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THE PRACTICES AND THE BELIEFS OF A GRAMMAR TEACHER

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Abstract

Penelitian mengenai “teacher’s beliefs” dan pengajaran ini dilaksanakan di Prodi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta. Penelitian ini mengkaji kondisi nyata mengenai proses belajar mengajar yang terjadi di Prodi tersebut melalui sudut pandang seorang dosen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa seorang dosen, dalam kehidupan profesionalnya, dipengaruhi oleh seperangkat “beliefs” atau keyakinan yang merupakan kumpulan dari pengalaman-pengalaman belajar dan mengajarnya. “Beliefs” ini juga merupakan buah pengalaman-pengalamannya dalam mengatasi situasi atau kondisi yang dihadapinya dalam konteks mengajar di mana dia berada. Hasil studi ini dapat dijadikan dasar untuk melakukan perubahan-perubahan dalam proses belajar mengajar. Ini dapat dilakukan dengan adanya pangkalan data yang berisi “beliefs” dari dosen-dosen dan dijadikan bahan untuk forum diskusi, pertukaran ide dalam forum profesional, yang bertujuan akhir mencapai berbagai alternatif dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa.

This study on teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices set in the English department of FS UKI sheds some light on the real conditions of the teaching and learning processes taking place in the department as seen from the perspective of a teacher. The study suggests that a teacher, in her professional life, is influenced by a set of beliefs which is an accumulation of her learning and teaching experiences. The beliefs also result from her experiences in coping with the teaching and learning context that she is in. The study has

revealed what beliefs about learning, teaching, and language as possessed by the teacher. There might be a need for the department to put to use the findings of this study to help teachers deal with the tensions in their professional life as well as to help teachers develop better professionally. Teachers need the support of the context they are in to better handle the teaching and learning processes. This can be done by creating a database of beliefs held by different teachers, as well as the practices reflecting the beliefs. These beliefs are then brought to forums for discussion, a professional gathering of exchanging ideas, getting to know the possible existing alternatives to teaching and learning a language.

Background

English and its teaching and learning in Indonesia.

The 1945 Constitution of Indonesia states that the national language and the official language in Indonesia is Bahasa Indonesia. It is the language that unites the nation, as it was declared in the 1928 Youth Pledge: One language, which is the Indonesian language. Nevertheless, English holds a very important place in Indonesia. English was introduced by the Dutch during the occupation (1600-1942) and was taught in the formal education. (Passassung, 2003) Even before Indonesia declared its independence in August 17, 1945, English was already taught in secondary schools in Indonesia (Nurkamto, 2003). It is “the only compulsory foreign language subject in the public schools” (Hesfiandani, 2002). English continued to hold its significant place in Indonesia, especially in the Indonesian education system.

English is compulsory because it is a language that is used globally in different aspects, among others in international communication, science, commerce and also in technology. Therefore, the objectives of teaching English in Indonesian schools are to develop communicative competence (Yuwono 2005; Nurkamto 2003).

Being competent in English is considered very important in Indonesia. It is one of the major requirements to qualify for work positions. It is a known fact that a graduate who majored in English is much in demand and is considered qualified for many different positions in different fields of work. For example, graduates of English departments qualify for employment in areas such as business, journalism, broadcasting, translation, secretarial, tourism, mass media (print, electronic, and web-based), public relations, research, teaching language and literature, and many more. This situation is perhaps one of the main reasons for the existence of English departments in many universities and colleges in Indonesia, one of which is the English department of FS UKI.

A teacher teaching English skills in the context of FS-UKI faces a heavy burden, having to cover many topics with limited time. A skill teacher has to handle many classes; therefore, she may not find the time to reflect on her teaching to consciously improve her teaching practices, explore teaching or discuss with her fellow teachers in FS-UKI or outside the school, or keep up with the latest developments in the world of ELT (English Language Teaching). True, there are occasions in which teachers are sent to attend ELT seminars; however, the opportunities for sharing and discussing are limited, as skills teachers have to fulfill the number of classroom meetings as planned.

As teachers hold the key position in the success of teaching and learning, it is important for everyone in a teaching and learning institution to understand their “lives” in the classroom – their experiences, their thoughts and beliefs, their instructional practices and the reason behind the choices that teachers make. Having to cover a lot of topics in one semester and handle around 30 students with different competencies in one class is surely a challenge for Grammar course teachers. How do they teach so many topics in a very

limited time? What factors guide them in their instructional practices and in dealing with the contextual constraints?

This study is an examination of how a teacher teaches the Grammar I class in the English department of Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Kristen Indonesia (FS UKI), Jakarta. Specifically, this study focused on what tasks the teacher gave, what learning environment the teacher created, and how the teacher managed the classroom discourse, as these reveal the teacher's instructional practice and also the teacher's beliefs on language, learning, and teaching, especially teaching and learning grammar.

Teacher cognition. Teachers are one key factor in the success of the teaching and learning process. They are the planners, executors of lessons, decision makers, and course planners. They deliver what they plan in lessons and determine what goes on in a classroom. What happens in the classrooms is mostly dependent on the teachers, on the decisions they make in relation to the way the class progresses and in relation to the interaction with the other participating agents in the classrooms, i.e., the students, and the environment surrounding the class (Woods, 1996; Borg, 2006).

Woods (1996) mentions that the course is “the trail that the decision-making leaves behind,” which is why one important way to understand a course is through understanding the work of the central conductor of the lesson, understanding the beliefs that drive the teaching and learning process. Teacher cognition is:

...the store of beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, theories, and attitudes about all aspects of their work which teachers hold and which have a powerful impact on teachers' classroom practices.” (Borg, 1999b)

Teacher cognition is characterized as “an often tacit, personally-held, practical system of mental constructs” that teachers have. Teacher cognition is dynamic, changing or “defined and redefined” by the teachers’ educational and professional experiences over the course of their lifetime. (Borg, 2006).

Why study teacher cognition? There are still a lot of issues related to the teaching and learning of language that have not been resolved yet despite the abundance of research in teaching and learning a language in the academic world. The study of teacher cognition is now considered a way in to resolving these issues.

First, studying teacher cognition has been acknowledged as one way in into understanding what goes on in the classroom. Understanding the beliefs and the thoughts of teachers, their decisions, and the practices driven by these beliefs provides insights for the improvement of teacher education and the teachers’ instructional practices as well. (Borg, 2006; Mullock, 2006)

In addition, studying teacher cognition is essential in implementing innovations in educational institutions (Borg, 2006). It has been generally acknowledged that some educational innovations may not be fully implemented because teachers do not embrace them. Through studying insights from the study of teacher cognition, policy makers or people in power in a language institution are more aware of the significant role that teachers and their cognition play in implementing changes in the educational system.

Finally, it is important to study teacher cognition so that there exists a deeper understanding of “what it means to become and to be a teacher” (Borg 2006), so that teachers can have a more reflective view of their professional lives and develop continuously. Findings of studies on teacher cognition are in general geared toward empowering teachers with a

more reflective stance of teaching, raising in them an awareness of their own belief systems and how the beliefs affect their instructional practices, which is hoped will lead to a more effective teaching as a result of an independent and continuing professional development.

Teacher cognition and grammar teaching.

According to Borg (2006), studies of language teacher cognition in the teaching of grammar are divided into three groups: (1) teachers' declarative knowledge about grammar, (2) teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar, and (3) teachers' cognitions as expressed through their grammar teaching practices. This particular study on the beliefs and practices of teaching grammar in FS UKI will fall under the last category. Following is a discussion of the literature and studies on teacher cognition and its relation to the teaching of grammar.

Studies on teacher cognition seek to find out why teachers teach grammar and what factors influence teachers' decision to teach grammar. Borg (1999c) expounded that teachers teach grammar for different reasons and these reasons are influenced by the interaction of their pedagogical system, educational and professional experiences and their context of teaching. Borg (2006) lists five reasons that compel teachers to teach grammar. They are:

- 1) acquisition, by the teaching of grammar, teachers expect that students will acquire accuracy in their use of the language in communicating and that students will be able to use the patterns of the language,
- 2) awareness raising, through grammar, students have explicit understanding of the rules of the language they are using,

- 3) diagnostic, through grammar, teachers are able to work on areas of language that students need to improve linguistically,
- 4) psychological, students expect to be taught grammar and grammar “provides concrete evidence of instruction,”
- 5) classroom management, grammar exercises or drills or games can be used by teachers to enliven the classroom situation.

Borg (1999c) also found that aspects of grammar that can be studied are: error analysis, reference to students' mother tongue, the use of grammatical terminology, grammar rules, practicing grammar, as well as the issue of grammar and communicative ability.

As mentioned above, the use of metalanguage is one aspect of grammar teaching that has become the focus of study in relation to teacher cognition study. The use of metalanguage in the language classroom has been the topic of debate and research without referring to the investigation of the reality through the study of teacher cognition. Borg (1999a) studied this issue through the investigation of the use of metalanguage of four language teachers in two EFL schools in Malta: observing the teaching practices to find out how the teachers used of terminology during their instructional practices and to understand from the point of view of the teachers the reasons behind their decisions to use metalanguage during classroom instructions. The findings of the study suggested that in their use of grammatical terminology in the teaching of grammar, the teachers under study were influenced by different experiential, cognitive, and contextual factors. For example, teachers were triggered to give grammatical explanations with grammatical terminology because of their students' questions about grammar.

Examining the studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that almost all aspects of teaching grammar can be explored and linked with teachers' beliefs. In relation to this study on beliefs and practices in teaching grammar in FS UKI, it is noticeable that the classes investigated in the review above are not exclusively grammar classes like classes that exist in English departments in Indonesia. Therefore, it is important to find out what the findings of the present study reveal with regards to teacher cognition and teaching grammar and contribute to the field of investigation.

Studies on teacher cognition and the teaching of grammar. Studies on teacher cognition and the teaching of grammar show that there is a belief that to master a foreign or a second language, it is important to have a formal study of grammar (Tran-Hoang-Thu, 2009; Vandebroeck, 2007). Further, grammar is taught explicitly. Teachers give direct explanation of grammar with a focus on breadth over depth of the lessons. In addition, the materials used for the teaching of grammar are usually error correction or error analysis exercises (Tran-Hoang-Thu, 2009, Vandebroeck, 2007). One study (Tran-Hoang-Thu, 2009) even mentions that teachers use metalanguage in the teaching of grammar in all proficiency level.

Studies on teacher cognition and the teaching of grammar also claim that factors influencing teachers in the teaching of grammar are contextual factors, such as time limitation and a fixed syllabus. The teacher strictly follows the syllabus because of time limitation and the standardized tests the students have to take (Vandebroeck, 2007). Another factor that influences teachers in teaching grammar is their previous language learning and teaching experiences (Vandebroeck, 2007; Hawanti, 2010)

Studies on teacher cognition in the world of English teaching in Indonesia. There are only a few studies on teacher cognition done in an Indonesian setting, which is an invitation for future research as a way to understand better the minds and the actions of teachers. These studies focus on what teachers think about issues relating to English as a global language: culture, native speakers, materials, and role of students' mother tongue, and how the beliefs of the teachers regarding the issues influence their instructional practices and how these beliefs are reflected in classroom practices (Zacharias, 2003; Hawanti 2010).

This limited number of research projects on teacher cognition and language teaching in Indonesia strengthens the importance of the study and invites the materialization of other similar studies in the context of Indonesia. Studies focusing on teacher cognition in grammar teaching, to my knowledge, have not been done in an Indonesian setting, a fact which gives rise to the significance of the present study.

Methodology for studying teacher cognition.

Studies on teacher cognition, are generally studies that are qualitative in nature and take an "emic" perspective as they seek to understand from the inside the knowledge and the beliefs of teachers. They can also be said to be exploratory and interpretive. Studies on teacher cognition do not aim to test a priori hypotheses but seek to generate theory. They are also naturalistic and not experimental.

Data are usually gathered through questionnaires, interviews (structured and semi-structured interviews, scenario-based interviews, or stimulated recall), observations (unstructured observation and/or structured observation), and reflective writing (journal writing, biographical accounts). The data gathered may be classified as real time data (videotaped classroom sessions, lesson plans and notes) and/or ex post facto data (stimulated recall interviews).

Studies on teacher cognition usually employ the following methodology: the teachers are first interviewed for to elicit their beliefs. After that, they undergo class observations. The results of the interviews are then compared with the data from the videotaped classroom practices. The data are then analyzed with set categories and interpreted to discover a pattern in the teachers' way of teaching and the reasoning behind their planning and practices. Researchers are usually on the lookout for recurrent issues or themes regarding aspects of teaching and look for the consistency between the stated beliefs and the practices. Any "tensions" found will be further explored and analyzed; in doing so, contextual. In analyzing the data, contextual factors are also considered (Borg, 2006, Gutierrez, 2003).

Discussion

This study is a case study following an English teacher (Elizabeth) teaching Grammar in the context of FS-UKI, Jakarta, Indonesia. The class in observation is a Grammar 1 Class. The study only focuses on examining the teaching practice and the beliefs of one teacher, how the beliefs, the practice and the contextual factors come into play. The advantage of a case study, in this case, is that the study can really focus on depth, instead of breadth, as the search of the study is on the patterns that mark the teacher's instructional practice along with the belief system that drives the observed practice and the contextual factors that the teacher also needs to tackle. (Feryok, 2010). Following is the result of the study.

For Elizabeth, language and learning a language are related to a system or a set of rules, which becomes the foundation of the development of language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Elizabeth's instructional practice reveals this in her choice of tasks, which include class discussions on the structures of English, group presentations on grammar tenses, etc., to make students become conscious of the rules, so that they are able to apply

them in their receiving and producing the language perfectly. To further support her students, Elizabeth tries to create a learning environment that facilitates the growth of internal motivation in her students: motivation to be serious and responsible for their own studies, in particular in studying grammar. This is achieved through her choice of activities that allow students to share ideas and knowledge, tasks such as games and group discussion and sharing. A discussion on the interplay of beliefs, instructional practice and contextual factors follows.

Interplay of Beliefs, Instructional practice and Contextual Factors. As explained previously, for Elizabeth language is a system consisting of a set of rules, “concepts,” and “theories” that have to be learned in order to acquire the language. These rules, “concepts,” and “theories” influence communication. Therefore, Elizabeth also believes that learning or studying grammar (the study of the rules, “concepts,” and “theories”) is a “really important” component in acquiring a language, as grammar is the foundation for the other skills. Grammar is needed to be able to, among others, analyze a reading passage, to write, and to speak English. This belief is reflected clearly in her choice of instructional practices, which are in general centered on the use of the rules, the rules and the usage and meaning connected to the rules. Through these exercises on analyzing the use of the rules, along with analyzing the meanings the rules carry, students are expected to master the grammar or the rules, a sign of which is the students’ ability to rationalize or to reason out their particular choice of rules and the meanings the rules expressed. When students can rationalize the rules chosen, when they are conscious of the rules, then, they understand what they are doing with the language. This is in line with what is stated by Widiati and Cahyono (2006) and Widodo (2006) regarding the teaching of grammar – that teaching grammar is important because grammar is needed for development of receptive and productive skills so that students can

communicate well with the language and become understandable. As for her beliefs regarding grammar as the foundation of the development of other language skills, they are consistent with Azar (2007).

There seems to be a clear relationship between Elizabeth's stated belief on language and learning, especially with regards to the importance of grammar in acquiring language, and her instructional practice, which is centered on raising the awareness the students' awareness/consciousness of the rules and their importance and their meanings. In this case, the stated belief influences the instructional practice.

However, there also seems to be a point of mismatch between the stated belief and the instructional practice. Elizabeth believed that grammar was necessary for the development of other skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and that grammar should be integrated with other skills. However, from the six observed lessons, it seems that she did not really try to integrate grammar with the four skills intentionally. Activities that may be termed as "communicative" in which the students use their knowledge of grammar in listening, speaking, reading, and writing which took place after incidents, were not really planned. The reason may be related to the fact that the course syllabus covered too many topics – topics that Elizabeth had to explain in a very limited time.

Another stated belief related to learning is Elizabeth's view that to succeed in their studies students should be "serious" with their studies – they should be "industrious," and they have to be "disciplined." For students to be "serious" and "industrious," they need to have the right internal motivation. To create this "right" internal motivation, Elizabeth believes that the students should feel motivated and comfortable in her class by the existence of a conducive and non-threatening learning environment, a condition Elizabeth strives to achieve in her class. Elizabeth's effort to create the previously mentioned condition is shown through her choice of activities,

namely the class discussions, the group presentations, the group discussion and the Twenty Questions game. This idea is supported by the beliefs underlying this choice of activities: that students should be active in their learning, that they have to practice what they learn in the class, and that they have to be able to explain to the classmates what they have learned, having the courage to speak in public.

Nevertheless, one point had to be made regarding “discipline” in the classroom. Elizabeth stated that she believed that to succeed in learning students should be disciplined. For example, they should come on time and always bring their textbooks to class. From the incidents that took place, one can see that Elizabeth did not actually adhere to this belief. In several classes, some of the students came late, and some students did not have their textbooks during class. However, Elizabeth did not really reprimand the late students and try to discipline them. In addition, when Elizabeth became really upset because some of the students forgot to bring their textbooks, she decided to “punish” all students by having them do group discussions and play the Twenty Question game. Indeed, in the post interview she explained that she actually wanted to instil discipline, but she felt that if she gave way to anger and scolded the students, the classroom atmosphere might be in jeopardy. For her, keeping harmony in class was more important because should she get angry the other students would be disturbed or feel demotivated, and learning would probably not take place. From this incident it can be concluded that a teacher’s belief may be in conflict with another belief she professes. It is up to the teacher which belief should be prioritized.

Further, students should practice and “be brave” and try to explain what they know to their friends. The activities that the students chose in their group presentations created opportunities for them to be responsible for their own learning as well. Elizabeth also believes that students have more

creativity than teachers may assume. This belief is embodied by her choice of group presentation activity, in which students are asked to be the “teacher” for a day and share their knowledge of grammar to their classmates. The activity also proves that students indeed have more creativity, by coming up with game-like activity in explaining the grammar points.

Teaching for Elizabeth is a combination of the teacher- and student-centered approaches, a view that she embraces as a result of her previous learning experience. To Elizabeth, it is important for teachers to involve students to participate actively in the learning and teaching process, inviting them to discussions and to problem solving exercises. For teaching to succeed, students should be able to apply the knowledge they get from the class instruction in real life; and to ensure that teaching and learning take place, teachers have to take up several roles, e.g., manager, motivator, and friend.

Related to her beliefs about learning, Elizabeth believes that teaching grammar means teaching students to be able to analyze structure and to analyze errors so that they would be “conscious” of the rules of grammar, rules which they can use in the skills class, for example, in the writing class, as already explained in the previous part of the discussion.

It can be concluded that, indeed, there is a strong relationship between the stated beliefs and the instructional practices of the teacher, Elizabeth. Her instructional practices evidently reflect what she believes about language, learning and teaching, especially those related to grammar teaching and learning.

However, one should also keep in mind that there are also some instances in which Elizabeth’s instructional practice does not match her stated beliefs as explained previously. Based on the instances mentioned above, it can be stated that mismatches may occur because of contextual factors that come into play, as well as because of the clash of two beliefs,

in which case the teacher should choose one that she finds more important to uphold. Therefore, what Borg (2006) mentions what teachers do in class is a result a result of the beliefs that they have in their system, which is a dynamic product of language learning experience and language teaching experience, language teaching and contextual factors.

Contextual factors, in the case of Elizabeth, affected Elizabeth's instructional practice, a fact that resulted in some instances of mismatches between the stated beliefs and the instructional practice. Borg (2006) mentions that teachers react to contextual factors differently, for example, they may have to sacrifice one belief over another belief -- two beliefs collide, and the teacher had to make a choice – to decide which one is of greater importance: in Elizabeth's case, for example, the belief regarding discipline in learning versus the belief regarding the need to make students learn in a non-threatening environment.

Firstly, in the case of Elizabeth, the stated beliefs that emerged in the pre-observation interview can be classified as core beliefs (beliefs that originate from teachers' teaching and learning experience). The literature states that this kind of beliefs are deeply rooted in the teachers' belief system; thus, they are not as prone to change as the peripheral beliefs, which are beliefs derived from thoughts or theories Borg, 2009. Core beliefs are more resistant to change because they are formed early Pajares, 1992. Her belief in language as a system of rules which can be analyzed through structure and error analysis is the result of her previous learning experience with a professor she admired; in addition, her belief that in teaching, teachers should combine teacher- and student-centered approaches is also the effect of a previous learning experience, an experience with a teacher-centered method of teaching which she found unpleasant. As for the peripheral beliefs, in the case of Elizabeth, this is not apparent; this

reality can be attributed to the fact that Elizabeth had never actually followed any real and full time training on the teaching of English as a 2nd or foreign language, which proves her answer saying that experience is what shapes her teaching the most.

Finally, as supported by Borg (2006), contextual factors mostly affect novice teachers, who are still struggling to cope with the realities of the teaching and learning environment they are in, while experienced teachers, such as Elizabeth, are more in tune with their teaching context and have in them a repertoire of beliefs and task choices that they can use in handling the different contextual factors that come their way in teaching.

Conclusions

Teachers' instructional practice: tasks, learning environment, and discourse. The findings of this study suggest that a teacher may rely heavily on her beliefs, which mostly derive from experience (language learning and language teaching experience) as her guide in selecting appropriate tasks, creating the most conducive learning environment and building up supportive discourse in her classes. Most of the literature states that teachers acquire their knowledge about teaching from both teacher education (formal education or seminars on the best practices of teaching and learning a language) and experience. However, Borg (2006: 40) stated that how influential teacher education is on teacher cognition is still undecided.

The key factor influencing beliefs that remains is experience. The strong influence of experience most probably explains how teachers with profiles similar to Elizabeth's – teachers not having formal knowledge of ESL or EFL, who just “flow” into teaching, have firm knowledge of how to survive the world of teaching. These teachers, whom we can find in many teaching situations, especially in Indonesia, manage to create

supportive learning and teaching situations for their students as their experience in the field accumulates. Borg (2006: 40) explains that classroom experience has a more powerful impact on teachers' knowledge and instructional practice, which lead them to have more rounded "schemata of teaching." This is what is called "expert knowledge", which is not derived from formal education on teaching second or foreign language. This "schemata of teaching" or "expert knowledge" is the source of teachers' classroom practices as well as the source of their knowledge about classrooms and students. This point is also an echo of what Carter in Borg (2006: 24) mentioned how expert teachers have a repertoire of knowledge about classroom activities, student behaviors and situations, which help them deal with everyday teaching situations or occurrences well.

The situation above, where teachers just "flow" into teaching, is prevalent in a teaching situation such as Indonesia, as exemplified by the situation in the English department of FS UKI, where there still exists a lack of support from the educational institution for the continuous professional development of the teachers, due to different contextual factors, such as financial and time limitations. This fact adds more significance to the present study for the development of teacher education program in such institutions. This study on teacher cognition and instructional practice shows that teacher education can start from within, from the teachers themselves, through the existence of continuous practice of reflective and collaborative teaching, using the various methods of exploring teachers' own beliefs and classroom practice.

Studies such as the present one may be conducted in order to develop a database on the beliefs and the instructional practices of other teachers in, especially, FS UKI, the purpose of which is to get a clearer picture of the present situation of teaching and learning language in FS UKI. This will also serve as the medium for reflective teaching practice and

collaborative efforts on the teachers to learn from one another, to develop more professionally. This study, then, is the springboard for the existence of more informed teaching practices in FS UKI, Indonesia. The methodology used in the study, for example, the study's use of the Lesson Dimensions and Dimensions Indicators framework can be applied to take a clear look at teaching practices in the English department of FS UKI. Collaborative classroom observations are also recommended for teachers in FS UKI as a medium to learn from one another, to develop better professionally through learning from other teachers.

The present study also reveals that teachers oftentimes feel that they are not supported by their own teaching institutions, as revealed by Elizabeth. Teachers feel that they need to be supported, for example, through the existence of a syllabus that fits the students under their care, etc. Studies on teacher cognition reveal the contextual factors that support or hinder teachers in their work. Therefore, it may be a good idea for decision makers in UKI, especially the English department, to make use the findings of the present study to reevaluate how the institution can better support its teachers and improve its service to its students by listening to the teachers' side of the story.

This is important because most of the time and for most teachers, they feel that they are left alone to struggle with the various day to day demands that teaching brings (heavy teaching workload, pressure from the school or pressure to keep up with the syllabus or common examination, dealing with students of various level of competence and different motivations, dealing with parent expectations, and handling administrative work, just to mention a few). It is hoped that when institutions really understand what teachers have to deal with, together with the teachers themselves, they may be able to devise or plan ways to make teaching and learning in the institutions more conducive and supportive for both the

teachers and the students, a fact which will, hopefully, can contribute to a better service of the language institutions.

The findings of the study and the methodology for exploration can also be used in equipping new teachers to face the world of teaching and learning a language -- the findings of this study may be used as well as part of introducing the prospective teachers into the practice of teaching, exploring their own beliefs and plans of instructional practices. The methods used in the case study, with other added methods of exploration, will be very helpful in preparing or equipping the prospective teachers in entering the profession, introducing them to the practice of reflective teaching. Johnson (1994) affirms this by stating that understanding one's beliefs is critical in learning how to teach so that new information about learning and teaching can effectively and appropriately be interpreted in their instructional practices: tasks, learning environment, and discourse.

Efforts to understand teachers' instructional practices are directly related to the need to understand the reasons or the power that drives the practices: the beliefs underlying teachers' choices of tasks, creation of learning environment and discourse. As already described, teachers' choices are influenced by their beliefs and by their contexts – beliefs that come from teachers' own experience learning and teaching a language.

Studies on teacher cognition are foremost related to the development of reflective teaching or practice for teachers to continuously develop professionally. This is supported by the literature on teacher cognition and teacher development as well. For the English department of FS UKI, the study implies the need for a continuous effort to develop its teachers to keep up with what is happening in the world of English language teaching through the practice of reflective teaching. One example is Elizabeth's realization of her own teaching after she saw the videos of her class. The experience evoked

reflective thoughts regarding her teaching and her expectations of her students, which she now finds unrealistic, not thinking of the students' perspective and needs. Implied, then, is a need to constantly assess experience, beliefs, and instructional practices – looking back and ahead – in light of professional development and change.

Observing other teachers may also bring about a reflective mode of thinking, reflecting on one's own teaching as I experienced also from observing Elizabeth's classes. Teachers need to continuously learn and relearn from the teaching experience. Gebhard and Oprandy (1999) recite Freire's definition of learning, stating that learning "consists of acts of cognition." Learning is not about the transfer of information. It is about rediscovering by oneself what is needed to improve from one's own teaching: "Each of us needs to construct, reconstruct, and revise our own teaching." This point on the significance of observing one another to grow and develop professionally is advocated by Gebhard and Oprandy (1999):

When we observe others to gain self-knowledge and self-insight and when we generate our own alternative based on what we see others do we construct our own knowledge.... (184)

Through exploring teachers' cognition in relation to teachers' instructional practice and through practicing reflective teaching, the teaching profession need not be a 'lonely' profession anymore – an isolated activity or an "egg box" profession. (Kiely and Davis, 2010).

This study on teachers' beliefs and instructional practices set in the English department of FS UKI sheds some light on the real conditions of the teaching and learning processes taking place in the department as seen from the perspective of a teacher. The study suggests that a teacher, in her professional life, is influenced by a set of beliefs which is

an accumulation of her learning and teaching experiences. The beliefs also result from her experiences in coping with the teaching and learning context that she is in. The study has revealed what beliefs about learning, teaching, and language as possessed by the teacher. There might be a need for the findings of this study to be should be put to use by the department to help teachers deal with the tensions in their professional life as well as to help teachers develop better professionally. Teachers need the support of the context they are in to better handle the teaching and learning processes. This can be done by creating a database of beliefs held by different teachers, as well as the practices reflecting the beliefs. These beliefs are then brought to forums for discussion, a professional gathering of exchanging ideas, getting to know the possible existing alternatives to teaching and learning a language.

It is this process that goes behind the actual teaching and learning that needs to be explored further as data base for the improvement of teaching and learning condition in an institution, such as FS UKI. This exploration will lead to more informed efforts toward change and improvement, be it from the perspectives of the teacher or the students – a change and improvement based on real situations.

Continuously looking at and reflecting on teachers' instructional practice means continuous effort towards more informed practices on the part of the teachers, which will lead to the betterment of the teaching of the students and the service provided by the institution. It is, therefore, recommendable that the Lesson Dimensions and Dimensions Indicators framework used in this study, along with other methods of exploring instructional practices, be utilized to foster the practice of reflective teaching. This teaching may be considered a way to compensate for the lack of professional discussions and collaboration in many tertiary level education in Indonesia, such as FS UKI.

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