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# **BELIEFS OF ENGLISH TEACHER IN TEACHING COMMUNICATIONS SKILL**

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## *Abstract*

*To be able to communicate in English both in spoken and written form is the main goal in teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia. This paper focuses on revealing the English teacher's belief in teaching speaking. The investigation was conducted through case study toward a successful English who teaches speaking in Kanjuruhan university of Malang." The researcher obtained the data through interviewing teacher and students. This study found that that there is correlation between the teacher's beliefs and teaching practices of speaking. The subject of this study is the lecturer of speaking 1, when they have teaching belief for speaking they will decide to apply the approach, method, and strategy in their teaching activity in classroom activity.*

***Keywords: teaching belief, English teacher, communication skill***

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Borg (2006) suggests that teacher's cognition is important, and teacher need to consider the psychological process that controls the sense of their works. This statement is related with the fact that teacher is one of four key elements in teaching-learning process plays an important role in determining students' learning outcomes. Dunkin and Biddle (1974) also stated that teacher brings certain characteristics as individual or as a group to their teaching such as their formative experiences, their trainings, and their personal qualities to help the students acquire the knowledge of the subject taught. Especially for English language teachers, it is a compulsory for them to make the students mastering the target language. This is a challenge for the teachers because they do not only teach the students how to communicate by giving them enough exposures to the target language, but they themselves need to maintain and increase their knowledge of foreign language by engaging in foreign language communication (Borg, 2006).

When a teacher understand the complexities of teaching-learning process and is able to draw upon this knowledge into the teaching act it shows that the teacher able to determine the formulation of theory of teaching and implement it in his classroom teaching. In the context of foreign language, classroom teachers are often the only speakers with whom students have the opportunity to interact in the process of developing their language skills; thus, the teachers plays the role as the

center of teaching. Teachers need to identify the belief of English teachers related with their teaching of speaking and how they apply their beliefs into teaching practices to English learners in Kanjuruhan University of Malang.

This study tries to picture out the links between the theories they understand individually and practices in teaching speaking class, this study was also hoped to give other teachers a clear description in teaching speaking subject in order they apply in their teaching and improve their students' achievement in communication.

Based on the description above, this study tries to find out teachers' belief and their practices in teaching speaking through observing a teacher as subject who teaches speaking 1 in Kanjuruhan University of Malang. This study focuses on the following research problems:

- a. What teaching beliefs does the speaking teacher in Kanjuruhan University of Malang have?
- b. How does the teacher apply his beliefs to teach speaking 1?

## **2 METHOD**

This case study was conducted in Kanjuruhan University of Malang, East Java. This study was conducted in this private university because the teacher have to work hard to make students have good communication skill compared to state university in case of lower students' capacity both in intelligence and learning styles. The subject of this study was one experienced speaking lecturer at Kanjuruhan University of Malang who got score A in teaching evaluation. In this university every end of semester students should give evaluation to the teachers them in that semester about their teaching performances, the subject was also chosen through direction of English Department Chairman and preliminary questionnaire about teaching performances..

This study applied interview to the subject to obtain data about the lecturer's belief and practices in teaching speaking, and Interview 10 students to see whether the lecturer really apply his beliefs to his teaching practices. The interview was based on Borg's theory (2006), the framework covers of the lecture's in teaching speaking and speaking teaching practice in classroom. The result of data were analyzed by using descriptive qualitative which is proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) which consist of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

### **3 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The findings are presented into three sub-discussions, they are finding about teacher's beliefs of speaking, teaching speaking and teaching speaking practice.

This first part describes how the lecturer's beliefs about classroom practices and the teaching of speaking in particular. A good teacher always has strategy, plan, methods and techniques to help students achieve the speaking subject goals. Thus, he said that he designs the syllabus based on the situation he encountered in the classroom. He believes that materials that are designed specifically based on the students' needs, would be appropriate and effective to help students to master speaking skill. He also provides conducive classroom environment to facilitate the students to improve their speaking skill by creating interactive and communicative activities. This can be seen from the way he teaches by applying various techniques in teaching speaking and also the instructional media, such as videos, films, listening, pictures, and proposed hand out.

Regarding to the lecturer's beliefs, he believes that a good speaking teacher is the one who gives his students opportunity to be communicative in English that is why all students should speak in the class. He does not really mind how the students speak whether the students has not perfect grammar, pronunciation and dialect, the most important is they are active in speaking activities, and if they make mistakes, correction or feedback is done indirectly but after they finish presentation or giving response to avoid feeling of shy and hesitation. The lecturer feels that understanding how to do error correction in speaking skill is very important for EFL learners. The lecturer also plays his important role as language teacher as suggested by with Borg's (2006) that a teacher should teach the students how to communicate by giving them enough exposures to the target language. The lecturer also indicates his belief that the students should speak freely. He also motivates his students be active in communication. His beliefs of teaching lead him to apply communicative approach in which he teaches speaking subject communicatively and interactively. And he always give students full attention with different characteristics and competences personally to give different treatment as the students need.

Regarding to classroom management, he applies many kinds of activities in the classroom, he always listen patiently when students express ideas and appreciate them by giving appraisal to the students' answers and responds, he also avoids direct correction to students errors or mistakes. He believes that it is very important to manage the students to be fluent in speaking. He makes sure that he teaches with different techniques every meeting to make students enthusiastic every time he teaches. For example, he once used two stray one stay to give students

opportunity have turn to the expert when they have small group discussion, because certain often students manipulate classroom discussion. He also used sometimes small group discussion and other techniques. Besides various teaching techniques, he also supports his teaching and learning process in speaking class by using several instructional media.

Gebhard (2001) states that there are at least five closely related factors that can contribute to making interactive classrooms interactive. One is reducing the central (and traditional) position of the teacher. 1) Reduction in the centrality of the teacher, 2) An appreciation for the uniqueness of individuals, 3) Chances for students to express themselves in meaningful ways, 4) Opportunities for students to negotiate meaning with each other and the teacher, 5) Choices, both in relation to what students say and how they say it. In line with these, the lecturer has the five of factors proposed, the lecturer has reduced his centrality when he gives students opportunity to express ideas and listen to them patiently.

The lecturer also really believe that there is an appreciation for the uniqueness of individuals in the class. Each student brings to the classroom unique language-learning and life experiences (both successful and unsuccessful), as well as feelings about these experiences (including joy, anxiety, and fear). As teachers, we need to be sensitive to each individual's background and affective state. To create a classroom atmosphere conducive to interaction, we need to understand and accept each student as he or she is, which sometimes can require considerable effort.

The second part is about how the teacher's teaching belief was applied to his teaching practices. To obtain the data the researcher interviewed 10 students to investigate whether he is an effective and successful teacher for speaking 1.

Based on the result of the interview with students, they consider the Lecturer as a successful speaking lecturer because of his competence as speaking lecturer and his teaching practice. They agreed that the Lecturer has good technical knowledge, pedagogical, personal and interpersonal competence. They also explained that these four competences support the lecturer's teaching practice. Based on the interview result, the lecturer's teaching practice was considered as fun and communicative by the students. The students explained that they feel free to speak and deliver their opinion. Using communicative and student-centered approach, the lecturer lets them to explore their own ability in speaking class. During the teaching and learning process, they told that they were encouraged to have confidence in speaking and not to be afraid to talk and say what they have in their mind to participate in conversation in class.

Further, the students also consider that Lecturer never discriminated any students and treated them well by being friendly and never making any student

feel ashamed of their ability. Instead, they said that he always praises by saying good, excellent, nice, or perfect etc. This way, according to the students, makes them motivated to become better speakers in English. The lecturer did not interrupt to correct errors while they were speaking, but she kept the notes about the students' performance until her turn to give feedback. All these findings match the lecturer's belief that she has to give the students chance to speak and to be heard without making the students anxious and ashamed while practicing speaking. The students also said that the lecturer always gave them feedback at the end of their performance. This is also in line with the lecturer's belief that every student needs feedback and they should be given feedback but not in the form of direct feedback.

Regarding the use of teaching technique, the students mentioned that they learned by using various techniques in speaking class with he and most of the techniques were considered as fun by the students. According to them, he always wanted them to get meaningful activities and these activities make a conducive environment for them to master speaking skill. In addition, the instructional material and media used by the lecturer was appropriate and effective to help them to learn in speaking class.

Finally, interview has revealed that the lecturer's teaching practice has properly and clearly reflected her belief in teaching speaking. No mismatch was found between her belief and her teaching practice in teaching speaking. Her competences and how she successfully put her belief in her teaching practice make her to be considered as a successful speaking lecturer by the students.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based the finding, the lecturer has done at least five closely related factors that can contribute to making interactive classrooms interactive. He always tries reduce the central position of the teacher he also tries to can maintain control of what goes on in the classroom while still giving freedom to students to initiate interaction among them and with the teacher. As suggested by Gebhard (2001) that there are factors contributing to making classrooms interactive include 1) reduction in the centrality of the teacher 2) an appreciation for the uniqueness of individuals 3) chances for students to express themselves in meaningful ways 4) opportunities for students to negotiate meaning with each other and the teacher 5) choices, both in relation to what students say and how they say it.

This shows that genuine communicative interaction is enhanced through an appreciation for the uniqueness of individuals in the class since the teacher applies the following beliefs of interaction in which each student brings to the classroom unique language-learning and life experiences (both successful and unsuccessful), as well as feelings about these experiences (including joy, anxiety, and fear). As



teachers, we need to be sensitive to each individual's background and affective state. To create a classroom atmosphere conducive to interaction, we need to understand and accept each student as he or she is, which sometimes can require considerable effort.

He also provides chances for the students to express themselves in meaningful ways potentially contributes to creating an interactive classroom. Students need chances to listen to each other, express their ideas in speech and writing, and read each other's writing. **Negotiation of meaning** needs to become the norm, and while negotiating, students need chances to ask for and receive clarification, confirm their understanding, generally ask questions, respond to questions, and react to responses. If true negotiation of meaning is going on, students will be fully engaged in using English to understand the meaning intended by others, as well as to express their own meaning as clearly as possible. Negotiation of meaning also implies that students have choices as to what they want to say, to whom they want to say it, and how they want to say it.

This study showed that there was a relatively strong linearity-between the teacher's beliefs and her classroom practices. Based on the findings of teacher interview, the teacher has his own personal beliefs that the ideal lesson of teaching speaking is the one which gives students opportunity to speak more in the classroom as they are given freedom to share their ideas without giving direct feedback to avoid interruption during the learning process. This beliefs then affect teacher's practice in teaching speaking. The teacher uses communicative approach, creates fun and relaxing atmosphere, uses various techniques every week and instructional media to support the learning process.

The lecturer also believes that materials that are designed specifically based on the students' needs, would be appropriate and effective to help students to master speaking skill. This also study proves that the subject really reflects her teaching beliefs into the teaching practice of speaking. As it is already mentioned before that a successful teacher is the one who could formulate his/her theory of teaching and apply it into practice. This concept is similar to the characteristics of effective teacher in which it involves understanding what being a good teacher really means and incorporating classroom practices that are appropriate for the wider social context. Furthermore, teacher's belief in teaching speaking in the classroom might be influenced by schooling background, professional coursework, and contextual factors.

The result from this study is expected to give good model for other teachers in teaching speaking so that they can become better professionals and increase student achievement in communication skill. This is supported by the fact that teachers should be encouraged to make their teaching of language

successful so that the students are able to achieve better in class. It is also expected that other language teachers would use the findings of this study as the basis for their self-evaluation toward their teaching practice so that it will not be mismatched with their teaching beliefs.

Finally the researcher suggests that it is essential for lecturer of speaking to evaluate their beliefs toward communication skill and how to teach speaking skill. The evaluation can be done through the following ways, reading books on teaching communication skill and also discuss with other speaking teachers. It is also important for lecturer of speaking to explore more about teaching speaking skill to give more feedback that students have more opportunities to speak spontaneously.

It is expected that further classroom observation will be conducted in the future for deeper study. Besides, more subjects of the teacher need to be added and in-depth study toward teacher's beliefs and practices in teaching speaking also needs to be done.

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