

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the whole study and is divided into six major sections. The first is the background of the study, which briefly explains the rationale of the study and the theoretical framework used in analyzing the data. The second is the formulation of the research questions. The third presents the significance of the study, while the fourth outlines the research scope. The fifth section provides an overview of the organization of the thesis, and the last lists the key terms of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teachers play a crucial role in schools as educators and have a significant influence on students' growth academically and in characters. There are different types of roles that represent teachers as one of the important aspects in educational field, such as how they play their role in the classroom that has direct interaction with the students. To fulfill that demand, these teachers have their own beliefs regarding what roles to play as a teacher in their everyday teaching practices. Teachers can possibly get influenced from many factors to finally decide what roles to play. Thus, it will principally determine what they do in the classroom, what to teach and what method to use, or/and how to address the students.

Regarding the importance of their roles as a teacher, it has become a great interest for many researchers to conduct a study about that topic. However, as to date, there have only been few research studies focusing on in-depth inquiry into the experiences of the teachers who have mismatch educational background. Teachers with mismatch educational background are common phenomena happened in Indonesia (Jalal, Samani, Chang, Stevenson, Ragatz, & Negara, 2009), i.e., those who do not have the appropriate education background to teach or graduate from English education major teaching English language. That phenomenon is in contrast with the

Ismi Ajeng Hurriyah, 2019

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regulation from the education Ministry of National Education of Indonesia which is stated in the national constitution number 14 article 8, 9, and 10 (2005) that was mainly elaborated how to become a teacher.

Pointing to the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 Year 2005 about teachers and lecturers, this was stated as:

Guru wajib memiliki kualifikasi akademik, kompetensi, sertifikat pendidik, sehat jasmani dan rohani, serta memiliki kemampuan untuk mewujudkan tujuan pendidikan nasional (The constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, No. 14, article 8, 2005).

Teachers must have academic qualifications, competencies, educator certificates, physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to fulfill national education goals (My translation).

This constitution explains how to become a teacher, the person should have completed at least a professional education. Under Article 9 in the same constitution, it was stated as:

kualifikasi akademik sebagaimana dimaksud dalam pasal 8 diperoleh melalui pendidikan tinggi program sarjana atau program diploma empat (The constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, No. 14, article 9, 2005).

The academic qualifications referred to article 8 are obtained through higher education undergraduate programs or four diploma (D4) programs (My translation).

It is explained that the teachers should be qualified at least at the undergraduate level. Additionally, article 10 of the same constitution then stated that a teacher should have pedagogical competence, personality, social competence, and the professionalism attained from the academic profession as it is said in Indonesian language as:

Kompetensi guru sebagaimana dimaksud dalam pasal 8 meliputi kompetensi pedagogik, kompetensi kepribadian, dan kompetensi profesional yang diperoleh melalui pendidikan profesi (The constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, No. 14, article 10, 2005).

Teacher competencies as referred to article 8 include pedagogical competencies, personality competencies, and professional competencies obtained through professional education (My translation).

The pedagogical competence belongs to character competencies, which will differentiate teachers to other professions and will determine the level of success of the process and learning outcomes of learners (Rahman, 2014; Shabir, 2015).

Additionally, Shabir (2015) stated that pedagogical competence is about teachers' ability and skills related to teaching and learning interaction between teachers and students in the classroom. Pedagogical knowledge has to do with the element of teaching such as how ideas are best presented and formulated (Fang, 1996) and the ability to explain, teach, ask and answer questions, manage the classes, and do evaluation (Shabir, 2015) in order to make it comprehensible to others. Furthermore, the pedagogical competence is accomplished when the individual pursues his/her education in educational field. However, realities in Indonesian education arena point to the fact that many teachers have mismatched educational background. Meaning, many teachers do not meet the requirements of becoming a teacher. It turns out that the Constitution is not strictly adhered to when it comes to the teaching profession. Yet, as Syahrudin, Ernawati, Ede, Rahman, Sihes, and Daud (2013) maintain, teachers are the most influential component of an educational system.

Regarding teachers' roles, Harmer (2007b) emphasizes that the most important part of the school is the teachers. Several studies (Armin, 2017; Brimi, 2009; Gandeel, 2016; Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016; Vetter et al., 2016; Yoon, 2008; Zoch, 2015) have specifically discussed how teachers decide their roles in their teaching practices. Sumpter and Hedefalk (2018) add that teachers' roles have been found to be based on the individual of the teachers and will be impossible for them to focus only on one role (Armin, 2017). For that reason, every teacher is different from one to another, such as their characteristics or points of views about teaching practices, which in turn may have been influenced by their personal experiences (Borg, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996).

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In addition to teacher's roles, Richards and Lockhart (2007) provide a discussion on how teachers decide what roles to play in the classroom to achieve their teaching's goals based on their beliefs as teachers. Consequently, teachers are likely to come up with different ideas about their roles based on their own beliefs, which have been created and shaped by their personal experiences. It follows that the understandings of teachers' roles in this study will be discussed after comprehending how a teacher shapes her beliefs about the roles of an English language teacher.

Teachers have their own beliefs about what to do as a teacher. Every action or behavior done by teachers is based on what they believe is the right things to do (Kirkpatrick, 2007). As regards to teachers' actions or performance in the classroom, Borg (2006) identifies those behaviors as the teachers' beliefs that can happen in a conscious or unconscious situation. These various moments experienced by the teachers may contribute to shaping teachers' beliefs. This then caused differences in teachers' beliefs among teachers because they encounter different experiences (Xu, 2012). Beliefs are created and accepted as a proper thought which come along with emotional commitment. To put it simply, a belief is a guide to thought and behavior (Abdi & Asadi, 2015; Borg, 2003, 2006; Galvis, 2012; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996).

Meanwhile, in the educational field, Borg (2003) defines beliefs as the key underpinning for teachers or other stakeholders in influencing their performances to play their roles. Additionally, as beliefs are the phenomena happened to influence people (Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding, Cuthbert, 1988), Armin (2017) explains the importance for teachers to take their beliefs into their consideration for how it gives one of the biggest influences in their teaching performances. As for teachers, understanding their beliefs can help them to make better improvement regarding their profession as a teacher (Alexander, 2012). Xu (2012) also adds that teachers use their beliefs as the basis for their teaching practices, such as to form their teaching practices, decision-making, strategies and other aspects related to their performances as teachers. Those aspects will help teachers to create the expected learners' learning environment.

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Teachers, who are educators and also professionals (Sadulloh, 2010), are responsible for children's growth educationally (Biesta, Priestley & Robinson, 2015). Teachers are expected to be able to play their best role as an educator. In terms of how teachers can play their roles, teachers' beliefs will lead the teachers to decide the kinds of teachers they want to be (Khader, 2012) and to determine what they have to do as a teacher, to behave, and even to guide them in terms of interaction between the learners and among their colleagues (Abdi & Asadi, 2015).

Based on the above discussion, it can be inferred that understanding teachers' beliefs can help teachers to be more aware in carrying out their jobs professionally. In relation to this, Xu (2012) points out that a study about teachers' beliefs assists teachers to reflect on what they did in their teaching practices. Biesta, Priestly and Robinson (2015) further emphasize that a study which focuses on teachers' beliefs helps to describe teachers' personal sense and thought put in the picture of the teachers' perceptions, judgments and decision-making which then motivate and drive their actions. This study, thus, attempts to contribute to the literature in the area, in the hope that it can shed light on the challenges such teachers face and provide better understandings of their beliefs and practices.

1.2 Research Questions

Teachers' beliefs, according to Borg (2006), are formed based on the goals, values and beliefs the teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it. Therefore, in order to achieve its major purpose in finding out what one particular non-education English teacher's beliefs about herself as an English language teacher, some specific questions corresponding to how the teacher's beliefs are formed have been formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1 What are the teacher's beliefs in relation to her roles as an English language teacher?
- 1.2.2 How do these beliefs inform her actual teaching practices?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to give some benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can provide further insights into the area of teachers' beliefs and their roles as an English language teacher. As Xu (2012) explains, teachers need to acquire teacher's beliefs to have better understandings of themselves and to improve educational practices. Practically, this research can also provide a better understanding about what beliefs teachers have, which can serve as a consideration for curriculum developers in developing new curriculum. By understanding how teachers see themselves, a curriculum that speaks for the teachers can thus be better designed. As Thomson and McIntyre (2013) argue, understanding teachers' beliefs regarding their professionalism as a teacher can facilitate successful teaching and stronger teachers' self-efficacy.

1.4 Research Scope

A number of studies have discussed the topic of teachers' beliefs in education area, which bring significant development for educational system, especially in relation to teachers' professional development. This research mainly focuses on a non-education teacher's beliefs about her roles as an English teacher. It explores how this particular teacher forms her beliefs and seeks to understand how her beliefs inform her teaching practices.

1.5 Organization of Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The present chapter, as shown above, describes (1) the background of the study; (2) the research questions; (3) the significance of the study; (4) the research scope; (5) the organization of the thesis; and (6) key terms used in this study.

Chapter Two discusses related theories and studies that are used to analyze the data. This chapter, hence, primarily presents theories and research findings related to teacher's beliefs and roles. Chapter Three provides detailed information about the

research methodology. The participant of the research, research design, and data collection and analyses method are presented in this chapter.

Chapter Four discusses the findings and analysis of the present study, highlighting the participant's beliefs about her roles as an English teacher and how these beliefs inform her practices. Finally, Chapter Five presents the conclusions of the study and puts forward some suggestions and implications for future studies and teachers' professional development.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

1.6.1 Beliefs

- The term “beliefs” are defined as convictions or opinions that are formed either by experience or by the intervention of ideas through the learning process (Ford, 1994 as cited in Borg, 2006).
- In this study, the terms “beliefs” refer to teacher's beliefs which are the main foundation for the teacher to act, behave, or to decide what to do as an English language teacher. The teacher's beliefs are the foremost term in this study which also influences the teacher or the participant to decide what roles to play in the classrooms as an English language teacher.

1.6.2 Teacher's Roles

- How the teachers play a role when being a teacher. As professional teachers, they have various ways in expressing themselves as someone whose main job is to deliver the knowledge (Sánchez, 2014). Those roles are not limited to classroom or school environment, but they can also go beyond the classroom setting.

- Teacher's roles in this study refer to who the teacher is in the classrooms. It explains how the teacher brings herself as an English language teacher in her teaching practices.

1.6.3 Non-English Education Graduate Teacher

- Non-English education graduate teacher is a teacher who did not pursue higher education program which is one of the regulations to become a professional English language teacher in the schools.
- In this study, this term is related to the selection of the participant, referring to an English language teacher who graduated from a non-English education department, i.e., an Islamic studies program for both her undergraduate and graduate studies.