

## Pedagogy, Culture and Society - Decision on Manuscript ID RPCS-2019-0044

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From: Pedagogy, Culture and Society (onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com)

To: arsyad.araafii@ikipmataram.ac.id

Date: Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:38 PM GMT+8

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01-Jun-2019

Dear Mr Arrafii:

Your manuscript entitled "GRADES AND GRADE INFLATION: EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' PRACTICE OF GRADING IN INDONESIAN EFL SECONDARY CLASSROOM", which you submitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society, has been reviewed. The referee comments are included at the bottom of this letter.

The referee(s) would like you to make some major revisions to your article and resubmit it to us for them to consider further. I therefore invite you to respond to the referee(s)' comments and revise your manuscript. Please also have your paper checked by a native English speaker before resubmission.

To submit the revision, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rpcs> and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision. Please enter your responses to the comments made by the referee(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you made to the original manuscript. Please be as specific as possible in your response to the referee(s).

Alternatively, once you have revised your paper, it can be resubmitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society by way of the following link:

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IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision before 28-Nov-2019, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Pedagogy, Culture and Society and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Best wishes,  
Professor Paechter  
Receiving Editor, Pedagogy, Culture and Society  
[carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk)

Referee(s)' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1

Comments to the Author

This is a very interesting and extremely valuable study with important implications within and beyond Indonesia. The findings are beautifully and accessibly presented and they quotations have been aptly selected to illustrate key points. I have two areas for potential improvement. Firstly, methodologically, the reader needs to know a bit more about the whole study. What questions were asked? This article only addresses one of the emerging themes. What were the others and what was the initial starting point?

This brings me to the second concern. It is really gratifying to see that Indonesia is the focus on attention in this article, as little is published about education in Indonesia internationally. However, the findings in this one state in Indonesia need to be contextualised in the international literature about testing and grade inflation. There are other countries where similar events occur [e.g. Greece], but you do not explore these similarities. What is the problem or thesis that your study addressed? There is not a clear conceptual starting point, from which to explore the issues and thereby determine which other contexts to examine.

Some possible conceptual starting point might be:

The Diploma Disease/unemployment post Higher Education [Dore; Little]

The social situation of teachers in low/middle income countries [Hanushek etc]

Schools as institutions of control and conformity [Clive Harber etc]

Performance versus learning [Chris Watkins; Carol Dweck etc]

Authoritarianism [Harber; Hargreaves; Hemmings]

In terms of writing style, I suggest less overlap/repetition between the introductory sections and the discussion. I would also like to see analysis of the two parts of the findings and how they relate to each other i.e. using outside-cognitive criteria for assessment; and inflating grades anyway. How do you make sense of these somewhat contradictory findings?

I wish you the very best with this important article.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author

The goal of the study is to explore the practice of English teachers' grading in the secondary school from their perspective. The subject is interesting and important in education. However, I feel that the paper is not suitable in this version for publication because of several significant problems:

Theoretical framework: In my opinion, the literature review does not include enough relatively update references.

Recommend to refer to the following:

Bachan, R. (2017). Grade inflation in UK higher education, *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(8), 1580-1600.

Robbins, J. (2018). Improving Work Based Assessment: Addressing Grade Inflation Numerically or Pedagogically? *Practioner Research in Higher Education* 11(1), 80 -86.

It is surprising that the paper does not refer to the rubrics as an evaluation tool that reduces the problem of grade inflation. Recommend to refer to the following:

Anglin, L., Anglin, K., Schumann, P. L., & Kaliski, J. A. (2008). Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of grading through the use of computer-assisted grading rubrics. *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*, 6(1), 51-73.

Panadero, E. & Jonsson, A. (2013). The use of scoring rubrics for formative assessment purposes revisited: A review, *Educational Research Review*, 9, 129–144.

The theoretical framework section leads well to the conceptual basis of the study but lacks a clear research question (just a research goal is presented).

Method: It is not clear how a small number of interviewees could be the basis for significant findings. It is unclear what the considerations were when choosing 15 interviews and three discussion groups with another 19 teachers. Why was this research set chosen? The author does relate to these limitations in a discussion that I think is very significant. There is a lack of reporting of the percentage of agreement among colleagues who analyzed the interviews before the discussions on the gaps were held and after.

Results: I do not feel that the quotations presented in the chapter of the findings are strong enough and scientifically convincing about the presented themes.

In general, the findings do not appear to be significantly new. It is unclear what significant value the study adds to the field of knowledge

## Pedagogy, Culture and Society - Decision on Manuscript ID RPCS-2019-0044.R1

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From: Pedagogy, Culture and Society (onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com)

To: arsyad.arafii@ikipmataram.ac.id

Date: Friday, July 19, 2019, 11:33 PM GMT+8

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19-Jul-2019

Dear Mr Arrafii:

Your manuscript entitled "GRADES AND GRADE INFLATION: EXPLORING TEACHERS' PRACTICE OF GRADING IN INDONESIAN EFL SECONDARY CLASSROOM", which you submitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society, has been reviewed. The referee comments are included at the bottom of this letter.

The referee(s) would like to see some further revisions made to your manuscript and for you to resubmit it for further consideration. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the referee(s)' comments and revise your manuscript.

To submit the revision, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rpcs> and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision. Please enter your responses to the comments made by the referee(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you made to the original manuscript. Please be as specific as possible in your response to the referee(s).

Alternatively, once you have revised your paper, it can be resubmitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society by way of the following link:

\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: This is a two-step process. After clicking on the link, you will be directed to a webpage to confirm. \*\*\*

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IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Pedagogy, Culture and Society, your revised manuscript should be uploaded by 15-Jan-2020. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision at that time, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Pedagogy, Culture and Society and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,  
Professor Paechter  
Receiving Editor, Pedagogy, Culture and Society  
[carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk)

Referee(s)' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1

Comments to the Author  
Comments to the author

This is a very interesting and thorough paper. It addresses a very important issue. Perhaps it would benefit from geographical areas being described within the literature review. Is this phenomenon particularly prevalent in certain parts of the globe and if so which and why? These details could also be used in the "discussion" section.

What do you mean by “ability”? [p.2, line 26] Beware of this word as it has many undesirable connotations. Could “test attainment” be used instead? Or “competence”? P.16, line 49: you actually describe the students as low ability. This needs to be explained if it is to be claimed – how can all students be “low ability”. Perhaps what you mean is that teachers find it difficult to get them through the prescribed curriculum [which does not make them low in “ability”!]

p.3, line 37: the role of teachers’ assessment training seems irrelevant here?

p.3, line 49: what do you mean by performance “and knowledge”? What is knowledge in a different sense from performance, in this context?

P.6, line 7: I don’t understand the connection between authoritarianism and grade inflation. Please could you clarify. P.17, line 7: you again mention “authoritarianism” as a cause for grade inflation but perhaps you mean rather “a highly centralised and prescriptive system”? This is only part of Harber’s argument which seems to have been taken rather out of context.

Quite a few writing inaccuracies need to be corrected, throughout.

p.6, line 37: grade inflation is a growing phenomenon?? I don’t think the literature you have cited suggested that it was increasing?

p.7: How did you select the teachers to be interviewed, from all the survey responses?

The article lacks a methodology section in which the authors’ ontology and epistemology are at least outlined. Given that the wider project was mixed-methods, it is particularly important to identify these for this particular focus.

p.8, line 38: Do you mean that this quote reflects many others?

p.9: I think it would suit the nature of the research better if you use teachers’ names [pseudonyms] instead of initials.

p.12, line 28: What do you mean by “pressures from the curriculum itself”?

p.16, line 27: I don’t understand the kitchen sink reference.

p.17, line 23: You write, “Another implication of grade inflation which is worrying and recently experienced in school is the deviation of students’ social behaviours (e.g. disrespectful to teachers, disobeying community regulations)”. And yet, it seems to me that such a response by students is a very sensible reaction to a system that is so clearly not serving their needs or respecting their capacities?

p.18, line 5: When using qualitative data, one is not attempting to generalise, so this is not a limitation. What you have described is clearly “relatable” to other teachers and schools and this is what qualitative data can do.

## Pedagogy, Culture and Society - Decision on Manuscript ID RPCS-2019-0044.R2

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From: Pedagogy, Culture and Society (onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com)

To: arsyad.araafii@ikipmataram.ac.id

Cc: tamarabibby@gmail.com

Date: Thursday, August 1, 2019, 09:03 PM GMT+8

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01-Aug-2019

Dear Mr Arrafii:

Ref: GRADES AND GRADE INFLATION: EXPLORING TEACHERS' PRACTICE OF GRADING IN INDONESIAN EFL SECONDARY CLASSROOM

Our referees have now considered your paper and have recommended publication in Pedagogy, Culture and Society. The referee comments are included at the bottom of this letter.

The paper will now be forwarded to the Compiling Editor, Tamara Bibby ([tamarabibby@gmail.com](mailto:tamarabibby@gmail.com)). She will read the paper and let you know if there are any further minor amendments necessary to assist our international readership or to improve the 'flow' of the article.

She will be in touch with suggested amendments/questions, if necessary, using track changes on your article. She will also let you know if no further changes are required. This process will take place as soon as possible. When this is complete she will be able to let you know when we plan to publish the paper.

You will receive proofs for checking, and instructions for transfer of copyright in due course. The publisher requests that proofs are checked and returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Thank you for your contribution to Pedagogy, Culture and Society and we look forward to receiving further submissions from you.

Sincerely,  
Professor Paechter  
Receiving Editor, Pedagogy, Culture and Society  
[carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:carrie.paechter@ntu.ac.uk)

Referee(s)' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1

Comments to the Author

Thank you for making all the changes I suggested and making them so thoroughly. Once you have done some minor language edits, I think this article will be of great interest to PCS's readers.