

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion and suggestions for English language teachers teaching in senior high school level in Waikabubak, Sumba Barat and for further research are presented in this chapter as the summary of the research.

Conclusion

In this study, a picture of beliefs and practices of four English teachers from two schools in Waikabubak, West Sumba emerged from the results of their pre-observation interviews, classroom observations, and post observation interviews. There is a general agreement among the four participants of this study that the objective of English teaching in senior high schools is for communication. However, they believed that in EFL teaching, both English and Indonesian language should be used as the classroom medium of interaction. They all agreed that foreign language learning on

the whole should be viewed as an active process that involved learners' participation in the language environment. This view aligns with the CLT method. However, when it comes to error treatment, all of them considered errors undesirable and should be corrected immediately by teachers. This view somewhat reflects GTM view of errors.

The results of the present investigation into the teachers' beliefs, as compared to their teaching practices in class have shown that there are some mismatches. Teachers from both schools showed some mismatches in their beliefs and teaching practices. Most of those differences are on the skills that they considered important to be taught to the students, the emphasis on accuracy or fluency, error treatment, and the use of Indonesian and English language in the process of teaching and learning in the class. Even though the teachers participated in this study believed that their beliefs about English language teaching were right and good, they could not

practice it in class. Thus, it led to mismatches between their beliefs and their English teaching practices.

Several factors were indicated to cause mismatches between the teachers' stated beliefs and their teaching practices, namely, teachers' unawareness of their teaching practices and beliefs, some factors from the teachers' accounts, and the student factor. Among these three factors, the student factor was seen as the major factor which led to mismatches between the teachers' stated beliefs and their teaching practices. This factor includes students' inactive behavior and their lack of motivation to learn. There are two constraints that caused the student factor to arise. The first constraint is constraint related to teaching materials which involves a scarcity of learning resources, namely textbooks, dictionaries, teaching aids, and well-equipped language classrooms. The second constraint is a content constraint which concerns with uninteresting topics for the students to discuss. Another factor that was stated by the teachers to be a factor to cause

mismatches is administration-related constraints which includes the national curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education, inadequate time for delivering a fixed content, and a large number of students in a class.

Suggestions

The findings of this study are expected to enable the local office of Education, Youth and Sports (Dinas Pendidikan Pemuda dan Olahraga) in general and specifically, English teachers who teach in Waikabubak, West Sumba to realize the importance of teacher development as opposed to teacher trainings which only create ritual teaching behavior. It is about time for teachers to understand their own teaching beliefs through teacher development programs. By joining these programs, teachers are not just being enabled to be aware of their beliefs, but they are also reminded of their beliefs and the importance of applying their beliefs in their teaching practices. Just as what Richards (2003) stated, "Current approaches to

professional development emphasize the need to focus on the teacher and to allow the programme to be directed by the teachers themselves, rather than adopting a top-down approach.”

To enable teachers to resolve inconsistencies between their beliefs and teaching practices, relevant authorities (i.e., the schools, the local office of Education, Youth and Sports, and the Ministry of Education) should also be involved to consider minimizing as many constraining factors as they could, for example by changing the exam system from focusing on accuracy to fluency in using the foreign language, providing teachers with sufficient in-teacher trainings, reducing overloaded contents, and supplying better resources. The measurement of education success in all fields of study should not only be product-based which causes the teachers to focus on product rather than the process. Thus, they tend to teach only for the sake of teaching rather than to give their students meaningful learning experiences. Having large classes also

affects the teaching and learning activities when the classroom is not spacious. Providing facilities for the schools will also help the teachers to teach their students better, so that the schools can have more references and dictionaries for the students.

The present study has mainly dealt with four language teachers' beliefs and practices in two schools of different types in Waikabubak, West Sumba which surely cannot be generalized to represent the beliefs of English language teachers in general. Conducting the same study in different contexts or settings (i.e., in elementary or junior high schools, or in other regions of Sumba) will most likely give different results. Another weakness of this study is the videotaping of the process of teaching and learning in class which might affect the way the teachers taught in class or the way the students reacted toward the teaching and learning process that was happening in the class. This study also did not include the students' beliefs to be matched to the teachers' beliefs. Further

investigations may examine the similarities and differences between teachers' beliefs and students' beliefs and to what extent their similarities and differences influence their success in teaching and learning. Despite its weaknesses, results from this study are expected to be useful to provide information to help further research about teachers' beliefs in the teaching of English as a foreign language in areas outside Java.

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