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Abstract:

**Exploring Language teachers' cognition in the implementation of a newly English education policy: Perspective, potential and pitfalls.**

Malaysia has enthusiastically implemented the phonics approach as a new method in teaching primary school English reading as oppose to whole-language approach through its latest 'Education Blueprint 2013-2025'. This presentation examines a research process to investigate the implementation of this new policy from the perspectives of different stakeholders involved: the English language teachers. It also aims to explore the teachers experiences in using the approach and how they perceived phonics teaching as the potential approach in improving English reading in a second language classroom. Despite the changes with the syllabus, teachers were experiencing pitfalls and challenges in adapting and implementing the newly approach as part of their classroom pedagogy.

A mixed method sequential design was applied for the study. For phase 1, a survey was distributed to English teachers in getting their views regarding their belief, knowledge and practices of the previous and current reading approaches. 123 English teachers responded to the survey. The surveys were then analysed, and the result derived from this phase was used to provide a general picture of the situation especially on the perception of using different approaches to the teaching of English reading. The findings show that the teachers regardless of their teaching experiences, age and qualification show no significant differences in the result of their practices.

To investigate the phenomena further, an ethnography case study was conducted in phase 2. Through this phase, four teachers were followed for a month in two different schools. This included spending time with them around the school and observing them in the classroom. The data collected from this stage came from teachers' interviews, classroom observations, lesson planning and researcher's field notes in order to explore teachers experiences in using the phonics approach through their everyday classroom instructions. The findings show that although teachers are positive toward the changes, there are other pitfalls and challenges that they need to deal, thus, at the end neglected the targeted approach to be used in the classroom.