The Implementation of Outcome Based Education (OBE) Principles in the Curriculum of the English Education Study Program at a Higher Education in Toraja

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to elaborate how the implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja. The researchers applied qualitative methods with a case study design. The subjects of this study were five representative lecturers from the Research Group of the English Education Study Program, they were selected using purposive sampling techniques. Data collection in this study used observation and interview. The data analysis techniques used were transcription and coding to analyze observational data, while interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of this study confirm that the implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Language Education Study Program UKI Toraja Indonesia is as follows: 1) The PEO preparation process not only reflects a commitment to the quality of education, but also maintains the relevance of the study program to the needs of industry and society in general, 2) PLO is described in detail and hierarchically, covering various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education, as well as accommodating the specific needs of the intended field of study, 3) Curriculum formulation applies the principles and practices such as details on each course and learning activities, active learning approach, use of technology, integration of formative assessment, orientation to Outcome-Based Education (OBE), curriculum structure oriented to competency development, and the application of real-world relevant content. 4) The evaluation system implemented not only aims to assess student achievement, but also to ensure that their curriculum is relevant, effective, and prepares graduates to succeed in their careers and make a positive contribution to the development of society.

Keywords: *Implementation; Outcome Based Education (OBE) Principles; Curriculum*

Introduction

Higher education in Indonesia, as in many other countries, has undergone a change in thinking. From the traditional teaching-centered model, today's educational approach increasingly focuses on learners' outcomes and achievements. One approach that appeared in response to these changes is Outcome-Based Education. Outcome-Based Education is an educational framework that places emphasis on achieving clear and measurable learning outcomes (Premalatha, 2019; Rao, 2020). OBE aims to ensure that graduates have competencies relevant to the demands of the job market and the needs of society (Asim et al., 2021; Katawazai, 2017). Through OBE, educational institutions

can design a more structured curriculum, evaluate student achievement more effectively, and improve teaching quality.

The principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) (Spady, 1994) can be elaborated as follows. First, clarity of focus is key to helping lecturers build a clear understanding of student learning, which in turn supports students' ability to achieve expected performance. Second, a key priority in OBE planning and assessment is student success in mastering the necessary skills. Third, a clear picture of expected outcomes forms the basis for curriculum design, learning methods, and assessment planning, as well as how the plan is closely related to achieving the desired outcomes. Fourth, the learning process begins with the lecturer giving, explaining, and modeling the aims from the beginning of learning, and this continues continuously until the end of the learning activity. In the context of OBE, learning activities enable cooperation between students and lecturers as partners in achieving learning aims. The principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in curriculum development guidelines are seen from 4 aspects, namely: 1. Formulation of Program Educational Objectives (PEO); 2. Formulation of Learning Outcomes (PLO) Program; 3. Curriculum Formulation; and 4. Formulation of PLO evaluation.

The English Education Study Program at Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja has a great responsibility in preparing qualified English teacher candidates. English is not only a foreign language, but also an important global communication tool. Therefore, it is important to constantly update the curriculum and teaching methods to match the latest developments in education and the needs of society.

Several studies related to the implementation of the Outcome-based approach in the curriculum in universities confirm the results of exploration are quite varied. In Sunan Kalijaga UIN, the evaluation results of the application of OBE principles show that Program Educational Objectives (PEO) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta are formulated 100% according to OBE. The curriculum achieved 80% conformity, while the Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) assessment only reached 25% according to OBE principles (Husein et al., 2022). Meanwhile, one of the universities in West Java in implementing *Outcome-based* shows that OBE-based assessment has not been fully implemented by lecturers in their study programs because they still face several obstacles, so the implementation of the OBE-based assessment system is not complete (Setiono et al., 2023).

Several study programs at the Indonesian Christian University of Toraja have designed education plans with an Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach since 2022. They apply the principles of Outcome-Based Education in the preparation of the UKIT curriculum by following guidelines from the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework, National Higher Education Standards, the concept of Integration-Interconnection, and the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (*MBKM*) initiative. Outcome-Based Education (OBE) focuses on the achievements achieved by students during their completion of the study program (Harden et al., 1999). In the English Language Education Study Program at Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Kristen Indonesia (UKI) Toraja, changes in OBE-based curriculum and teaching methods can be considered as a strategic step to ensure a better quality of education. However, the implementation of OBE in the context of the English Education Study Program at FKIP UKI Toraja still needs to be explored further. Based on the background, the aim of this present study is to elaborate how the implementation of the principles of Outcome-

Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja.

Method

In this study, researchers applied qualitative methods (Gerring, 2017; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The research design applied to this study is a case study (Heale & Twycross, 2018). In addition, the implementation of Semester Learning Plans based on the Output-Based approach in Indonesia can still develop and be adapted to local needs and contexts. Educators and educational institutions can adapt these principles in their curriculum and integrate them into everyday learning practices. The researcher understands very well about the subject chosen in the study and believes that the subject can provide the data desired by the researcher (J. W. Creswell & Poth, 2016). The subjects of this study were five representative lecturers from the Research Group of the English Language Education Study Program, they were selected using purposive sampling techniques (Etikan et al., 2016; Rai & Thapa, 2015). Data collection in this study used observation technique and interview (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Suryani, 2008). Researchers prefer direct observation as a data collection technique and followed up with interviews. The data analysis techniques used were transcription and coding to analyze observational data (J. W. Creswell & Clark, 2017) ([19]), while interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis(Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis contains six steps: familiarization, generating initial code, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, generating reports.

Results

The implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Education Study Program at the Indonesian UKI Toraja

The results of this study show the implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Education Study Program at the Indonesian UKI Toraja.

Formulation of Program Educational Objectives (PEO)

Interpretation of results should not be included in this section, unless the research required combination of both findings and discussion in one section.

This finding illustrates an important stage in the development of educational programs in the English Language Education Study Program UKI Toraja, namely the preparation of Program Educational Objectives (PEO). This process involves various interested parties, such as lecturers, students, and industry representatives, to ensure that the PEO prepared reflects the needs and expectations of all stakeholders involved. Here are observations that prove that the PEO preparation process involves stakeholders from various parties, showing a collaborative approach:

When entering the meeting room, there are several lecturers who have gathered around the round table. Some of them were seen opening documents and preparing for discussion. Then, an administrative staff brought some sheets into the room, which were allegedly summaries of interviews with industry representatives that had been conducted before. Students from the study program also began to arrive in the room. Some of them were seen carrying laptops and notes related to the discussion. The discussion began promptly at 9:30 a.m. after all parties involved had attended. The

lecturer led the discussion by introducing today's agenda and aims, which included the preparation of Program Educational Objectives (PEO). During the discussion, each stakeholder was given the opportunity to speak and present their input related to the proposed PEO. Lecturers help discussions well, ensuring that all voices are well heard. Some students showed data from interviews with students and industry representatives that they had summarized earlier. They presented the findings to lecturers and administrative staff. Industry representatives who attended also provided valuable input based on their experience in recruiting graduates from this study program. They highlight skills they consider important for students to develop. The discussion continued smoothly for several hours, with all parties actively involved contributing to the discussion. There is a strong collaborative spirit among all parties involved. At the end of the discussion, it was seen that several draft PEOs had been prepared based on input from all stakeholders presents. Lecturers and administrative staff agreed to continue discussions later to refine the drafts before taking further steps.

From these observations, the PEO preparation process actively involves lecturers, students, and industry representatives. Each side provided their input and contribution to the discussion, proving an important collaborative approach in designing educational programs that are responsive to existing needs and demands. The PEO preparation process involves stakeholders from various parties, including lecturers, students, and industry representatives. It proves an important collaborative approach in designing educational programs that are responsive to existing needs and demands. Group discussions and interviews are used as methods to find the educational expectations and goals of various parties. This approach allows researchers or program developers to gain a deep understanding of stakeholder needs and expectations. The resulting PEO not only reflects the vision and mission of the study program, but also in line with the vision and mission of the Faculty / Study Program and the vision and mission of the university. It shows consistency and integration between the educational aims of the study program with the broader goals of the educational institution.

The PEO emphasizes the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to student needs and job market demands (Gedye & Beaumont, 2018). This reflects efforts to prepare students with the skills needed to succeed in their careers, as well as a cheerful outlook towards learning and self-development (Madin et al., 2022). This was confirmed through interviews with participants in this study. As said by participant "A" the following is related to the importance of emphasizing the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are relevant to student needs and job market demands in the preparation of PEO:

> "I think that's very important. Skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to the needs of the job market are key to preparing students for the challenges of the world of work. For example, strong English language skills, knowledge of language teaching methodologies, and professional attitudes in interacting with students and colleagues are indispensable for graduates of the English Language Education Study Program. Therefore, PEOs must ensure that our students are equipped with the skills necessary to succeed in their careers." [interview with participant A, December 2023]

The emphasis on relevance to student needs and job market demands shows the orientation of the study program towards providing an education that is not only academic but also practical and proper to the needs of the world of work. Thus, these findings prove the importance of involving various stakeholders in designing educational programs that are relevant and responsive to the needs and demands that exist in the educational environment and job market.

Thus, the PEO preparation process not only reflects a commitment to the quality of education, but also keeps the relevance of the study program to the needs of industry and society in general.

Formulation of Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

This finding highlights the process of preparing the Learning Outcomes (PLO) Program which is a crucial step after the determination of Program Educational Objectives (PEO) in the curriculum development of the English Language Education Study Program UKI Toraja. Here are some points elaborated from the findings based on observations:

Several lecturers are gathering in the meeting room. They were seen discussing documents related to curriculum and program development. Along the walls of the room, there are several posters containing a summary of the Program Educational Objectives (PEO) that have been previously set. This poster covers the main points that the study program wants to achieve. During the discussion, one of the lecturers opened documents related to the Learning Outcomes (PLO) Program that was being prepared. The document consists of a detailed and hierarchical list of PLOs. The lecturers engaged in an intensive discussion on how each PLO should be formulated to conform to the established PEO. They discuss each PLO in detail, breaking it down into sub-abilities that students must master.

The PLO compiled covers various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education, such as English language skills, cultural understanding, teaching ability, and research skills. Discussions focused on ensuring that each PLO reflected these important aspects. During the discussion, lecturers also discussed how to integrate particular content in the curriculum that suits the specific needs and demands of the English Language Education field of study. They consider a variety of learning materials that can develop the PLO effectively. The discussion went smoothly for two full hours, with all lecturers actively involved in the PLO drafting process. There is a spirit of cooperation and focus on achieving the goals that have been set.

Program Learning Outcomes is formulated as a direct consequence of a pre-established Program Educational Objectives. That is, each PLO is designed to achieve the broader aims covered by the PEO (Peppler et al., 2020). This shows consistency and alignment between the macro (PEO) and micro (PLO) levels in curriculum design. The PLO is not only arranged in general terms, but also elaborated in detail and hierarchically (Davis, 2016). This means each PLO not only includes a general description of what is expected, but also breaks it down into sub-abilities or specific aspects that students must master (Stelzenmüller et al., 2021). The hierarchy in the preparation of the PLO makes it possible to set up priorities and a logical sequence of teaching.

Program Learning Outcomes covers various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education (Bahous & Nabhani, 2011). These include English language skills, cultural understanding, entrepreneurship, teaching ability, and research skills (Leon, 2017). This approach reflects the comprehensiveness of education in preparing students for various challenges in the field. This is proven through interviews with participant "B" as below:

> "We ensure that every aspect included in the PLO is designed with the aim of providing a holistic education to students. For example, English skills include not only aspects of speaking and writing skills, but also listening and reading skills. In addition, cultural

understanding and entrepreneurship are also considered important in facing today's multicultural and dynamic world of work. As such, our PLO reflects our commitment to preparing students well for the challenges in the field." [interview with participant B, December 2023]

Each PLO is designed to be relevant to the field of study of English Language Education. This emphasizes the need to integrate specialized content in the curriculum that suits the specific needs and demands of the field of study. Thus, the PLO not only reflects the general needs of the PEO, but also accommodates the specific needs of the intended field of study.

Thus, the process of drafting a PLO involves systematic and structured discussions between lecturers, with the aim of directing each PLO to achieve the broader aims covered by the PEO. In addition, the PLO is also described in detail and hierarchically, covering various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education, as well as accommodating the specific needs of the intended field of study.

Formulation of Curriculum

The findings on this aspect illustrate some of the principles and practices applied in the curriculum development of the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja. The following are observational data that prove the application of several principles and practices in the curriculum development of the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja:

When entering the classroom, on the blackboard is displayed a detailed learning agenda for the day. Each agenda is related to the pre-set PLO. During lessons, lecturers engage in an active learning approach. They not only give lectures, but also encourage active participation from students through group discussions, role plays, and case studies. The use of technology is seen in learning. Some classes are equipped with projectors and touch screens that are used by lecturers to show learning materials interactively. In addition, some students have also been seen using laptops or tablets to access learning materials and online resources.

During the learning session, lecturers can be heard giving formative assessments to students. They provide constructive feedback on student performance and provide direction on how to improve their performance. The material taught in class is closely related to the real-world context. For example, in one session, students are invited to analyze popular culture texts in English and relate them to the current global cultural context. The curriculum structure looks oriented towards competency development. Each course and learning activity are designed to include the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to the English language education profession. Lecturers also integrate content relevant to the real world in each lesson. For example, in learning about English teaching techniques, they present case studies of situations that English teachers may face in the field.

The curriculum of the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja is designed by detailing how each course and learning activity supports the achievement of PLO (Output Graduate Profile). This means that each element in the curriculum has a clear and measurable goal that is directly connected to the goal of the study program (Harden et al., 1999). Related details on each course and learning activities in the curriculum and how the curriculum is designed to support the achievement of PLO (Profile of Output Graduates) confirmed through interviews with participant "C" in this study:

"Our curriculum is highly detailed and designed with clear, measurable goals directly connected to the PLO. Each element in the curriculum has specific aims that support the overall achievement of the PLO. For example, in each course, we detail how each topic taught will help students develop skills and knowledge relevant to their field of study." [interview with participant C, January 2024]

The curriculum applies an active learning approach, which means students not only become passive in receiving knowledge, but they are also actively involved in the learning process (Lombardi et al., 2021). This can include methods such as group discussions, problem-based projects, role-plays, and so on (Akiha et al., 2018; Alfieri et al., 2011). Regarding the active learning approach applied in the curriculum, the following are the results of interviews with participant "D" in this study:

"We apply an active learning approach in various aspects of our curriculum. Students not only sit quietly and listen to lectures, but they are also actively involved in the learning process. We use methods such as group discussions, problem-based projects, role plays, and case studies to encourage student engagement in learning." [interview with participant D, January 2024]

The use of technology in learning provides greater accessibility to educational resources and can increase student interactivity and engagement in learning (Han et al., 2024; Henrie et al., 2015; López-Pernas & Saqr, 2024; Ma et al., 2024). The use of technology can also help broaden the scope of learning and provide a more dynamic learning experience (López-Pernas & Saqr, 2024). Formative assessment is used as a tool to check student learning progress at regular intervals (Han et al., 2024; Heilporn et al., 2024). The integration of formative assessment allows lecturers to provide constructive feedback to students on a regular basis, so that students can continuously improve their performance. Related to the use of technology in learning and how it contributes to the student learning experience, here are the results of the interview with participant "E":

"The use of technology provides greater accessibility to educational resources and increases student interactivity and engagement in learning. We use technology such as projectors, computers, and online learning software to dynamically present learning materials and allow students to access materials flexibly." [interview with participant E, January 2024]

The curriculum is designed according to the principles of OBE, which emphasizes on the desired outcome of learning rather than just focusing on the material taught (Abd-El-Khalick et al., 2004). This ensures that the focus of learning is on developing skills and abilities that can be measured and saw in a real-world context (Krajcik et al., 2008). The curriculum emphasizes on competency development, which includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to the profession that students wish to pursue. It aims to prepare them holistically for the real-world challenges of the future. The curriculum emphasizes the application of content that is relevant to the real world. This means that the material taught is not only theoretical, but also has practical application in everyday life or in a professional context.

Thus, it is clear that the curriculum formulation in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja applies the principles and practices mentioned in the findings, such as details in each course and learning activities, active learning approaches, the use of technology, the integration of formative assessment, orientation to Outcome-Based Education (OBE), curriculum structure oriented towards competency development, and the application of content relevant to the world real. This proves their commitment to providing a holistic and relevant learning experience for their students.

Formulation of Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) Evaluation

These findings provide a deeper understanding of how the evaluation system implemented in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja helps measure PLO achievement and improve curriculum relevance and effectiveness. The following are observational data that can prove the application of the evaluation system in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja:

Upon entering the classroom, it was found that the lecturer was introducing the tasks to be conducted by students. The lecturer clearly mentioned how the task was related to the pre-established PLO. For example, the assignment aims to measure students' ability to apply English skills, which is one aspect of the PLO. During learning sessions, several forms of assessment are seen, including written exams, project presentations, and portfolio assessments. It shows diversity in the form of applied evaluation, allowing for a more comprehensive measurement of student achievement in distinct aspects of the skills and knowledge taught.

During the session, lecturers give direct feedback to students about their work being done. This feedback not only provides information about a student's individual progress, but also provides direction on ways to improve their performance. Thus, the evaluation process is continuous and formative, helping students to improve their skills gradually. When lecturers explain the purpose of a particular task, they clearly highlight how the task relates to the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE). They emphasize the importance of understanding desired learning objectives and how the assignments will help students achieve those goals, thereby increasing the relevance of the curriculum to the needs of the job market and the real world.

The evaluation system applied in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja is closely related to the previously established PLO. This means every element of assessment, from exams to projects and portfolios, is designed to measure the extent to which students have achieved their desired goals in the PLO (Underwood, 1998). With this approach, evaluation becomes not only a tool for assessing knowledge, but also the skills and attitudes expected of graduates (Struyven et al., 2005). Evaluation instruments include various forms of assessment, such as exams, projects, and portfolios. This diversity makes it possible to measure distinct aspects of student achievement in a more comprehensive way (Pereira et al., 2016). For example, exams can assess conceptual understanding, projects can assess practical skills, and portfolios can prove the development of skills and knowledge over time. The evaluation process does not only occur once in a period but is continuous and formative. This means that throughout the learning process, students and lecturers regularly receive feedback on their learning progress. This feedback allows students to know which areas need improvement and improve their performance gradually.

By applying the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the evaluation system, the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja aims to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum. By placing focus on desired outcomes of learning and measuring student achievement against those goals, the curriculum becomes more responsive to student needs and job market demands. Regarding how OBE principles help the curriculum become more responsive to student needs and job market demands, here is an explanation from participant "A":

> "OBE principles allow us to focus on the desired outcomes of learning, not just on the material being taught. By placing focus on the goal of learning, we can ensure that each element of the curriculum has direct relevance to student needs and job market demands. For example, we can design assignments and assessments that allow students to develop

communication, problem-solving and teamwork skills, which are highly valued skills in today's work environment." [interview with participant "A", January 2024]

Through an evaluation system based on PLO and OBE principles, graduates of the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja are expected to be better prepared to face challenges in the world of work. They have a better understanding of the skills and knowledge required in their profession and have been trained to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.

Thus, the evaluation system implemented in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja not only aims to assess student achievement, but also to ensure that their curriculum is relevant, effective, and prepares graduates to succeed in their careers and make a positive contribution to the development of society as a whole.

Based on the findings of this study, the implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Language Education Study Program UKI Toraja Indonesia is as follows: 1) The PEO preparation process not only reflects a commitment to the quality of education, but also maintains the relevance of the study program to the needs of industry and society in general, 2) the PLO preparation process involves systematic and structured discussions between lecturers, with the aim of directing each PLO to achieve the broader objectives covered by the PEO. In addition, the PLO is also described in detail and hierarchically, covering various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education, as well as accommodating the specific needs of the intended field of study, 3) The formulation of the curriculum in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja applies the principles and practices mentioned in the findings, such as details in each course and learning activities, active learning approach, use of technology, integration of formative assessment, orientation to Outcome-Based Education (OBE), curriculum structure oriented towards competency development, and application of content relevant to the real world. This shows their commitment to providing a holistic and relevant learning experience for their students, 4) The evaluation system implemented in the English Language Education Study Program at UKI Toraja not only aims to assess student achievement, but also to ensure that their curriculum is relevant, effective, and prepares graduates to succeed in their careers and make a positive contribution to the development of society. The results of these findings add insight and highlight earlier findings related to the application of OBE principles (Husein et al., 2022) and OBE-based assessment (Setiono et al., 2023).

Conclusion

The results of this study confirm that the implementation of the principles of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in the curriculum of the English Language Education Study Program UKI Toraja Indonesia is as follows: 1) The PEO preparation process not only reflects a commitment to the quality of education, but also maintains the relevance of the study program to the needs of industry and society in general, 2) PLO is described in detail and hierarchically, covering various aspects of skills and knowledge relevant to the study of English Language Education, as well as accommodating the specific needs of the intended field of study, 3) Curriculum formulation applies the principles and practices mentioned in the findings, such as details on each course and learning activities, active learning approach, use of technology, integration of formative assessment, orientation to Outcome-Based Education (OBE), curriculum structure oriented to competency development, and the application of real-world relevant

content. 4) The evaluation system implemented not only aims to assess student achievement, but also to ensure that their curriculum is relevant, effective, and prepares graduates to succeed in their careers and make a positive contribution to the development of society. Further studies could compare the effectiveness of OBE implementation in different educational programs within the same institution or across different institutions. This would provide insights into variations in implementation strategies, outcomes achieved, and challenges faced, contributing to a deeper understanding of best practices in OBE implementation.

Acknowledgment

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