GRADE DECISION-MAKING AND GRADE INFLATION BY EFL SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR MORAL JUSTIFICATIONS IN ONLINE LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master Degree in English Language Education



By: Romadhon 2010276

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM

FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE EDUCATION

UNIVERSITAS PENDIDIKAN INDONESIA

2023

PAGE OF APPROVAL

ROMADHON 2010276

GRADE DECISION-MAKING AND GRADE INFLATION BY EFL SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR MORAL JUSTIFICATIONS IN ONLINE LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC

Approved by:

First Supervisor

Eri Kurniawan, M.A., Ph.D. 198111232005011002.

Head of English Language Education Study Program
Faculty of Language and Literature Education

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Prof. Dr. Didi Suherdi, M. Ed. NIP. 196211011987121001

STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATION

I, Romadhon, declare that this thesis entitled "Grade Decision-Making and Grade Inflation by EFL Secondary School Teachers and Their Moral Justifications in Online Learning during the Pandemic" submitted to fulfill the requirements for a Master's Degree in English Language Education Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, is entirely my own work with the guidance of supervisors. I am fully aware that I have cited some ideas and statements from several sources. All citations are appropriately acknowledged.

Bandung, 1st January 2023

Author,

Remadhon

Student ID. 2010276

ABSTRACT

This study investigated what grade decision-making factors EFL secondary school teachers considered in online learning during the pandemic and how they provided measurable and observable evidence in their assessment. Also, this study identified EFL secondary school teachers' considerations in grade decision-making that lead to grade inflation and how they morally justified it during emergency remote teaching. The study used the framework of grade factors: internal (Cheng & Sun, 2015) and external factors (Cheng & Sun, 2015; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; McMillan & Nash, 2000), students' academic and non-academic records (Lawrence, Rober, Cross, & Frary, 1996; McMillan, Myran, & Workman, 2002), cognitive and non-cognitive performances (Arrafii, 2020; Brookhart, 2016), or product and process factors (Guskey & Link, 2019). An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was conducted to collect, analyze and interpret data sequentially from a questionnaire as quantitative data to interviews and document analysis as qualitative data. The findings present that EFL secondary school teachers conducted a hodgepodge grading, a combination of all grade factors mentioned above that potentially led to grade inflation. Although EFL secondary school teachers provided measurable and observable evidence in their assessment, their grade decision-making was still identified as grade inflation based on several theories. Grade inflation by EFL secondary school teachers was morally justified because they still upheld values in classroom assessment. This study gives theoretical, practical, and policy significance to English teachers, schools, and the government regarding assessment standards and language testing and evaluation. Eventually, this gives evaluations and recommendations for stakeholders, experts, and educators for assessment standards in both face-to-face and online settings.

Keywords: EFL teachers, grade decision-making, grade inflation, Indonesian secondary schools, online language teaching during the pandemic

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE OF APPROVALi	
STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATIONi	i
ACKNOWLEDGEii	i
ABSTRACTiv	7
TABLE OF CONTENTv	
TABLE OF FIGURESvii	ii
TABLE OF TABLESix	Ĺ
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	
1.1. Background of the Study	
1.2. Research Questions5	
1.3. Purpose of the Study6	
1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study	
1.5. Significance of the Study6	
1.6. Clarification of Terms	
1.6.1. Grade Decision-making	
1.6.2. Grade Inflation	
1.6.3. EFL Teachers in Secondary Schools	
1.7. Thesis Organization9	
1.8. Concluding Remark9	
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW 1	0
2.1 Grading in Assessment	0
2.2 Grade Decision-making	1
2.3 Grade Inflation	4
2.4 Moral Justifications of Grade Inflation	5
2.5 Grading guidelines	7
2.6 Online Learning during the Pandemic	9

2.7 Emergency Remote Teaching in the Indonesian EFL Context	19
2.8 Grading practices of Indonesian EFL Teachers	22
2.9 National Assessment Policy during the Pandemic	23
2.10 Assessment in Online Learning	25
2.11 Related Previous Research	26
2.13 Concluding Remark	31
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	32
3.1 Research Design.	32
3.2. Research Site and Participants	34
3.3. Data Collection Techniques	39
3.3.1. Quantitative Instrument	39
3.3.1.1 Validity and Reliability	40
3.3.2. Qualitative Instruments	42
3.4. Data Analysis	44
3.4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis	44
3.4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis	44
3.5. Concluding Remark	45
CHAPTER I FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	46
4.1. Findings.	46
4.1.1. Grade-decision Making Factors of EFL Secondary School Teache Online Learning	
4.1.1.1. Internal Factors	
4.1.1.2. External Factors	75
4.1.1.3. Academic, Cognitive, and Product factors	99
4.1.1.4. Non-academic, Non-cognitive, and Process factors	
4.1.2. EFL Secondary School Teachers' Grade Decision-making Factors Online Learning during the Pandemic led to Grade Inflation	in

4.1.3. Moral Justifications of Grade Inflation Done by EFL Secondary School Teachers in Online Learning during The Pandemic
4.2. Discussions
4.2.1. Grade-decision Making Factors of EFL Secondary School Teachers in Online Learning during The Pandemic
4.2.1.1. Internal factors
4.2.1.2. External Factors
4.2.1.3. Academic, Cognitive, and Product Factors
4.2.1.4. Non-academic, Non-cognitive, and Process Factors144
4.2.2. EFL Secondary School Teachers' Grade Decision-making Factors in Online Learning during the Pandemic led to Grade Inflation
4.2.2.1. Grade Inflation Justifications of EFL Secondary School Teachers in Online Learning
4.3. Concluding Remark
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, LIMITATION, AND RECOMMENDATION
5.1. Conclusion
5.2. Implication
5.3. Limitation
5.4. Recommendation
5.5. Concluding Remark
REFERENCES
APPENDIX303

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1. Research Phases of Explanatory Sequential Design	35
Figure 4.1 Mrs Anne's Lesson Plan	51
Figure 4.2 Mrs Belle's Lesson Plan	52
Figure 4.3 Mrs Cloe's Learning Objectives and Assessment	53
Figure 4.4 Mrs Diane's Lesson Plan	54
Figure 4.5 Mr Edward's Learning Objectives	55
Figure 4.6 Mrs Diane's Lesson Plan	58
Figure 4.7 Mr Edward's Remedial Plans	58
Figure 4.8 Mrs Anne's Lesson Plan	60
Figure 4.9 Basic competencies in the curriculum	60
Figure 4.10 Mrs Belle's Learning Objectives	62
Figure 4.11 Mrs Belle's Assessment	62
Figure 4.12 Basic Competencies used by Mrs Belle	63
Figure 4.13 Mrs Cloe's Learning Objectives	63
Figure 4.14 Mrs Cloe's Assessment	64
Figure 4.15 Basic Competencies used by Mrs Cloe	65
Figure 4.16 Mrs Diane's Learning Objectives	66
Figure 4.17 Basic Competencies used by Mrs Diane	67
Figure 4.18 Mr Edward's Learning Objectives	68
Figure 4.19 Mr Edward's Assessment Aspects	68
Figure 4.20 Mrs Belle's Lesson Plan	70
Figure 4.21 Mrs Anne's English Test	
Figure 4.22 Students' English Test Result in Mrs Anne's Class	73
Figure 4.23 Mrs Anne's English Test Report	73
Figure 4.24 Mrs Anne's Lesson Plan	79
Figure 4.25 Mrs Belle's Lesson Plan	80
Figure 4.26 Mrs Cloe's Lesson Plan	81
Figure 4.27 Mrs Cloe's Assessment	82
Figure 4.28 Mrs Diane's Assessment	82
Figure 4.29 Mrs Diane's Lesson Plan	83
Figure 4.30 Mr Edward's Lesson Plan	84
Figure 4.31 Mrs Belle's Assessment	86
Figure 4.32 Mrs Cloe's Taks Plan	88
Figure 4.33 Mrs Diane's Assessment	89

Figure 4.34 Mr Edward's Remedial Plans	90
Figure 4.35 Mr Edward's KKM Analysis	90
Figure 4.36 Mrs Belle's Assessment	92
Figure 4.37 Mrs Cloe's Lesson Plan	95
Figure 4.38 Mrs Anne's English Test	101
Figure 4.39 Mrs Anne's Knowledge Assessment Rubric	102
Figure 4.40 Mrs Belle's Assessment Rubric	103
Figure 4.41 Mrs Cloe's Knowledge Assessment Rubric	103
Figure 4.42 Mrs Diane's Platform	104
Figure 4.43 Mrs Diane's Knowledge Assessment Rubric	104
Figure 4.44 Mrs Anne's Assessment Aspects	106
Figure 4.45 Mrs Belle's Assessment	107
Figure 4.46 Mrs Cloe's Psychomotor Assessment Rubric	108
Figure 4.47 Mrs Diane's Psychomotor Assessment Rubric	109
Figure 4.48 Mr Edward's Assessment Aspect	110

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Province	. 37
Table 3.2 Gender	. 38
Table 3.3 Education Level	. 38
Table 3.4 Education Status	. 39
Table 3.5 Teaching Experiences	. 39
Table 3.6 Assessment Training	. 40
Table 3.7 Assessment Training Frequency	. 40
Table 3.8 Reliability Statistics	. 42
Table 3.9 Validity Statistics	. 42
Table 3.10 Participants' demographic backgrounds	. 44
Table 3.11 Themes in the interview	. 45
Table 4.1 Internal Factors of the Questionnaire Data	. 48
Table 4.2 Interview Themes in Internal Factors	. 49
Table 4.3 Items of External Factors in The Questionnaire	. 76
Table 4.4 External Factors Themes in Interview Data	. 77
Table 4.5 Academic, Cognitive, and Product factors	. 100
Table 4.6 Academic, Cognitive, and Product Factors Themes in Interview Data	. 101
Table 4.7 Non-academic, Non-cognitive, and Process factors	. 112
Table 4.8 Non-academic, Non-cognitive, and Process Themes in the Interview	. 113
Table 4.9 Grade Decision-making Factors	. 120
Table 4.10 Data Summary of Internal Factors	. 124
Table 4.11Data Summary of External Factors	. 127
Table 4.13 Data Summary of Academic, Cognitive, and Product Factors	. 131
Table 4.14 Data Summary of Non-academic, Non-cognitive, and Process Factors	. 134

REFERENCES

- Aldossari, S., & Altalhab, S. (2022). Distance learning during COVID-19: EFL students' engagement and motivation from teachers' Perspectives. *English Language Teaching*, *15*(7), 85. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n7p85
- Arrafii, M. A. (2020). Grades and grade inflation: exploring teachers' grading practices in Indonesian EFL secondary school classrooms. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 28(3), 477–499. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2019.1663246
- Asma-Ul-Ferdous, & Forhin Shifat, N. (2020). Dealing with mental health in online learning: A retrospect on ELT teachers and EFL learners during COVID-19 pandemic (Vol. 2, Issue 3). http://ojs.journal.unilak.ac.id/index.php/
- Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020). EFL classes must go online! Teaching activities and challenges during COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. *Register Journal*, *13*(1), 49–76. https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v13i1.49-76
- Brookhart, S. M. (1998). Why" grade inflation" is not a problem with a" just say no" solution. *In National Forum*, 78(2), 3–6.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2011). Educational assessment knowledge and skills for teachers. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 30(1), 3–12. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-3992.2010.00195.x
- Brookhart, S. M., Guskey, T. R., Bowers, A. J., McMillan, J. H., Smith, J. K., Smith, L. F., Stevens, M. T., & Welsh, M. E. (2016). A century of grading research: Meaning and value in the most common educational measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 803–848. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316672069
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language assessment: principles and classroom pratices*. NY: Pearson Education.
- Cahyadi, A., Sri, H., & Suryani, W. (2021). COVID-19, emergency remote teaching evaluation: the case of Indonesia. *Education and Information Technologies*, 0123456789, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10680-3

- Camara, W., Kimmel, E., Scheuneman, J., & Sawtell, E. A. (2003). *Whose grades are inflated?* College Entrance Examination Board.
- Caruth, D. L., & Caruth, G. D. (2013). Grade inflation: An issue for higher education. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 14(1), 102–110. https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.59055
- Chen, P. S. D., Gonyea, R., & Kuh, G. (2008). Learning at a distance: Engaged or not? *Innovate: Journal of Online Education*, 4(1). https://doi.org/10.1300/J172v01n01_09
- Cheng, L., & Sun, Y. (2015). Teachers grading decision making: Multiple influencing factors and methods. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 12(2), 213–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2015.1010726
- Cheng, L., & Wang, X. (2007). Grading, feedback, and reporting in ESL / EFL classrooms. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 4(1), 85–107.
- Collins, K. M. T., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Jiao, Q. G. (2006). Prevalence of mixed-methods sampling designs in social science research. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, 19(2), 83–101. https://doi.org/10.2167/eri421.0
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative* (P. A. Smith, Ed.; Fourth Edi). Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W., & Guetterman, T. C. (2019). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (Sixth edit). Pearson.
- Defianty, M., Hidayat, D. N., Kultsum, U., & Sufyan, A. (2020). Reframing formative assessment practices in emergency remote teaching context of English Language Teaching in higher education institutions Indonesia. *ICIIS*. https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.20-10-2020.2305143
- Dewi, M. P., & Wajdi, M. B. N. (2021). Distance learning policy during pandemic Covid-19. *Journal of Education and Technology*, 4(3), 325–333.
- Dumford, A. D., & Miller, A. L. (2018). Online learning in higher education: exploring advantages and disadvantages for engagement. *Journal of Computing*

- *in Higher Education*, 30(3), 452–465. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-018-9179-z
- Grantor, D. (2021). Teachers' Perspectives on Emergency Remote English Language Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Guskey, T. R. (1994). Unknowledge making the grade: what benefits students?
- Guskey, T. R., & Link, L. J. (2019). Exploring the factors teachers consider in determining students' grades. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 26(3), 303–320. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2018.1555515
- Hadar, L. L., Ergas, O., Alpert, B., & Ariav, T. (2020). Rethinking teacher education in a VUCA world: student teachers' social-emotional competencies during the Covid-19 crisis. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 573–586. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1807513
- Hapsari, C. T. (2021). Distance learning in the time of Covid-19: Exploring students' Anxiety. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *10*(1), 40–49.
- Hapsari, F. I. (2020). The Implementation of curriculum of English teaching in pandemic era. *Journal of Applied Linguistics Indonesia*, 04(01), 32–37.
- Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *Educause*, 1–12. https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-
- Holisoh, N., & Fitriani, H. (2020). English learning strategies of using application in online class: An emergency remote teaching during Covid-19 pandemic. *ELT in Focus*, *3*(2), 42–45. https://doi.org/10.35706/eltinfc.v3i2.4626
- Isnawati, I., & Saukah, A. (2017). Teachers' grading decision making. *TEFLIN Journal*, 28(2), 155–169. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v28i2/155-169
- Jafari, S. M., Shokrpour, N., & Guetterman, T. (2015). A mixed methods study of teachers' perceptions of communicative language teaching in Iranian high schools. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(4), 707. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0504.06

- Johnston, B. (2008). Values in English Language Teaching. In *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling* (Vol. 53, Issue 9). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- Karadag, E. (2021). Effect of COVID-19 pandemic on grade inflation in higher education in Turkey. *PLOS ONE*, *16*(8), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256688
- Karagül, B. İ., Yüksel, D., & Altay, M. (2017). Assessment and grading practices of EFL teachers in Turkey. *International Journal of Language Academy*, 5(September), 168–174.
- Kearns, L. (2012). Student assessment in online learning: Challenges and effective practices. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 8(3), 198–208. http://jolt.merlot.org/vol8no3/kearns_0912.htm
- Koç, S., Liu, X., & Wachira, P. (2015). Assessment in online and blended learning environments. Information Age Publishing.
- Kusumastuti, W. P. (2020). Emergency remote language teaching during pandemic.
- Kuyumcu Vardar, A., & Türegün Çoban, B. (2021). Evaluation of distance English language teaching education during COVID-19 pandemic from the perspectives of ELT student teachers and their instructors. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 5(3), 198–220. https://doi.org/10.33902/jpr.2021371746
- Lase, D., Zaluchu, S. E., Daeli, D. O., & Ndraha, A. (2021). Parents' perceptions of distance learning during Covid-19 pandemic in rural Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Learning*.
- Lawrence, H., Robert, B., Cross, L. H., & Frary, R. B. (1996). Hodgepodge grading; endorsed by students and teachers alike National Council on measurement in education. *Applied Measurement in Education*, *12*(1), 53–72.
- McMillan, J. H., Myran, S., & Workman, D. (2002). Elementary assessment teachers' and grading classroom practices. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 95(4), 203–213.

- McMillan, J. H., & Nash, S. (2000). Teacher classroom assessment and grading practices decision making. *Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education*, 39.
- Mcmillan, J. H., & Workman, D. (1998). *Teachers' classroom assessment and grading practices: Phase 1.*
- McMillan, J. H., & Workman, D. J. (1998). Classroom assessment and grading practices: A review of the literature. *Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium*.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (Fourth). Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis* (Third-edit). Sage Publications.
- MOEC, 2016. Peraturan Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia nomor 23 tahun 2016 tentang standar penilaian pendidikan Indonesia (The Ministry of Education's regulation No. 23, on assessment standards).
- MOEC, 2018. Peraturan Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia nomor 37 tahun 2018 tentang kompetensi inti dan kompetensi dasar pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Pendidikan Menengah pada Kurikulum 2013 (The Ministry of Education's regulation No. 37, on core and basic competencies of English subject in secondary schools).
- MOEC., 2020. Peraturan Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia nomor 719/P/2020 tentang pedoman pelaksanaan kurikulum pada satuan pendidikan dalam kondisi khusus (The Ministry of Education's regulation No. 719/P/2020, on core and basic competencies of English subject in secondary schools).
- MoECRT, 2021. Official letter No.17, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, about national assessment.
- Nugroho, A., & Haghegh, M. (2021). Emergency remote teaching amidst global pandemic: Voices of Indonesian EFL teachers. *VELES Voices of English*

- Language Education Society, 5(1), 66–80. https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v5i1.3258
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. In *The Qualitative Report* (Vol. 12, Issue 2).
- Pulfrey, C. (2013). *Autonomy and task performance: Explaining the impact of grades on intrinsic motivation*. *105*(1), 39–57. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029376
- Randall, J., & Engelhard, G. (2010). Examining the grading practices of teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(7), 1372–1380. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.03.008
- Teddlie, C., & yu, F. (2007). Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *I*(1), 77–100. https://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906292430
- Thomas, M., & Reinders, H. (2010). *Task-based language learning and teaching with technology*. Continuum.
- Tuah, N. A. A., & Naing, L. (2021). Is Online assessment in higher education institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic reliable? *Siriraj Medical Journal*, 73(1), 61–68. https://doi.org/10.33192/SMJ.2021.09
- Wang, X. (2017). A Chinese EFL teacher's classroom assessment practices.

 *Language Assessment Quarterly, 14(4), 312–327.

 https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2017.1393819
- Widiastuti, I. A. M. S. (2018). Teachers' classroom assessment and grading practices. SHS Web of Conferences, 42(4), 00052. https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20184200052
- Yesbeck, D. M. (2011). Grading practices: Teachers' considerations of academic and non-academic factors. In *VCU Scholars Compass Theses*.
- Yin, H., & Shi, L. (2021). Which type of interpersonal interaction better facilitates college student learning and development in China: Face-to-face or online? *Sage Publications*, 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/20965311211010818

- Yundayani, A., Abdullah, F., Tandiana, S. T., & Sutrisno, B. (2021). Students' cognitive engagement during emergency remote teaching: Evidence from the Indonesian EFL milieu. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(December 2019), 17–33. https://doi.org/10.52462/jlls.2
- Zoeckler, L. G. (2007). Moral aspects of grading: A study of high school English teachers' perceptions. *American Secondary Education*, *35*(2), 83–102.
- Zulaiha, S. (2017). Teachers' grading practices: in search for clear grading criteria.

 **Journal of ELT Research*, 2(1), 80–93.

 https://doi.org/10.22236/JER_Vol2Issue1pp15-23
- Zulaiha, S., Mulyono, H., & Ambarsari, L. (2020). An investigation into EFL teachers' assessment literacy: Indonesian teachers' perceptions and classroom practice. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, *9*(1), 189–201. https://doi.org/10.13187/ejced.2020.1.189