

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.0 Chapter Introduction

Nowadays, creative thinking and commitment are very important among teachers even though the teachers are from primary or secondary school. Between 1991 and 2001, the English language learners or teachers population was raised around 105% (Kindler, 2002). The creative thinking can increase the teachers' capability to learn and teach in a different way to the students to make sure the students enjoy the lesson in the classroom. Hence, the students' proficiency of the English language can be improved.

Moreover, the training or workshop in English can help teachers to think creatively on ways to develop the students' level of proficiency in English language. At the same time, the teachers' commitment can be developed. The teachers can sense the confidence by using creative thinking to develop their students' mentality in the classroom. So, creativity and commitment play a major role among teachers for developing and improving the teachers' creative abilities and the students' proficiency of the English language. Teachers need to be committed in teaching English to raise the students' proficiency and performance.

English language is better taught at private schools than the public schools because of the teachers' creativity, attitude and commitment which can influence the students' proficiency and performance. Therefore, this could explain the aspiration of many parents, including the illiterates to send their children to private schools, just to ensure that they can speak English fluently. Few researches expose that the influence of teachers is the most important factor in determining the students' proficiency, even more important than socio-economic status, which for years was deemed as having the highest correlation with academic success (Coleman, 1966).

Poor students' proficiency in English language in such as public examinations as SSCE, GCE, and UME raises questions about the teacher's creativity, quality, commitment, and the effectiveness of teachers in teaching process. However, research indicated that teachers who major in the subject area taught had a more positive impact on students' proficiency and achievement than teachers who majoring in an out of field discipline, even including those in education (Goidhaber & Brewer, 1999).

Besides that, teaching is a complex and demanding profession because the capable teachers want to develop the students' performance in education. To maintain their energy and interest for the work, teachers need to maintain their personal commitment to the job (Day, 2000). According to Hargreaves (1994:108), the concept of 'commitment', as investment of personal resources, has long been associated with the professional characteristics of a teacher. It is widely recognized that the role of the teacher has intensified, and teachers need to adapt to bureaucratically driven escalation of pressures, expectations and controls concerning what teachers do and how much they should be doing within the teaching day.

The teachers are expected to assimilate reforms on a number of levels into their daily practice at a time when education is in continuous fluctuation. According to Day, (2000:125) the reform agenda has created an environment where those who wish to survive and thrive must become involved in an increased rate of personal adaptation and professional development. Therefore, the teachers must be willing to experience precipitous learning curves and invest their personal time and energy to translate the on-going reforms successfully into an effective practice. The professional commitment emerges to be extremely significant for not only a teacher's success during times of change but also for systems in seeking to bring about changes.

## **1.1 Background**

The key factor in the success of current educational reform agenda is the level of teachers' commitment because it is seriously influencing the teachers' willingness to engage in cooperative, reflective and critical practice to develop the students' proficiency of the English language. However, the previous study of this paper is mostly significant for school leaders as they engage the teachers' in school initiatives and educational reform because teachers themselves struggle to find a solution to think creatively to increase and develop the students' proficiency of the English language.

So, trainings and workshops such as ESL program has contributed something good to the teachers to encourage the teachers to solve the English language problem especially in Chinese Independent secondary schools. They contributed the right ways to education and students by using the right terms that they learned from the workshop.

First, the training or workshop is given to those who would like to be English language teachers to make sure the training is effective and sufficient to the right teachers to achieve their aims for developing students' creativity in learning English. Secondly, they increase the population of teachers to learn English; it can allow the students to learn English very well. The workshop has many applications that contributed the right education to make sure the students learn something new from the teachers. This practice is really important to the new teachers because it might bring new insight to the students to learn and improve their level of proficiency of the English language and value it in other things.

Are teachers born creative in teaching? Some of them are born as a genius in teaching but not all of them. So, the influence of teachers' creativity and commitment on

students' proficiency can help the teachers to teach creatively which will influence the interest of students in English language. They can make that lesson more interesting so that the students will not feel bored in their lesson. According to the researcher, the teachers normally do not know about creativity while they are not familiar with creativity (Torrance's research, 1965) because human beings are not born with creative thinking, unless God creates a genius person. They can improve their ability to think creatively very well by learning.

According to UNESCO (2001 & 2002), the world nowadays needs better teachers and more teachers to make sure the education worlds can develop in future, and the students' knowledge and proficiency can be improved by giving new insight to them to think in a better way. For instance, The Dakar conference discovered that more than 100 million students need teachers, while the world moves towards 2015 target to educate all of them.

In this case, we need to develop the skills of the existing 60 million teachers because they are untrained and unqualified to teach English. Thus, they need to attend training or workshop to raise their skills, teaching commitment, creative teaching, creative thinking and knowledge to develop the students' proficiency of the English language. Furthermore, the skills and knowledge that all the teachers need are no longer fixed because it has moved from one stage to another in order to learn different skills in handling the different level of proficiency of students. So, teachers need more confidence and opportunities to learn to be creative and give full commitment towards their job before they step into the learning world throughout their careers. This is to make sure that they can increase the students' level of proficiency of the English language.

One of the ways of strengthening the teaching profession is by using distance education or open distance learning (UNESCO, 2001). Teachers are very imperative in

the education world because the students really need someone who really can help them in their education skills. If we cannot get more English teachers and better English teachers, we will not reach a better goal and quality of education by 2015. Now, the world is still looking for teachers because under qualified teachers in a large number.

The government found a solution for that by providing trainings or workshops to those who need further professional education and skills to improve their commitment and creative thinking in teaching at secondary school. The conventional which approaches to the teachers' education, has not meet all the demands of the career and the students' need because the students really want teachers who can help to them to increase their proficiency level of the English language. This issue has brought the interest of starting the distance learning alternatives (UNESCO, 2002).

For instance, the U.S. Department of the State Office of English Language Programs which cooperates with the University of Oregon's American English Institute has offered training programs to the teachers to make sure they can learn how to improve their teaching creativity and how to develop their creativity thinking. The teachers need to know "Shaping the Way to Teach English" to make the students enjoy the lesson, while trying to develop the students' proficiency.

The writers in the past have made a difference between "teacher's education" and "teacher's training" (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997). He also identified the difference between teacher's education and teacher's training to make sure the teachers understand the difference before they step in the learning world. The intellectual development of teachers is more to the teacher's education but teacher's training is more towards the development of teacher's particular areas to make sure they can gain their knowledge and skill which are helpful to them in the teaching task to raise the students' proficiency of the English language.

The current accepted conceptualizations of teacher's commitment can be directly linked back to the research done in the 1970's which is organizational commitment by Kanter (1974) and Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979). According to Day, 2000, 2004; Nias 1981, 1996; Tyree, 1996 explained teacher commitment is not dimensional but it has many layers and dimensions because teachers are thought to have commitments to the social context in which they work, or to what Kanter (1974) described as the social system to improve the system.

How do teachers characterize in commitment? The individual teacher will conceptualize the phenomenon of teacher commitment in variety ways (Nias, 1981; Graham, 1996; Tyree, 1996; Louis, 1998). The teachers conceptualize the commitment, and relationships between their commitments by practice their commitment. According to Meyer & Allen, 1991 explained that the dimensions of commitment may be interconnected with an individual, possibly exhibiting different level of identification simultaneously to improve their creativity to help the students to increase their proficiency level of the English language.

According to Darling – Hammond (1997), he examined that the quality of teaching is the key to boost the success of students in learning and proficiency. Many efforts have been taken to provide a better quality of teaching throughout the professional development. The actual classroom actions have not been discovered by the researchers yet because of certain criteria, once the teachers come back to their classrooms after their professional-development training experiences, they can develop their teaching methods very well. (Frechtling, Sharp, Carey, & Baden-Kierman, 1995).

The trainings or workshops will be effective when the teachers obtain their knowledge and skills into the classroom but sometimes they cannot interpret whatever they learn from the training program into their classroom practice because of basic

reasons that are underlined by the theory and research: (a) teacher's efficacy and (b) organizational support (e.g., Smylie, 1988). The program that is participated by the teachers will enable learn and teachers apply to certain things such as: (1) accurate and appropriate usage of oral and written discussion, (2) speaking, listening and reading strategies, (3) advanced grammar, (4) advanced academic and practical vocabulary. (Office of International Affairs McMaster University, 2009 – English Teachers Training Program). These knowledge and skills influence the students' proficiency of the English language.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Most of the training programs' are not tied to the teacher's goals as they are often conducted in a classroom, which are not related to the problems facing by the teachers. So, the training program results are considered less crucial than the activity itself because the organizations are satisfied as long as the teachers attend without knowing the importance of the training program which is increasing their creativity, attitude towards training and commitment.

Nowadays, the teachers' creativity drops because of the lack of training program that are provided by top educational management, while their work performance and commitment are also not good. Evidence shows that the students' results drop because of low proficiency in English. In the year 1999 and 2000, the lack of proficiency was clearly reflected in the students' poor performance in the English language test which was Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) examinations because fewer teachers implement their learning process to the students, they gave less commitment in attending the training and showed less creativity in teaching skills.

Although there have been several studies reported on training program, creativity, job performance and commitment to build the teachers' awareness in teaching to achieve the school objectives and goals effectively and efficiently, the research has still done very little in respect of the influence of teachers' creativity, attitude and work commitment towards training at secondary schools.



### **1.3 Purpose and Significance of the study**

Most teachers think that teaching English at secondary school is easy and it can be done by everyone, but their perception about teaching profession is wrong because teaching English is not an easy job that can be done by everyone. Only people who have patience, good command of English good leadership behavior can join the teaching profession. Generally, teachers look for easy work, by merely giving their knowledge to the students. This study is related to the previous academic study which is the significance between teachers' creativity, attitude and commitment on students' proficiency in their learning process.

The real amount of training or workshop that is offered by the organizations to the teachers may affect the level of creativity, attitude and commitment or performance among teachers. Besides that, the literatures also suggest the teachers' perceptions towards their performance or commitment right after they have attended the training or workshop that is offered by their organizations (Kumar, 2006; Berger and Cummings, 1979). Consequently, the construct of performance or commitment has a natural marriage with the construct of expectation because performance or commitment shows the attitude of workers to develop their career and improve their set of knowledge. Job commitment will be the act of fulfilling work-related expectations from this study because training can develop workers' performance, attitude, commitment and creativity which are related to the work criteria. In this study, the conceptual framework has not been applied fully, and it will be created to understand the unique and the influence of teachers' creativity, attitude and commitment on students' proficiency.

#### **1.4 Objective of study**

The main objective for this study:-

1. To examine the relationship between teachers' creativity and students' English language proficiency.
2. To determine the relationship between teachers' attitude and students' English language proficiency.
3. To investigate the relationship between teachers' commitment and students' English language proficiency.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study addresses three research questions which are: -

1. How can teachers' creativity increases the students' proficiency of the English language?
2. Can teachers' attitude help them to improve students' proficiency?
3. How do teachers' commitments develop the students' proficiency of the English language?

## **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The study is focus on three important aspects such as limitation of time, limitation of location and limitation of study and respondent.

### **1.6.1 Limitation of time**

The study needs to be completed as soon as possible because everyone has their own limitation of time to complete it. Thus, my target to complete this study is within one year which consists of two semesters, starting from April 2010 until December 2010.

### **1.6.2 Limitation of location**

The location of this study only concentrates on English teachers at private secondary school, so get to information which is related to the study (The Influence of Teachers' Creativity, Attitude and Commitment on Students' Proficiency of the English Language). The purpose is to allow the researcher to gets information, measure the topic easily and complete the study within the time.

### **1.6.3 Limitation of study and respondent**

The target of the respondent in this study is limited to three hundred ten (310) teachers only. The respondents refer to 110 male teachers and 200 female teachers around Kuala Lumpur. Other purpose is to narrow down the scope of study which is very wide. Collection of the data refers to the information that is gathered by distributing the questionnaire to the respondents.

## **1.7 Organizational of the study**

This study is reported into five chapters which are:-

### **Chapter One**

Focus on introduction of the study, statements of problem, and the purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, and scope of the study, limitation and organization of the present study and so on.

### **Chapter Two**

Literature review of the previous study can help to relate to the present study which is concentrated on the definition of the key terms, conceptual framework and theoretical model (The Influence of Teachers' Creativity, Attitude and Commitment on Students' Proficiency of the English Language) which can to make sure the results of study is significant.

### **Chapter Three**

Focus on the research methodology of the study. This study includes few matters such as research hypotheses, selection of the measures, sampling design, data collection, procedures and data analysis techniques.

### **Chapter Four**

The result of the study will provide a summary of the respondents, an analysis of the measures by using SPSS, the results for the hypotheses testing and the summary of the results. To ensure and measure whether the result is significant to the variables.

### **Chapter 5**

Focus on the conclusion of the study and recommendations for future research. This chapter also focus to the implications of the study to make sure it can benefit to everyone in the organization.

## 1.8 Chapter summary

Teachers' creativity, attitude and commitment towards training should be concerned by all the teachers to make sure they can influence the students to feel confidence in learning English wherever they are. However, to support and encourage the training program for the teachers to increase their ability and creative teaching, government should concern and take action to raise their attention to promote and provide this kind of training program to the teachers to increase their creativity, knowledge and teaching skills. It is not enough to just hold a training program to the teachers and hoping for the best from them. Their commitment towards training is very important to make sure they have encouragement for self-enrichment. So, the teachers must be elected and they must try to develop their self-creativity by involving in the training program that can give good knowledge to them implement in their classroom.

Creativity of teachers can influence the students' proficiency of the English language because the teachers' will implement their creative teaching in classroom to make sure the students can learn new skills from them. Teachers need to improve their creative learning by involving in workshop or training program to carry out their new strategies and ideas.

Teachers' commitment towards training program also include analyzing whether the teachers' are committed to the training in developing their ability and creativity throughout the teaching process. So, the following chapter presents the review of academic literatures in understanding the influence of Teachers' Creativity, Attitude and Commitment on Students' Proficiency of the English language.