



# Indonesia's Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning: From a University Teacher Training Program to High School Classrooms

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## Abstract

This study asked how and to what extent professors were modeling and encouraging active-learning methods in the students' English and Education courses in response to decentralization reforms at the University of Banten, in Serang, Indonesia. A discussion of the background of *PAKEM* (*pembelajaran aktif, kreatif, efektif dan menyenangkan*) policy and its implementation builds a framework for identifying and interpreting specific challenges which impact English teacher preparation and the knowledge and implementation of PAKEM Active Learning methods. PAKEM represents a major element of ongoing decentralization policy and was explored thematically through an ethnographic analysis of in-depth accounts of professors, teachers, and students at the campus over ten months. The discussion provides extensive and diverse evidence of dynamic responses to PAKEM policy changes. Lecturers were well informed about and engaged in the implementation of active learning methods in instruction. Findings are situated amongst similar case studies on the implementation of active learning pedagogies and consistencies are identified and discussed.

## Keywords

PAKEM, Indonesia, university teacher training, high schools, decentralization

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## Introduction

The Indonesian school system serves over 50 million students with about 2.6 million teachers in more than 250,000 schools. It is the fourth largest education system in the world (behind China, India, and the United States). The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) manages 84 percent of public and private schools and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) 16 percent (The World Bank, 2009). Since the 1980's, and assertively in the new millennium, the MoNE and MoRA have encouraged the adoption of student-centered and active teaching and learning methods nationally, and these are officially proscribed in policy. The purpose of Teacher Law No. 14/2005 as to improve education quality by upgrading teacher qualifications and improving education quality is the second of three pillars in the Ministry of Education's strategic plan for 2005-2009. In addition to upgrading all teachers' qualifications to include a minimum bachelor's degree (S1) and passing the national certification exam, the utilization of active learning methods is viewed as a means of improving teaching quality.

*Pembelajaran Aktif, Kreatif, Efektif dan Menyenangkan* (PAKEM) or "Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning," is the Indonesian conceptualization of actively engaged, student-centered teaching and learning. *Menyenangkan* can also be translated as "fun," "pleasurable," "nice," "agreeable," etc....). PAKEM is used primarily in elementary (*Sekolah Dasar; SD*) schools, while the term "Contextual Teaching and Learning" (CTL) is often used at the junior secondary (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama; SMP*) and senior secondary (*Sekolah Menengah Atas; SMA*) school levels. The purpose of Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning, and Contextual Teaching & Learning, is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools, and to make schooling more meaningful and enjoyable for teachers and students. By extension, it is hoped that this will result in greater student participation, especially at the junior and senior high school level, and fewer drop-outs.

The philosophical foundations of PAKEM and CTL run deeply throughout western pedagogical thought, most notably that of John Dewey, and also in the cultural and constitutional heritage of Indonesia, as well. Dewey's (1916) "Democracy and Education" and "Experience and Education" (1938) inspired progressive education and experiential education movements in the U.S. and around the world. Dewey's (1938) pragmatic or instrumentalist philosophy emphasized curriculum and methods that are relevant and meaningful to students' lives, that promote critical thinking and social interaction for solving real-life problems, and that model the school as a microcosmic democracy within a larger social and national democracy. Therefore, this democratic, student-centered paradigm opposes authoritarianism in the classroom as well as in society. Dewey (1938) also emphasized change, and the dialectic nature of life. When we learn, we gain knowledge and understanding that provides us with agency to control our lives, and to deal with today's and tomorrow's challenges. We need to be able to think and learn in this way; learning what we want to know and need to know, and thus we become intrinsically motivated learners. Finally, Dewey's (1938) theory of *continuity* proposed that each and every experience of an individual influences his or her perception and ability to learn and understand future experiences. Consequently, every experience, positive or negative, influences the understanding and effects of all future experiences for an individual. His theory of *interaction* explains how the continuity of our total experiences serve our perception and understanding



as we perpetually confront, and deal with a reality day after day. Students must be able to connect their learning—the curriculum and classroom activities—with their everyday lives. Dewey (1938) asserted that education wasn't preparation for life—it is life, and we all must re-create ourselves with each passing day and every passing moment. These philosophical and psychological underpinnings support the need for pedagogy of Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning.

Among the Five Principles of the Pancasila, the national ideology, the third affirms the unity of Indonesia (*Persatuan Indonesia*) and strong sense of the nation as a family (*keluarga*) the fourth affirms the principle of democratic representation, and the fifth affirms the principle of social justice for all Indonesians. President Yudhoyono has strongly supported the conviction to uphold the ideals of pluralism and tolerance in this socially-conscientious, collective and inclusive Indonesian philosophy. Again, the pedagogical strengths of PAKEM and CTL methods for teaching and learning are consistent with the principles guiding the development of Indonesian citizens and society: promoting critical thinking skills, problem-solving, productivity, cooperation, inclusivity, active participation, and democracy. It is helpful to understand that the curriculum national standards for each subject are mandated and utilized in the production of textbooks and the development of syllabi, lesson plans and curriculum in all public and private elementary, junior and senior secondary schools. These are the standardized objectives that teachers are trying to accomplish for each subject and grade level. The national Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC,) *Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi* (KBK) standards have been adapted and structured as the KTSP, or *Kurikulum Tingkat (Levels) Satuan (Units) Pendidikan (Education)*; thus, Curriculum Levels and Units for Education (CLUE) in order promote implementation which is consistent with PAKEM instructional methods. Ultimately, the attainment of the concepts and skills delineated in the CBC and KTSP standards are assessed with the National Examination, *Ujian Nasional*, for higher education and called *EPTANAS* at the elementary, junior and senior high school levels.

The purposes of the study were to provide background on the development of the PAKEM policy, to define and establish criteria for identifying characteristics of PAKEM and CTL, and to provide a concise rationale of how and why active learning is desirable. Next, to provide and analyze ethnographic data selected from a case study of a university teacher training program and senior high schools connected with the lecturers and students of the program. The following research questions guided this study: (1) Do lecturers understand PAKEM? (2) Was Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful teaching and learning occurring? How do we know this, and why was it, or was it not, occurring? And (3) What factors seem to be involved— i.e., teacher characteristics, education, and experience— that constrained or enabled active learning approaches? The answers to these questions, at this qualitative level, inform our planning and more broadly-based future research on the progress of PAKEM active learning approaches in teacher training programs and in schools. Finally, the findings of this case study can be situated with, and related to, similar efforts to develop and implement active learning approaches internationally, and consistent factors and patterns are apparent.



## Literature Review

### *USAID's role in promoting PAKEM and CTL: The MBE and DBE programs*

From February 2003 until June 2007, the Managing Basic Education (MBE) program of the USAID and RTI International Consultants worked in 23 districts in East and Central Java, Aceh and Jakarta, building capacity at district and school levels to manage basic education. The project worked to create models of good practice in basic education, including public and private elementary (SD) and some junior secondary schools (SMP) because this is the largest sector managed by local governments.

The most important objectives the MBE Program were first, developing and using models for the management of resources and education funding at the district level and second, improving and expanding School Based Management (SBM), Community Participation, and Active, Creative, Joyful and Effective Learning (PAKEM) at the school level. The MBE expected that working to promote SBM, PAKEM and Community Participation (PSM) would serve to stimulate other neighboring schools that wish to improve their quality of education using their own resources. The MBE worked to build models of good management practice in twenty schools, ten in each sub-district within a district, including primary and junior secondary schools, conventional and religious (SD, MI, SMP and MTs), state and private, in the areas of SBM, Community Participation and PAKEM and CTL.<sup>1</sup> The program intentionally worked to build up local government capacity to develop and adapt models, and to perpetuate the best use of these practices, with the purpose of building local ownership and ensuring sustainability. Activities generally included each of the groups of stakeholders, in order to develop a common vision, cooperative approaches and a well-informed group of stakeholders. It worked with a cross section of education stakeholders, including the democratic institutions, local parliament (*DPRD*), education council (*Dewan Pendidikan*), School Committees, Local government institutions: the local development agency (*Bappeda*), the education office (*Dinas Pendidikan*), ministry of religious affairs and the finance department; schools and local communities: school committees, parents, principals and teachers.

The MBE built an interpretation of the “Active, Creative, Joyful and Effective Learning” (PAKEM) program upon the Active Learning through Professional Support (ALPS, or CBSA in Bahasa Indonesia) program, which started in Cianjur in 1980 and ran until 1993 (MBE, 2005). The school cluster and teachers’ working group systems, (*Peningkatan Kemampuan Guru*, PKG or KKG; and MGMP at the junior high school level) adopted throughout Indonesia, were also developed at this time to function as major supports for teachers in carrying out the objectives of SBM, PAKEM, and Community

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<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgements: This MBE program was based on the SBM program developed by the Government of Indonesia, UNESCO and UNICEF, and used materials developed by that program. The funding of schools to support the SBM program follows the pattern developed by the DSSD program which was funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).



Participation. Principles the MBE established according to ALPS/CBSA for Active, Creative, Joyful and Effective Learning are (MBE, 2005): the children do more practical tasks (for example in science), including using the social and natural environments, the children use more teaching aids, libraries and library corners are set up and used, the children's work is written in their own words, children's work is displayed in class, teachers show more flexibility in organizing and grouping pupils' in their learning.

### ***Decentralized basic education 2 (DBE2)***

The main purpose of the USAID DBE2 program (in coordination with DBE1 and DBE3) is to provide the Government of Indonesia (GOI) with technical services and resources to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Indonesia's public and private elementary schools, with limited assistance to junior secondary schools. Monitoring and evaluation demonstrate the efforts of DBE2 have significantly improved the quality of teaching and learning in targeted schools, as well as strengthening In-Service Professional Development (USAID, 2008). In one component of DBE2, Florida State University, one of three U.S. universities partnering with a total of 14 Indonesian universities, carried out a project with 7 of them, connecting USAID staff, lecturers from the universities, principals and master teachers with elementary schools in their communities, and training them in PAKEM methods. Two lecturers from one of the university teams will be discussed in this report. Manuals, examples of teaching aids and other materials, appropriate for various school subjects like Math, Science, and Bahasa Indonesia were used in the trainings, as well as technology such as power-point presentations, cameras and recorders. There are manuals for a total of nine modules for the trainers and participants, including a general manual, or foundation package, "Introduction to Effective Learning in (PAKEM) Subject Matter (*Pengenalan Pembelajaran Efektif dalam Mata Pelajaran Pokok*, 2007) the subject-specific manuals, entitled "*Paduan Untuk Fasilitator: What is Active Learning?*" (2007). The texts are all in Indonesian language,

"What is Active Learning" provides detailed definitions of each of the terms that make up the acronym, as well as characteristics of Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning in action. The translated definitions themselves contain examples: With Active teaching and learning students "question, discuss, express ideas, discover, and seek information to build knowledge..." (2007).

With Creative teaching and learning "teachers promote a variety of approaches and activities and are able to create low-cost materials and teaching aids that facilitate understanding" and with Effective teaching and learning the "innovations in the learning process lead to optimum student achievement of the competencies in the curriculum, and increased knowledge, skills and abilities" With "Joyful teaching and learning the "atmosphere of learning is comfortable, without pressure... enjoying the process of learning, with freedom to try new things without fear of mistakes." Finally, PAKEM teaching and learning uses principles of contextual learning, cooperative learning, and the accommodation of diverse learning styles and gender (*Pengenalan Pembelajaran Efektif dalam Mata Pelajaran Pokok*, 2007).

A mentoring section of "What is Active Learning" describes what an observer would see in a class where PAKEM teaching and learning is taking place, or evidence of the process in action (*Pengenalan Pembelajaran Efektif dalam Mata Pelajaran Pokok*, 2007). These



include many of the characteristics mentioned thus far, and compiled in the following rubric “Criteria and Characteristics for Assessing PAKEM and CTL.” Aspects of the classroom environment, such as displaying students’ work (what work, what should not be displayed, how it can be beneficial, keeping it updated) and the idea of flexibility in seating arrangements, like with the clustering of desks for small group work, are discussed in detail. Establishing reading corners with shelves and books, their usage, and the use of teaching aids are described, and many photos of the materials are included in the manuals. Between 2003 and 2010, several provinces in Indonesia made great progress in the adaptation, implementation and effectiveness of School-Based Management (SBM,) PAKEM and Community Participation (PSM) for improving schools, due to support from the regional and district education offices. This had been achieved by making systemic changes concurrently with organizational cultural changes, commonly lead by dedicated and dynamic school principals. A clear understanding of the roles of all stakeholders was necessary, with the overall objective being to provide the maximum support possible for the teachers in the field, and thus the teaching and learning process. It was observed at that time that: In turn, strong SBM in schools is improving not only with leadership and allocation of resources, but also with the diffusion and enhancement of PAKEM (Rekdale, 2005).

Indonesia’s PAKEM approach encourages learning how to learn, learning by discovery, creativity, and analytical and critical thinking. Methods of facilitating and stimulating these types of learning include having students engaged in individual, pair, group and class-wide learning activities, participation in individual and group projects, research, discussion, independent reading and study, creating journals and portfolios, as well as traditional methods such as lecture listening, note-taking, recitation, and textbook, workbook, and paper-based exercises. As the data from this study showed, it can be difficult and at times impractical to utilize PAKEM methods for instruction, depending upon the nature of the learning objectives, skills, and tasks undertaken. However, according to Indonesian policy (UNESCO, 2008), active learning methods should accompany and supersede traditional methods, when possible, integrated with the schools’ curriculum, which is developed in synchronization with the national subject-area standards of the CBC/KTSP, and realized at the school-level in the syllabi and lesson plans designed by individual teachers.

Research and evaluations from the USAID and consultants have indicated the benefits of active learning methods for improving education quality (Cannon, 2005) and a component of the DBE2 project is currently researching the effects of active learning interventions and the practice of active learning in classrooms. It is appropriate to acknowledge that even these proposed characteristics for a “PAKEM Criteria” are culturally-biased and are open to discussion and consensus.

### ***The DBE2 PAKEM teams***

There were a total of eight teams from four provinces representing seven universities on the DBE2 project, who developed PAKEM modules, conducted training with elementary school teachers, and carried out action research on the progress of these teachers to incorporate PAKEM methods and resources in their instruction. In addition to the study, the DBE2 team research also provided feedback on the progress of the PAKEM training



modules and implementation of PAKEM methods in elementary schools. Two male lecturers, Tubagus and John, and one female were team members in Banten. At workshops held in March 2009, members from the eight teams reported the following issues related to the progress of the PAKEM training modules and implementation of PAKEM methods in elementary schools.

## Methodology

The University of Banten College of Education<sup>2</sup> Teacher Training Program, or *Facultas Keguruan Ilmu Pendidikan* (FKIP) is the most common form of teacher education programs within a larger university offering diverse programs such as Law, Political & Social Science, Agriculture, and Engineering, among others. The majors within the FKIP Program include programs of study in Early Childhood, Math, Science-Biology, Indonesian and English Language (*Bahasa Inggris*) Education.

This ethnographic study employed individual and focus group interview sessions assembled with professors, lecturers and prospective teachers in this university, as well as administrators, and regional officials involved in the teaching of language arts. Participants of varying ages and experience with the language arts curriculum were invited to act voluntarily as members of the purposive sample, nine lecturers and twenty-five student-teachers at UB, for a total of 34 lecturers and student participants. Teachers at four senior high schools, three in the city of *Serang* in one in a rural part of the province, were also interviewed. Interviews conducted in English and partially in Indonesian (with the help of translators) lasted from 40 to 60 minutes each. The questions were thematic, open-ended, and sequenced with each participant responding in turn and listening to one another's responses in the focus groups.

Observations were primarily as a participant-observer in classes and campus activities. Field notes were fundamentally descriptive, including portraits of subjects, the reconstruction of dialogue, description of the physical setting, accounts of particular events, depiction of activities, and reflexive accounts of the researcher's thoughts and behaviors. Peer reviewers, participants themselves, were involved as partners in the study through the ongoing qualitative practice of member-checks to verify perspectives and accuracy of data collected.

The case study focused on six female and five male lecturers in the FKIP English Education program, the English and Education courses they teach, and the students enrolled in those courses. The lecturers and students were self-selected as volunteers, and had varying lengths of experience at the University of Banten. Students ranged from first year to fourth year and beyond. Data were collected through Primary Interviews, follow-up conversations, Classroom Participant-Observations, and Campus Activities Participant-Observations, from November 20, 2008 to August 19, 2009. Class visits were chosen and planned based upon availability and schedule coordination, an attempt to have a balanced number of visits per

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<sup>2</sup> I will use "College of Education" or "Education Department," not to be confused with the national "Department of Education," or MONE. In Indonesian it is simply "FKIP," in English: "Faculty of Teacher Training in Education."



lecturer, and the likelihood of the courses contributing data relevant to the research questions. In the first months, all class visits were scheduled, but later many class visits were unscheduled. All interviews and classes were in English, except for the Introduction to Education (*Pengantar Pendidikan*) and Education Management (*Pengaloloan Pendidikan*) courses, which were taught entirely in Indonesian. A longitudinal continuation of this study is planned for 2018, to examine the progress of the PAKEM initiative.

## **Findings**

### ***State influence on teaching methods: Active learning (PAKEM)***

*Pembelajaran Aktif, Kreatif, Efektif dan Menyenangkan*, (PAKEM) or “Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning,” is the Indonesian (MoNE) conceptualization of actively engaged, student-centered teaching and learning. PAKEM is used primarily in elementary (Sekolah Dasar; SD) schools, while the term “Contextual Teaching and Learning” (CTL) is often used at the junior secondary (Sekolah Menengah Pertama; SMP) and senior secondary (Sekolah Menengah Atas; SMA) school levels. The purpose of Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning, and Contextual Teaching & Learning, is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools, and to make schooling more meaningful and enjoyable for teachers and students. By extension, it is hoped that this will result in greater student participation, especially at the junior and senior high school level, and fewer drop-outs.

Though I have presented a rubric for “Active Learning,” the “Criteria and Characteristics for Assessing PAKEM and CTL” based upon trends in Indonesian education, I asked lecturers what their views are. For example, one question I asked was “Can you describe or further elaborate on what you mean by ‘Active Learning,’” and “What kinds of methods and activities would this include?” I also asked (and observed) if the teaching behaviors and method were being modeled and discussed in classrooms. The lecturers and students at the UB FKIP showed implicit attitudes and offered explicit statements and descriptions that they feel teaching for “active, relevant, and engaged learning” could be accomplished while following a highly-structured national curriculum, resulting in greater student involvement, enjoyment, and achievement.

### ***Use of discussion, media, research and extracurricular projects to engage students***

While all lecturers agreed that teaching about and modeling active learning methods was important for their students, who would be expected to incorporate these methods in elementary and secondary schools, the extent of inclusion of active learning methods in all of the classes in this UB program was not clearly agreed upon. Several lecturers suggested that differences in the subject matter of courses strongly influenced the nature of integrating active learning methods for different FKIP English Education classes, and that the goal of maximizing active learning in these classes was not always feasible, desirable or appropriate. These lecturers explained that for some activities in courses like Reading and Writing, class time was allotted for individual student reading and writing. However, all lecturers and



students indicated that they thought the extent of incorporation of active learning methods was, and should be greater in the elementary, junior and senior high schools.

Interviews revealed that all of the lecturers had themselves studied in classes, from elementary school to their own teacher-training programs, with some teachers using active-learning methods. Tubagus and John described their own schooling and teacher training experiences, and also were trainers on an Active Learning elementary school teacher training project. I observed many of their classes and we participated in numerous campus activities together as well. At the University of Banten, especially in FKIP, principles of PAKEM and CTL are taught explicitly and modeled and experienced implicitly by many lecturers in diverse courses in the program of study. John's favorite classes to teach were Language Lab Management and Translation. Besides teaching the Language Lab course, in the interview he explained "I work with the English language lab, and with media software that promotes and encourages motivation, and gives support for teachers. In the language lab the students do listening and dictation...they practice translations...work in groups, collaboration with a variety of tasks..." During the course of the fall 2008 semester, "odd" or *ganjil*, and the spring, "even" or *ganap*, I observed in this lab management class and in addition to those activities described by John, he and students used Power-point presentations, overhead projectors, recorders, and the computers and materials in the language lab itself. Typically, there was always a good deal of question and answer, and group discussion. John graduated from Lampung University FKIP for English education, in Lampung Province, Sumatra, across the *Sunda* Strait to the west of Banten. He described the incorporation of active learning in his classes there,

John: "Since junior secondary my teachers have used active learning techniques, such as games, media, using theory to practice...That institution (Lampung University) encouraged us to use active learning techniques because the students get bored learning English so that's why we have to solve that problem by having more interesting ways of teaching and learning. Take for one example, at that time (his undergraduate study at Lampung) we learned how to operate a Language Laboratory in the subject of Language Lab and Management to teach English, so how we can combine software and hardware, and using media to encourage the students' motivation and can help the teacher to be more comfortable with English and the students....When we are trained at the university in this area, yes this applies especially at the junior and senior high levels...when we learn about theories we are trying to apply it in our actual teaching..."

Me: "So, in coming here to UB, have you tried to keep the same methods and teaching style that you were trained in?"

John: "Yeah, we do our best to teach our students, because the difference between secondary and university is the students, of course they are already quite mature enough, so that's why you have to treat them different...But the principles of teaching are the same; we have to teach them actively, in a way that is interesting and to enjoy...Let's say, at that time I was teaching listening or dictation, so I tried to provide or to make my class feel active, and that the students are really getting practice, not only learn about some theories without practical exercise... Well, in 2002 I taught first Dictation, and then also Language Laboratory, and Education



Management, and Translation and English for Specific Purposes. I have also taught, let's see, Teacher Training Experience, that's what we call PPLK1..."

From the statement above, John emphasized his views that the lecturers in the UB FKIP must integrate active learning in the English Education courses there in order to model the methods for the students, so that they will understand active learning techniques and use them in their own teaching, at all levels. All of the lecturers shared the attitude that their students need to have teachers as role-models of the best teaching practices, including active learning, so that they will emulate these practices as teachers themselves. John continued to elaborate on the integration of technology and materials with active learning methods, he expressed,

John: "I worked with the English language lab, and with media software that promotes and encourages motivation, and gives support for teachers. In the language lab the students do listening and dictation...They practice translations and work in groups, with collaboration and with a variety of tasks...What is my favorite class to teach? I like to teach Language Laboratory Management, but actually my mastery is in translations...One of the principles is to work in groups and collaborative learning, and I try to provide them with a variety of tasks, and I try to guide them to have a source of texts of many varieties, so they have many sources..."

Me: "The class I visited was ESP, and you were using a laptop and projector, and a variety of media to teach the lesson...Yes..."

John and the other lecturers also repeatedly mentioned the importance of the language laboratory to the program. I visited the laboratory and it had functioning computers that were integrated with lessons that focused primarily on speaking and listening exercises.

I observed a lesson in which Tubagus had different cards with job descriptions written on them, for the "employers," and cards with personal and professional attributes on them, for the "job candidates." These cards were distributed amongst the students, and after a brief moment to prepare, the interviews commenced. This lesson clearly met several criteria presented in the "20 characteristics for assessing PAKEM and CTL." Many of the lessons in all nine lecturers' classes combined the use of games and puzzles linked with the learning objectives and the use of teaching aids, as with object lessons. This particular lesson links the practical tasks of interviewing and role playing, including using the students' social environment, with the Speaking course objectives of describing oneself, and one's qualifications for a job position. Regarding research on an active learning training project, which was still in progress at that time, Tubagus stated these observations based upon data collected at that point, he noticed,

"Observing and interviewing both students and teachers in the Madrasah gives me a light that active learning, so far, has been considered as an ideal way in helping students learn and actively participate in the classroom. Discussion for example, has helped students to be more active under supervision from the teacher. Implementing active learning through various games and instructional media, to my observation, attracts many students to be more active and to learn better."



These statements underscore many of the positive characteristics attributed to PAKEM methods, and it also indicates that Tubagus believed the active learning modules and training had been helpful for teachers and students. Two major problems for teachers in the elementary schools he was studying were described by Tubagus next,

“However, the biggest barrier so far, as many teachers in the Madarash said, is supporting teaching media and facilities. Some of them are well trained in active learning to be implemented but they still find the lack of media and facilities are quite disturbing. Another problem is related to students' “basic characters.” Many of them are introverted (say, “shy”) in the classroom. This condition hinders them to fully participate and aspire in their learning process within the classroom.” A shortcoming is that the “shy students” find it difficult to cope with active learning more than “brave students” who “naturally like being active in the classroom.”

These observations of Tubagus were confirmed by teachers that I visited in the senior secondary schools. A lack of resources and class materials are a hindrance for teachers implementing active learning, as others are the cultural norms of deference to authority and the reserved nature of some students. However, I observed many students who embraced and enjoyed participating actively in lessons at the UB FKIP and in the senior high schools. Many students I observed over the long course of the study were as ebullient and outgoing as I've seen anywhere. There is a likely possibility of the “Hawthorne Effect” taking place in class observations, as students will often “be on their best behavior,” or sit still and be quiet, when a stranger is visiting a classroom. Yudi explained how the use of active learning in the UB English classes is intended not only as a means for effective teaching, but also as a model to be emulated by the students when they are teaching. He said,

“I like teaching TOEFL and Learning and Planning ELT because of learning more about concepts of teaching, and how to relate concepts and practices...this is what I want to know...It gives students ideas on recent ideas and issues which students should know, or be familiar with...We try to integrate principles of active learning... We do not want our classes to be teacher-centered here...For example, we have students go to the internet and share with your friends, then highlight major points for discussion, and we try to select our own materials...For example, learning concepts but also producing, as in speaking and listening, if it's 60% to 70% passive, then we need to draw together to speak, to talk, and to encourage the students to produce language...”

Furthermore, Ayu related similar experiences in her teaching first at an Islamic elementary school in Semarang for grades four and five, she expressed,

“It was nice explore how to make lesson, they moved around a lot...We sang a lot, and told stories...There was a separation of classes—boys and girls, and the stories would make them more calm. And they really liked the games and songs... like



‘Keep baby brother, baby sister, Pa and Mom safe Allah...’ A lot about the family, but all in English...”

Ayu also showed an integration of local culture with active learning as this song for her elementary school students is a popular traditional song for children in Indonesia. Ayu later taught English Speaking and Writing at a private university, and described how she enjoyed helping students to understand other cultures, especially American through learning English. She said,

“I use these kinds of stories in my CCU course, also, when we talk about cultural backgrounds...And in my Introduction to Literature course. In my class for example, we will have a topic... I ask the students to use the internet or library for sources, and they do group presentations. In our group discussions I will let them choose themes, like the mosaic or cultural melting pot...And that many ethnicities together don’t have to be mixed...Like ‘Bhineka tunggal Ika’... ‘Berbeda beda tapi tetapa satu saja’... ‘different but one’... and the Garuda Pancasila is the national bird, the condor...They are not sculptures... They are human...Give them a chance to speak— This is not meditation class—so please speak up’ I say... And being a friend is important...”

Additionally, Ayu consistently modeled these best practices of active learning and encouraging the affective domain in her teaching of Cross-Cultural Understanding and Literature and Poetry. In this description, she had also included elements of the state ideology of *Pancasila*, and of the idea of “Unity in Diversity.” Ayu incorporated interactive and fun activities in most of her classes. In a Literature and Poetry, I observed, after analyzing poetic elements of Robert Burns and Emily Dickinson poems, such as rhythm, tone, stress, and metaphor, students were encouraged to give poems and songs in English that they liked, and which they would analyze in small groups. The lecturers and students at UB are very well-informed and engaged with active learning methods in their studies. Strategies for active learning in Indonesia presented in the rubric from chapter two were consistently integrated and modeled in English and education courses during the school year, and seemed to be the status quo. Students assumed personal responsibility for their assignments and were often eager according to their abilities in English, to participate in classroom activities. Lecturers and students encourage one another to “not to be shy” and to be self-directed and independent in responding to the challenges of course requirements like reading, writing, and participating in class discussions and activities.

### ***The English student association (ESA) carnival and the English debate club (EDC)***

The English Student Association (ESA) and The English Debate Club (EDC) are both very popular extracurricular groups for the UB students. Virtually, all students in the FKIP English teacher training program are members of the ESA. In some cases, non-English majors are in these groups and attend meetings and activities, especially in the case of the debate club. I asked John about his views of these groups and he responded,



Mike: “Is there, what are the best things you can say about the UB and the FKIP English programs here? Are there some kind of ratings nationally or awards that students have won? Like the EDC for example?”

John: “Well, the students are very active in extracurricular and intra-curricular activities, this is proved with several data that all of the budgets for the student activities are covered by the English Student Association and English student activities, and then, if we try to have a competition we have the most dynamic and valuable activities. Also, the EDC English Debating Club participated here local in Banten and national or even international, and is preparing the team for the national competition...sometimes they have won at the national level, so this is also shows and proves to us that the English Student Association and English Student Activities really are active at the level of national, and also at the level of this university...”

The English Student Association is a major extracurricular event coordinated mainly by the ESA student committee. All of the students take great pride in the event, which is held in the main auditorium and lasts all day. The lecturers were all present and participate as planned by the students. Several students from the committee serve as emcees, and the event is almost entirely in English. There is a good deal of language code-switching, and students sometimes speak back and forth from Indonesian to English to better express themselves. There were competitions and games of various kinds, in English, and skits, dance performances, songs, and poems read. The competitions match the various cohorts within the year, one through four, against one another and a champion is crowned at the end. Awards are also given for the most outstanding students. Yudi, as head of the English Education program welcomed all in the introduction and gave a closing speech. The event combines the accomplishments of the students’ English studies with fun and comradery, and there was a great deal of noise and excitement throughout the day. This event and its activities demonstrated the self-directed motivation for learning by the ESA and debate club students and are substantial evidence of the “Attitude that learning can occur anywhere is encouraged; learning inside and outside of school is stressed” and that “Students are responsible for interacting with teachers and other students, for finding information, for assessing their own work, and for participating in planning their learning from the PAKEM rubric, and the students autonomously pursue their own mastery of English and debate skills independently in their own free time.

The remaining components of the PAKEM Characteristics, such as recognizing the importance of emotion in learning (the affective domain)—therefore teachers actively promote joy and pleasure in learning, a focusing on learning cooperatively with other students (and teamwork), greater flexibility in arranging learning and teaching facilities (rooms, desks, locations) and grouping pupils in their learning, accommodating diverse learning styles and diverse qualities of past experience, emphasis on activity (problem solving, discussion, inquiry) and higher-order thinking such as application, analysis, evaluation, and intrinsic motivation to learn through interest, curiosity, and responsibility (Cannon, 2005) were all observed in practice over the course of the study.



### ***Sani, Defi, and Reza, and students in the University of Banten FKIP***

Sani was a second-year student in the UB FKIP English program, and a leader of the English Debate Club. She and fellow students in the club extended their speaking and rhetorical skills, and were able to practice discussing educational issues in English in the development of debate proposals. She was also active as a coach of the *Serang* Senior High School debate team, and I attended practices and a major competition with them in Tangerang. She was actively involved beyond her own university classrooms and campus by sharing her English and debate skills with the high school student level, and modeling the most effective forensic strategies to win competitions.

Leading the UB debate club, with minimal interference from the lecturers, Sani showed incredible enthusiasm and commitment along with the other club members. Debate also falls in the thirteenth characteristics of PAKEM, and important endeavors (like Project-based Learning) including current issues (i.e., environmentalism, technology, and politics) is the eleventh; so active learning is taking place beyond the classrooms at UB as well. The topics pursued by the UB debate club and the senior high school debate club included all of these current issues and more, especially issues directly related to students. Sani was one of the best performing students in her fourth-year class at UB, and she took the initiative to lead and coach the debate club at Senior High School 1, with Aiyda as the club's sponsor. She is only one example of the self-motivation and conviction of the UB English Education students I encountered. I asked Sani about her knowledge and understanding of the CBC-KTSP and PAKEM active learning methods based on her experiences at UB, and which courses she felt helped her most as far as incorporating PAKEM active learning methods, and she expressed,

Mike: "Sani, you said Speaking, Pronunciation, and Structure were courses that helped you most? Why is that?"

Sani: "I would say why I chose these courses first is just because the lecturers. In the Speaking class, as a new student, I needed time to adapt with the new environment, which is totally different from senior high school. This kind of transition is pretty hard. But, I thought that the lecturer was successful. He encouraged me to be brave; to speak my thoughts and my mind. The lecturer started from simple things like daily questions that he always asked before starting the material, like 'How was your day?' 'How was the holiday?' Or 'What did you do last night?' I admitted that the first time that we had this class, only a few people were brave to speak in front of the class, because maybe they're not used to it. It's only about three or four students who are brave to come in front of the class. As the time goes by on the second and third semester, there were more students who made positive progress in terms of speaking. Well, I think this is the rule of the lecturer to encourage the students through the very simple things and talking."

English teachers I interviewed and observed at five senior high schools, all were familiar with the national CBC standards for their English classes, and I observed the integration of the skills identified in these standards in their classes. In one case I observed a graduate of the UB FKIP English program, Aiyda, at senior high School integrating PAKEM active learning methods with the CBC standards with students happily and playfully using critical thinking



skills to compose comprehensible sentences out of a collection of words and phrases. Aiyda said that she thought the UB FKIP English program was an excellent teacher training experience for her, because “At that time both the English program and the university were new, and the lecturers were very great professional educators, and had very many experiences to share. I really liked studying at UB. I liked Shafira’s classes, and I got very good grades. I liked songs and movies in English, and dance and theatre. I want to meet ‘Hanson’ and speak to them in English! Do you know ‘Mmm Bop?’” I said, “Of course,” and we laughed. Aiyda was in her mid-twenties, had an ebullient demeanor, and was excellent in speaking English. She also had attended this SMA 1 for senior high school. I discovered after visiting her classes she also had a highly competent understanding of English grammar and the logical sequencing of sentences in narrative composition, as was demonstrated in a lesson that featured many of the PAKEM characteristics. Aiyda’s lesson plans for the classes I observed were detailed, organized, and engaging. I asked Aiyda about the development of the curriculum for the English courses, and she explained,

“There are two senior English teachers who work together with the MGMP school curriculum committee, which is like an association of teachers for each subject area, and they follow the CBC-KTSP curriculum to determine the syllabus for each grade level. We apply and develop in lessons plans that we make for each class based on the syllabus, which is based on the standards from the two senior English teachers on the curriculum team.”

I replied that this process seemed very similar to our curriculum development and instruction in the U.S. Aiyda further elaborated that she understood “KTSP” stands for “*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*,” or structuring of skills and competencies for instruction of national CBC standards. She further thought the purpose of the KTSP in the following,

“So that students can enjoy the subjects more, and be more active... So they can develop themselves in skills and knowledge spontaneously, and fluently. The lesson plans and activities are different for different skills. It depends, if you want to teach Speaking, we have conversational role-play and dialogue. In general, I try to ask students to speak English as much as they can, even simple words like ‘Hello.’ In Grammar or studying text, or how they can read and understand the text, for example, we use description, giving instructions, and procedural text, like the process of how to follow steps... You know about the debate team—we use debate in the classroom, too. They work in teams and do ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ and deliver it to the class... Sometimes I want to make new creations and games”

Based on Aiyda’s statements regarding the CBC-KTSP curriculum standards to the syllabi, lesson plans, instruction. She had similar views with the lecturers at UB, in that ultimately in the classroom the standards, objectives, concepts and skills influence the types of activities the teacher uses to engage the students with the material. I noticed that overall, more students in the high schools were not as proficient in English as those in the UB FKIP English program, meanwhile, their enthusiasm and strongly-positive attitudes toward their school work was the same. I met some students, especially three students at SMA 1, getting



involved in the high school's English debate team, and were very fluent in English. I accompanied these students, along with their coach, Sani, to a province-wide English competition held by SMA 1 Tangerang, and the students excelled in the English debate competition. They affirmed that active engagement with language learning was essential. In Aiyda's classes, as with teachers at the other senior high schools, the English teachers were very fluent in English and demonstrated active learning methods in the implementation the CBC-KTSP curriculum standards in their lessons.

## **Discussion**

Active learning and student-centered approaches have been increasingly embraced internationally since the Progressive era, culminating in the Education for All (EFA) World Conference on Education endorsed by the UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank in Jomtien, Thailand, 1990. Indonesia is one of many countries incorporating active learning methods for instruction in an effort to improve learning outcomes, and the approaches vary according to unique contexts such as former and developing educational policy, sociocultural factors, resources and external support and existing teacher training. The data analysis and findings for this study showed remarkable parallels to similar efforts to implement active learning methods in other countries. Ginsburg (2010) identified four major areas or themes prevalent from studies in Cambodia, Egypt, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, and Malawi: (1) reform documents and active-learning pedagogies, (2) professional development initiatives and active learning pedagogies, (3) teachers' understandings and behaviors related to active-learning pedagogies, and (4) factors that constrain/enable implementation of active-learning pedagogies.

These same four themes identified by Ginsberg (2010) became apparent inductively for this study with some variations, and these consistencies and variations are discussed in the following findings and conclusion. Though these countries and Indonesia have unique historical, cultural and political contexts regarding education, involvement from the federal level, and international influences reveal many similar trends in adapting active learning pedagogies. It is important to consider that factors within the four areas are interconnected. Analysis of data obtained and experienced from this study showed repeated and authentic evidence of the Indonesian acronym PAKEM "Active, Creative, Effective and Joyful Learning," and actively-engaged, student-centered teaching and learning. Fieldwork and interviews indicate the university lecturers, teachers and student-teachers observed and interviewed in Banten Province consistently approach the integration of active learning in teaching practice with high levels of enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and competence. The following findings are linked with the four overlapping areas discussed by Ginsburg (2010), along with strengths, challenges and implications for PAKEM in Indonesia.

### ***Reform documents and active-learning pedagogies***

Studies of policy development and implementation of active learning pedagogies invariably include extensive background research, literature and government documents pertaining to the development of education policies preceding current active learning reforms. Common purposes for this are to provide historical and cultural contexts of



teaching methods in a country or region, to define just what “active learning methods” means for those contexts, and to provide an official rationale for implementing these policy and teaching reforms. This case discussed the evolution of Indonesia’s national policies PAKEM and CTL, and national and international resources such as manuals and modules provided in teacher training, including the 20 characteristics for assessing PAKEM and CTL” compiled by Cannon (2005) the MBE/DBE, and myself.

The background research for Indonesia shows active learning pedagogies gaining attention and building toward a series of policy development and implementation during the 1990’s and into the new millennium. The explicit description of the meaning and reasons for active learning methods (in the “20 Characteristics for PAKEM” Chart), and their observed interpretation, reflect both the cognitive and behavioral dimensions of teaching and learning. The rationales for active learning in Indonesian education emphasize improved learning outcomes (ostensibly measured by scores on national standardized tests and other less-tangible means,) increased critical thinking skills as citizens and workers, and the practical purpose of retaining students in school and encouraging progress from grade to grade. Elements of these rationales are evident in comparison with the five countries in Ginsburg’s study, including the purpose of nurturing problem-solving skills and dispositions favorable for participating in the global economy as in Cambodia and Jordan (2010).

### ***Professional development initiatives and active learning pedagogies***

As with all five cases from the Ginsburg’s (2010) study, government and international initiatives supported the professional development of trainers and teachers for understanding and implementing active learning pedagogy and methods in Indonesia. Workshops, conferences and related activities, as well as the inclusion of active learning in the teacher training curriculum were approaches designed to disseminate and sustain the methods across the Province of Banten. Emphasis was placed on fundamentally understanding and planning of A.L. methods in instruction. The lecturers and students in the FKIP program and teachers in secondary schools agreed that the school year, semesters, units and lessons must be well-planned and coordinated with PAKEM methods and materials integrated with instruction. Since planning also applies for the classroom environment and materials, it was agreed that training should include emphases on the importance and careful performance of comprehensive planning and implementation. During my study, John and Tubagus were conducting USAID-supported research on the integration of Active Learning in public and private elementary schools in Banten, and Rizal and Yudi had previously done studies on active learning for English education in Banten. Shafira and Arsi had been actively involved with the MGMP Teacher’s Association, meeting and working together with English teachers in Banten to discuss and improve the teaching and learning process. The lecturers used their own research as examples in the English teacher training program at UB, encouraging students to pursue their own research projects in the form of the undergraduate thesis. Lecturers and students from the UB FKIP department also actively participated in nationally and provincially sponsored workshops on active learning methods, at times working together with elementary and secondary teachers (Shafira and Arsi) and John and Tubagus with the action research project assessing and promoting the use of active learning methods in Banten.



The findings and implications are largely consistent with some major points of the analysis of teacher training in Indonesia, part B (Evans et al., 2009). For example, Point 9: Build upon the DBE successes in school and district management, student centered methods and materials, and Junior Secondary and life-skill training, Points 10-12, deals with coordination between DBE, provincial and district governments, education institutions specifically teacher training colleges, and KKG's, MGMP's, MKK's, PGPT's, and DBE CRC's), and point 13: "Work at the provincial level to establish a "Center for Effective Schools" either at a university or LPMP."

The breadth and depth of PAKEM dissemination, as well as its sustainability, can be improved with the collaboration of all possible stakeholders. Furthermore, these collaborating partners can continue to reach out within provinces to train increasing numbers of teachers and to provide resources and materials. As for training and practice effective PAKEM instruction requires that teachers have support from school leaders in a context of SBM, communities of practice, and constructive school cultures. Many teachers said they would like more and more thorough training and practice. The Cluster Resource Centers, KKG and MGMP teacher groups and "Master" or "Lead" teachers can be utilized to improve PAKEM methods and to sustain them independently. These recommendations are all consistent with the emphasis on capacity-building for diffusion and sustaining of professional development programs found in Ginsburg's (2010) case study.

### ***Teachers' understandings and behaviors related to active-learning pedagogies***

Participants described how their families influenced their pursuit of teaching, as many lecturers and some students have relatives who are also teachers. Many lecturers, teachers and student-teachers stated that they themselves had been taught with active-learning methods at the elementary, junior, and senior high school levels. They also reported that these teachers were the "best" and "favorite." Thus, PAKEM methods are not entirely new for many teachers. We found that trainers need to get to "know" PAKEM teachers' own experiences, build upon them, and identify and involve accomplished teachers in the training. This strategy also embodies and serves as a rationale for utilization of PAKEM methods: students and teachers enjoy learning more. The essential enjoyment of learning was not noted as a rationale for active learning methods in the Ginsburg's (2010) cases, whereas likely is a prevalent rationale in these countries as well.

Lecturers, teachers, and students shared university and secondary experiences involving both traditional and active learning teaching methods, and described their own teacher training experiences (many at the University of Lampung, nearby Sumatra) involving the use of active learning methods. They also explained how and why they believed active learning methods can be more effective for engaging students and increasing the relevance of course material, as demonstrated by the data presented here, and how PAKEM strategies are easier to integrate with instruction in some courses as opposed to others, depending on the subject matter and objectives. This relates to constraining factors as well. I also observed the implicit and explicit modeling of active learning instruction in classrooms and in activities around the UB campus, including the use of discussion, media and technology, research, and extracurricular activities to engage students. Lecturers incorporated many active learning approaches in their instruction, such as utilizing group work in and out of the class, role



playing, interviewing, debating, cooperative learning, flexibility in arranging learning and teaching facilities, and showing care and concerning for the students' success, as my data here has shown.

Lecturers and students also participated in workshops on active learning methods, at times working together with elementary and secondary teachers (Shafira and Arsi) and as mentioned by several lecturers including John and Tubagus, working on an action research project assessing and promoting the use of active learning methods in the province of Banten supported by USAID. This involvement deepened their understandings and teaching of active learning. The lecturers, students and teachers all shared the opinion that active learning strategies, together with clearly-structured learning objectives and planning, can help to promote retention and progress of students, and encourage interest in learning and better achievement. All five countries in Ginsburg's (2010) case study analysis reported progress in understandings and implementation behaviors of varying aspects of active learning, as with this case study, was not surprising considering the substantial guidance and resources supporting the instructional reforms from the national and international levels.

### ***Factors that constrain and enable implementation of active-learning pedagogies***

Lecturers, teachers and students expressed that understanding and using Active Learning methods is complex, and teachers must actively guide and facilitate PAKEM instruction. They emphasized, for example, that simply clustering desks and using group presentations do not constitute effective PAKEM teaching, and that unguided, poorly planned active learning can create distractions from learning. This should be clarified for teachers and school leaders in training. Some veteran, civil-service teacher level are resistant to changing their traditional ways of teaching and adopting PAKEM methods, and we agreed that school leaders and teacher colleagues can demonstrate the benefits of PAKEM for their colleagues. Elements of PAKEM methods could be included in performance standards, if desired, employed from a national or provincial level, while this might include incentives as well. Consideration of the CBC-KTSP standards on national tests, along with a lack of classroom resources and incentives was frequently voiced as challenges to integrating active learning methods. I found that integration of PAKEM methods will vary for different subjects, such as Math, Science, Civics and Language Arts, and within skill areas of subjects, for example with Speaking-Listening, Grammar, Reading and Writing in Language Arts. Thus it is unrealistic to expect every lesson of every course to be taught strictly as "active-learning." PAKEM methods should be integrated in a holistic manner with the planning of an entire semester. Teachers need to collaborate and mutually support each other. Teachers need to be creative in the development of methods and materials; to create, access and utilize various resources, including technology and their teaching colleagues. Thus, PAKEM training should also include guidance to overcome obstacles to resources, materials and teaching aids, and teachers should work together to assess what is provided and what more could be provided in terms of books, materials, activities and websites.

"Civil service culture" or "institutional culture" (Bjork, 2005, 2006) comes from being a civil-service teacher level, which is achieved with experience, a portfolio, and by passing a civil service exam. It may be considered a form of tenure, and once attained,



according to Bjork's (2005, 2006) study, complying with formal daily routines is the highest priority, and teaching and learning a much lower priority. There are multiple perspectives from which to examine this phenomenon. One prominent perspective that the over-reaching structure of the education system, historically, strongly reinforces authority roles and loyalty and compliance from all actors, students, teachers, and administrators alike, within the hierarchy. These relationships seem authoritarian and even possibly un-democratic and anti-autonomous. An alternative explanation of this is that, if actors are customarily loyal and compliant, they will do what is expected and increase their own knowledge, qualifications and credentials, and will integrate the educational standards with effective active learning teaching methods. Bjork (2005) contends this culture affects public junior high school teachers in East Java who were generally indifferent to the quality of instruction and actual learning. Public senior high school teachers that I interviewed and observed, in the subjects of English and Local Content Curriculum (LCC), did not seem so adversely affected by civil service culture. These teachers I worked with as participant-observer prepared and implemented quality lessons, and showed a commitment to student learning while also adhering to the formal protocols of school relationships. My observations in FKIP teacher training courses at UB showed that contemporary school management structures promote parental and community involvement; during visits and observations at high schools I witnessed parents in the administration offices meeting with teachers. While in this case study, the interests of students, parents and the community are more strongly considered in relation to national influences than Bjork's model suggests, there is ubiquitous variation in schools across Indonesia and surely an ongoing need for improvement.

### **Conclusion: State and international influence and active learning teaching**

Active Learning pedagogies, combined with more traditional teaching approaches, are widely recognized for improving learning outcomes internationally. PAKEM active learning methods have been integrated for instruction in Indonesian schools to increase student attendance, involvement, interest, and achievement. I witnessed many elementary and secondary teachers, beyond the scope of the case of lecturers and students in the FKIP at UB, who were developing and using active learning methods for instruction, as identified in the appendix table I have provided and developed. In addition to making learning more relevant to students' lives and school more enjoyable, these diverse approaches, in addition to traditional lecturing, recitation, and bookwork, are intended to more effectively help teachers and students meet the national standards of the CBC-KTSP.

I observed the implicit and explicit modeling of active learning instruction in classrooms and in activities around the UB campus and in secondary schools in Banten province, including the use of discussion, media and technology, research and extracurricular activities to engage students. Lecturers incorporated many other elements of the "20 characteristics for assessing PAKEM and CTL" in their instruction, such as utilizing group work in and out of the class, role playing, interviewing, debate, cooperative learning, flexibility in arranging learning and teaching facilities, providing students with helpful feedback, and accommodating diverse learning styles and diverse qualities of past experience and generally caring about the students in regard to the affective domain. John and Tubagus were involved with research on active learning methods in Banten as part of a USAID



Decentralized Basic Education (DBE2) project, which may explain their thorough understanding of the PAKEM initiative. All of the lecturers shared the attitude that their students need to have teachers as role-models of the best teaching practices, including active learning, so that they will emulate these practices as teachers themselves.

A primary finding of this study was that PAKEM methods were well-understood and utilized by lecturers in this university FKIP case, and teachers in SMA public high schools in the city. An implication of this is that university, particularly, FKIP, and all higher learning institution professors and lecturers, as well as “Master” or “Lead” teachers in provinces and cities of Indonesia should be involved with, and leaders of, the in-service professional training of existing teachers. It became apparent in the study that positive teacher characteristics, and personality traits such as enthusiasm, empathy, caring, and being ethical, as described in the Indonesian Teacher Law (2005), and essential conduct such as consistent attendance and involvement with students are necessary for successful PAKEM instruction and quality teaching in general. Teachers’ earlier experiences as students, through college teacher training showed a strong influence on their understanding and implementation of new teaching approaches.

Teaching traditionally has been widely viewed as a high status profession in Indonesia (Geertz, 1960). Lecturers, teachers and students were generally very sociable, genial and cooperative. Code switching between languages was very common in English-taught classes and around the campuses. Lecturers and students consistently showed respectful and supportive attitudes toward one another, and this group-centered social dynamic has been described as “Asian communitarianism” in the work of Tan and Ng (2007). Asian communitarianism can be learned from Huat (2004) and Rawls (1971, 1993).

PAKEM teaching reinforces characteristics of best-teaching practices, from planning to assessment and feedback. Elements of the affective domain, such as socialization and cooperation are enhanced with PAKEM methods, as are the promotion of creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving. PAKEM also stresses the accommodation of diverse learning styles and experiences. PAKEM, “Contextual Teaching and Learning” (CTL) and active learning in general, by various names like “discovery” or “experiential” learning, are synonymous with good teaching. While traditional methods such as lecture, worksheets and workbooks, memorization, drills, and solitary work at reading and writing can be useful approaches for learning. Teachers’ education and experience with PAKEM, and use of planning, lesson plans, and materials, together with students’, lecturers’, teachers’ and leaders’ expectations, commitments, and collaboration will contribute to improved utilization of active learning in Indonesian classrooms.

The lecturers, students and teachers all shared the conviction, in concert with the national education policy development; active learning strategies, combined with clearly-structured learning objectives, can help to keep students in school and progressing from grade to grade, and promote engaged interest in learning and better achievement. It is ironic that the mandating of PAKEM active learning methods by the national government reflects the state’s ongoing influence on educational practice, and simultaneously devolves greater autonomy to schools and teachers in the implementation of these methods. Active learning methods are meant to be fundamentally democratic in nature, encouraging participation, and representing the core rationale and purposes of decentralization reforms. For these lecturers, teachers and students, PAKEM was viewed as an advantageous means



for improving schooling and learning outcomes. International and national level resources have helped to support the diffusion of the PAKEM educational reforms, together with enthusiasm and cooperation among many lecturers, teachers and students. However, as identified by Ginsburg (2010) in multiple countries, the challenges of national standards and high-stakes tests, limited resources and teaching conditions, and a dearth of incentives all pose challenges to the effective implementation of Active Learning teaching methods in schools.

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### ***Acronyms and abbreviations***

IKIP- Institute Keguruan Ilmu Pendidikan. Teacher Training University. The title IKIP is no longer used; i.e., University of Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung (UPI).

FKIP- Fakultas Keguruan Ilmu Pendidikan. Faculty, or College, of Teacher Education.

PGSMTP- Teacher training college for junior secondary school teachers (*Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Menengah Tingkat Pertama*) currently being phased out.

PGSLTA- Teacher training college for senior secondary school teachers (*Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Menengah Tingkat Pertama*) currently being phased out.

STKIP- School of Higher Learning of Teacher Education (*Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu*). Often extensions or satellites of IKIP programs in teacher training universities.



*Criteria and characteristics for assessing PAKEM and CTL*

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20 Characteristics for Assessing PAKEM and CTL

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- 1 Students are responsible for interacting with teachers and other students, for finding information, for assessing their own work and for participating in planning their learning.
- 2 Emphasis on activity (problem solving, discussion, inquiry) and higher-order thinking such as application, analysis, evaluation.
- 3 Intrinsic motivation to learn through interest, curiosity, and responsibility
- 4 Recognizes the importance of emotion in learning (the affective domain)—therefore teachers actively promote joy and pleasure in learning.
- 5 Focus on learning cooperatively with other students (and teamwork)
- 6 Attitude that learning can occur anywhere is encouraged; learning inside and outside of school is stressed.
- 7 Greater flexibility in arranging learning and teaching facilities (rooms, desks, locations) and grouping pupils' in their learning
- 8 Greater emphasis on a long-term perspective: emphasis on lifelong learning and learning how to learn to face future challenges and changes.
- 9 Assessment of learning (tests and examinations) used to provide students with feedback to help them learn (Cannon, 2005).
- 10 Accommodating diverse learning styles and diverse qualities of past experience.
- 11 Important endeavors (Like "Project-based Learning") including Current Issues (i.e., environmentalism, technology, politics)
- 12 Service Learning (social causes like helping less-fortunate people)
- 13 Debate, Creative Writing, Poetry, Music, Journals, Portfolios, Art.
- 14 Games and puzzles linked with learning objectives
- 15 Students use more teaching aids; Object lessons
- 16 Practical tasks, including using the social and natural environments
- 17 Libraries and library corners are set up and used
- 18 Student's work is written in their own words
- 19 Student's work is displayed in class
- 20 Interview and Role playing

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Nos. 1-9 from "Student-centered, active learning" (Cannon, 2005). 10-20 from MBE, DBE, and myself.