

# A CASE STUDY OF ACADEMIC WRITING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PRINCIPLED VERSUS STANDARD CLT METHOD AT BINUS UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the research project is to investigate how far the academic writing skills of Binus University students can be developed through two conflicting CLT methods: standard and principled. The research project is expected to result in computer-animated format which can be used as one of the main tools in teaching and learning grammar at Binus University. The research project uses the qualitative approach, and thus uses verbal data. The research project involves two subject groups (experimental and control). The experimental group will receive the treatment of grammar learning by using the Principled CLT approach, while the control group receives the standard CLT approach. Survey is then conducted to the two groups so as to find out their comments on the two teaching methods. From the results of the questionnaires, it is found that Principled CLT method is favored for its knowledge and accuracy factors, while the Standard CLT is preferred for its fun and independence factors.*

**Keywords:** *academic writing skills, academic writing development, principled CLT method, standard CLT method*

## ABSTRAK

*Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari seberapa jauh kemampuan menulis akademik siswa Binus dapat dikembangkan melalui dua metode CLT yang berlawanan: baku dan prinsipil. Proyek penelitian diharapkan dapat menghasilkan dalam format animasi komputer yang dapat digunakan sebagai salah satu alat utama dalam mengajar dan mempelajari Grammar di Binus University. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan data verbal. Proyek penelitian ini melibatkan dua kelompok subjek (eksperimental dan kontrol). Kelompok eksperimental memperoleh pembelajaran Grammar dengan menggunakan CLT prinsipil; sementara kelompok kontrol, CLT baku. Survei dilakukan terhadap dua kelompok untuk mencari tahu pendapat mereka tentang dua metode pengajaran ini. Dari hasil kuesioner diperoleh metode CLT prinsipil disukai karena faktor pengetahuan dan akurasi, sementara CLT baku dipilih karena faktor kesenangan dan kebebasan.*

**Kata kunci:** *keterampilan menulis akademis, pengembangan keterampilan menulis, metode CLT prinsipil, metode CLT baku*

## INTRODUCTION

When it comes to academic writing purposes, grammar is an integral part of the process. Without grammar, the nightmare possibility of making non-sense piece of English essay might be a reality, not to mention that non-English writing styles could also influence the writing process. However, with grammar, students are often against its delivery in the classrooms due to various factors, like the nature of too many rules, formal instruction, and the condition of non-guarantee of successful writing. English teachers are often put in a dilemma whether they should grammar in isolation for academic English essay writing, or whether they should teach grammar indirectly through the works of their students and let the focus occur naturally in the process. The previous teaching way is known as Grammar Translation method, while the latter is known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, however, is not entirely problem-free. Many teachers feel that CLT is too much concerned with the communicative-based activities to the level that grammar is sacrificed greatly along the process. As a result, accuracy level of the students' English proficiency is getting worse than before, resulting in the use of English known by the derogative term of 'broken English'. Furthermore, CLT approach does not guarantee the improvement of fluency and clarity of the students' performances as well. On the other hand, the principled CLT approach tries to put grammatical aspects in its proportion, especially for academic writing purposes. The approach has not been implemented before, and thus requires experiments to test its effectiveness and acceptability level.

The research project tries to compare and analyze the two teaching methods, so as to find out what happens during the teaching and learning process as well as the results of each technique in the end. To make a clear separation about these two methods in this research, the common CLT method is termed Standard CLT method, while the experimental one is termed Principled CLT method. For the latter method, grammar is delivered in its proper balance together with the communicative-based activities. The research will focus on how far each of the teaching methods will have effect on the academic writing skills development of Binus University freshmen.

Therefore, the problem formulation that the research project aims to address is: (1) Which one of the two teaching methods has been proved effective to develop Binus University freshmen's academic writing skills and (2) How do Binus University freshmen view and comment on each approach of the two teaching methods? The significance of the research project is that it can provide an alternative English Language Teaching scheme at Binus University, where communicative-based activities are mainly highlighted in its curriculum, so as to prepare students for international work environment and higher study level.

## Literature Review

Savignon (1990:211) observes, "*Many a curricular innovation has been undone by failure to make corresponding changes in evaluation... Some teachers understandably are frustrated... by the seeming ambiguity in discussions of communicative competence. Negotiation of meaning is well and good, but this view of language behavior lacks precision, does not provide a universal scale for assessment of individual learners*". As for the same issue, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell (1997:145) comments "*many CLT proponents neglected linguistic competence and accepted the premise that linguistic form emerges on its own as a result of learners' engaging in communicative activities*". In a similar vein, Widdowson (1989:135) argues "*communicative competence is not a matter of knowing rules for the composition of sentences and being able to employ such rules to assemble expressions from scratch as and when occasion requires. It is much more a matter of*

*knowing a stock of partially pre-assembled patterns, formulaic frameworks, and a kit of rules, so to speak, and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to contextual standards”.*

In his research at Binus University, Asmani (2011) found that although the tendency of the majority of the students (most of them are of computer studies) prefer a more communicative approach in learning English, but when it comes to academic settings like lectures, seminars, and workshops/trainings (where English is preferably used), accuracy of the native speaker model is also highly appreciated, and thus requires a certain level of grammar competency among its speakers and active participants, including in presentations, listening for note-taking, discussions, etc.

Spada and Lightbown (1993:205) also presents the evidence *“that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative interaction can contribute positively to second language development in both the short and long term”.*

Finally, in her recommendation, Celce-Murcia (1997:148) suggest the new approach in CLT, which is more “explicit and direct” and termed “principled communicative approach” where *“it bridges the gap between current research on aspects of communicative competence and actual communicative classroom practice by synthesizing direct, knowledge-oriented and indirect, skill-oriented teaching approaches”.*

Halliday in Joyce and Burns (1999:10) says *“The classroom image of grammatical structure is something like the following. Language is made up of sentences (some of which have clauses in them) consisting of words (some of which are grouped into phrases). There is no need to reject this picture; we can build on it and enrich it.”* In other words, if teaching traditional grammar is to be integrated into ELT, then it can have a certain degree of relevance in the modern classroom.

Furthermore, Chomsky in Joyce and Burns (1999:12) states *“distinguishes between language competence and language performance. ‘Competence’ is defined as what people know about language; that is their ability to use language, while ‘performance’ is language behavior, or what people do with language.”*

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **General Research Approach**

There are two groups of students in this research. First is the control group, where they receive the standard CLT method for academic writing lesson. The second is the experimental group, where they receive the principled CLT method for their academic writing. The two groups have their writing assignments in class. The control group receives input and feedback from the teachers along the way, and there is no formal grammar instruction beforehand. On the other hand, the experimental group receives grammar instruction in the beginning before they actually write their assignments. The grammar instruction is designed in such a way that the method is more communicative and familiar to the students. In this research, there is awareness that the *“creative and human aspects of social behavior”* (Cohen, Manion, et. al, 2000) cannot be ignored. The Binus University freshmen might have their own reasons or opinions, particularly in evaluating the two different methods. Therefore, the students are given the opportunity to express their own thoughts and feelings in this regard.

Based on the nature of this research methodology, the writer position in this research project is more of the hermeneutic/interpretive epistemology where it assumes that all knowledge is *“perspective-bound and partial, i.e. relative to that framework”* (Usher, 1996).

Based on the brief overview above, this research applies the research methodology of qualitative data gathering and analysis. The project focuses on the generalization of the observed social phenomenon by examining the contexts, in which it exists, using a qualitative methodology. The method emphasizes a holistic interpretation, to understand the social phenomena by relying on students' comments.

### **Data Collection**

The research project divides the subjects randomly into two groups, which are experimental group and control group. The experimental group receives the principled communicative approach by integrating grammar into the teaching methodology, while the control group receives the standard CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) approach. The research project conducts the same writing assignments for both experimental and control group after the teaching treatment. After the essay task, the two groups are given survey questionnaires so as to find out the general comments and opinions about the two different methods. Target population is Binus University freshmen who have English Entrant course during the academic semester of 2012/2013.

### **Participants**

The participants are divided into two groups of Binus University freshmen who have English Entrant subject during the academic semester of 2012-2013. All groups are at their first year of study. The two groups are Experimental group which consists of 20-30 freshmen in the odd semester of 2012-2013 and Control group which consists of 20-30 freshmen in the odd semester of 2012-2013. These students are chosen as the participants in the research project due to some reasons. First, all students of first year study are assumed to have some basic knowledge of grammar from their previous primary, middle, and senior high education, and thus expected to have relatively 'fresh memory' on basic grammar. Secondly, all students of first year study are not under pressure to work on more academic loads in the next semesters, so that they are in a better position to have some alternative learning experiences, which might be different from the university curriculum standard.

Since there is only one university to be sampled from a number of other universities available in the district of Jakarta Barat, the approach of simple random sampling is used, where "*all members of the population have an equal and independent chance of being included in the random sample.*" (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006: 169)

### **Academic Writing Essay**

The two groups receive two different teaching methods. After the treatment, the two groups have the writing assignment of the same academic writing task format with different alternative topics to choose from.

### **Survey Questionnaires**

Open-ended questions are provided in the survey questionnaire to encourage students to express their individual opinions about the teaching methods that they receive. These free comments of the students will compensate for the possible limitations of the teaching procedures, namely the lack of sensitivity of the methods to act in accordance with individual differences, nuances and tones in their learning experiences. The questionnaires consist of two main questions, which are: (1) Do you think the method helps you to develop your grammar competency? Why? and (2) Do you like the method? Why?

## Data Analysis

I apply the qualitative analysis in this research is applied. Here, grids and matrices are used to organize the data. Then, the themes, patterns, gaps and contradictions in the free comments of the participants are highlighted, and is summarized into findings. The findings are then analyzed and interpreted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this analysis, the data are presented, then summarized, and then interpreted so as to find the significant findings of the two methods.

### Data Presentation of Experimental Group

The responses of the freshman Binus University students in the experimental group receiving the principled CLT method are presented as follows.

Table 1 Data Presentation of Experimental Group

Student	Question 1	Question 2
1	Yes, because the T delivers the material well and made it easy to remember	Yes, because simple to remember and to learn
2	Saya menjadi tahu apa yang harus saya tulis dan tahu lekak lekuk grammar tersebut	Saya jadi lebih bisa dan lebih mengerti karena ilustrasi yang di gunakan
3	Ya, karena penjelasan tsb membuat saya lebih mengerti grammar	Cara penyampaian dari dosen yg merupakan dosen terbaik yg pernah sy dapatkan di binus
4	Sangat menolong dan membuat kita <b>kreatif</b>	Karena <b>menarik</b>
5	Yes. It makes me <b>understand</b> grammar well	It is <b>easy to understand</b>
6	Ya. Saya <b>lebih mengerti</b> di ajarin sir dari pada di SMA	Ya, karena sir mengajar memakai <b>mind mapping</b> , jadi lebih <b>mudah dimengerti</b>
7	Yes, the method is good but I <b>can not make it into my writing</b>	Because I just shared what my brains think about
8	Yes, I think the competency of grammar is good and <b>useful</b>	<b>Tidak monoton</b> dan <b>banyak variasi</b> sehingga tdk membuat jenuh
9	Ya, karena <b>sangat berguna</b> bagi saya	Ya, saya sangat suka dengan <b>cara mengajar</b> anda
10	Cara mengajarnya bagus; <b>variatif dan tdk monoton</b>	Melatih para mahasiswa untuk <b>berbicara</b> inggris lebih lancar
11	Karena mahasiswa dapat <b>mereview pelajaran</b> yang pernah di pelajari	Dapat <b>diterapkan dalam writing</b>
12	<b>Variatif</b> dan <b>mudah dimengerti</b>	Mahasiswa akan <b>lebih terampil</b> lagi
13	Dapat belajar atau <b>berlatih untuk kedepannya</b>	Dari awal saya suka dengan cara mengajar anda; <b>mudah, detail dan jelas</b>
14	Cara mengajar <b>gampang dimengerti</b> dan <b>fun</b>	<b>Grammar saya meningkat</b> dan saya suka cara mengajar anda
15	Caranya <b>mudah dimengerti</b> dan menjelaskan dengan cara yang mudah dimengerti	The way you explained the lesson is <b>attractive and interesting</b> . You can also control the class.
16	Cara mengajarnya <b>mudah dimengerti</b>	I mainly <b>understand</b> what you have taught us and I like it
17	Saya tambah <b>memahami</b> apa itu grammar	Bisa membantu saya dalam <b>membuat cerita</b>
18	Metode cukup baik, menggunakan <b>analogi menarik</b> namun <b>sulit di pahami jika tdk dari awal</b>	Tidak membosankan, tapi <b>lebih baik di kurangi</b>
19	Ya, metodenya sangat membantu saya karena mengajarnya dengan <b>bahasa yang lebih mudah</b>	Ya saya suka karena <b>metodenya</b> sangat bagus

20	Yes , because it teaches me <b>the simple way</b>	Because the <b>method is good</b> enough
21	Grammar yang saya pelajari sangat berguna untuk <b>membuat sebuah karangan</b> agar grammarnya tidak hancur	Saya menyukai metode yang diajarkan karena <b>mudah dimengerti</b>
22	Ya, saya merasa tertolong dalam <b>membuat karangan</b> meski <b>sedikit sulit untuk mengerti</b>	<b>Awalnya tdk suka</b> , tapi dijelaskan dengan cara yang baik dan membuat saya mengerti metode tsb
23	Ya, karena membantu dalam <b>membuat sebuah kata kata yang benar dan baku</b>	Ya, karena sangat mudah dan membantu saya <b>dalam mengerti sebuah kata kata</b>
24	Sya merasa tertolong dengan metode grammar yg diberikan dan dapat menerapkan metode tsb <b>dalam karangan</b> yang saya buat	Sy menyukainya karena dijelaskan dengan <b>cara yang baik dan mudah dimengerti</b>

### Data Presentation of Control Group

The responses of the freshman Binus University students in the control group receiving the standard CLT method are presented as follows.

Table 2 Data Presentation of Control Group

Student	Question 1	Question 2
1	Yes, because....ya, karena pelajaran yang di berikan secara <b>praktik lebih cepat masuk ke otak</b> di banding kan teori	Yes, because pelajaran yang diberikan sir menarik, fun dan <b>memberikan motivasi</b>
2	It's ok for me, but <b>I don't feel it</b>	This is not private lesson. So so lah
3	Metode ini membantu sy lebih baik dari pada secara langsung karena <b>sy langsung praktek</b> , bukan teori	Saya <b>lebih tertarik</b> belajar
4	I choose this method because <b>I don't</b> want to <b>waste time</b>	It can <b>make people speak</b> English well
5	Because the lecturer teaches indirectly and it's cozier <b>and more convenient</b>	Learning grammar is too bring but this method is <b>fun</b>
6	It doesn't matter, I <b>find my own way</b> of doing it	Everything is ok, Mr Almo is a good person to talk with
7	Saya bisa <b>belajar sendiri</b> dan secara praktik lebih gampang diingat daripada secara lisan	Ya, karena secara gampang mengerti bahasa inggris
8	Selama ini cara mengajarnya enak. Teruskan!	Suka metode ini karena menyenangkan
9	Sangat membantu karena secara <b>langsung sehingga lebih efektif</b>	Bisa <b>lebih menyenangkan</b> dan <b>lebih menarik</b>
10	Karena kita <b>berani salah</b> ketika praktik, kelasnya santai tapi ada yg bisa diambil	Karena <b>santai</b> dan <b>dosennya membantu</b>
11	Ya karena <b>lebih praktik</b> , jadi lebih banyak masuk ke otak	Cara mengajarnya lebih mudah dimengerti dan <b>seru</b>
12	Saya <b>netral</b> . Tapi kalau tdk diterapkan dalam penuliasn dll, percuma saja.	Netral. Lebih kesukanya. Saya <b>dapat ketahui kelemahan</b> kami dan dapat <b>memperbaiki kesalahan</b> tersebut.
13	I can more <b>easy learn that</b>	I like it
14	I can <b>learn immediately</b> what I don't know	The method is <b>really useful</b>
15	My grammar competency is not so good so I <b>can get a good score</b>	The method helps to understand and the teacher is good
16	Iya, proses pembelajaran yg diajarkan <b>lebih mudah</b> difahami	Memudahkan saya <b>lebih memahami</b> apa yang disampaikan dosen
17	NA	NA
18	NA	NA
19	NA	NA
20	NA	NA

21	NA	NA
22	NA	NA
23	NA	NA
24	NA	NA

### Data Summary of Experimental Group

The description of the answers given by the experimental group in response to Question 1 that relates to the effectiveness of the Principled CLT method for developing their grammar competency is summarized as follows. In response to the effectiveness of the Principled Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that the freshman Binus University students received during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, they showed a very strong agreement (100% of the students wrote “Yes” directly and Indirectly in their responses) toward the high degree of relationship between the grammar lesson given in the class to the real practice of composing an essay in English. They posed factors like the applicability of the lesson, the simplicity in medium of instruction, the comprehension at the word and sentence structure level, the systematic way of detailed explanation, and reviewable lesson points for future practice as the important factors in developing their grammar competency into their writing performance.

The description of the answers given by the experimental group in response to Question 2 that relates to the personal preference of the Principled CLT method is summarized as follows. In response to the preference of the Principled Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that the freshman Binus University students received during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, they showed a very high preference (100% of the students gave “yes” directly or indirectly in their responses) toward the methodology. They mentioned things like the clarity of the teaching way, the creativity of the technique, the attractiveness of the topic, the variety of illustrations or maps used, and the lesson points that are easy to remember as the significant factors to contribute to their high preference toward the methodology.

### Data Summary of Control Group

The description of the answers given by the control group in response to Question 1 that relates to the effectiveness of the standard CLT method for developing their grammar competency is summarized as follows. In response to the effectiveness of the Standard Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that the freshman Binus University students received during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, they showed a more agreement attitude toward the methodology (Most students gave the “yes” answer directly and indirectly through their feedback). According to them, the most prominent factor that contributed to the success of the method was the practice itself in contrast to the theory. The next factor was their own ways of finding mistakes. The next factor was the greater chance of earning a good score. The last factor was mentioned by a student as the higher probability of speaking improvement. Only one student was neutral about the method as he couldn’t find the link between the method and the practice in his writing.

The description of the answers given by the experimental group in response to Question 2 that relates to the personal preference of the standard CLT method is summarized as follows. In response to the preference of the Standard Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that the freshman Binus University students received during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, they mostly showed the positive attitudes towards the methodology because it established a more motivating, convenient, and relaxed environment. One student also appreciated the more contributing factor of the teacher by providing a more direct and immediate feedback to the student’s question.

## **Data Interpretation of Experimental Group**

The analysis of the evidence given by the experimental group in response to Question 1 that relates to the effectiveness of the Principled CLT method for developing their grammar competency is interpreted as follows. To the freshman Binus University students that received the Principled CLT method during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, it appeared that they still needed grammar lesson to improve their writing skills in composing an essay. It seemed that there were four big factors that they deemed necessary for developing their grammar competency. The first factor was the depth and coverage of the knowledge required for academic writing purposes. This should include detailed explanations on words, phrases, simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences, and all the elements and relationships involved in it. One student commented that the grammar lesson given was already covering everything they learned about grammar during high school. The second factor was the systematic way of the teaching delivery. This included the shifts from the lesser or simpler lesson points to the greater or more complex ones. One student even mentioned that if he had not followed the lesson from the beginning, it would have been still very difficult for him to catch up and follow the lesson. The third factor was the practicality value of the lesson points. This included the strong degree of relationship to correlate between what they had learned during the grammar lessons with what they would do in the real writing practice. Some students agreed that the lesson had given them big impacts on the way they wrote essays. The last factor was the durability power of the lesson points for future references and practice, so that they are able to apply the points learned during the lesson into their writing works anytime in the future even when the grammar lesson has finished or is no longer available.

The analysis of the evidence given by the experimental group in response to Question 2 that relates to the personal preference of the Principled CLT method is interpreted as follows. To the freshman Binus University students that received the Principled CLT method during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, it seemed that they had enjoyed the grammar lesson very much and showed strong appreciation for the teaching and learning process. The number one reason for their appreciation was the clarity and simplicity of the lesson points. The teaching technique given was to translate everything in the lesson from complex concepts to simple ones. For example, during the lesson, the teacher first introduced the main components in English grammar, including the word types, phrases, main clauses, and sub-clauses. Next, the teacher explained their structures and relationship among them. Here, the teacher also provided many examples. All of the concepts are explained in easy, clear and daily language of mixed Bahasa Indonesia and English to the level that the students can easily grasp. The next reason was the interesting factor of the topic that correlated the abstract concepts found in the lesson with what they were already familiar in their daily life. This included using the analogy of English grammar world to a big happy family in human lives, consisting of mothers (main clauses), daughters (sub-clauses) and nephews (phrases), as well as the social interactions among mothers, between mothers and daughters, and nephews. One student commented that the analogy was so interesting that he could easily remember it. The last reason was the high degree of creativity involved in the lesson. The lesson was a kind of combination between work and play. In one side, students were expected to understand and comprehend the abstract and complex concepts learned in the lesson including the rules and relationship of components, and later to integrate and apply all of the principles into their writing works to be finally graded by their teachers. On the other side, the learning process was far from pressure, and conducted in a fun mode of learning, by using analogies and storytelling techniques, for example using the storyline or the plot to connect the movements of the lesson points from the beginning to the end.

## **Data Interpretation of Control Group**

The analysis of the evidence given by the control group in response to Question 1 that relates to the effectiveness of the standard CLT method for developing their grammar competency is interpreted as follows. To the freshman Binus University students that received the Standard CLT



method during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, it appeared that the method itself has its own advantages despite the existing drawback. The first good point was the directness factor. Some students agreed that the method, which emphasized more on the practice rather than theory, helped them to grasp the grammar principles better in their brain compared to the separate formal grammar instruction. The method aligned with the teaching principle that focuses on gaining the accuracy through fluency, and not fluency through accuracy. During the lesson, the teacher didn't provide the formal explanation on grammar but rather, helped students directly with their questions as they worked on their writing work and found grammatical problems in the learning process. The next good point on the method was the independent learning factor. Here, the students appreciated the way they found their own ways of expressing their ideas and opinions in sentence and clause structures which should be in harmony with the grammatical rules and conventions. As a result, they could also find their own mistakes, and turned to their teacher for feedback on the very spot of their learning problems for more effective individual improvement. The last good point about the method was that it allowed students to reduce their fear of getting bad scores due to their incompetence of grammatical knowledge. The method helped students to develop awareness that 'focus on form' is important, but 'focus on meaning' is more important. In addition, this method freed them from the common grammatical anxiety in a way that teacher might tolerate minor grammatical mistakes in their writing works as long as the message was conveyed clearly. Another good point was made by the student where he felt that this method was not only applicable in writing but also in speaking. This might be due to the reason that this student linked the mistakes made in writing to the probably same mistakes made in speaking. If that was the case, it might be true that what he learned during the writing process could be applied as well in the speaking activity, and thus doubled the learning effects at the same time. However, one student did highlight the fact that the method was lack of the link between the grammatical knowledge and the writing skill on the real practice. This might be due to the reason that the student felt he hadn't had enough grammar background and knowledge during high school, so that the method was not really effective in this case. Another reason might be that the problems found and the corresponding feedback given during the writing process might not cover every grammatical aspect that he wished to know in order to develop his grammar competency in academic writing tasks.

The analysis of the evidence given by the control group in response to Question 2 that relates to the personal preference of the standard CLT method is interpreted as follows. To the freshman Binus University students that received the Standard CLT method during English Entrant classes of odd semester 2012/2013, it seemed that they liked the stress-free learning environment that this method brought into the class. Some students seemed to link the grammar-free lesson with the higher degree of motivation and enjoyment of the learning process, as if the formal grammar instruction brought the negative image to their minds as terrifying, rigid and stiff knowledge. This might be due to the learning style of the students which might not match with the formal grammar instruction. This might also be due to their past experiences during high school studies where the formal grammar instruction put more emphasis on repetitive drills and rules memorization, and in which their final scores were much dependent on how successful they had mastered the knowledge rather than the practice. One student also mentioned the extent to which the teacher helped the students individually as a contributing factor for the method's preference. This might be due to the reason that the feedback that the students received from the teacher was always right-to-the-point and timely. Another reason might be that students enjoyed the individual attention and help given by the teacher, as it really represented the principle of student-centered approach in contrast to the commonly teacher-centered approach that many teachers still showed nowadays, especially during high school studies.

## CONCLUSION

The verbal evidence provided by the experimental group in response to Question 1 that relates to the issue whether the principled CLT method is effective in developing their grammar competency

for academic writing purposes shows that grammar lesson is vital to the development of their grammar competency in essay writing. There are four issues that these students refer to as the main reasons. (1) The depth and coverage of the grammar knowledge required for academic writing purposes means that the lesson should cover lesson points as detailed and complete as possible, ranging from the word, phrase, and clause level to the relationship among the components. (2) The systematic way of the grammar instruction means the lesson given should move systematically, beginning from the easier and simpler points to more difficult and complex ones. (3) The practicality of the lesson points means that there should be a strong and direct link between what they have learned during the lesson with what they would do in the real practice. (4) The reliability of the lesson points means that the lesson points should be easily remembered by these students and applied well for their future writing practice and references.

The verbal evidence provided by the experimental group in response to Question 2 that relates to the issue whether the principled CLT method is acceptable for their learning experiences shows that they really enjoy the teaching and learning process during the lesson because of the following factors. (1) Clarity of the teaching delivery means that the lesson should be delivered by using daily language, and should translate complex concepts to simpler ones, so that students can easily grasp the meaning. (2) The attractiveness factor of the topic means that the lesson should associate the abstract concepts with the concrete models or objects in daily lives that these students are familiar with. (3) The creativity level of the lesson format means that the lesson could use a variety of teaching styles, including, for example, storytelling techniques with several roles and figures involved in the storyline.

The verbal evidence provided by the control group in response to Question 1 that relates to the issue whether the standard CLT method is effective in developing their grammar competency for academic writing purposes shows that generally the students think the method brings more advantages rather than disadvantages. They pose the following arguments. (1) The directness factor, in which the teacher does not have to bring every aspect of grammaticality into class. Rather, they could just focus on the very specific areas of concern that these students show during the writing process. (2) The independent learning style, in which the method allows the students to develop their own awareness for grammatical mistakes and writing style problems, and turn to their teacher for feedback. This way helps them learn better and remember points longer. (3) The reduced anxieties of the common grammatical errors due to the shift from “focus on form” to “focus on meaning”, in which the teacher might tolerate minor grammatical mistakes in their students’ writing. (4) The double impact of the method, in which the feedback that these students receive for their mistakes is not only useful for the writing skills, but also applicable for the speaking skills. However, there is one voice that says that this method lacks the relationship between grammar input gained from the feedback with what they have to apply in the real writing practice. It thus may limit the students’ other potential of using other grammatical aspects in their writing.

The verbal evidence provided by the control group in response to Question 2 that relates to the issue whether the standard CLT method is acceptable for their learning experiences shows that these students generally appreciate the method due to the following factors. (1) The stress-free learning environment, in which grammar is given only necessary and not in a separately formal instruction. (2) The timely and effective feedback, in which students can get what they need and not necessarily learning other grammatical aspects that they do not really need. (3) The student-centered approach, in which the teacher acts more as a facilitator, rather than an instructor, by giving individual attention, help and feedback to the students’ writing problems.

The research findings of the qualitative analysis in this report generate some academic implications concerning the implementation of the Principled and/or the Standard CLT approach of English Language Teaching practice at Binus University students. The results are as follows. (1) Each method has its own strong points so as to answer the questions of whether it proves effective and acceptable for developing grammar competency in academic writing skills in the perspectives of Binus

University freshmen. (2) The Principled CLT method has strongly linked what the students should *know* about grammar with what they should *apply* in their writing process. It virtues the process of getting the knowledge first before it can be applied in the tasks. Of course, teacher factor such as clear and interesting way of teaching is still needed to achieve the high acceptability level. (3) The Standard CLT method has mainly promoted the directness factor between what *difficulties* the students really face in the writing process with the right *guidance* they receive from their teacher. It really reduces the distance and gap found between students and the teacher, and thus promotes student-centered approach, as students struggle by themselves first with the writing challenges, as their teacher act as the facilitator to guide and show them the right way. (4) The best combination of these two methods would be the approach that teachers could use audio-visual media, such as computer-generated animation, to describe the basic grammar elements and its functions and links, or a more traditional way of story-telling (like what I did) to explain the grammar knowledge. After that, teacher could ask their students to have the writing practice, during which teachers could guide the students along the way, and act as a facilitator to help students individually with their writing problems. (5) Scores can be derived as a combination between formative assessments (when teacher guides their students in the class), in which topics are free and less restricted by time, with summative assessments, for example, by computer-based writing test with a specific topic and time given.

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## APPENDICES

### 7.1 Topics of Academic Writing Assignment

Choose ONE topic below and write a minimum of a 300-word-essay based on the topic of your choice. The essay should be organized into 4 – 5 paragraphs with an introduction, middle parts, and a conclusion. Please provide examples and details to support your arguments.

The topics are:

- In your opinion, what are the qualities of a good best friend?
- What are very important skills a person should have in order to be successful in the world today?
- Do you agree/disagree with the following: F2F communication is better than Technology communication, such as FB, email or SMS.
- What are the best ways of reducing stress?
- Would you prefer to live in the countryside or city? Why?

You are given 60 minutes to complete your essay.

### 7.2 Questionnaires

Course : \_\_\_\_\_

Class Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Semester : \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year : \_\_\_\_\_

Please give your free comments and opinion about these following questions:

1. Do you think the method helps you to develop your grammar competency? Why?

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2. Do you like the method? Why?

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