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## CONVENTIONAL TEACHING METHOD AND AN INTERACTIVE-BASED TEACHING METHODS TO ADJUST LEARNERS' GRAMMAR AND SPEAKING COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY FOR EFFECTIVENESS METHODS IN LEARNING

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**Abstract:** The study discusses the effectiveness of Conventional Teaching Method utilizing whole-class member group and an Interactive-based Teaching Method employing small group works for improving both learners' Grammar and Speaking competences in English Grammar classrooms. Data were taken from 68 first-year students of English Education Department of UNIDAYAN University, Bau-Bau, South-East Sulawesi province, who sit in a pre-test and post-test of two English competences; Grammar and Speaking in English. The research design is quasi experimental assigning 5 group works as the independent variables and 2 English competences; Grammar and Speaking in English as the dependent variables. The group works consist of various number of students. The treatment of all group works was reduplicated twice. The study reveals that the interactive-based teaching method utilizing small group works is far more effective for improving both learners' Grammar and Speaking competences compared to those of conventional teaching method employing whole-class member group work in English Grammar classroom. The learners' mean achievement is 25.04 points and 8.8 points respectively. The t-test confirms that there is a significant difference between the two methods. Moreover, the less the number of group members the more effective to the achievement of the learning target of the classrooms.

Keywords: Conventional teaching, Interactive teaching, Grammar and Speaking Competences, Group works, and Learners' Achievement

#### 1. Introduction

The issue on the teaching of English Grammar has been an endless topic and as such it has attracted many concerned people including foreign language teaching researchers. The attempt to find out a somewhat effective teaching method in English grammar classroom has become the most crucial point to pursue. Above all, it is commonly said that Indonesian learners mostly have a very low command



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of English. Yassi (2009, 2010a, and 2010b) found that in average the first year students of English Department of Hasanuddin University of Makassar were categorized as lower intermediate based on Sutherland's framework (1983). In consequence, they couldn't work well with their daily academic tasks which is mostly carried out in English. As a matter of fact, the ideal competence for such students is upper intermediate level in order to enable them to perform their daily academic tasks well.

In similar pain and even worse, Suhartina (2012) found that the average of learners' English proficiency of first year students of English department of some private well-known universities in Makassar was in Elementary level. Similarly, Hanafiah (2011) found that the average English competence level of first year students of English education of Unidayan University was elementary level.

The article discusses the effectiveness of conventional teaching method utilizing whole-class member group and interactive teaching method employing a small group work in an English grammar classroom. Moreover, it has been designed to figure out the most effective number of group member of group works in an English grammar classroom.

#### 2. Method

Data were taken from 68 first-year students of English Education Department of UNIDAYAN University, Bau-Bau Sulawesi Tenggara province, who sit in a pre-test and post-test of two English competences; Grammar and Speaking in English. The research design is quasi experimental assigning 5 group works as the independent variables and 2 English competences; Grammar and Speaking in English as the dependent variables. The group works consist of various number of students. Group A consists of 20 students also called 'whole-class member group' under Conventional Teaching Method, Group B consists of 2 students, Group C consists of 3 students, Group D consists of 4 students, and Group E comprises 5 students. The last four groups also called "small group work" under Interactive Teaching Methods. The treatment of all group works were reduplicated twice.

After sitting in a pre-test of the two competences of English; Grammar and Speaking, all group underwent 10 English Grammar classroom sessions of 100 minutes for each utilizing a different module. Group A employs a narrative-descriptive English grammar lesson delivered mostly deductively. Group B, C, D, and E make use an interactivedialogic based English grammar lesson. When the instructional sessions finished, all group members sit in a post-test of the two competences; Grammar and Speaking. Assessment for Speaking employ three raters aimed at obtaining a somewhat objective score for the students involved. The study also employs two statistic tests; t-test aimed at figuring out the significant differences of the groups and correlational test aimed at finding out the level of correlation between learners' working knowledge on Grammar and their Speaking performance. In addition, adapted IELTS test rubric of level of competence is employed to categorize learners' achievement after undergoing the instructional sessions.

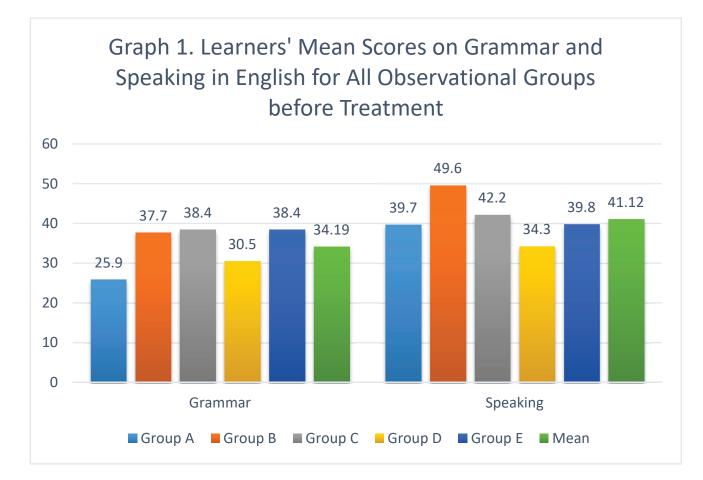
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#### 3. Results

#### Learners' Competence Before Treatment

before treatment obtained from the pre-test of the two English competences.

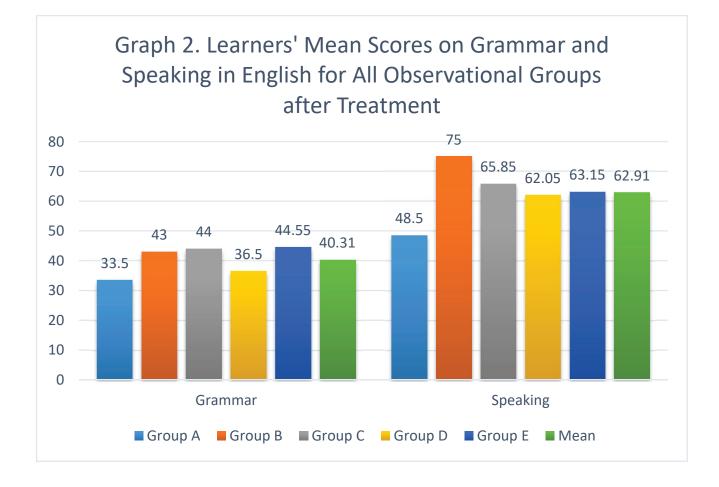
The following graph denoted the learners' English competence on Grammar and Speaking



As can be seen from the graph above, learners' mean score of the two English competences; Grammar and Speaking, is relatively similar. They are all categorized as "Limited User (LU)" based on the IELTS test rubric of competence level (see Table 1). As such, the study reliability has been fulfilled as the samples start at the same level of English competence. However, for Speaking competence, Group B and C are one level higher, "Modest User (MU)".

#### Learners' English Competence after Treatment

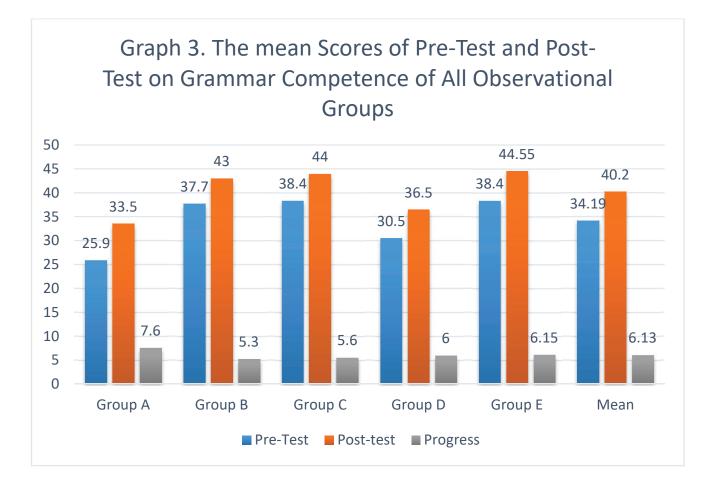
Graph 2 below shows the mean of learners' level of competence after treatment, i.e. having undergone 10 instructional sessions of English grammar lesson of 100 minutes for each. The figure is obtained from a post-test of the two English competences; Grammar and Speaking administered after the lesson sessions finished.



As can be seen from Graph 2 above, each group has in general increased at least up to one level higher, that is from "Limited User (LU)" to "Modest User (MU)" or from "Modest User (MU) to "Competent User (CU)". Even, Group D and Group E have shown a tremendous increase. They achieved two levels higher, that is, from "Limited User (LU)" to "Competent User (CU)". The following graphs illustrate the learners' achievement in all observational groups in detail.

#### Progress of Learners' Achievement on English Grammar Competence

Graph 3 illustrates the mean of Learners' Achievement Progress on English grammar competence for all observational groups.

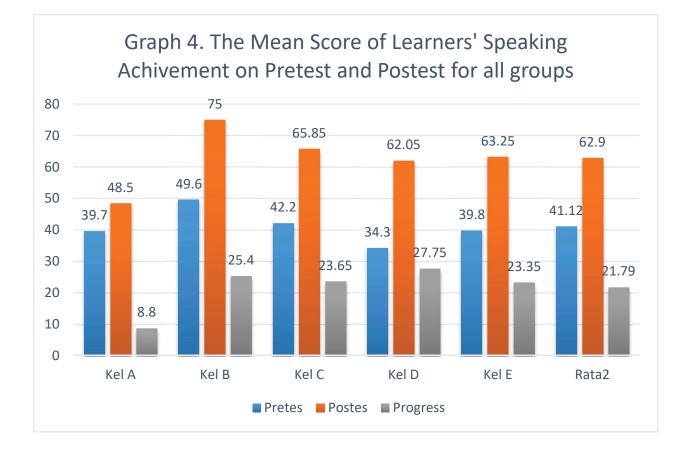


As can be seen from Graph 3 above, in general there is an increase of learners' grammar competence in all groups. The most significant learners' progress is held by Group A (7.6%) which applies conventional teaching method where grammar items and rules were presented explicitly and deductively. Group A underscored the rest groups which applied the interactive teaching method utilizing small group works, and the least is held by Group B (5.3%). As we know earlier that Group A consists of 20 students, Group B comprises 2 students, Group C consists of 3 students, Group D consists of 4 students, and Group E comprises 5 students.

Moreover, the graph infers two important aspect as far as the teaching of English grammar is

concerned. Firstly, conventional teaching method utilizing whole-class member group underscores the interactive teaching methods employing small group works. Secondly, there is a steady increase of learners' achievement along with the increase of the group member numbers. The phenomenon implies that traditional method also called conventional method in which the teaching English grammar is carried out deductively, presenting the grammatical items and rules explicitly, has been still the most effective method for teaching English grammar up to now in Indonesia. This phenomenon is of course contradictory to the trend of the teaching of foreign language including English in the world nowadays, which has been promoting a learner-centered approach instead of a teacher-centered approach as applied by the conventional teaching method.

Moreover, the graph denoted there is a steady increase of learners' achievement along with the increase of the number of group members. Group B consisting of 2 students achieved 5.3%, Group D comprising 3 students achieved 5.6%, Group D consisting of 4 students achieved 6%, Group E comprising 5 students gained 6.15%, and Group A comprising 20 students achieved the highest, 7.6%. The phenomenon implies that in this regard the most effective method for teaching of English grammar is conventional teaching method promoting teachercentered approach. T-test confirms that there is a significant different between the learners' achievement in pretest and posttest where t value of 15.3 is bigger than t-table of 4.604. The figure implies that the proposed teaching model is relatively effective for improving leaners' English grammatical competence. In other words, deductive teaching method has still been the most effective teaching method for English grammatical classroom. In this regard, conventional teaching method where English grammatical items and rules are presented explicitly is somewhat appropriate for English grammar classroom in Indonesia. The following graph shows the mean score of learners' achievement of Speaking in English.



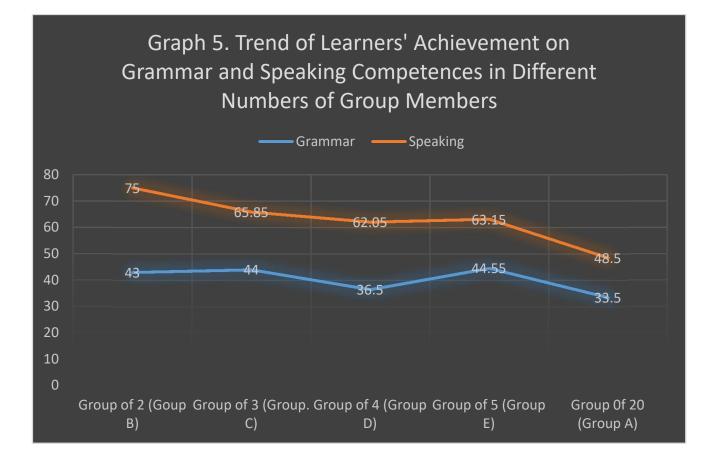
As can be seen from the graph, the mean score of learners' Speaking achievement on Pretest and Posttest underscored those achieved in Grammar competence. The achievement of Group A which employs Conventional teaching method is remarkably lower (only 8.8% of the data) than those achieved by the other four groups (Group B, took 25.4% of the date; Group C, 23.65%; Group D, 27.75% and Group E, 23.35%) which employ An Interactive Teaching method. Moreover, t-test confirms that there is a significant difference between the learners' achievement on Pretest and Posttest where t-value of 6.54 is bigger than t-table of 4.604 denoting that there is a significant increase of learners' Speaking achievement after undergoing the instructional treatment utilizing an interactive teaching method in English Grammar classroom.

The phenomenon implies that the employment of an interactive-based instructional teaching method is remarkably effective for improving learners' Speaking performance in English Grammar classroom compared to those employing Conventional teaching method. Such an achievement is really remarkable as most of the teaching methods of English Grammar classroom that have been applied so far in Indonesia seem to neglect Speaking competence as another issue that should be taken into account as far as learners' English proficiency in concerned. In consequence, regardless the increase of their English grammar competence, they still lack of communicative skills. They could not speak in English fluently.

Therefore, I found this interactive-based instructional teaching method in English grammar classroom is relatively effective for improving learners' English proficiency in general and specially, their English Speaking performance. As such, after joining such a classroom, learners will not only have a good working knowledge on English Grammar but also on their communicative competence in English. To this aspects, as I believe, are the merits and advantages of this interactive-based teaching model in English grammar classroom in Indonesia. This is in line with the studies conducted by the writer on Pair Interaction Model (Yassi 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013).

# The Effective numbers of Group Members of Small Group Works

As we know that one typical characteristic of an interactive-based teaching method is the employment of small group works in facilitating its learning activities in the classroom. This of course then rises a question asking how many students should be put in one group that is really effective for achieving the learning goals of the classroom. The following graph clarifies this.



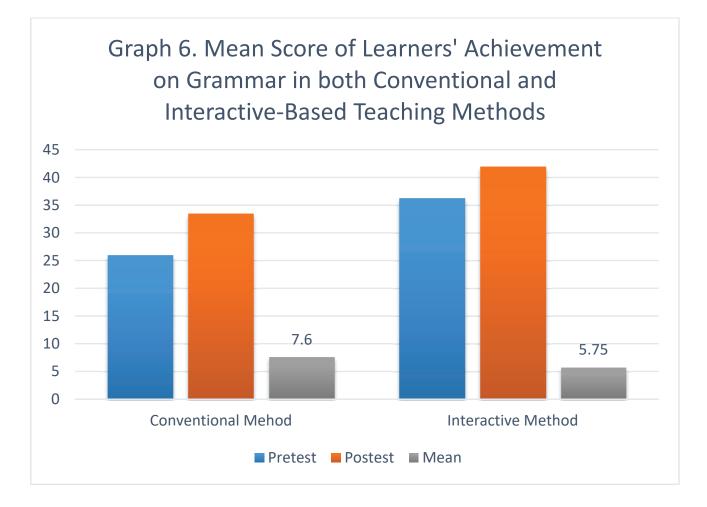
As stated previously, the study has been designed in a such way to test five types of treatments of the number of member of group works. They are Group A comprises 20 students, belonging to the conventional teaching method, Group B consists of 2 students, Group C consists of 3 students, Group D comprises 4 students, and Group E comprises 5 students where the last four groups belong to the interactive-based teaching method.

As can be seen from the graph, there is a steady decrease of learners' achievement on both Speaking and Grammar competences along with the increase of the numbers of group members. For Speaking competence, Group B comprising 2 students achieved the highest (75). However, the learners' achievement started to decrease when the number of member group increase as shown by those in Group C consisting of 3 students (the figure dropped to 65.85). This trend continues to happen in Group D which comprises 4 students (62.05) and a bit steady in Group E comprising 5 students (63.15) before it remarkably fell down in Group A comprising 20 students (it dropped till 48.5). Similarly, in the same pain, Grammar competence also denoted the decrease of leaners' achievement along with the increase of the numbers of group members, i.e. starting from 43 to 33.5.

Based on this phenomenon, it can be said that the less number of members of a group work, the more effective to the achievement of a learning process as far as the achievement of both Grammar and Speaking competences in Grammar classrooms are concerned. Surprisingly, this is in line by the study conducted by the writer in 2012 (Yassi, 2012) who studied varied number of group members in Grammar classrooms. The study concluded that the most effective number of members of a group work is two or three students.

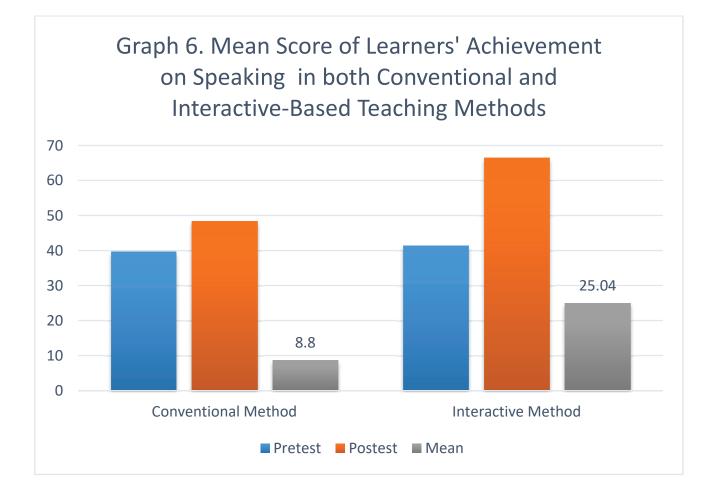
#### Conventional Teaching Method vs An Interactive-Based Teaching Method

The following graphs illustrate globally the effectiveness of Conventional teaching method and an Interactive-based teaching method in improving learners' English competences especially their English Grammar and Speaking performance in Grammar classrooms.



As can be seen from the graph, learners' Grammar competence is a bit more effective to be achieved when the grammar teaching employs conventional teaching method (7.6) than those using an interactive teaching one (5.75). However, the

figure of achievement is not significantly different, just differ about 1.85 points. This implies that both methods are relatively useful for improving learners' English grammatical competence in Grammar classrooms.



As can be seen from the graph, learners' Speaking performance in English is remarkably more effective to be achieved when grammar teaching employs an interactive-based teaching method (25.04) compared to those using conventional one (8.8). The difference reached up to 16.24 points. This figure implies that the grammar teaching using the interactive-based teaching method has empirically proved to be remarkably effective for improving learners' English proficiency especially their Speaking performance in English. This finding is in accordance with the teaching model which has been developed by the writer since 2009 called "Pair Interaction Model" (See Yassi 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013). Pair interaction model is an instructional teaching model in Grammar classrooms aimed at improving not only the learners' English grammatical knowledge but also and most importantly their English speaking performance. As its name suggests, learners are put in pair work group (group of 2) to perform a dialogic module comprising grammatical items to be learned and rehearsed with their changeable partners in the classroom. It is empirically proven that by undergoing such an intensive rehearsal, the learners' speaking performance increase along with the increase of their grammatical knowledge. This is as the writer believe caused by the aspect where learners are getting more and more confident to talk

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and communicate in English with their peers. As such, this eventually will form their habitual action in speaking in English.

#### 4. Conclusion

As stated previously that the study has been designed in such a way to respond to the three research problems, (1) How effective is the interactive-based teaching method utilizing small groups works in improving Grammar and Speaking competences of the learners compared to those conventional teaching methods employing whole-class member group works in Grammar classrooms?, (2) How many numbers are the members of group works effective for improving Grammar and Speaking competences of the learners in Grammar classrooms?, and (3) What factors are significantly contributing to the learners' achievement?

Respond to Research Problem 1. The study concluded that the interactive-based teaching method utilizing small group works is far more effective for improving both learners' Grammar and Speaking competences compared to those of conventional teaching method employing whole-class member group work in English Grammar classroom. The learners' mean achievement is 25.04 points and 8.8 points respectively. The t-test confirms that there is a significant difference between the two methods.

The respond to Research Problem 2. The study reveals that the less number of members of a group work, the more effective to the learners' achievement. The most effective number of members of a group work is two. The respond to Research Problem 3. The study found that there are two crucial factors contributing to the remarkable increase of learners' Speaking performance after having the interactivebased instructional teaching method in Grammar classroom. They are classroom management and syllabus design. The classroom management allows the students to work in groups. As such, they have more time to rehearse orally the given grammatical task. This eventually forms their speech habit as well as their high motivation and confidence in Speaking in English. At last, the learners' habitual action in Speaking in English becomes automatic and spontaneous.

Syllabus design enables the learners to work out with a more dialogic module of English grammatical items rather than those of narrative and descriptive one mostly used by conventional teaching method. As such, the learners are more likely to be more accustomed to speaking in English after rehearsing the module with their peers in their group works for several learning sessions. Moreover, the learners are getting more and more confident in speaking in English. At last, this eventually increase their speech habit and speaking in English becomes automatic and spontaneous.

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