

# THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEAM-BASED LEARNING IN CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH CLASS

**Rusiana**

UniversitasMuria Kudus  
iraw\_anne@yahoo.com

## **Abstract**

The previous research that I conducted, the use of Team-Based Learning in Classroom Action Research (CAR) class is well accepted and gives a good influence on the students' learning. To have a responsibility to teach Action Research and to keep being reflective as a teacher, I am interested to implement TbL in another class of CAR which is aimed at knowing the constraints of its implementation and how the students cope with those constraints. The design of the research is qualitative research. The participants are one class of Classroom Action Research class consists of 16 students. The instruments are observation and questionnaires. The findings show that the constraints on the implementation of TbL in CAR class are dealing with the material, team work, and incomplete team member. To cope with the constraints, the students have discussion and ask for opinions among the team member. In addition, instead of discussion, to have complete team member is the possible solution to cope with the constraints.

**Keywords:** *Constraints, Team-Based Learning, Classroom Action Research Class*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Students of English Education Department are prepared to be English teachers. They are equipped with materials of English as Foreign Language teaching, literature, and other courses that will support them in teaching English after leaving college. One of the courses that has to be taken is Classroom Action Research. This course is aimed at experiencing the students with the theories and the application of Action Research.

Action Research is a design of research that is important to be given to the students since in the future the English Education Department students are going to be teachers who are required to conduct Action Research in their classroom. It deals with the regulation issued by the government that teachers have to be able to conduct Action Research as a tool to be reflective teacher and improve their teaching practice and help the students learn better as well. Therefore, this course is required to the sixth semester students of English Education Department.

Since this course is very important, the students have to accomplish the requirements of the course that is mastering the concepts and its application. In teaching Action research as a course that is rich with the theories and concepts which are the number of the students are around 45, an appropriate approach should be employed to maximize the achievement of the students in accomplishing the requirements of the course. Presentation that is usually used as a strategy in delivering the material seems not effective any longer. It is a challenge to utilize an approach that really works in a big class. As the teacher, I am interested in employing Team-based Learning in another class.

The result of the previous research, Rusiana (2014) finds out that Team-based Learning help the students to learn better. They are well prepared to class and can freely share in group discussion. This approach also allows the students to apply the theories in a real-life context. The findings are met with the definition of Team-based Learning as follows.

“Team-based Learning is a special form of collaborative learning using a specific sequence of individual work, group work and

immediate feedback to create a motivational framework in which students increasingly hold each other accountable for coming to class prepared and contributing to discussion.” (Michaelsen and Sweet, 2008)

As stated above, Team-based Learning is a kind of collaborative learning utilizing some sequences to motivate students to be well prepared and active in a discussion. Thus, I am interested in conducting a further research investigating the constraints in the implementation of Team-based Learning and investigating how the teacher and the students cope with those constraints. Therefore, this research is entitled “The Constraints in the Implementation of Team-based Learning”.

## 2. BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Dealing with TBL, the previous research was conducted by Basset et al (2007), *Using Team-Based Learning to Override the Cram and Dump Mentality in Medical Education*. It was designed for 2 years TBL. The result shows that: 1) students successfully keep up with course material instead of cramming just prior to exams and 2) students peer teach and problem-solve, allowing students to gain skills and knowledge by interacting with their classmates.

The other previous research was conducted by Rusiana (2014), *The Influence of Team-based Learning on the Students' Learning*. It was an action research project and the results show that: 1) the implementation of Team-based Learning in *Classroom Action Research* class seems to positively influence the students' learning. Particularly, they become well prepared and active in the team discussion when they make a consensus for the team-test. In addition, the students also learn and perform better in the application phase; 2) The students' response are positive, they are excited to have a new experience in learning concept of action research through TBL. They really enjoy the small group discussion in which they can share and get some suggestions from the team. They also have a better understanding on the content in the application phase.

Team-based Learning is characterized by the phases that have to be followed. Those phases includes readings for prepara-

tion (out of class), Readiness Assurance Process (in class 1 to 1.5 hours), and Application activities (in class 3 to 5 class meetings). The following is a structure of a team-based learning module.

Out of class <b>usu. 30-50 pages</b>	in class <b>usu. 1 to 1.5 hours</b>	in class <b>usu.3 to 5 class meetings</b>
Readings for preparation	Readiness Assurance Process: Individual Test Same test completed as a team Appeals Mini Lecture	Application activities: Teams work on a significant problem that requires them to make a significant choice. All teams work on the same problem and report simultaneously.

**Structure of a team-based learning module**

Those three phases will emphasize on the student's willingness and activeness in working individually or as a team with a contextual and meaningful tasks to be able to apply the theories on the application activities. Through the phases, it would allow them to achieve the learning objectives of the course. However, during the implementation there might be some constraints emerge either from the students or the teacher and even the time. Therefore, this research is trying to find out the constraints in the implementation of Team-based Learning and how the teacher and the students cope with those.

### **3. METHODS**

As Team-based Learning is implemented for the whole semester, positive impacts may emerge as well as the negative impacts. Students might find either some usefulness or lack during the implementation. The present research is a qualitative research aims at investigating the constraints found in the implementation of TbL in CAR class of English Education Department and how the students cope with those constraints. The participant is one class of CAR

consists of 16 students. The instruments used are observation and questionnaires. The observation was done during the class meetings, and questionnaire was administered after the completion of the course.

#### 4. FINDINGS

The findings and the discussion of the current research is presented as follows.

**Table 1.**

No	Questions	always	Usually	Some-times	never
1	Do you read the required material before class?	12.5%	25%	50%	12.5%
2	Do you do the Individual-test confidently?	50%	43.75%	6.25%	0%
3	Does your team do the team-test well?	50%	43.75%	6.25%	0%
4	Is each member of your team active in the discussion?	25%	50%	25%	0%
5	Do you actively participate in team discussion?	37.5%	37.5%	25%	0%
6	Does team-based Learning help you to learn better in Action Research course?	100%	0%	0%	0%

From the table above, further the items are classified into some categories Item 1 and 2 ask the students' readiness. The students are required to read a chapter of introduction to action research individually which is out-class assignment before doing individual test. Item 3 and 5 ask about team work and team's participation. Item 4 asks about individual participation in team work. Item 6 asks whether or not Tbl help the students to learn action research better.

In this current research, Tbl is employed for teaching action

research. Some steps have to be accomplished either individually or in team. Items which ask the students' readiness figure out whether the students are individually ready to follow materials to be discussed. It is found that a half of the total number of the students sometimes read the material before class. Yet, surprisingly the same number of the students always does the individual test confidently. While the rest, 43.75% of the students is usually confident in doing the individual test, 6.25% is sometimes confident, and nobody is not confident doing the test.

To see the number of the students who always read the material before class and that who are confident in doing the test confidently, it is indicated that they do the test intuitively, without knowing the prior knowledge. It is 50% of the students sometimes read the material but 50% out of them always do the individual test confidently. Surely, the number does not correspond to the same students. Yet, from the observation, it was indicated that some of students were trying to have a discussion and see their friends' work.

From the response it is obvious that readiness and confidence is not always in line. The number of students who read the material before class is less than 50% but surprisingly 50% students are confident in doing the individual and the team test. And although there is one student who never reads the material, s/he is also confident in doing the test. It is quite surprising to find that readiness in fact does not correlate to confidence. Being ready individually is necessary in Tbl because without individual's readiness in the very beginning step, it will influence the team in accomplishing the next phases of Tbl. Lack "preparedness" hinders the development of group cohesiveness (Michaelsen, 2008).

For team-work, the percentage for each category is exactly the same that is 50% out of the students always do the team-test well, 43% usually does, 6.25% sometimes does, and 0% never does the team-test well. It is known that the students' perception in doing the test either individually or in team is the same.

Instead of team-test, participation in team discussion is also considered. Individual's participation in giving opinion, suggestion, peer-teach and others are important in Tbl since they are in the

same team for the whole semester. It is 37.5% of students always participate and 37.5% usually participates, 35% sometimes participates, and 0% never participates. They perceive that they individually participate in team. It can be seen from the percentage that is almost the same.

Yet, it is quite not in line with the result of question” does each member in your team participate?”. The response to this question is that 25% out of students perceive that each member of the team are always active in discussion, 50% is usually active, 25% is sometimes, and 0% is never. It shows that a half of the students are usually active. It means that the perception of the students on their team-mate is different with their own perception on their individual-participation. They perceive better that their team-mate are usually active in team discussion. Meanwhile, individually they think that they do not really participate well.

The last item is whether the students are helped to learn better with the use of Tbl in Classroom Action Research class. It is known that 100% of students admit that Tbl does help them in learning Action Research materials. Some reasons are: 1) In team, friends/teams explain each other, give reference, and help out if there is misunderstanding; 2) they are well-prepared before class, 3) they can have discussion with team without being shy, and 4) they believe that learning from friends is easier than that of book.

Tbl is characterized by the teamwork and sequences of activities done individually and in team. Presenting the students’ perception of their team is seen to be important to be revealed. There are seven students perceive that their team is solid, always, discuss and do the test well. If there is an argument there always be an answer. There are 3 students perceive that their team is cooperative, solid, and participate well in giving opinions. Three students perceive that their team is quite passive and the rest three students think that their team are easy going and comfortable, effective, and confident. It is obvious that most of the students use “adjective” to represent their team. The specific ones are those, whose teams are solid, cooperative, the members participate well, and discussion takes place.

Yet, there are some constraints during the implementation of

TbL, among them are: 1) different opinions are sometimes not taken into account; 2) the material is hard to understand; 3) the team member is not complete 4) have no ideas to do the test; 5) the students seldom to read the material. There is one student stated that there is no constraint at all. As stated by Michaelsen (2008) that one of the essential principles is students must be made accountable which includes accountability for individual pre-class preparation and accountability for contributing to their tem of Team-based Learning. Seeing the five constraints, the team accountability contributes a lot. The members of the team are not well-prepared in terms of reading the material in pre class assignment and it influences the team to have wide-range of opinions, even has no idea to do the test. Incompleteness of the team member is quite unique thing here since the number of the students who comes to class is almost the same; they were the 16 students who filled out the questionnaire.

To cope with the constraints found in the implementation of TbL, some ways are done: 1) The students decide to discuss with friends when they find difficulties,; 2) Ask opinions to a passive member, 3) Have a complete team member in discussion and be a solid team. Being together in one team for one semester, the students learn the course content and learn how to work in team as well. Yet, because of the uniqueness of the class, the implementation of TbL has not been maximal. The good point of this that the students admit that TbL helps them to learn the course content better. Deals with the constraints, they are wise enough to choose discussion as the way to solve any difficulties. One thing that they might realize is that the importance of being a team is accountability. It can be seen that having a complete and solid team is believed to be the solution on the constraints.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

TbL as a strategy for teaching content for big class is believed to be appropriate to help learners learn better. Being interested to apply it for teaching Classroom Action Research course, this strategy is implemented for one semester. The steps have been accomplished and the data have been discussed in the previous chapter. At

last, the research has come to the end of reporting the result and drawing conclusions as follows:

- a. The constraints that the students face during the implementation of TbL in CAR class are dealing with the material, team work, and team member. The material is hard to understand because of lack preparation in individual assignment. It causes different opinions come to the discussion and consequently some opinions are not taken into account. Then incomplete team member also contributes because fewer members surely impacts on the discussion.
- b. To cope with the constraints, the students have discussion and ask for opinions among the team member. It is also noticed that incomplete team member contributes to the constraints. In addition, instead of discussion, to have complete team member seems to be the possible solution to cope with the constraints.

## REFERENCES

- BassettCasey, GromleyZeynep, and MillerStephen. 2007. *Using Team-based Learning to Override the Cram and Dump Mentality in Medical Education*. Lincoln Memorial University- DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (LMU-DCOM) Harrogate, TN
- Michaelsen, Larry K. and Sweet Michael. 2008. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, *The Essential Elements of Team-based Learning* • No. 116, Winter © Wiley Periodicals, Inc. Published online in Wiley Inter Science (www.interscience.wiley.com) DOI: 10.1002/tl
- Parmelee Dean, Michaelsen Larry K, et all. 2012. *Team-based Learning: A practical guide: AMEE Guide No.65*. Medical Center ;34:e275–e287 a
- Rusiana. 2014 *The Influence of Team-based Learning on the Student's Learning*. Proceeding: The 61<sup>st</sup> TEFLIN