

## **Teacher's Belief on Teaching Philosophy as Teachers Professionalism Platform**

**Muhammad Reza Pahlevi<sup>1</sup>, Kusrin<sup>2</sup>, Acep Bahrum Kamil<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>[mreza.pahlevi@fkip.unsika.ac.id](mailto:mreza.pahlevi@fkip.unsika.ac.id)

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

<sup>2</sup>[kusrin@fkip.unsika.ac.id](mailto:kusrin@fkip.unsika.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

<sup>3</sup>[acep.bahrumkamil@fkip.unsika.ac.id](mailto:acep.bahrumkamil@fkip.unsika.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims at presenting the teacher's belief on teaching philosophy as a teacher professionalism platform. It explores how the teacher perceives teaching philosophy as a teacher professionalism platform and in what ways teaching philosophy assists the teacher to refine his teaching. The research design of this study is basic interpretative study. It is used to identify the extent to which teaching philosophy is understood and practiced by teachers. There are general pattern findings of this study. The first finding is English teachers' perceived teaching philosophy builds reflective teachers. The second findings refers to reflected activity that copes with the teacher in refining suitable ways in facilitating students to learn. Teaching philosophy potentially assists teachers in teaching by providing various activities. Thus, it supports the teacher to be a professional English teacher.

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**Keywords:** Teaching philosophy, Belief and professional teacher

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Issue of being a professional teacher has been widely discussed. Empirical evidence reported by Malm (2009) knowledge and teacher beliefs take a crucial role in building professional teachers. Moreover, becoming a professional teacher is a challenge for the teacher. However, the teacher is expected not only to transfer knowledge but to transfer the view. These two things indicate learning outcomes indicators that are not only included in the cognitive domain but also enter into the development of the physical and personality and social domains. As stated by Syah (2012) educating must adjust to the development of students in physical, cognitive and personality and social aspects.

This is closely related to teacher professionalism where to facilitate students with professionals both in preparing lesson plans, learning activities and evaluation. The study of professional roles and professional behavior refers to scientific mastery explicitly and wisely in attitude (Lunenburg, Dengerink and Korthagen, 2014).

However, in practice there are many obstacles faced by teachers to become professional teachers. One of the things that is neglected for most teachers is self-reflection in the teaching process to achieve continuous improvement. One of these types of reflection is teaching philosophy. Even when compared to America and Canada, teaching philosophy is one of the main requirements in teaching (Campos, 2010). In teaching philosophy the teacher reflects their beliefs both as a teacher, to students and the preparation of learning. Conducting teaching philosophy is an innovative practice and becomes a meaningful thing in representing learning experiences, goals, beliefs, levels of professionalism and self-development (Campos, 2010). The benefits of teaching philosophy is to write teaching philosophy to make our minds open to discussion or input for improvement. Then teaching philosophy also forms belief in teaching (Coppola, 2002). It is in line with Schonwetter, Sokal, Freisen, and Taylor (2002) mentioned in Canadian higher education define teaching philosophy as an effective and learning practice classroom (p.84). In addition, teaching philosophy assists on how to teach and engage students in the classroom (Crookes, 2003). It potentially attracts students and teacher' participation. It also refers to effective teaching that is the same as Kearns and Sullivan (2011) claim adopting teaching philosophy also encourages teachers to be prepared and equipped in effective teaching as better teachers. However, teaching philosophy is under-explored especially in English language teaching areas (Payant, 2012). Based on the discussion of teaching philosophy in this term, therefore this study aims at exploring how far the teacher knows teaching philosophy to refine his teaching experience. Then, how teaching philosophy helps teachers to reflect and improve their teaching practices. Related to this, it is still new and has potentially good implications for professional teachers. So far, research on teaching philosophy has not been widely studied by previous researchers. Therefore, conducting research on teaching philosophy potentially gives implications for the professionalism of teachers. In addition, this study is focused on the perceptions and practices of English teachers in conducting teaching philosophy. Furthermore, it emphasizes how far the teaching philosophy helps teachers in doing continuous improvement. Therefore, this study tries to find how the teacher perceives teaching philosophy and how the teaching philosophy assists teachers improve their teaching experience. The results of this study are expected to give implications for English education study programs in equipping prospective English teachers in practicing teaching philosophy.

Teaching Philosophy as mediation to improve teaching practice. According to Schonwetter and other actors the philosophy of teaching statements is "systematic and critical reasons that focus on important components that define effective teaching and learning in certain disciplines and / or institutional contexts" (Schonwetter et al, 2002, p. 84) Natasha Kenny defines teaching philosophy statements ``as clear and logical statements that communicate what your fundamental values and beliefs are about teaching and learning, why you hold these values and beliefs, and how you translate these values and beliefs into your experience daily teaching and learning. "(Kenny, 2008, p. 6) Brookfield (1990) as quoted in Hege (2004), defines a teaching statement of philosophy as" personal vision of teaching; critical reason teach; the sense of purpose of teaching. "(Virginia TRC, 2004, p.1).

There are several reasons why EFL professionals must develop their own teaching philosophy statements. Many EFL teachers make teaching philosophy just to add it to a personal portfolio or to your resume or just to get a job. However, these points should not be the main purpose for the statement of teaching philosophy. Developing a teaching philosophy must have specific goals such as reflecting on your teaching, your students, your methodology, your ideals as a teacher, the level of professionalism, personal learning, involvement, teaching beliefs, and values, among others. Some concrete reasons are relevant for doing the teaching philosophy statement are:

- a) Teacher beliefs about teaching and learning usually have a positive impact on students and the classroom environment.
- b) Teachers tend to apply classroom practices that reflect their classroom practices and philosophical beliefs.
- c) The philosophy of teaching that is done well helps the instructor to reflect and act appropriately in the class.

In addition, some other experts consider the teacher important to develop teaching philosophy because it helps them to improve their teaching. For example, Coppolla states that developing your teaching philosophy is important because "the teaching statement gives you a starting point to examine your teaching practices, allows you to share your ideas with others, and allows you to monitor your own development progress as a teacher . "(Coppolla, 2002 p.450). Brookfield (1990) mentions the importance of developing your teaching philosophy because it can be used for four different purposes:

1. Personal goals: good that your teaching philosophy reflects the reason. You do what you do as an EFL professional.

2. Political goals: Your teaching philosophy needs to show you the position is based on a well-developed and careful philosophy practice. This helps you gain respect, which is important for growing in politics.

## **METHOD**

### **1. Research Context**

This research takes place at one of the junior high schools in Karawang. This junior high school has some uniqueness both in demography, language and teaching English. From the demography perspective, it is located between the city and the countryside. Moreover, another uniqueness is the use of both Sundanese, Javanese and Indonesian languages which later influence learning English. While the English teacher is unique. This can be seen from the information obtained previously that learning is built by promoting active interactions with students.

### **2. Participant**

Participant in the study is an English teacher at one of the junior high schools in Karawang. The reason for choosing this participant is to have the criteria needed in research and ease of access in conducting research. In addition, participants have nearly nine years of teaching experience. Then he also teaches at an English language course which implies that participants meet the requirements to become sources of information in research.

#### Research design

This study tries to explore an English teacher's belief on teaching philosophy as a professional platform. As this study concerns natural phenomena, it is proper to use basic interpretative study design (Ary, Jacob, Sorensen and Razavieh, 2010). This study uses a basic interpretative study that begins with sit-ins in the teacher class for the purpose of the study. Then discuss the teaching experience so far. The interview also is taken to gather the teacher's belief on teaching philosophy. This is done naturally without any treatment. Discussions are redeveloped regarding barriers and opportunities to teach in the classroom. After that, teaching philosophy is introduced to form the identity of a professional teacher. From this it is learned the meanings contained in the research findings. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by Heigham & Croker (2010) to learn something based on understanding deep perception.

### **3. Data Collection and Analysis**

To obtain data, observation, interviews and documentation are used in this study. The data collection tools in the study are divided into three types; observation, interview and documentation. Observation is carried out by following class in sit-in form. Then illustrates the events that occur in the class both from pre-lesson, while-lesson and main lesson. The interview is practiced with open-ended interviews where the questions have been prepared but it is still possible to add questions that have not been satisfied with the answers. The last is documentation. The documentation in this study can refer to the general description that occurs as well as the draft file of the teacher's teaching notes. The obtained data from data collection is reduced based on research needs. Thus, the data are selected and defined to form themes. The themes are analysed and studied through theory lenses (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **DISCUSSION**

There are two findings of this study. The first findings of this study is that the English teacher perceived teaching philosophy builds reflective teachers. The participant agreed that he always did reflection as refining activity. This sort of reflection assists him in re-planning on how to facilitate students. In addition, based on observation data, it showed that the teacher gave evaluation on what learnt by providing activities. It is in line by Schonwetter (2000) teaching activity in philosophy point of views tends to obtain an essential part of teaching. It represents that teaching philosophy closely related to include crucial events in teaching. This also describes how self-fundamental values and belief in learning experiences (Kenny). Teaching activity should be in line by learning objective as learning objective represents successful learning activity. This is same with Virginia TRC (2004) promotes teaching is derived from self-vision on teaching, reason of teaching and teaching objective. The second findings is that reflected activity copes with the teacher in refining suitable ways in facilitating students to learn. It can be seen from interview data as well. The teacher habituated to try new methods in facilitating students to learn. It is supported also from observation data. The observation data illustrated that the teacher did reflection as a way in refining teaching activity. Teaching philosophy potentially assists teachers in teaching by providing various activities. Thus, it supports the teacher to be a professional English teacher. It is in line by Coppola (2002) emphasizes that developing teaching philosophy is essential since teaching philosophy is possible for sharing ideas and reinforcing each other.

## CONCLUSION

Teacher perceived teaching philosophy potentially builds reflective teachers as it serves to do reflection. Reflected activity that is in teaching philosophy statements assisted the teacher to refine teaching effectively. The teacher stimulated in having continuous improvement in facilitating students to have better learning experiences. In addition, it is expected for other researchers to be an alternative in exploring research in terms of teaching philosophy. Thus, it is more meaningful to develop beliefs and practice into enhancing professional teaching through teaching philosophy.

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