

# INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: REINFORCING THE TEACHER AS LEADER

Ruhaya Hassan<sup>1</sup>  
ruhaya@iab.edu.my

## ABSTRACT

*Leadership for Learning implies that leaders and learners share their thoughts about learning and their respective roles in learning. In the best establishments, from the smallest primary school to the largest college, learners are supported to become leaders of their own learning and to take responsibility for their own progress and development. When this is considered seriously and planned for, learners become independent learners. The research presented in this paper outlines the preliminary study carried out by Institut Aminuddin Baki, Ministry of Education, Malaysia in the Teach For Malaysia (TFM) program in the attempt to illustrate the outcome of teaching as leadership framework employed by TFM Fellows in teaching and learning in the classroom in which this has been an innovation in the teaching and learning in the existing classroom. The methodology of the study is open interviews which are carried out throughout the 17 schools designated for the TFM program. The respondents are 50 TFM Fellows placed in the 17 secondary schools in three (3) states namely Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan. The interview data was analyzed qualitatively in order to give rich description of the process of teaching and learning using the teaching as leadership framework. This study is still on-going and the result will be expected to be fully reported by the end of December 2013.*

Sub-Tema D

**Key words:** *Leadership for Learning, Teach for Malaysia (TFM), Teaching as Leadership*

## INTRODUCTION

*Leadership for Learning implies that leaders and learners share their thoughts about learning and their respective roles in learning. In the best establishments, from the smallest primary school to the largest college, learners are supported to become leaders of their own learning and to take responsibility for their own progress and development. When this is considered seriously and planned for, learners become independent learners.*

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<sup>1</sup> PhD, Senior Lecturer, Institute Aminuddin Baki

are supported to become leaders of their own learning and to take responsibility for their own progress and development. When this is considered seriously and planned for, learners become independent learners. The sheer magnitude of change from the 20th to the 21st century should be forcing everyone in schools, and all those working with schools to be ready to be independent learners in order to embrace and be adaptable of the change. As leaders and teachers, we ought to be asking ourselves these questions: 1) What, exactly, has changed around us or is changing? and 2) How can we prepare ourselves and learners for these changes?

So, what are these changes that schools need to prepare the learners for? Watkins (1997) describes succinctly the four change forces as the social change, technological advancement, economic and work front as well as environmental change of the world at large. The significant social change includes the changes to family structures where more women excel in education and work outside the home, people are generally live longer and the world's population explosion, exceeding seven billion in October 2011 (UN report, 2011), with more than half a billion living in absolute poverty. The technological advances has brought about new meaning to finding out things in a split second, and this has continuously brought down the cost of widespread communication. On the economic and work front, part-time jobs and portfolio careers have replaced the job for life, many people work from home and in different locations. There is a dramatic increase in service and knowledge work which coincides with a sharp decrease in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Globally, the move towards global economies has lead to increased movement between countries and questions about national borders. Worryingly, environmental deterioration continues, and will do so until sustainability is taken more seriously. So, what does this all mean for schools and leaders in schools? The short answer to that is, it means learning.

Schools are responsible for preparing learners for this changing world. The ultimate goal of school improvement is not only to enhance learners' progress, achievement and development, but also to capture the ever-changing life of the 21st century. The UNESCO's International Commission on Education for Twenty-first Century report (UNESCO, 1996) outlines that the four "pillars of knowledge" should be 1) learning to know, 2) learning to do, 3) learning to live, and 4) learning to be. Another report by RSA (1999) proposes five 'competencies' for the 21st century "that can help students become capable of meeting the more complex demands that will be made on them in the future" (p. 7). These 'competencies' include learning, citizenship, relating to people, managing situations and managing information. While both reports acknowledge the importance of subject disciplines, knowledge and skills, they, however, recognize the fundamental importance of Gardner's interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (1983) as well as Coleman's emotional intelligence (1996). With these curriculum in mind, the essential learning outcomes in today's and tomorrow's world will surely involve the recognition and understanding of one's own learning, possessing a love for learning and living with others harmoniously. Learning is and should no longer be confined only in the classroom, and more importantly should not just be the road to various assessments and examinations in a learner's life. Learning should mean something to learners and help them to grow with

their understanding of the subject, life and the world. Therefore, schools must ensure that learning must take place. Successful and effective schools promote and enhance learning, and we all agree that nothing or no one is more important to school improvement than a teacher!

### **Teach for Malaysia Program**

The Teach for Malaysia (TFM) program is a public-private partnership to raise student outcomes in high need schools in Malaysia. The program is established by TFM Foundation and supported by the Ministry of Education. It is one of the educational initiatives in the 10th Malaysia Plan which emphasizes to improve the quality of human capital towards achieving the nation's workforce by the year 2020. In this context, the Ministry of Education strives to improve the quality of teaching and further boost the teacher professionalism in order to develop and sustain world-class human capital. The TFM program is a network from Teach for All, an agency established from the successful experiences of Teach for America and Teach First UK in the attempt to bridge the gap in education equity and raise student outcomes. The crux of TFM program is to increase students' learning and achievement by placing high quality graduates from multi-disciplines as classroom teachers in high need schools across the country. These graduates undergo a highly selective admissions process by TFM Foundation, initially guided by Teach for All in the attempt to identify the right and most appropriate candidates. There are currently 49 TFM Fellows in 17 high need schools in Negeri Sembilan, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, and another 70 candidates are being identified for the 2013 cohort. The ultimate aim of these TFM fellows is to improve student outcomes through leadership competencies instilled in them during pre-placement training, using the Teaching as Leadership framework.

### **PURPOSE**

To evaluate TFM Fellows' performance in the first six months of their placement as teachers in schools.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- i. To investigate the performance of each Fellow in the teaching and learning in their specific classroom; and
- ii. To evaluate Fellows' performance in teaching and learning towards student achievement using Teaching as Leadership framework.

## QUESTIONS

- i. How do Fellows perform in the teaching and learning in their specific classroom?
- ii. To what extent Fellows' performance in teaching and learning impact student achievement using Teaching as Leadership framework?

## TEACHING AS LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Teaching as Leadership (TAL) is adapted from Teach for All's research-based framework (Farr, 2010) which outlines six general principles and teacher actions distinguishing teachers whose students, despite starting behind and facing huge challenges, are demonstrating tremendous academic gains. TAL uses these six general principles with a list of specific rubric for each principle to capture measurable teacher actions in her attempt to measure actual student learning. Figure 1 illustrates the TAL framework.

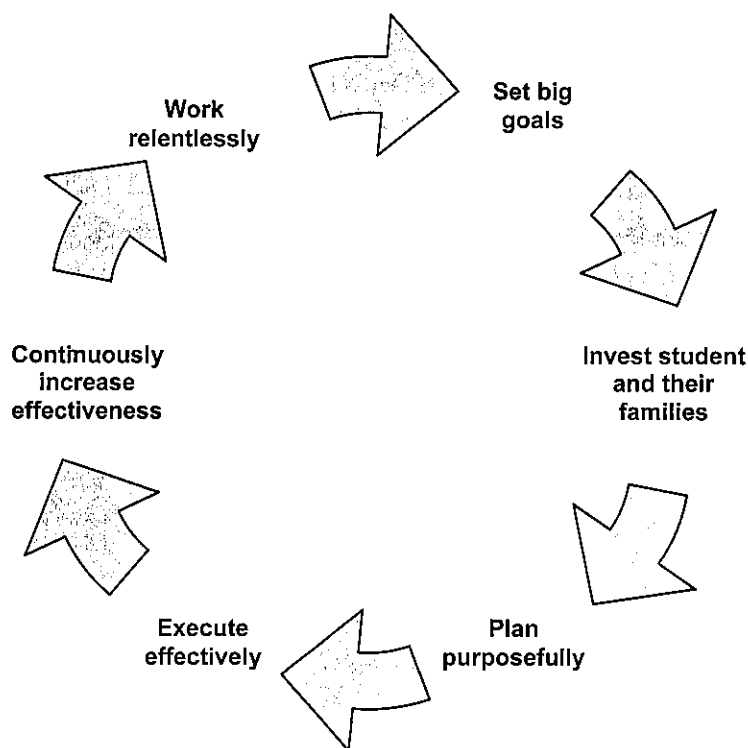


Figure 1: Teaching As Leadership Framework.

## **1. Set big goals**

The notion of setting big goals in TAL is founded on three strong ideas. First, highly effective teachers insist on defining and measuring achievement so that progress and success are clear. In TAL, this principle takes the form of ambitious standards – aligned and quantifiable goals – targets that help students see their progress in learning and appreciate the benefits of hard work. Second, highly effective teachers expect the best of those they are leading. In TAL, this means demanding and seeing that their students reach their full potential, holding high expectations that actually raise student performance. Third, strong teachers are keenly aware of their students' needs and desires, therefore they not only seek to meet those inherent interests and motivations, but also find ways to build them into their vision of success to make it all the more inspiring to their students.

The effective big goals set in TAL are measurable, ambitious and meaningful to students' learning. Big goals help focus and align the efforts of many students who have low self-esteem as they are often being told by many teachers that they simply "could not do it" or that they "do not meet the standards". Setting big goals in TAL classrooms often result in students achieving more and faster than they themselves believe. The learning focus often is executed with the timeline and deadline inherent in setting a measurable goal which will bring urgency to teachers and the team, hence maximising student learning.

"A teacher's beliefs about student chances of success in school influence the teacher's action with students, which in turn influence students' achievement. If the teacher believes students can succeed, she tends to behave in ways that help them succeed. If the teacher believes that students cannot succeed, she unwittingly tends to behave in ways that subvert student success or at least do not facilitate student success. This is perhaps one of the most powerful hidden dynamics of teaching because it is typically an unconscious activity."

(Marzano, 2007, p. 162)

## **2. Invest students and their families**

Investing in students means that teachers take responsibility for convincing students that they can and want to learn. The value of learning and academic achievement is seen as realistic to students when they realise that their hard work is leading to success. Teachers using TAL expand their influence on their students by ensuring that students' families, coaches, other teachers and any other influences are all aligned in building students' investment. It enhances the chance of meaningful learning when students believe that they "can do this" and they "want to do this" and thus, invest in working hard to reach ambitious goals. With invested students, the potential for influence expands dramatically, unlike with uninvested students, the teachers' efforts will often lead to very little or learning.

TAL invests on the belief that changing students' beliefs about learning requires the help of other influential people in students' lives – influencers such as their friends,

families, coaches and other teachers. Therefore, to maximise students' learning, these teachers invest families and other influencers in helping students work toward the big goal. This form of collaboration creates a network of well-aligned messages that reinforce the benefits of hard work and the value of achieving the big goal.

"Initially I was under the impression that community members, parents, and teachers were not concerned with the academic progress of the community's children. I quickly learned that... their hopes, dreams, and aspirations were far-reaching, and not limited to the poverty conditions that surrounded them. After inviting parents to a 'report card dinner,' I quickly realized that we as a community were all in this together."

(Farr, 2010, p.66)

### **3. Plan Purposefully**

Strong leaders define the ultimate result they want, make clear how they will know they have succeeded and only then choose and design strategies to that end (Farr, 2010). No patient will enter any operating theatre for a brain surgery if he or she knew that the surgeon had not planned intricate strategies for the operation. However, children entering classrooms across the world for brain development often with teachers teaching without purposeful planning or even any planning whatsoever every day. While, the purpose to execute a successful brain surgery is foremost in a surgeon's mind as she prepares, that evokes all of her knowledge of surgical methods, and her patient's unique condition, similarly, the same principle applies to a teacher teaching with purposeful planning which means that she starts by developing clear vision of success for her students that is built on the set learning standards, using all of her knowledge of pedagogical methods and her students' unique learning situation.

In short, all purposeful planning involves establishing a vision of success, developing a means of knowing you have reached success, and planning a path or roadway to that vision of success. The approach is also known as a form of 'backward planning', starting with the visionary success and then thinking and charting the ways on how to get there – an approach that characterizes strong leadership in any context, including the classroom.

"In some ways, leaders live their lives backward."

(Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 17)

### **4. Execute effectively**

In TAL, effective execution is the tenets of three main ideas; i) doing well what must be done, 2) insisting on seeing reality and 3) adjusting course as circumstances change which manifest in a number of teacher actions in and around the classroom. Strong leaders, including strong teachers, always insist on the better ways to do every necessary task. Strong teachers must not only master their own content area knowledge, but also everything

that relates to learning and their learners. They must understand and able to design long and short terms objectives of lesson planning, grading systems, learning disabilities, learning technology, and communicating effectively, to name a few. Learning from highly successful teachers, TAL recognizes two actions that lead to a high level of 'task competency': 1) these highly successful teachers are constant learners. They are forever seeking not only new ideas but also in insights into how to make what they are already doing even more effective, and 2) these teachers practise the 'teaching' before they get in front of students.

"In college, I always noticed that when I practiced before going into any sort of interview, I did so much better. Even if they didn't ask the questions I practiced, if I had practiced out loud... my responses were much more clearer and concise. As a teacher, I found the same to be true in my classroom. I would practice lessons out loud in my car on the way to school, and found that this made my actual lessons clearer and helped me have a sense of where I was going during the lesson. For example, I might discover that my in-car version of my lesson on probability needed to be better translated into language that an eleven-year-old could understand, and I could work out those adjustments right then and there and be ready when I actually delivered the lesson to my students."

(Eastman in Farr, 2010, p. 147)

In sum, effective execution defines the action of ensuring that your plans have the effect you want them to. Doing well what must be done, insisting on real evidence of student learning along the way, and adjusting plans when necessary to rechart the path to the ultimate goals. This is the approach that teachers who are using TAL rubrics employ for a successful implementation in the classroom – much like their successful classroom leaders counterpart across the world.

## **5. Continuously increase effectiveness**

Strong teachers seem to always challenge their students to learn, grow and improve, all with the aim of maximising meaningful learning. However, the biggest challenge that they seem to face is to challenge themselves to constantly learn, grow and improve in their teaching! Highly effective teachers constantly work to improve their effectiveness. TAL outlines the four key beliefs of these successful and highly effective teachers; learning the skill of effective teaching, using relevant data to make key decisions on students' learning progress, taking charge of one's own improvement based on experiences, and constantly sharing ideas and resources with other strong teachers.

These tenets should remind teachers that our improvement as teachers has a solid purpose because at the end of the day what matters is student achievement. As Vanessa Muller, TFA teacher (Farr, 2010) puts it,

"This isn't about you – or the weight you feel. This is about children and equality and changing something much bigger than yourself... The knowledge that every move I make is for something bigger than myself helps keep me going and fuels my fire to constantly improve." (p. 192)

## **6. Work relentlessly**

TAL key elements of working relentlessly include persisting through challenges and failures, maintaining high expectations of students, expanding time and resources, expanding influence through relationships, student achievement, respect and humility, and professionalism, as well as sustaining the work over time. The spirit of working hard in the ways that ensure teachers achieve their goals with regards to students' learning. They control their own success as teachers and their students' success. The notion of working relentlessly is not a list of things you do, but a mindset you bring to everything that you do. This has become the core tenet of working relentlessly.

"Teachers who approach their classroom leadership with that resolve act as great leaders would in any challenging context, demonstrating 'ferocious resolve, an almost stoic determination to do whatever needs to be done'"

(Collins in Farr, 2010, p. 30)

## **METHODOLOGY**

The data for this research is based on the development of 49 TFM Fellows, the first cohort of the TFM program. These Fellows are in their first year of teaching high need schools in the selected 17 schools. There are two observations made by two parties in the continuous evaluation and observation of the Fellows' development as teachers for the past six (6) months. One observation is made by TFM Foundation through their Leadership Development Officers (LDOs) and the other is by coaches from Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB), Ministry of Education. The LDOs are using the TAL framework strictly, while IAB coaches use classroom observation and open interviews as a means of collecting data.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings in this paper are preliminary, as both parties are still doing observations and evaluations throughout the year, as well as in the second year of 2013. The final data collection will be expected to complete by end of December 2013, when all 49 Fellows have completed their compulsory two (2) years teaching in schools. The data shown here are just for sharing the developments that Fellows are making in the first half year of their teaching experience, using the innovative TAL strategies in high need classrooms. Throughout the first two (2) years of teaching, Fellows are given support and guidance from IAB coaches and LDOs. They are also given support by subject school-based mentors and school leaders in their respective schools in various aspects in and around the classroom context. Let's see how they are doing.

## 1. Findings by LDOs

From Table 1, we find that the findings by LDOs on the TFM Fellows using the TAL rubric indicates that almost all Fellows have shown strengths mainly in the elements of 'planning purposefully', 'executing effectively' and 'invest in students and others'. These are deemed as "the most critical skills that they (Fellows) need to lead their students to success". For the element of 'executing effectively', most Fellows seem to show strengths in even higher rubric (E-4) which denotes the ability to "communicate high expectations for behaviour by teaching, and reinforcing rules and consequences so that students are focused on working hard." (Farr, 2010; p. 256).

Table 1: TFM Fellows performance using TAL rubric (Jan - June 2012).

No. of Fellows (N)	Planning Purposefully P-3	Executing Effectively E-1	Executing Effectively E-2	Executing Effectively E-3	Executing Effectively E-4	Investment 1-1 1-2	Working Relentlessly
49	49	49	44	46	43	47	38 (All Fellows work hard and committed but a number have slackened on lesson planning)

Source: TFM Foundation (2012)

- P-3 Create rigorous, objective-driven lesson plans so that students who complete class activities successfully will have mastered the objectives and made progress toward the big goals.
- E-1 Clearly present academic content (in differentiated ways, if necessary) so that students comprehend key information and ideas.
- E-2 Facilitate, manage and coordinate student academic practice (in differentiated ways, if necessary) so that all students are participating and have the opportunity to gain mastery of the objectives.
- E-3 Check for academic understanding frequently by questioning, listening, and/or observing, and provide feedback (that affirms right answers and corrects wrong answers), in order to ensure student learning.
- E-4 Communicates high expectations for behaviour by teaching, practising, and reinforcing rules and consequences so that students are focused on working hard.
- I-1 Develop students' rational understanding that they can achieve by working hard ("I can") through evidence of students' own progress, statistics, explicit discussions if malleable intelligence, creative marketing, leveraging the big goals, etc.
- I-2 Develop students' rational understanding that they will benefit from achievement ("I want") through connections between class achievement and their lives and aspirations, statistics, creative marketing, leveraging the big goals, etc.

To support the data in Table 1, some descriptions on Fellows who have demonstrated proficiency in certain TAL rubric are given in Figure 2.

<b>Plan Purposefully</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soon Seng and Jasmine realised that their school Scheme of Work (SOW) was not interesting and also pitched at level higher than their students' ability. So they have compared their school SOW with the syllabus as well as taking into account student needs/ability and developed a thematic programme to cover skills for this term.</li> <li>• Kugahn plans his lessons several weeks in advance so he can ensure each lesson builds on the previous.</li> </ul>
<b>Executing Effectively E-1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharun uses a variety of techniques ranging from games to more traditional teacher focused approaches. She also regularly has students 'teach' the class by explaining their workings and approaches in groups and or as individuals.</li> <li>• Azhari uses graphic organizers in every class to visually present new material to students who struggle with literacy.</li> </ul>
<b>Executing Effectively E-2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hafiz ensures that his classes meet different learning styles as a way to help students remain motivated and to avoid monotony. Where possible he has students use kinesthetic approaches such as having fellows act out the behaviour of atoms, he also tries to bring the syllabus alive by showing the everyday application of principles they are learning.</li> <li>• Ken Ming uses group practice in his classes and assigns roles and work for each student to ensure that students work together and individually to practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Executing Effectively E-3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kai Lee has instilled a series of procedures in her class that students follow, she ensures her lessons are on objective and that students understand where they are heading. She surveys students on her approach so that she can reflect and amend as necessary.</li> <li>• Lutfi uses frequent checks for understand and gives students 5 sec. to answer, then a friend can help them, but they must repeat the correct answer.</li> </ul>
<b>Executing Effectively E-4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ranjeetha has created an atmosphere of collective purpose and discipline by investing students in their objectives but also expecting high conduct in her class. She also adapts according to students' need and so is not 'stuck in one delivery method.</li> <li>• Joyce has three character strengths that she teaches her students (Respect, Collaboration and Determination). Classroom behaviour reflects these three strengths.</li> </ul>
<b>Investment I-1 and I-2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jessica has run a talent show on the weekend to invest students in their interests and English. She worked in her own time to accommodate students, doing everything from planning the event to obtaining resources. She did this for her classes as well as all those interested in the school.</li> <li>• Victoria took her English class to Aquaria in KLCC to invest them in learning English.</li> </ul>

Figure 2: Observations on some Fellows who have demonstrated proficiency in certain TAL rubric.

## 2. Findings by IAB Coaches

As the MOE implementation agency in the TFM program, IAB has the responsibility to monitor the progress of TFM Fellows in the 17 selected schools. 17 IAB coaches have been appointed to support and guide the 49 Fellows, mainly in the area of teaching and learning in the classroom. IAB coaches do not grade or formally evaluate the performance of Fellows, rather they are there to give necessary guidance and professional support in the attempt to assist Fellows in their encounter with students in the high-need schools. IAB coaches use a set of instrument to record their observations of Fellows, their strengths and areas that need attention, as well as their overall being as a teacher in the school. Although the TAL framework is not used by IAB coaches, the observations recorded by most coaches indicate similar elements in the framework. All data from observations recorded by IAB coaches are taken from their first visit to the 17 schools which were done from early February till end of March 2012. All data are in the narrative form. The data presented is only a fraction of the complete observations by IAB coaches during their first visit to schools.

### a. Work Relentlessly

Most principals celebrate the presence of Fellows in their schools, and are very pleased and satisfied with their commitment and positive working culture. They find that Fellows work very hard, particularly in preparing materials and strategies for their lessons in the classroom. They consider Fellows a valuable asset for their school who manage to bring a new learning culture in their attempt to increase student achievement in non-performing classes. They are quite surprised that some Fellows are ever ready to stay back in the evenings to voluntarily give unplanned extra classes to very weak students or come early in the mornings if they teach in the afternoon session. Most principals feel extremely grateful when their teachers are willing to go to that extra mile for students. Some detailed observations of Fellows working relentlessly are given in the following citations:

*"Fellow mempunyai keyakinan diri dan menampilkan sikap yang sangat positif terhadap tanggungjawab sebagai pendidik. Kegigihan beliau dalam persiapan untuk mengajar jelas dipamerkan dengan alat bantuan mengajar seperti carta dan lembaran kerja yang beliau hasilkan sendiri"*  
(IAB coach, SMK Segambut)

*"Fellow berkeyakinan tinggi menangani masalah... sanggup membantu Sekolah, contoh Fellows mengajar pada sesi petang untuk membantu Kekurangan 3 orang guru sesi petang."*  
(IAB coach, SMK Tengku Idris Shah)

*"(Fellows) amat baik. Mereka rajin, berdikari dan ambil inisiatif untuk bertanya guru (lain)..."*  
(IAB coach, SMK Jalan Reko)

*"Pentadbir sekolah amat berterima kasih dengan kedatangan Fellows ke SMK Pulau Ketam kerana mereka telah dapat memberikan impak yang amat baik dalam menjalankan tugas dan tanggungjawab mereka... Fellows TFM amat komited dalam menjalankan tugas mereka. Ini dapat dilihat oleh PP semasa lawatan di mana mereka masih berada di sekolah pada waktu malam untuk membuat persediaan dan berbincang tentang tugas mereka."*

*(IAB coach, SMK Pulau Ketam)*

### **b. Plan Purposefully**

One of the fundamentals of teaching is to plan for the lesson that teachers are going to teach. IAB coaches consistently find that Fellows have managed to plan well for their lessons, including developing their own materials for specific lessons. As most Fellows are teaching the lower secondary classes, a lot of homegrown materials are developed by Fellows, and this has managed to increase participation amongst students, even those who have discipline problems in the classroom. Fellows seem to manage the students well through their well-thought out lesson planning

*"Preparation takes a lot of time. Tracking their progress is important. The diagnostic test is important. We need to prepare worksheets to get them (students) going... I google all the time to find activities, improvise them..."*  
*(Fellow teaching Maths, SMK Tanjong Sepat)*

*"Mentor juga menyatakan Fellows TFM agak kreatif dalam P&P dan juga telah dapat menggunakan sumber yang ada dengan baik (penggunaan bilik tayangan, ICT dll)...dan telah menarik minat pelajar untuk belajar (ability to make students want to learn)."*

*(SBM, SMK Pulau Ketam)*

### **c. Execute Effectively**

Based on the observations made, most Fellows seem to be able to execute their lessons competently. Although some Fellows have bigger challenge in terms of students' disruptive behaviour in their classrooms than others, they seem to be able to execute their lesson plans effectively. One of the challenges facing all Fellows consistently is student disruptive behaviours in the classroom. From school and classroom observations previously, it is a common phenomenon in most under-performing classrooms in high need schools. However, IAB coaches record observations that highly promising, that Fellows are able to engage these students in most learning activities in the classroom. This seems to be an achievement in itself, when normally these students are not at all interested in whatever their teacher is teaching. Here, we see Fellows have successfully involved these students, albeit difficult at first, in the learning process. Here are some observations recorded by IAB coaches:

*"At first it's very difficult to get the students to pay attention to you, when you talk they tend to talk too... and then everybody is talking... so I stop talking... I then device strategies to start my class with an interesting activity, and whoever can shout the most correct answers, they will get merit points. After that, after each lesson I make the students to recall the activity and explain in their own words what they understand about that day's lesson... The students are getting more and more interested in my class"*

*(Fellow teaching Science, SMK Jeram)*

*"Mentor menyatakan Fellows TFM sangat kreatif menggunakan pelbagai kaedah dalam P&P mereka sehingga semua murid nak Fellows mengajar mereka. Bila tanya murid mengapa mereka nak Cikgu Jessica, mereka kata sebab dia ajar senang faham, kita buat banyak aktiviti, tak boring...."*

*(SBM, SMK Rantau Panjang)*

*"Fellows TFM sangat rajin bertanya kepada guru lain dan mula-mula datang ke sekolah tersebut, bertanya apakah latar belakang murid di dalam kelasnya, dan beliau dilihat cuba menyesuaikan aktiviti kelas dengan latar belakang murid. Contohnya, apabila membuat aktiviti dalam kelas, Fellow meminta murid membuat layang-layang (Fellow mengajar Bahasa Inggeris) dan mengajar perkara yang berkaitan dengan aktiviti tersebut. Murid-murid faham dan seronok dengan aktiviti yang dekat dengan mereka."*

*(IAB Coach, SMK Pulau Ketam )*

## DISCUSSION

In TFM program, the TAL framework is distinctly used by Fellows in their teaching and learning to measure students' performance based on specific rubrics that outline each element of TAL. From the observations, we can see that using TAL can be beneficial for ensuring that each lesson is thought out carefully, measurable and have potential to increase student performance. By bringing together data showing student learning and other data showing teacher actions, we can shed light on a number of important issues namely; the most effective resources used by effective teachers, the lesson plans of teachers who make significant improvement in student gains in learning, the type of pedagogical techniques that attractive to students and make students learn and the indicators that seem to predict teacher's making significant gains with students.

Like Teach for America, Teach for Malaysia's mission is to expand educational opportunities and eliminate education inequity amongst low achievers, especially those who come from low socioeconomic status and background. With the TFM program in place in these selected high need schools, the Ministry of Education is anticipating significant increase in these students' learning and achievement. Earlier, we have seen some positive

data from Fellows after just six months being with the students in schools. We believe that when the basic of wanting to learn is being dealt with successfully by Fellows, then learning becomes meaningful for the students. This will help them to grow with their understanding of the subject, their lives and the world. Later in life, they will see that not only education can be a means of upward social mobility, but they will also experience that learning at whatever level is important in order to be functional and significant in a constantly changing society.

## CONCLUSION

If there is a correlation between headteacher competences and student outcomes, it is at best an indirect one. The most persistent finding from effectiveness studies is that the teacher effect is far more significant than the school or individual leader effect (MacBeath, 2002). Teachers make the difference. Teachers are the gatekeepers of change, and if improvement initiatives are to bear fruit they must start first and foremost with the individual and collective capacity of teachers to learn and through learning to meet and initiate change. More than anything, they need to be seen to learn, and to model the kind of learning they expect to take place as leaders of learning and leaders for learning.

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