree with?

5. What is your overview on the excerpt?

6. What did you like/not like about it?

7. If you could rewrite the excerpt, what would you change?

Appendix 6 Excerpt text for Think Aloud Session

Strengthening The Teaching Of The English Language

The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all 61,000 English language teachers by the end of 2012 using the CPT. Teachers will be grouped into three categories based on their results—proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency. The Ministry will consider rewarding the best performers under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or *Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan*. There is likely to be a small, fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed. A pilot study involving 7,500 teachers from four states showed that a significant number of teachers did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and a small number of teachers will need to be redeployed.

Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process.

Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015. The English training course comprises an 8-week immersion programme and 8-week self-learning course. The immersion programme is an in- person, face-to-face course with 30 hours contact time each week. The self-learning course is a modular, computer-based programme with 30 hours of self-directed learning per week. In total, the English training course will provide 480 hours of lessons each time it is taken.

Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements. As the average non-proficient teacher only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that most who adhere to the training regime will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. Those who still do not meet the proficiency standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed.

Redeployment of teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015 could result in a small shortfall of English language teachers. These gaps will be proactively filled with teachers that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency. To fill these gaps as rapidly as possible, the Ministry will hire teachers using alternative pathways. The primary sources of these new teachers will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs.

These pools of talent have the advantage of having already completed teacher training and can quickly start teaching. If primary sources do not produce sufficient teachers, secondary sources such as retired teachers will be tapped. Over time, the matching of what teachers have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching will also be improved. It is estimated that this should inject an additional 2,000 English language teachers into the system.

The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of English language teachers and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes. The Ministry will also launch a series of MBMMBI initiatives to strengthen the delivery of English lessons. The OPS English programme focuses on improving students' listening and speaking skills and is in the process of being scaled up following a successful pilot. OPS English teaching and learning materials have been re ned based on feedback from the pilot project. Additionally, teachers will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills.

Comprehensive English remedial support has been introduced. In Years 1 to 3, the existing LINUS programme has been expanded from Bahasa Malaysia literacy and numeracy to include English literacy. Additionally, the Ministry aims to increase differentiation of teaching approaches using the new "set system" to help secondary school students struggling with the English language. All students will take a diagnostic test according to their grade level. Based on test results, students will be assigned to a "set" with students of similar English proficiency levels. Sets will be smaller than normal classes with each "set" expected to be between 20 to 30 students. This system will allow teachers to tailor pedagogical styles according to students' skill level and learning requirements.

Given the planned roll-out of the 1BestariNet system, the Ministry has started exploring the use of ICT models to bring more effective English instruction to students. ICT solutions have the dual advantage of offering personalised learning customised to individual needs and being quickly scalable. As discussed earlier in the chapter, one such model is the blended learning model which integrates face-to-face and technology-mediated instructional approaches in the classroom. In addition, the Ministry is exploring self-directed online learning and interactive online tutoring (Exhibit 4-8).

EXHIBIT 4-8

ICT models under consideration for English instruction

Model	Key characteristics	Advantages
Self-directed online learning	▪ Adaptive learning software enables learning at own pace ▪ No human facilitation ▪ Various delivery channels –games, videos, audio clips, eBooks	▪ Flexibility over timing ▪ Multiple programmes, particularly for primary level students, already exist (although they would need to be mapped to the Malaysian curriculum)
Interactive online tutoring	▪ Small group or one-on-one tutoring with a teacher ▪ Various delivery channels –video conference, instant messaging, phone calls ▪ Can be paired with an online learning platform	▪ Accessibility to high-quality teachers not limited by geography ▪ Students can receive targeted coaching in the areas where they are weakest

(Malaysia Education Blueprint, pp 4-13 - 4-14, 2013)

Appendix 7 List of statements from text for representation of social actors - functionalization

Statement from text	Category	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
Lower student performance in English language appears to be driven by low proficiency among **English language teachers.**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Circumstantial Premise	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals
When a sample of over **7,500 English language teachers** took the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT), a significant number did not meet the minimum proficiency standard required for teaching English language.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Circumstantial Premise	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals
There is also a mismatch between **subjects that teachers were trained to teach and the subjects they end up teaching**.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Circumstantial Premise	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Due to unavoidable circumstances, approximately **30% of current English language teachers were not originally trained to teach English** while approximately **3,600 that were trained to teach English language are teaching other subjects**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Circumstantial Premise	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals
The Ministry will test the proficiency levels of all **61,000 English language teachers** by the end of 2012 using the CPT.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Teachers will be grouped into **three categories based on their results— proficient, requires part-time immersive training over one year to reach proficiency, and requires part-time immersive training over two years to reach proficiency**.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	●to acknowledge teachers as professionals

Statement from text	Category	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
There is likely to be a small, **fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed.**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals
A pilot study involving **7,500 teachers** from four states showed that a **significant number of teachers** did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and **a small number of teachers** will need to be redeployed.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals
As the average non-proficient teacher only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that **most who adhere to the training regime** will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. **Those who still do not meet the proficiency** standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to acknowledge teachers as professionals

Statement from text	Category	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
Redeployment of **teachers who do not meet the proficiency standard by 2015** could result in a **small shortfall** of **English language teachers.**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
These gaps will be proactively filled with **teachers that already meet the minimum competency bar in English proficiency.**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
To fill these gaps as rapidly as possible, the Ministry will hire **teachers** using alternative pathways.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
The primary sources of these **new teachers will be existing English language teachers that are not currently teaching the subject, and new graduate teachers from the IPGs or IPTAs.**	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
If **primary sources do not produce sufficient teachers, secondary sources** such as **retired teachers** will be tapped.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – solution for shortfall of teachers	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
Over time, the matching of what **teachers have been trained to teach and the actual subject they end up teaching** will also be improved.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – solution for shortfall of teachers	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
It is estimated that this should inject an additional **2,000 English language teachers** into the system.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – solution for shortfall of teachers	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
The English Language Training Centre (ELTC) within the Ministry will be strengthened to support the effective training of **English language teachers** and to continuously develop English language teaching and learning materials and programmes.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals

Statement from text	Category	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
Additionally, **teachers** will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
This system will allow **teachers** to tailor pedagogical styles according to students' skill level and learning requirements.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals
In striving towards achieving the targets of 90% and 70% operational proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English language respectively, attention will be given to ensure that students receive high quality instruction in both Bahasa Malaysia and English language, that an adequate supply of **trained teachers** are available and that students that fall behind are adequately supported.	Functionalization i.e. teachers	Claim for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	•to acknowledge teachers as professionals

Appendix 8 List of statements from text for representation of social actors – passivation by beneficialisation

Statements from text	Categories	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
The Ministry will consider rewarding the **best performers** under the Incentive Payment for Education Subjects or *Bayaran Insentif Subjek Pendidikan.*	Passivation by beneficialisation (positive) i.e. rewarding the best performers	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to highlight the reward • Legitimising the group of teachers who are deemed as proficient
There is likely to be a small, **fourth group of teachers whose grasp of English is too weak to teach the language and who will be redeployed.**	Passivation by beneficialisation (negative) i.e. will be redeployed.	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• to highlight the consequences of teachers who are not deemed as proficiennt • to show that MOE decision on tackling the issue i.e. no more unqualified EL teachers. Also denotes proficiency is the benchmark for a qualified EL teacher
A pilot study involving **7,500 teachers** from four states showed that a **significant number of teachers** did not achieve the minimum proficiency level in English language and **a small number of teachers** will need to be redeployed.	Passivation by beneficialisation (negative) i.e. will need to be redeployed.	Circumstantial premise for Initiative of upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• Passivation by beneficialisation - to highlight the consequences and also to show that MOE decision on tackling the issue i.e. no more unqualified EL teachers. Also denotes proficiency is the benchmark for a qualified EL teacher • Referring teachers in various ways to justify the redeployment
Teachers in urban and suburban areas who do not meet the proficiency standard will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a	Passivation by beneficialisation i.e. will be required to attend an English training course for four hours per week, over a span of 44 weeks.	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	• Passivation by beneficialisation - to highlight the consequences and also to show that MOE

Statements from text	Categories	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
span of 44 weeks. These sessions will be held outside school hours and will hence not disrupt the teaching and learning process.			decision on tackling the issue i.e. no more unqualified EL teachers. Also denotes proficiency is the benchmark for a qualified EL teacher
Teachers in rural areas that do not meet the proficiency standard will be put through an intensive English training course by 2015.	Passivation by beneficialisation (positive) i.e. will be put through an intensive English training course	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•To show that teachers will be given the proper course to make them become more proficient
Teachers who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard after attending the training course will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements.	Passivation by beneficialisation (positive) i.e. will be given up to two years to make the necessary improvements	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•To highlight the consequences and, also to show that MOE decision on tackling the issue i.e. no more unqualified EL teachers. Also denotes proficiency is the benchmark for a qualified EL teacher
As the average non-proficient teacher only requires training over two years to meet the proficiency standard, it is anticipated that **most who adhere to the training regime** will be able to pass the evaluation by 2015. **Those who still do not meet the proficiency** standard will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed.	Passivation by beneficialisation i.e. a. training over two years to meet the proficiency standard (positive) b. will be tasked to teach other subjects or redeployed (negative)	Claim for action – initiative for upskilling teachers' English language proficiency	•to highlight the consequences and, also to show that MOE decision on tackling the issue i.e. no more unqualified EL teachers. •Also denotes proficiency is the benchmark for a qualified EL teacher •'the average non – proficient teacher' is a presupposed claim

Statements from text	Categories	Textual Context	Purpose/ Notes
Additionally, **teachers** will undergo training to ensure they can effectively use these new tools to refocus lessons on listening and speaking skills.	1. Passivation by beneficialisation (i.e. **teachers** will undergo training	Claim for action – initiatives for teaching & learning of English language	• To state that teachers will receive training – an initiative for teachers' teaching skills that will be conducted

Appendix 9 Sample of Interview Transcript

T1: Teacher
R: Researcher

R	:	Umm…hi umm can I ..can you just umm without saying your name just describe what you do in your school
T1	:	(clearing throat) Alright mm I've been a teacher here for the past 16 years
R	:	Uh huh
T1	:	Er I basically teach ah form 1 now form 4 and also form 5. My form 5 is 17 years old, my form 4 is 16 years old and my form 1 is 13 years old.
R	:	Ok
T1	:	Ok ah in a week I will have 6 periods of English
R	:	Ah
T1	:	Which is around 120 minutes ah for all of the forms
R	:	Ok…right… aahhh..ok…now, how much can you let us know can can you let me know how much you know about Malaysian edu Blueprint. what do you know about it
T1	:	So far what we are told that ah in terms of English language per se
R	:	Mm
T1	:	We know that there are changes to the syllabus=
R	:	Mm hm
T1	:	And there are also changes to the aahhmm… err.. stop *achi dok (can you)*..pause

Appendix 10 Sample from Think Aloud Session

Teacher 1

- Ok I know about the CPT I took the proficiency test as well you know all the three teachers in my school took it and all of us got C the best is C2 is it C1 or C2 but whatever it is we got the 5000 ringgit *lah* each

- I know this the first err paragraph it's been shown by an SBP (*Sekolah Berasrama Penuh* or Boarding School) officer

- Some of the teachers who took this course ahmmm in some cases there are still teachers who need to go for the course again because they didn't pass

- Mm even MBMMBI is also not clear what is it about

- Mmm ok it's familiar everything is familiar to me

- Mm familiar things

- Mm some are very aaa dear as well like for example the *bayaran insentif* like I have mention earlier on

- And the training course but I don't undergo the training course so I don't know what is it all about just that I heard some of my friends who still did not pass the course they have to go for another course and then aaahh it's a pity that some of the teachers who did not manage to pass the course they still they have to be redeployed and some of them needs to teach other subjects why in the first place became English did you become English teacher is it your choice or you have to be something you know can be questioned aahh the idea of MBMMBI as a teacher we only know that it's like a mixture of English programmes and also ahmm BM (Bahasa Malaysia) programmes but it's not really clear as well as for the OPS English programme ahhmm it's familiar but I think they are using to lower form starting with Form 1 this year but not all schools not all schools actually do this OPS programme