

Competency Of English Program Teachers Based on Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) And Its Influence on the Academic Performance of Primary Students In Samut Prakan, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the competency of English Program teachers using the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and its relationship to the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Specifically, it assessed teachers' profile variables, level of competency across SEA-TCF domains, students' academic performance, and the significant relationships among these variables. A cross-sectional research design was employed using a researcher-made, expert-validated questionnaire administered to 100 primary teachers selected through stratified random sampling from two school groups in Samut Prakan. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted mean, Pearson r correlation, and Eta statistics. Findings revealed that English Program teachers demonstrated a high level of competency across SEA-TCF domains, particularly in professional development and content knowledge. However, primary students' academic performance was found to be at a moderate level in English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement. Results further showed a significant positive relationship between teacher competency and student academic performance. Professional factors such as teaching experience, training exposure, and income were also significantly associated with both teacher competency and student outcomes. Based on the findings, a SEA-TCF-aligned capacity-building program was proposed to strengthen teachers' competencies and enhance students' academic performance. The study underscores the importance of continuous professional development in improving instructional quality and learner achievement.

Keywords: teacher competency, SEA-TCF, academic performance, professional development, primary education

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a vital role in shaping students' academic achievement and improving educational quality. In Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), developed by SEAMEO, serves as a regional guide for strengthening teachers' competencies in content knowledge, pedagogy and assessment, community engagement, and continuous

professional development. In Thailand, despite educational reforms aimed at improving English language instruction, many primary students continue to experience challenges in English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement, raising concerns about learning outcomes and instructional effectiveness. While previous studies have emphasized the importance of teacher quality in student achievement, limited research has examined English Program teachers' competencies using the SEA-TCF framework and their direct influence on primary students' academic performance in provincial contexts such as Samut Prakan. Hence, this study examined the competency of English Program teachers based on SEA-TCF and its influence on the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand, as a basis for proposing a capacity-building program to enhance teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the competence of English Program teachers in public primary schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand, based on the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), and investigated its influence on primary students' academic performance. Specifically, it sought to determine the profile of English Program teachers in terms of age, gender, marital status, highest educational attainment, bachelor's degree specialization, teaching license, length of teaching service in Thailand, number of seminars or training attended related to teaching, and average family monthly income. The study also assessed the level of teacher competency across the SEA-TCF domains, namely: Know and Understand What I Teach; Help My Students Learn (Pedagogy and Assessment); Engage the Community; and Become a Better Teacher Every Day.

Furthermore, the study evaluated the academic performance of primary students in terms of English language proficiency, literacy skills across subjects, numeracy and mathematics achievement, higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, and classroom engagement and participation. It further examined the significant relationships among teacher competency, students' academic performance, selected teacher profile variables, and students' academic performance and teacher profile characteristics. Finally, the findings served as the basis for developing a SEA-TCF-aligned capacity-building program to strengthen teachers' competencies and improve student academic outcomes in primary English Program schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

This study focused on assessing the competency of English Program teachers in selected public primary schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand, using the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) as the basis for evaluating competencies in content knowledge, pedagogy and assessment, community engagement, and continuous professional development. It also examined selected teacher profile variables and the academic performance of Grade 1 primary students in English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement, and the relationships among these variables, as a basis for a proposed capacity-building program. The study was limited to Grade 1 English Program teachers and their students in selected public schools in Samut Prakan, utilizing self-reported competency measures and school-based academic indicators, while excluding private schools, higher grade levels, non-English programs, and external factors such as parental involvement, school resources, class size, and students' socio-emotional conditions.

Review of Related Literature and Studies / Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in existing literature and theories that emphasize that teacher competence plays a significant role in improving students' academic performance. Previous studies revealed that teachers' subject mastery, effective pedagogy and assessment, community engagement, and continuous professional development positively influence learners' academic achievement, classroom engagement, literacy, numeracy, and higher-order thinking skills. Guided by the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), this study adopts its four competency domains—Know and Understand What I Teach, Help My Students Learn, Engage the Community, and Become a Better Teacher Every Day—as the primary framework in assessing English Program teachers' competencies in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Furthermore, the study is theoretically supported by the view that competent teachers create meaningful learning environments that enhance student outcomes; thus, it is assumed that higher levels of teacher competency are associated with better academic performance among primary students, serving as the basis for proposing an appropriate capacity-building program.

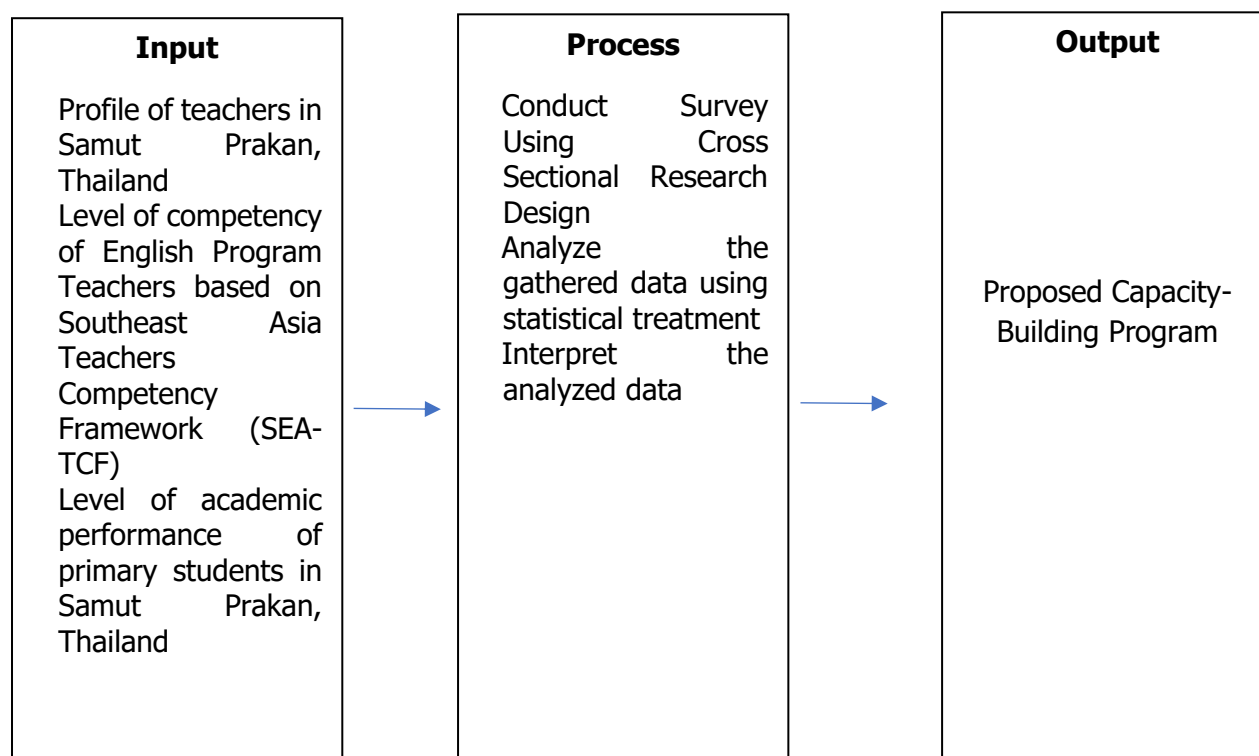
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is anchored on the Input–Process–Output (IPO) Model, which provides a systematic structure for examining the competency of English Program teachers based on the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and its relationship with the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand. This framework illustrates how teacher- and student-related variables are systematically examined through research procedures to generate evidence-based outcomes that guide educational improvement and professional development initiatives.

The Input component consists of the primary variables investigated in the study, including the profile characteristics of English Program teachers, their level of competency across the SEA-TCF domains—namely Know and Understand What I Teach, Help My Students Learn (Pedagogy and Assessment), Engage the Community, and Become a Better Teacher Every Day—and the academic performance of primary students in terms of English language proficiency, literacy skills, numeracy achievement, higher-order thinking skills, and classroom engagement. These variables serve as the foundational elements in understanding the relationship between teacher competency and student learning outcomes.

The Process component involves the systematic conduct of the research through a cross-sectional survey design, data collection using a validated research instrument, the organization and statistical treatment of the collected data, and the interpretation of findings in relation to the study objectives. This process enables the identification of competency levels, patterns of student academic performance, and significant relationships among variables, ensuring that conclusions are grounded in empirical evidence.

The Output component is the development of a SEA-TCF-aligned capacity-building program designed to strengthen teacher competency and enhance instructional effectiveness, with the ultimate goal of improving student academic performance. Embedded within the framework is a feedback mechanism, which emphasizes continuous evaluation, reflection, and refinement of teacher development initiatives, thereby promoting sustainable professional growth and long-term educational improvement in English Program schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand.



METHODOLOGY

This study employed a cross-sectional research design to assess the competency levels of English Program teachers using the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and to examine its influence on the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to collect data at a single point in time and examine existing relationships among teacher competency, teacher profile variables, and student academic performance within a defined educational context.

The study included 100 primary school teachers who taught English Program classes in public schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling, with equal representation from the Bang Bo 1 School Group ($n = 50$) and the Bang Bo 2 School Group ($n = 50$) to ensure proportional and fair representation across school groups. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent expert validation by five specialists in English language education, educational management, research methodology, and assessment to establish content validity. The instrument gathered data on teachers' profile variables, SEA-TCF competency domains, and students' academic performance indicators, including English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking skills, and classroom engagement.

The validated questionnaire was administered online through Google Forms, ensuring accessibility, convenience, and confidentiality of responses. Collected data were organized and analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted mean, Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson r), and Eta statistics to determine levels of competency, academic performance, and significant relationships among variables. Ethical principles, including informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality, were strictly observed throughout the study.

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional research design to determine the present level of competency of English Program teachers and their relationship to the academic performance of primary students. This design was appropriate because it enabled data collection at a single point in time and provided a clear snapshot of existing teacher competencies, teacher profile variables, and student academic performance within the selected public primary schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

Research Steps

The study began with an extensive review of related literature and the development of a conceptual framework aligned with the research objectives. A researcher-made questionnaire based on the SEA-TCF domains was then constructed and validated by experts. Following validation, data were collected from respondents, organized systematically, analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, and interpreted to determine the relationships among teacher competency, teacher profile variables, and student academic performance. The findings served as the basis for developing a proposed capacity-building program.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

The respondents in the study consisted of 100 primary school teachers who taught English Program classes in public schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from two identified school groups: Bang Bo 1 School Group ($n = 50$) and Bang Bo 2 School Group ($n = 50$). This sampling technique was employed to reduce selection bias and ensure adequate representation of teachers from different school contexts, thereby strengthening the validity and reliability of the study findings. The selected respondents provided data on their professional profile, competency as defined by the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency

Framework (SEA-TCF), and their perceptions of students' academic performance across key learning domains.

Data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire administered through Google Forms. Prior to its administration, the instrument underwent content validation by five experts in English language education, educational management, research methodology, and assessment to establish its clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives and SEA-TCF domains. After securing approval from participating schools, the questionnaire was distributed online to selected respondents, together with informed consent and clear instructions regarding voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. Completed responses were electronically retrieved, organized, and screened for completeness and consistency before being subjected to statistical analysis.

Data Analysis Methods

The collected data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson r correlation. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the teachers' profile, weighted mean was utilized to determine the levels of teacher competency and student academic performance, while Pearson r correlation was employed to examine significant relationships among teacher competency, teacher profile variables, and student academic performance. These statistical treatments provided the basis for interpreting the findings and formulating the proposed capacity-building program.

Hypothesis of the Study

This study was guided by the following null hypotheses, which were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the level of competency of English Program teachers based on the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the level of competency of English Program teachers based on the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and the profile variables of teachers in terms of age, gender, marital status, highest educational attainment, bachelor's degree, teaching license, length of service in Thailand, number of relevant seminars or trainings attended, and average family monthly income.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand and the profile variables of English Program teachers.

These hypotheses were formulated to determine whether statistically significant relationships exist among teacher competency, teacher profile variables, and students' academic performance, thereby providing empirical basis for the development of a proposed capacity-building program for English Program teachers aligned with the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF).

Validation of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity and appropriateness of the research instrument, the researcher-made questionnaire underwent expert content validation prior to its administration. The instrument was evaluated by five (5) experts specializing in English language education, educational management, research methodology, and educational assessment. The panel of experts reviewed the questionnaire in terms of content relevance, clarity of language, alignment with the objectives of the study, consistency with the domains of the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), and suitability to the context of primary English Program education in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

Comments, recommendations, and suggested revisions provided by the validators were carefully considered and incorporated into the final version of the instrument to improve item clarity, contextual appropriateness, and construct representation. This validation process strengthened the content validity of the questionnaire by ensuring that each item adequately reflected the variables being measured, particularly teacher competency domains and indicators of student academic performance. Following expert validation, the revised instrument was finalized and administered through Google Forms for data collection.

Study Limitations

This study was limited to 100 English Program primary school teachers from selected public schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings or regions. The study employed a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time; therefore, causal relationships between teacher competency and student academic performance could not be established.

In addition, data on teacher competency and student academic performance were primarily based on self-reported responses and teacher perceptions, which may be subject to response bias. Despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful insights into the relationship between teacher competency and student academic outcomes within the context of English Program schools in Samut Prakan.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Permission to conduct the research was secured from relevant school authorities prior to data collection. Participation of respondents was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained before administration of the questionnaire. Respondents were assured that all information gathered would be treated with confidentiality and anonymity, and that the data would be used solely for academic and research purposes. Furthermore, the researcher upheld the principles of respect, privacy, and responsible data management to protect the rights and welfare of all participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide important insights into the competencies of English Program teachers, as defined by the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), and their influence on the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Results revealed that the teaching workforce is largely composed of young, early-career educators, predominantly female, with bachelor's degrees and relatively limited teaching experience and exposure to professional training. While many respondents possessed valid teaching licenses either in Thailand or from their home country, the overall teacher profile suggests a developing professional workforce that continues to build instructional expertise through practical experience and ongoing professional learning. This demographic pattern indicates strong potential for professional growth, particularly when supported by structured mentoring, targeted training, and institutional development programs that strengthen classroom effectiveness.

In terms of professional competency, English Program teachers demonstrated a high level of competency across all SEA-TCF domains, particularly in continuous professional development, subject knowledge, and pedagogical competence. This suggests that teachers generally possess the foundational knowledge, instructional understanding, and reflective professional attitudes necessary for effective teaching practice. However, while competency levels were categorized as high, findings indicate that many teachers clustered within moderate-to-high performance levels rather than consistently demonstrating very high competency. This suggests that although professional standards are being met, there remains considerable

room for strengthening the depth, consistency, and practical application of teacher competencies in classroom settings. Notably, community engagement received comparatively lower ratings than other domains, highlighting the need to strengthen teacher collaboration with parents, communities, and educational stakeholders to support holistic student development.

Despite teachers demonstrating high competence, the academic performance of primary students was moderate across all measured domains, including English language proficiency, literacy skills, numeracy achievement, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement. This indicates that while students possess foundational learning skills, they continue to experience challenges in achieving stronger academic mastery, particularly in critical thinking, problem-solving, and deeper cognitive engagement. Although classroom participation received relatively higher ratings, student engagement appeared to be stronger behaviorally than cognitively, suggesting that students participate actively in classroom activities but may still require greater instructional support in developing analytical reasoning, independent learning, and meaningful academic application. These findings suggest a gap between teacher competence and student academic outcomes, in which teacher capability does not automatically translate into optimal student performance without consistent, high-impact instructional implementation and supportive learning conditions.

Correlation analysis further revealed a significant and strong positive relationship between teacher competency and student academic performance, confirming that teachers' professional competencies are strongly associated with improved learner outcomes. All SEA-TCF domains showed meaningful positive relationships with students' performance in language, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement. The strongest relationships were observed in classroom engagement and numeracy development, suggesting that competent teachers significantly influence both student participation and cognitive growth. These findings reinforce the widely supported educational perspective that teacher quality remains one of the strongest school-based determinants of student success. Teachers who demonstrate strong pedagogical knowledge, effective assessment practices, and continuous professional reflection are better positioned to create engaging learning environments that foster deeper understanding and stronger academic achievement.

The study also found that selected teacher profile variables significantly influence both teacher competency and student academic performance. Specifically, professional training participation, length of teaching experience, and income demonstrated significant positive relationships with both teacher competency and student outcomes, with training exposure emerging as the strongest predictor. These findings emphasize the critical importance of continuous professional development in enhancing instructional competence and improving classroom outcomes. In contrast, demographic variables such as age, educational attainment, marital status, and formal credentials showed weak or non-significant relationships, suggesting that teaching effectiveness is shaped more by professional growth, experiential learning, and sustained competency development than by static personal or academic characteristics alone. This underscores the importance of investing in dynamic teacher development initiatives rather than relying solely on formal qualifications as indicators of teaching effectiveness.

Collectively, the findings highlight that while teacher competency serves as a strong foundation for student achievement, student learning outcomes remain influenced by multiple interacting factors, including classroom practices, learner motivation, educational resources, and broader contextual conditions. The moderate level of student academic performance despite high teacher competency suggests that strengthening instructional application, learner-centered pedagogies, assessment strategies, and school-community partnerships is necessary to maximize the impact of teacher competencies on student learning. These findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed SEA-TCF-aligned capacity-building program, which emphasizes continuous professional learning, pedagogical enhancement, instructional innovation, and collaborative educational practice. Through sustained teacher development and supportive educational environments, schools may strengthen both teacher effectiveness and student academic performance, ultimately improving educational quality in English Program schools in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

SUMMARY

This study examined the competency of English Program teachers in Samut Prakan, Thailand, based on the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) and explored its relationship with the academic performance of primary students. Using a cross-sectional research design, data were collected from 100 primary teachers through a researcher-made, expert-validated questionnaire administered via an online survey platform. Findings revealed that English Program teachers demonstrated a high level of competency across SEA-TCF domains, particularly in professional development, pedagogical practice, and subject knowledge.

However, students' academic performance was moderate in English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement. Statistical analysis further showed significant positive relationships between teacher competency and student academic performance, as well as between selected teacher profile variables—particularly teaching experience, professional training, and income—and both teacher competency and student outcomes. These findings emphasize the important role of continuous professional development in strengthening instructional effectiveness and improving learner achievement, providing a basis for the proposed SEA-TCF-aligned capacity-building program for English Program teachers in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study conclude that the competency of English Program teachers, as anchored in the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF), plays a significant role in shaping the academic performance of primary students in Samut Prakan, Thailand. Teachers generally demonstrated a high level of competency across key professional domains; however, student academic performance remained at a moderate level, indicating that while teacher capability is an important foundation for learning, its impact is influenced by the consistency of instructional practice and broader educational conditions.

The study further established that teacher competency is significantly and positively associated with student outcomes in English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, higher-order thinking, and classroom engagement, highlighting the critical role of effective teaching in promoting learner achievement. Moreover, professional development, teaching experience, and training exposure emerged as important factors that strengthen teacher competency and contribute to improved student learning outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of sustained capacity-building initiatives, continuous professional learning, and supportive school environments in enhancing teacher effectiveness and advancing educational quality in English Program schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that schools and educational administrators strengthen professional development initiatives aligned with the Southeast Asia Teachers Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) to further enhance teachers' competencies across key domains of pedagogy, assessment, community engagement, and continuous professional learning. Structured mentoring programs for early-career teachers, sustained in-service training, and collaborative professional learning communities may be institutionalized to support reflective practice, instructional innovation, and the consistent application of effective teaching strategies in classroom settings. Particular attention should be given to strengthening learner-centered pedagogies, formative assessment practices, and strategies that promote higher-order thinking and active student engagement.

Furthermore, educational institutions may consider implementing context-responsive capacity-building programs that address both teacher competency development and broader instructional conditions influencing student learning outcomes. Future initiatives should also encourage stronger school-

community partnerships and provide equitable access to professional growth opportunities regardless of teachers' demographic backgrounds. For future research, broader investigations involving larger samples, additional educational contexts, and other learner-related variables may be conducted to further explain the factors affecting students' academic performance and deepen understanding of the relationship between teacher competence and educational achievement.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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