

Grouping Based English Language Teaching and Learning (A Descriptive Qualitative Study on Pkbn Attarim)

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the implementation of Group-Based English Language Teaching (GBELT) among students and to identify the obstacles encountered during the learning process. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method, involving students as the main participant. Data were collected , through observation, interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed descriptively to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the teaching and learning process. The findings reveal that the implementation of GBELT contributes positively to students engagement in English learning . students became more active, motivated, and were able to enhance their language skills through group collaboration. Nevertheless, several challenges were identified, including limited vocabulary mastery, lack of self confidence , and differences in students' proficiency levels within groups.

In conclusion the implementation of GBELT is effective in improving students participation and language learning outcome. However, it requires supportive strategies such as vocabulary enrichment to achieve optimal results.

KEYWORDS: Group-Based English Language Teaching, Descriptive Qualitative, Learning Motivation, Learning Obstacles

I. Introduction

In English coaching –particularly in training courses--- grouping, placement, or leveling is a common practice. This approach is designed to meet students' need by assigning them to classes that match their language proficiency, ensuring that they receive appropriate support from their institutions. Proper placement demonstrates an understanding that students learn more effectively when they are in classes suited to their skills level, alongside peers of similar age and ability. Placement tests provide valuable insights for instructors. When students are put in groups that are too challenging, they may become frustrated and lose interest in learning. Conversely, students with higher abilities in overly easy classes may become bored, which can negatively impact their motivation to study (Green,2025, p.1)

Group-Based English Teaching and Learning is an instructional approach that emphasizes collaboration among students through small group activities to enhance language acquisition. This method is rooted in social constructivist theory, particularly Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept, which highlights the importance of social interaction in learning. According to Brown (2001), group work allows students to negotiate meaning, share ideas and develop communicative competence in a supportive environment. Similarly, Johnson and Johnson (1994) emphasize that group-based learning encourages positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, and individual accountability elements essential to successful language learning.

Grouping appears to be rather common in emerging Asian countries when it comes to secondary schools. South Korea serves as an example, where state officials encourage its adoption (Hwang 2014, p.127). The use of grouping has been on the rise in many countries, particularly for the two subjects (mathematics and English) where ability grouping is most needed. According to government estimates, over 77% of secondary schools were participating in a vocational program in 2009, grouped by level as Hwang (2014, p.127) highlighted (Yonhap as quoted in Hwang 2014, p. 127).

In educational contexts, grouping students by ability is a well-established practice. Hwang (2014, p.128) notes that in Western countries, the approach has been a subject of debate. The concept of placing students in groups with similar skill levels has both supporters and critics. Proponents argue that homogeneous classes are beneficial because they meet students' specific needs. Allow for purposeful classroom management, and provide positive learning support compared to mixed-ability groups (Hwang, 2014), p.130). Conversely, opponents contend that the evidence for the effectiveness of ability-based grouping is not conclusive, and even when positive outcomes occur, they tend to favor higher ability students. They further argue that such grouping can disadvantage lower-ability students, hindering both their academic development and self-esteem (Hwang, p.131).

In Indonesia, PKBM ATTARIM Makassar City (Professional Education Development Institute) located in Jakarta, is an educational institution that has implemented and developed English language teaching (ELT) based on students' classification. This Makassar-based vocational higher education institution offers post-graduate programs. Recognizing that English proficiency is vital in the professional world, PKBM requires its students and graduates to master this skill as a core competency. According to the ELT Implementation Guidebook, the institution's vision and program aim to produce graduates who can communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing, to meet workplace demands (PKBM ATTARIM Makassar City, 2015).

In the reference to that Institution Guidelines Book For that Implementation from English Language

II. Learning and teaching process:

Effective Language learning is one of determined by that application from grouping in the learning system. That learning system, that is classification based on competency level. Class with the same level from competence (between his students) can run again effectively compared to class with heterogeneous ability. This is because that teaching approach method has brought about by that teacher become again in accordance to that students' ability, interaction and communication built between students is more interconnected because they are in the same level. Therefore, leveling/grouping/grading policy must become applied in the all PKBM ATTARIM City of Makassar branch. (PKBM ATTARIM Makassar city, (2015).

In fact, since his first implementation, that Polytechnic owner has never done a research to investigate how and what extent the grouping has taken place. In this regard, as English lecturer who teaches at the institution, the author has a feeling very urgent to conduct a descriptive qualitative study on the program. This research is important for improvement of ELT quality in institutions, because they can provide information to stakeholders (PLT director, academic staff, academic supervisors, fellow lecturers, students and parents) about How and What

coverage that policy is brought go out and whether or no his findings is relevance for that English Language teaching and learning in the institution.

Problem Statement

Referring to the background and the research framework highlighted on, that author intend to look for further understanding of grouping based ELT implemented by the ATTARIM Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM), with the specific question as follows;

1. What is student activities in That grouping based ELT?
2. What obstacle has done that lecturer meet in the that grouping based on ELT?
3. How is that evaluation grouping based ELT?

Research Objective

In relation to the research questions mentioned above,

Objective from this research are

1. To explore that students activity in the that grouping based ELT?
2. To find out the obstacles faced by the lectures in implementation from grouping based ELT?
3. To explore grouping based teaching evaluation and learning results?

Research Meaning

Based on the research questions and research objectives, the results of this study are expected to provide some significance, colleague student, teacher, lecturer, further research and researchers in term of :

- a. Contribution to the development of English language teaching and learning process, especially for institutions and all ELT participations practitioners generally;
- b. Opening to the wider discussions on method or curriculum evaluation from ELT;
- c. Input on That the moment practice from ELT and learning for that institution and to general public;
- d. New perspective for that risk holder from English language.
- e. New perspective for that stakeholders from English language education in general.

Previous related Studies

Several studies have examined the role of grouping in English Language Teaching (ELT). One study was conducted in Japan (Sheppard et. al: 2025) explored the effects of ability based grouping on students enrolled in mandatory English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. The findings indicated such grouping was beneficial for learners with lower proficiency levels but still impact on higher level students. The study also acknowledged its limitations, nothing that factors such as instructional design, institutioanal characteristics, and the potential influence of grouping on learners' intellectual self-concept may have shaped the outcomes. The authors consider this research valuable for informing how grouping can be implemented and evaluated within tertiary education contexts.

Howling's study (2017) draws on research conducted in 2014-2015 that examined the English learning experiences of female students enrolled in foundation programs in tertiary institutions in the UAE. The study highlighted need to re-evaluate the placement methods used for the university English classes in the country. At present, placement is determined through tracking, whereby students are assigned to classes based on their overall

exam scores and academic performance. This system often results in classes with mixed levels of English proficiency, which in turn fosters negative attitudes and reduced motivation among students (Howling,2017) . after reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of three grouping methods – tracking (or streaming) ability grouping, and in class grouping and analyzing students experiences in English foundation at UAE universities, Howling concluded that current grouping policies are disadvantageous for low achieving students and should be reconsidered. As a recommendation, the study suggests revising the existing system so that students are grouped according to their actual English language proficiency

A study conducted in Indonesia was a study conducted by Nyoman and Darma (2019) intentional to size that effectiveness from implementation of teaching at Bali State Polytechnic (PNB). That study intentional to find out that level from effectiveness from teaching implementation in PNB by looking at it from the input-process context product components. That author collected data through a list of questions, guided interview, and related document. That subjects from the study is student, lecturer and the management of PNB staff. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively and descriptively. To determine that effectiveness from that implementation of the teaching program, the author carried out a transformation that raw score into that Z Score and that T score, which then verified into the Glickman quadrant prototype. The result of the analysis shows that the effectiveness of learning implementation program on PNB seen from that relatedness from context, input, process and product waterfall into the currently effective category. In addition to the results, the author also highlighted the obstacles that exist in implementation of the teaching program at PNB , namely those located in that component from context, input, process and product. The author see that important obstacle appeared in the variables product.

In the view to that literature review with previous studies discussed on, the author can draw a layer on grouping based on English Language Teaching. Grouping in the English language teaching in educational institutional, especially at the higher education level, has become an important topic to discuss, as many practitioners have proposed it and neither a little who is against it.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A Research Design

The design of this research is descriptive qualitative. In its application, a particular research method, a researcher does not only need to understand the approach, but also, as Creswell (2017) points out, need to take three framework element into the consideration:philosophical dispute on what produce knowledge projection, overall construction from a study (Question Strategy) and determined step by from gather data, analyze , and compile. Therefore, in conducting this research, the author took consideration the elements of this framework. In addition, to obtain again wide understand on that implementation from ELT grouping in institutions, the author adds context. The input-process-product research framework (Stufflebeam,2007) in instruments. The author considers the framework relevant for spots that obstacle from the implementation from the group ELT.

B Information from Arrangement, Time, Place and Participant

This research is focused on grouping implementations based on ELT on Attarim Community Learning center from Academic year 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, with specific information from arrangement and participant as follows:

1. Teaching and learning activities in class in six groups from Academic Year 2024-2025 and 2925-2026;
2. Students from six grouping groups from Academic Year 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 (total participant around 180 students)
3. Lectures and academic staff as stakeholders in English learning and teaching activities; and

4. Related documents from that grouping based teaching and learning (plan or vision and mission, reasons, syllabus, teaching materials, that lesson plan, that test or evaluation guidelines, that desired results)

C Study Instrument

Research instruments are tools created by researchers to reach that projected objective when doing the research. Practical, that instrument is designed device to help in gathering data to be analyzed. Miles and Huberman (2014) describe research instrumentation as specific method which is focused on gathering information and can be done in person or openly structured. In this study, the author applied the instrument focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide, observation sheet and document from institution.

1. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines

That author design this Working Group Discussion (FGD) guide based on that framework CIPP research framework is projected to detect barriers in implementation from group of grouping-based ELT PLT is using ELT based on PLJ.

2. Observation sheet

In this instrument, the author designed on observation form to record any important information in the application of grouping ELT –based. Observations were conducted in a participatory and non-participatory manner participatory.

3. Documents Analysis

Plan or vision and mission, reasons, , teaching material, the lesson plan. The test or evaluation guidelines, expected outcomes of grouping-based ELT PLT is available in the document on the institution, this document informs the author about the background and objectives, as well as grouping process based on ELT implemented by institution.

D. Data collection Procedure

Data source in this study are the main stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in that implementation from grouping based on RLT on PLJ (lecturer, student, that can provide information, experience, insight and data) and documents available on that institution related to that implementation from grouping based ELT Craswell (2017) stated that the data collection process as follows a ‘circle’ of interrelated activities that includes, but goes beyond gathering data. Referring to that statement, again in particular in this study, that author gather the data through that research instrument with that process as the following:

1.Focus Group Discussion 2. Non participatory observation and 3. Documents related to application of grouping based on ELT on PLJ is a valaible on that institution

D. Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher gathered that data use document analysis, focus group discussion and observation. The author interpreted that results from working group discussion (FGD) and observation to reveal that actually implementation from grouping – based ELT. The results were transcribed from handwritten notes. After that data is collected, the author will analyze them according to Miles and Huberman (2014) as that follow:

1.Data collection 2. Data showing and 3. Data Substraction 4. The Conclusion.

IV. Finding and Discussion

A. Findings

In this section, the researcher presents a description of several data findings. Description are created to answer research questions.

In relation to this research question, the author investigated English teaching guidelines, syllabus –lesson plans, and conducting non-participatory observations. Starting with the process grouping based ELT on the institution start only before the new students begin their studies at the institution. New students are expected to take the TOEIL (prediction test) simultaneously on t (hat the same day. That results from the test (that score) is then used to for mapping out and grouped them go to class group

As for that student from 2017 and 2025 academic for years, there are six class groups as a result of placement. Then, the six class groups are taught by four English lectures. Every class group consisting of ten to sixteen students. These classes are taught GE 1 and GE 2 in the first and second semester by four English lectures according to the allocated schedule (4 credits in one semester). In the first two semesters, the English course for PLJ students abilities are projected at the Pre-Intermediate or B1-B2 level in that standard from CEFR (General Europe Framework from Reference for Language). In this basic learning stage, the learning and teaching ingredients in the text book is equipped with speaking with guidance practice, grammar for communication, pronunciation practice and substitution exercises method. Lin (2010) concluded that in the A interactive an in-depth speaking teaching method, English instructors can help their students non –verbal method from communicating, like body language and movement in the absence from adequate target language understand.

This type from approach appear to become the combination from students self-centered and interactive approach, as shown by Lin (2010) that in student- of every learning interactions in the centered learning, students are the center of every learning interactions in the classroom and teacher acts as facilitator; while interactive approach conditions students for active classes atmosphere by getting them to follow with their friends of the same age. Although the approach emphasize students talking more time correctly compared to the teacher speaking time, three other English skills (Listening, writing and reading) are still closed proportionally.

Green(2025) recommended the students can learn language best when they are grouped in the class with their friends of the same age who own similar ability or talent. Therefore, ability grouping is a form of institutional policies for students and lectures that aim to accelerate ELT in the institution. However, as mentioned earlier, PLJ applies unmeasured acceptance of new students. Therefore, because to that immeasurable acceptance, that challenge face by the English lectures are more specific compared to other universities specially competitive college. For example, between the enter students sometimes there are one or two people who are still not familiar enough with certain base understand from English

Language, for example; number, spelling and pronunciation of the alphabet, names of days, colors, and like. This challenge is again or less influence the method that the lecturer teach to student, specially students with ‘special need’.

B. Discussion

Based on the outlined in the findings, there are several things that need to be considered: points become concerned referring to research questions:

1. The curriculum used by PKBM ATTARIM in that grouping based ELT and that expected results

It is exploratory form to see an educational institution that is currently developing their English language teaching curriculum. That competence English based teaching curriculum implemented by PKBM ATTARIM Makassar City is contextually the reflection from the institution need, which practical go side by side with his vision and mission. As a personal polytechnic with the level from vocational. A job prospects tagline after graduation to attract new students is something normative, because students are the main resource for continuation from education serve by that institution. But, he does not mean it has nothing to do with the curriculum and what is expected outcomes set by the institution. ELT is grouping based here is one of the strategies in the English curriculum that can not even make reason if this implementation is not supported by other strategy and policy determined by that institution as well.

However, related to that aspect results, the author findings that the TOELIC standard score for the 2017

Academic year students and 450 for the 2025 academic year and also standard score for GE 1 and GE 2

From 75 still appear to become a worries, especially related to his reason runway, as that lecturer agreement with teaching, learning and evaluation, the figure went from 350 to 450 is a significant elevation that requires rational calculation by stakeholder in the institution. In this case, the institution requires further comprehensive needs analysis that refers to expect output and that which exists input.

2. Methods and strategies that ATTARIM community Learning Center applied in the Grouping – based ELT

The method and strategies implemented by PLJ appear to be the main factors that concern with this grouping-based ELT is that it is realization and even execution from that curriculum. For more century, 'Language educators try to solve language problems' teaching by focusing attention almost exclusively on Method' Hall (2017), with methodologist ask which method or approach that most effective for English Language Teaching maybe, for example audiolingualism, that sign road or possible communicative language teaching. In the latest for years, however, that the debate has involved in a significant new direction, argue that We I no longer request that right question. That method, traditionally seen as a theoretically consistent arrange from teaching outcomes if followed correctly, does not, and cannot provide, the 'answer to make English language teaching and learning again effective.

Larsen-Freeman (2025), in the study recommend see grammar is more progressive terms, namely grammar in order to smoothing the flooded knowledge problem. Whereas traditional approach to teaching position grammar as a static, limited systems, leading to a linear way to improve such control a system, grammatical approach improves students' abilities to go beyond the input, because in the end, learning a language is not about conformity to uniformity (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). Seen from this perspective, that which exists grammar lesson and the method in PLJ is still questionable to be called grammaring. Grammar lesson and exercise is still educative and authoritative, embracing a limited and static system. The students still faced with traditional exercise, specifically when dealing with tenses explanation.

V. Conclusion and Recommendation

A. Conclusion

Based on that findings and conclusion it can be concluded that:

That curriculum is practical related with that need and vision PLTs' mission. It is clear that teaching English curriculum applied by PLJ contextually accommodate his vision and mission to produce graduates who are competent in English. PLJ corner as a vocational higher education institution again or less intersects with the way institution receive and educate students. As a personal campus with that level from vocational, a slogan job

prospects after graduation to attract new students is something normative. However, that doesn't mean there is no connection do with that implementation from ELT, that expect results and that strategy from teaching applied. That method and strategy is relatively a number of adaptation from specifically communicative approach and student centered learning

Moreover, based on that findings, discussion and conclusion, the author recommended a number of points to consider . First, the should become again focused study how and what coverage grouping affects students' English language skills, specially speaking. Second, as part of teaching and learning, it needs to be explored more about how to what extent the English conversation journal (ECT) influence students' English skills, specially speaking. Third, in relation to the textbooks used, the author suggests that there should be periodically improvement from that main stakeholders, that is the lecturer and the students. Fourth, the institution should stage and analysis , especially for the expected standard scores of TOEIC and GE reason runway and based on needs analysis from preparing the target from 350=450 from TOEIC is important to give again focused guidelines for that stakeholders.

Final but no at least, the recommendation highlighted on also related to the limitation of this research. This descriptive qualitative research study is not expected to reveal any effects and correlations, grouping based on mastery of English language skills or in between. However, this study may open up further research on grouping ELT based, especially its impact or correlation on English language skill mastery.

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