

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH TEAM TEACHING AT A SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN MALANG

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**Abstract:** This descriptive-qualitative case study was conducted to describe the implementation of English team teaching at SMA Negeri (Senior High School) 2 Malang in terms of the objectives, the shared responsibilities among teachers, perceptions of the teachers and students, and factors influencing the implementation. Four English teachers and 106 students of Year 10 and Year 11, selected using a purposive random sampling technique, were involved. The data were collected through interviews and questionnaire. The findings show that the reasons for implementing team teaching were the adequate number of English teachers, empowerment in the subject they taught, and forming bonds among teachers and students. Different types of shared responsibilities were found among the teachers. Additionally, both the teachers and the students had positive perceptions concerning the effectiveness of team teaching. Instead of having difficulties, all the teachers saw the existence of supporting factors in their implementing team teaching.

**Key words:** English team teaching, senior high school, implementation, objectives, shared responsibilities, perceptions, influencing factors

Well-motivated students can be demotivated by a boring teacher; in contrast, many unmotivated students can develop an adequate degree of motivation if they are taught by a teacher who knows how to deal with students. Teachers' perception

about certain instructional techniques can influence the success or failure of their students. Many students fail in the teaching and learning process because their teachers do not have adequate background of what is being taught and because their teachers cannot communicate effectively. This is in line with what Martin et al. (1988:144) say, that is, teachers' success with their students is to a large extent related to their competence and effectiveness as communicator.

With the fantastic advancement of technology, it is necessary for English teachers to continue to improve their subject background and instructional skills in order to arouse the students' interest and motivation to learn English, so that students will learn English more seriously. Some teachers make use of information and technology, such as the Internet and television, to compensate the limited background and skill, while some others have resorted to work collaboratively with others, which is labeled as a *team teaching*.

Team teaching or teaching in a team is one of teaching structures implemented in many levels of education, from kindergarten to university level. The idea of team-teaching seems to have originated from the USA, with the publication in 1957 of Dr. J. Llyod Trump's *Image of the Future*, written on behalf of the Commission on the Experimental Study of the Utilization of Staff in the High School (Curzon, 1994:302). Team teaching has been promoted for high schools since the 1960s. It is a strategy that has been used across the USA at all levels and for various purposes. Historically, it has been seen as a practice suited for gaining better control of large group of students.

Team teaching appears to have emerged as a result of an opinion that the existing teaching technique patterns require revision. In some educational institutions the move toward team teaching has begun with the need of more specialized instruction. The differentiation does not come about because one member is better than the other, but because they perform different tasks (Welty & Welty, 1976:5).

The American schooling in the 1960s experienced what was proclaimed to be a revolution in education. The innovation that attracted the most attention was team teaching, which involved teachers to have shared responsibilities for planning, instructing, and evaluating instruction. The early experiments with team teaching were conducted by the school and University Program of Research and Development at Harvard University, the Claremont Graduate School Team Teaching Program in California, and the Wisconsin School Improvement Program (Gutek, 1991:310).

Cunningham (in Bailey et al., 1992:162) has identified four general organization patterns found in team teaching arrangements. The first is Team Leader Type, a type of arrangement where one team member has a higher status than the others. He or she may have a special given title such as 'Team Leader' or 'Chief Instructor'. The next type of arrangement is Associate Type, in which there is no designed leader. Leadership emerges as the result of interactions among the members of the team in a given situation, and decision-making power may be shared equally. The third type of arrangement is Master Teacher/Beginning Teacher. This arrangement is used to promote the acculturation of new teacher into the new school. The beginning teacher may have much less decision-making power than the more experienced teacher. The last type is Coordinated Team, in which there is no joint responsibility, but there is joint planning by two or more teachers who are teaching the same subject to separate group of students.

According to Wardani (2001), there are two types of team teaching: team planning and full team teaching. In team planning, which is the most common type of team teaching, the team members make planning collaboratively, but instructing separately. The planning made is the guidance for each member of the team in instructing the students. In full team teaching, on the contrary, a group of teachers teach the same students in the same time, and the teachers teach in turn. For example, when Teacher A is explaining, Teacher B is assisting the students, but when it is Teacher B's turn to explain, Teacher A assists the students.

Additionally, Brown (2001:441) states several team teaching models that are common: (1) Two teachers are overtly present throughout a class period, but divide responsibilities between them; (2) Two teachers take different alves of a class period, with one teacher stepping aside while the other is performing; and (3) Two or more teachers teach different consecutive periods of one group of learners, and must collaborate closely in carrying out and modifying curricular plans. Sandholtz (in Perry, 2005) has identified three configurations of team teaching: two or more teachers loosely sharing responsibilities; team planning, but individual instruction; and joint planning, instruction, and evaluation of learning experiences.

Clearly, team teaching varies according to levels of coordination and shared responsibility. Joint responsibility for team teaching and appropriate time shared between members of team teaching are among the most important features of team teaching, but their presence in a team does not necessarily guarantee its success. Of the vital importance is the team's conscious unity of purpose. No matter how well-organized the team is or how abundant the resources and the teaching aids are, the

chances of team's success will depend directly on the real cooperation of its members. Team teaching teachers may wish to experiment with alternative ways of organizing teaching and learning; rather than competition, they may wish to create an environment in which they can learn from each other in an equitable way.

Research concerning the implementation of team teaching in language area, especially in English, is hardly found in Indonesia. So far the discussion on team teaching is found in science area by Tobing (1981). He found that the science lecturers involved in one particular subject, for example, basic science which consists of Physics, Biology, and Chemistry, usually form a kind of team teaching for the sake of the more uniform lesson presentation and management.

To the writers' knowledge, team teaching is not yet a common teaching practice in Indonesia. In Malang, in particular, only three schools have implemented this approach; they are SMA Negeri 2 Malang, SMA Negeri 8 Malang, and SMP Taman Harapan Malang. At the time of this study, SMA Negeri 2 Malang has implemented team teaching in English lesson for over six years, much longer than the other two schools. Besides, the school also implements team teaching in every grade and study program, different from SMA Negeri 8 Malang, which implements team teaching only in Year 11 and Year 12. In addition, as research concerning the implementation of team teaching in language area, especially in English, is hardly found in the Indonesian context, this study is intended to investigate the implementation of English team teaching at SMA Negeri 2 Malang, with the specific focuses of describing the objectives, the shared responsibilities, the perceptions of teachers and students, and the factors influencing the implementation of English team teaching.

## **METHOD**

This study was a descriptive-qualitative case study as it involved only the teachers and students in one particular school, that is, SMA Negeri 2 Malang, with the main purpose of portraying and reporting the implementation of English team teaching. Teachers and students of Year 10 and Year 11 were involved, but no access was obtained for Year 12 as they had to prepare for the final examination.

Four female English teachers were involved in this study. Two English team-teachers (identified as Lana and Lani) were teaching eight classes, four classes of Year 10, two of Year 11 (IPA), and another two of Year 11 (IPS). The other team of two teachers (identified as Hana and Hani) were teaching only one class, that is,

Year 11 (Bahasa). In addition, 106 students out of 311 student population were selected using a purposive random sampling technique: 37 students of Year 10; 37 of Year 11 (IPA); 32 of Year 11 (IPS); and 19 students of Year 11 (Bahasa).

Three instruments were utilized to collect the data, namely, teacher interview guide, student questionnaire, and student interview guide. The teacher interview guide was used to collect the data of the objectives of the implementation of English team teaching, teachers' perceptions on English team teaching, and factors influencing the implementation of team teaching. The student questionnaire was designed to collect the data of the students' perceptions on the implementation of English team teaching, whereas the student interview guide was to collect further information of the students' perceptions concerning the program. All the data obtained from the questionnaire and interviews were then grouped and classified based on the research questions.

## **FINDINGS**

Concerning the objectives of the implementation of team teaching, the data from the interview indicate that it was implemented because the number of teachers was adequate, because the teachers wanted to specialize themselves in certain language skills, and because team teaching could lessen the students' boredom. As Lana said, the school had an adequate number of English teachers, so the headmaster recommended that team teaching be implemented. In addition to this reason, both Lani and Hana had the same opinion about the objectives of the implementation of team teaching. Though expressed in different sentences, their responses show that they wanted to specialize themselves with the skills that they really mastered, one wanting to specialize in teaching listening, speaking, and writing, while the other one in teaching reading and grammar. Hana, however, commented that team teaching was implemented to lessen the students' boredom in the classroom as it offered teaching variations brought by the teachers in the teaching and learning process.

Dealing with the responsibilities shared among English team-teaching teachers, there were four kinds of responsibilities as revealed from the teachers' responses in the interview; they were planning, searching for materials, instructing, and evaluating. In terms of planning, one pair of the teachers said that they had unequally-shared responsibilities because one member of the pair was physically weak at the time of preparing the teaching plans, so the other teacher planned all

the instruction herself. On the contrary, the other team acknowledged that they had more balanced responsibilities in every stage of teaching. They made the yearly and semesteral plans together, but for the daily purposes, they made the lesson plans themselves based on the yearly and semesteral plans they had constructed together.

In terms of instructional materials, all the four members of the team teachers stated that they always communicated with the partners about the materials they taught to the students. They generally shared responsibilities for searching the teaching materials based on the skills that they specialized. For example, Lana's job was searching materials from textbooks, whereas Lani's job was searching materials from the mass media and the Internet. Lani assumed that up-to-date teaching materials could increase students' motivation to study and to do their assignments.

It was also found from the interview that even though the teachers implemented partial team teaching and did not formally set time to meet and share what was going on in the classrooms, they often discussed problems occurring in the classrooms through informal discussion. It was not surprising that they still knew what happened in the other teachers' classes. In doing the evaluation, all of the four teachers said that they did not administer joint evaluation in daily assessment and assignments. They usually constructed tests together when they gave block evaluation (i.e., evaluation covering two or three basic competences), mid-semester tests, and final tests.

In response to the question about their perceptions on the implementation of English team teaching, the English teachers said

Team teaching makes my job easier. I enjoy team and collegial work. In addition, when a problem arises, I can discuss it with my partner. (Lana)

I feel more creative with team teaching. There are eight classes. Different classes need different methods because the students are different. I can share the problems with my partner also I save my energy because I teach only the skills that I really know. My job in preparing teaching materials will be more focused, so my teaching is more effective. (Lani)

I am helped by my partner on teaching materials. And students enjoy studying in the class because they have more than one English teacher. And I think it will increase their motivation to learn English. (Hana)

With team teaching, we would set the same criteria in giving the scores to students, so they won't feel jealous with students from other classes. With the same teaching materials, the ability of the students of the same grade is supposed to be the same. (Hani)

The statements above imply that according to the teachers, team teaching served as a partnership mechanism which gives advantages to both teachers and students. Teachers benefit from the abundant help and materials from their partners, which thus makes their teaching job easier. It facilitates teachers with opportunities for more collaborative and collegial work. They often discussed the teaching and learning problems found in the classrooms and determined the solution together.

The teachers also stated that it was easier to teach the subject that they really knew because they shared the lesson with their partner; the teaching became more effective as they taught the more focused skills to their students. Furthermore, team teaching seemed to be a good method to give more uniform lesson and instruction to the students. In team teaching, teachers would sit together and discuss the plan for the whole one year and set the same criteria in evaluating students' performances. The teachers hoped that with more similar instruction, the students' ability would be more homogeneous although they were taught by different teachers. The job of the next-grade teachers would thus be much easier. Finally, the teachers also perceived that by implementing team teaching, students benefit from the more enjoyable classroom atmosphere, which in turn will increase their motivation to learn English. Students appeared not to get bored easily by having two teachers teaching the same subject every week as different teachers tended to bring variations in teaching techniques into the classrooms. According to the teachers, students also benefit from the increased quality of the lesson because of the more-focused skills that their teachers teach and from being treated more fairly as their teachers set the same criteria in evaluating and assessing their performance.

Responses from the students indicate that the majority of Year-10 students (51.35%) considered team teaching more effective, and about 21.62% (eight out of thirty) students even strongly agreed with the statement that team teaching was effective. A different result, though, was obtained from Year-11 (IPA) students. Fifteen students out of thirty seven (40.54%) said that there was no difference between team teaching and solitary teaching in terms of their effectiveness. Year-11 (IPS) students had quite different perceptions; twelve students (37.5%) perceived that team teaching was more effective, but eleven students (34.38%) said that there were no differences between team teaching and solitary teaching. Year-11 (Bahasa) students seemed to have similar perceptions in that they considered team teaching a better technique.

Regarding the benefits of team teaching, most of Year-10 students agreed that their skills improved, particularly in reading and writing, but they chose neutral position concerning the improvement of listening and speaking skills. Year-11 (IPA) students acknowledged that team teaching seemed to improve respectively their writing and reading skills, but not the other skills. In contrast, students of Year 11 (IPS) agreed that their skills had improved, particularly speaking and writing skills. Finally, students of Year 11 (Bahasa) considered that their writing skill was likely to be improved by the implementation of team teaching.

In addition to closed questions, the questionnaire also required the students to write down their comments on the implementation of English team teaching at their school. Seventeen Year-10 students (45.95%) reported that English team-teaching teachers explained the lesson more clearly, whereas 10.81% of the students acknowledged that team teaching was more effective than solitary teaching. The comments of the 37 Year-11 (IPA) students also varied. Thirteen students (35.14%) said that team teaching was good because it made the students not bored in the classroom; six students (16.22%) indicated that they did not see the difference between English team teaching and English solitary teaching; whereas five students (13.51%) wrote down that English team teaching had improved their English skills. The rest of the Year-11 (IPA) students (13.51%) gave negative comments in that the explanation from different teachers made them confused. The students of Year-11 (IPS) appeared to give the most various comments. The highest frequencies of comments are as follows: English team teaching was not boring (15.63%); English team teaching was good (15.63%); and team teaching had no effect on the results of their study (15.63%). Finally, seventeen Year-11 (Bahasa) students (89.47%) commented that English team-teaching teachers explained the lesson more clearly than solitary teaching.

The findings regarding the factors influencing the implementation of English team teaching show two dominant factors: problems and supporting factors. There seemed to be no problem in implementing team teaching, although one of the teachers indicated that team teaching might not be suitable for every teacher. Another teacher mentioned that the only problem she found was at the evaluating stage where she had to report scores from skills in only one score, whereas she and her partner had decided to focus on teaching certain skills. Other members of the team teaching added that in order for team teaching to run well, there should be the same way of thinking among the members as team teaching needs good cooperative work.



## DISCUSSION

The study found that the objectives of implementing team teaching were to make use of the adequate number of teachers, to specialize in certain language skills, and to lessen the students' boredom. Their statements are in line with Welty & Welty (1976:5), who said that the need of team teaching is due to the more specialized instruction. With the more specialized instruction, teachers will focus themselves on a particular subject, so that their instruction will be more effective and efficient. In their attempts to develop their professional expertise, they are seeking for help to the other teachers. They need to cooperate and collaborate with others since the new ideas of effective teaching may much be coming from their associated partner. In addition, the findings are also in line with what Armstrong (1977: 66) says, that is, team teaching spurs creativity because teachers know they must teach for their colleagues as well as for their learners.

For some reasons, the teachers involved in this study do not know the exact objectives of implementing English team teaching at their school. The objectives that are reported here are based on their personal experiences and opinions. Team teaching is relatively new and this is probably the reason why there has not been a clear concept for it.

The pattern for English team teaching at the school is team planning (Wardani, 2001:10). In a team planning, the members of team teaching only collaborate in the planning stage, and they do the instruction and evaluation on their own. The two pairs of team teaching studied shared responsibilities in different ways. The first pair had unequal responsibilities. The responsibilities were given more to one of the member of the team. One more advantage of team teaching is that in case one teacher cannot perform his/her teaching well, the other member can substitute him/her. Therefore, the teaching and learning process would still run smoothly and easily. The other pair of team teaching had more balanced distribution of shared responsibilities among the members.

According to the teachers, team teaching had enhanced teaching and learning situation with a better atmosphere. The teachers and students had closer relationship, which made the class more enjoyable and increase students' motivation to learn English. Armstrong (1977:66) describes that team teaching facilitates individualized instruction because it is possible to provide learning environments involving close personal contact between teachers and learners.

In the English teachers' perceptions, their students would not get bored if the instruction was done by more than one teacher. Each teacher has his/her own uniqueness; he/she brings into class. With such uniqueness, it is hoped that students would not easily get bored in the English class. They also saw English team teaching benefits both sides, teachers and students. Teachers are more specialized with the skill that they major in, so the teaching will be more effective because they know well what they are instructing to their students. Teachers are also helped by the time and energy saving because they cooperate in planning the instruction for the whole year and solve the problems occurring in the classrooms together. Students also get benefit from the increased quality of the lesson and a better classroom atmosphere, which might then increase their understanding of the lesson.

Another teacher perceived team teaching as a good method for more uniform lesson and instruction. Although the teachers had different teaching styles, their teaching materials and scoring criteria were same. The perception is in line with what Tobing (1981:2) says, that is, the lecturers who are involved in one particular subject usually form a kind of team teaching for the sake of the more uniform lesson presentation and management.

Research findings from the students imply that it will be difficult for students to concentrate in the classroom if they did not feel comfortable. The students' perceptions seemed to agree with their teachers' perceptions on English team teaching. In the English classes where team teaching was implemented, from the questionnaires, interviews, and informal discussions it was found that most students thought that team teaching reduced their anxiety and boredom in the classroom.

Although each class had different chosen skill to be put as priority, most of the classes had positive perceptions on team teaching. Only students of Year 11 (IPA) seemed uneager to have English team teaching in their class. They said that the result of the study depended on the ability of students in learning and the ability of teachers in teaching, not on the teaching pattern that was used.

Students of Year 11 (Bahasa) appear to perceive English team teaching more positively than the students of the other groups. They had positive views on the lesson which was delivered by team teaching and the team-teaching teachers' efforts to teach them. This might have been caused by the fact that they had more hours of English lesson than the other classes. They also had English literature subject. Team teaching in their opinions helped reduce their boredom with English. The students said they were not bored when different teachers taught in one subject because the teachers might give different teaching variations.

The other classes, Year 10 and Year 11 (IPS), also had positive perceptions on English team teaching. They even expected that their teachers also paid attention to the vocabulary building. According to them, vocabulary was important to understand English texts, but their teachers seemed to rarely pay attention to the development of vocabulary.

The students' responses to the questionnaire imply that the students perceived the implementation of English team teaching differently depending on their grades (Year 10 or Year 11) and their programs of study (IPA, IPS, or Bahasa), resulting in individual differences in needs, interests, motivation, and ability. The differences tend to determine the success of the teaching and learning process. There is thus a need for the teachers to recognize their students' perceptions because as the subjects of the instruction, students are not just passive recipients of their teachers' instructions.

Furthermore, in every process of the teaching and learning, there emerge problems and supporting factors. This also happened to the school under study. Only one member of the first pair of English team teaching, that is Lani, said that there was a problem in the English team-teaching implementation at SMA Negeri 2 Malang, while the other pair of team-teaching teachers said there was no problem in the implementation. According to Lani, one biggest problem in implementing team teaching was the difficulty in reporting her students' performance results since due to some reasons her partner could not help her, so she had to work alone most of the time calculating all the scores from her partner and herself into one final score to be reported in the report book.

All the English teachers said that team teaching saved their effort in managing students in the class, helped them manage the lesson, and enabled them set the same criteria in assigning scores to students. Moreover, the important part seemed to be the good relationship among the members of the team teaching. As they implemented team planning, communication along the year was needed. Without the good relationship, the communication would not run smoothly and it would affect the partnership. Inharmonious relationship among team-teaching teachers can be an obstacle in the partnership.

Finally, it is important to note here that this study did not concern possible different personalities of teachers. The comment of one of the English teachers involved in this study, which indicated that team teaching might not be suitable for every teacher, implies that there might be teachers with certain personalities who would love solitary teaching more than team teaching.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The conclusions on the implementation of English team teaching at SMA Negeri 2 Malang were drawn on the basis of the five research objectives. First of all, the team teaching was implemented because of the availability of the human resources at SMA Negeri 2 Malang, teachers' empowerment on the subject matter, and the increasing opportunity to form bonds between teachers and students by minimizing students' boredom in the classroom. Second, the teachers implementing team planning shared their responsibilities in different patterns. One pair of team teaching had imbalanced shared responsibilities, while the other pair of team teaching said that they had a balanced responsibility in the planning, instructing, and evaluating. In everyday teaching and evaluation, all the four teachers said that they did not administer joint teaching and evaluation, but stayed in touch with their partners' instruction through informal discussions.

Next, team teaching helped teachers in planning, teaching, and evaluating processes. Team teaching brought more homogenous instruction and scoring criteria. Besides, students would benefit from the more enjoyable classroom atmosphere, so they would not get bored easily. Thus the work of the teachers in the next grade would be easier because of the homogeneity of the students' ability in one grade. In addition to such teachers' perceptions, the students perceived the implementation of English team teaching positively. Finally, there seemed to be no difficulty found among English team-teaching teachers, except in computing the students' scores. They had to compute to scores resulting from two teachers in one score to be reported in the report book.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

Suggestions are addressed to the headmaster, the teachers, and other researchers. The headmaster should set formal meetings regularly so that he can discuss with the teachers the problems appearing along the implementation of English team teaching, and then find the solutions together for the team teaching to succeed. Furthermore, the teachers should carry out formal meetings as well among them to discuss problems concerning not only the teaching and learning, but also personal matters. More balanced responsibilities should also be shared since imbalanced ones might become a trigger to interpersonal conflicts. Considering the importance of planning, the collaborative planning among team-teaching teachers

should be carried out not only when the teachers are constructing the yearly and semesteral plans, but also when they are preparing the daily plans. Last but not least, other researchers are suggested to carry out studies on team teaching, focusing particularly on possible different personalities of teachers which might result in different preference of teaching, solitary or team.

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