

DEVELOPING A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR PRACTITIONERS OF
ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC ENGINEERING PURPOSES (ESEP)

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

4 January 2017

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ABSTRACT

The English for Specific Engineering Purposes (ESEP) competencies of ESL practitioners teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) at Malaysian engineering and technical (MTUN) universities is vital in ensuring quality learning and teaching of language and communication skills at those institutions. This study aims to develop a competency framework for ESEP practitioners at MTUN universities. The development of the framework was conducted in two phases using the exploratory sequential mixed methods. The first phase comprises qualitative data gathered from document analyses, related literature and semi structured interviews. This study is framed by the principles of Malaysian Teacher Standards (MTS) i.e. the Professional Values, Knowledge and Understanding, and Skills of Learning and Teaching. The principles are represented by Walker's Professional ELT Service Standards, Venkatraman and Prema's Competencies for Teachers of English in Engineering Colleges and BALEAP Framework. The second phase comprises quantitative data gathered from three Delphi rounds with 14 ESEP experts and a survey of 101 MTUN ESEP practitioners. Findings from the qualitative inquiry revealed evidence of the three principles in identifying the practitioners' required competency which implicates two types of professional development training: Formal and informal. The quantitative analyses using SmartPLS software identified the second principle (ESEP Knowledge and Understanding) and 'patient when learners have difficulties in learning' as the prevalent principle and competency item for ESEP practitioners. This confirms the importance of ESEP practitioners' knowledge and understanding in engineering to elevate their status and recognitions, as well as enhance learners' interest in learning the language. The competency framework for ESEP practitioners was also validated in terms of its reliability and validity based on a measurement model developed from the software. The framework could be a standard for the practitioners' learning and teaching practices and employed as a standard evaluation for quality enhancement, professional development training and recruitment purposes. The findings also implicate the need for the local quality agencies to specify a standard of competencies as a guideline for ESEP practitioners' qualifications teaching at MTUN universities.

ABSTRAK

Kompetensi tenaga pengajar ESL akademik dalam bidang kejuruteraan (ESEP) yang berkualiti tinggi di universiti kejuruteraan dan teknikal Malaysia (MTUN) sangat penting dalam memastikan kualiti pembelajaran dan pengajaran bahasa Inggeris dan kemahiran berkomunikasi di universiti tersebut terjamin. Kajian ini bertujuan membangunkan kerangka kompetensi untuk tenaga pengajar ESL ESEP di MTUN. Pembangunan kerangka ESEP dijalankan dalam dua fasa menggunakan pendekatan reka bentuk penerokaan bercampur. Fasa pertama adalah pengumpulan data kualitatif berdasarkan analisis dokumen, sorotan literatur dan temu bual semi-struktur. Kerangka bagi kajian ini adalah berdasarkan Standard Guru Malaysia yang mengandungi tiga standard iaitu Nilai Profesional, Pengetahuan dan Kefahaman, dan Kemahiran Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran. Ketiga-tiga standard ini disokong oleh Piawai Perkhidmatan Profesional ELT oleh Walker, Kompetensi untuk Guru Bahasa Inggeris di Kolej Kejuruteraan di India oleh Venkatraman dan Prema dan Kerangka BALEAP. Bagi fasa kedua pula, pengumpulan data kuantitatif dilakukan sebanyak tiga pusingan Delphi dengan 14 orang pakar EAP/ESAP dalam bidang kejuruteraan dan borang kaji selidik diedarkan kepada 101 orang pengajar ESEP di MTUN. Analisis kualitatif mempamerkan elemen ketiga-tiga standard MTS dalam mengenal pasti kompetensi tenaga pengajar ESEP dan dua jenis latihan pembangunan profesional iaitu formal dan tidak formal untuk memenuhi keperluan kompetensi-kompetensi tersebut. Dapatan analisis kuantitatif melalui penggunaan perisian SmartPLS turut mengesahkan bahawa standard 'Pengetahuan dan Kefahaman mengenai ESEP' merupakan standard yang terpenting manakala kompetensi item terpenting adalah 'Bersabar apabila pelajar menghadapi kesukaran dalam pembelajaran.' Hal ini mengesahkan kepentingan pengetahuan dan kefahaman tenaga pengajar ESEP dalam menyumbang kepada pembangunan kandungan subjek atau kursus ESEP untuk meningkatkan status dan pengiktirafan tenaga pengajar tersebut, di samping meningkatkan minat pelajar dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Kerangka ESEP yang dibangunkan ini boleh dijadikan sebagai satu standard untuk amalan pembelajaran dan pengajaran, penilaian untuk peningkatan kualiti, latihan pembangunan profesional dan penanda aras dalam proses pengambilan tenaga pengajar ESEP. Selain itu, dapatan kajian ini juga menunjukkan keperluan agensi penarafan dan jaminan kualiti dalam menspesifikasikan kelayakan tenaga pengajar bahasa di universiti-universiti MTUN agar memenuhi piawai yang ditentukan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ESAP	English for Specific Academic Purposes
ESEP	English for Specific Engineering Purposes
ESL	English for Second Language
L2	Second Language
NS	Native Speaker
OBE	Outcome based Education
SCL	Student Centred Learning
MUET	Malaysian University English Test
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
ABET	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technical
EAC	Engineering Accreditation Council
MOE	Ministry of Education Malaysia
HEI	Higher Education Institution
MTUN	Malaysian Technology Universities Network
UMP	Universiti Malaysia Pahang
UniMaP	Universiti Malaysia Perlis
UTeM	Universiti Teknikal Melaka
UTHM	Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia
SGM	Standard Guru Malaysia
MTS	Malaysian Teacher Standards
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
PLS	Partial Least Squares
QR1	Questionnaire Round 1
QR2	Questionnaire Round 2
QR3	Questionnaire Round 3
R1PI	Round One Principle I
R1PII	Round One Principle II
R1PIII	Round One Principle III
R2PI	Round Two Principle I
R3PI	Round Three Principle I
EQ	ESEP Questionnaire

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