EFL Preservice Teachers' Beliefs About English Language Teaching in Role-Play Based Activities

Arifah Mardiningrum

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EFL PRESERVICE TEACHERS’ BELIEFS ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN
ROLE-PLAY BASED ACTIVITIES

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2016
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This study investigated the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences as learners and teachers in role-play based activities. The study found beliefs about English language teaching inferred from the preservice teachers’ experiences that can be categorized into beliefs about being a teacher, beliefs about lessons, and beliefs about school culture. There were several conclusions drawn from the findings. First, there was a negotiation of beliefs that can be inferred from participants’ reflections on their experiences. Second, there are certain educational values that are implied in participants’ reflections that might connect to their beliefs. Lastly, learning from experiences of performing in role-play and practicum might give a space for emotional experiences, which likely connect to their cognition and beliefs.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONE</strong></td>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong> .......................................................... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Background of the Study .................................................. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the Problem ................................................. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpose and Significance of the Study .................................. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overview of the Chapters ................................................ 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TWO</strong></td>
<td><strong>LITERATURE REVIEW</strong> .................................................... 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice Teachers’ Experiences and the Formation of Beliefs.......... 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiences in Attending University Courses, Conducting Teaching ... 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicum, and Beliefs About Teaching and Learning ................... 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesian Context ......................................................... 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English Status in Indonesia ............................................. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TEFL in K-12 Education in Indonesia .................................... 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EFL Teacher Education .................................................... 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role-play to Accommodate Experiences in Learning and Teaching ...... 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting the Puzzle .................................................... 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THREE</strong></td>
<td><strong>METHODOLOGY</strong> ............................................................. 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Design ............................................................ 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Context ............................................................... 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting ................................................................. 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Practicum ....................................................... 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sampling Criteria .......................................................... 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Source ............................................................... 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective Essay ............................................................ 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview ................................................................. 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Collection Procedure ............................................... 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Analysis ............................................................. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trustworthiness and Ethical Issues ..................................... 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary ............................................................... 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOUR</strong></td>
<td><strong>RESULTS</strong> ................................................................. 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs About Being a Teacher .......................................... 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs About the Expectation of What a Teacher Should Be Like .... 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Teacher’s Creativity</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Teacher as a Role-Model</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Lesson</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About the Need for Clear Instruction and Adequate Preparation for Students</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Practicing Knowledge</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Group-Work</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Adaptation in Applying Teaching Method in Different Context</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About School Culture</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Grades as Teacher’s Power Tool</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs About Teacher Hierarchy</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIVE CONCLUSIONS ................................................................. 69

Discussions ............................................................................. 69
  Negotiating Beliefs Through Reflections ................................ 70
  The Power of Educational Values ......................................... 72
  Learning From Experience .................................................... 75
Limitations of the Study .......................................................... 77
Pedagogical Implications ........................................................ 77
Reflections ............................................................................... 79

REFERENCES ............................................................................. 81

APPENDICES ............................................................................. 89

Appendix A - RTAF Approval .................................................. 89
Appendix B - Consent Form ..................................................... 90
Appendix C - Reflection Instruction ........................................ 93
Appendix D - List of Interview Questions ............................... 94
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflective process through experience .............................................................. 78
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

I had been exposed to English sounds and written words, mostly from the media, since I was very young. This is because, despite its status as a foreign language in my home country, Indonesia, as Lauder (2008) wrote, English has played an important role “in society at large, and in particular in business, politics, education and the media” (p. 10). However, I did not acquire the ability to make sense of the language until I learned it in a formal education setting in junior high school. Most of my childhood, I had been mostly exposed, had learned, and actively used my vernacular, Javanese, and Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Language). This is common because in Indonesia, “English takes a place in the third of three main categories, Bahasa Indonesia, the regional vernaculars, and foreign languages” (p. 13).

At that time, most classes, regardless of the subject, were teacher-centered. In addition to that, teachers were “expected to faithfully deliver the national curriculum rather than to inspire their students or to empower their intellectual ability” (Yeom, Acedo, & Utomo, 2002, p. 65). As I recall, most of the time, students would just sit and receive whatever was taught by the teachers. In English classes, in the context I was part of, students would need to memorize most of the knowledge they received in the classroom, including the concept of tenses and vocabulary. Although these classes taught me more about English, I did not feel that I really learned much in terms of using the language to communicate and to really grasp the meaning of the discourses in English. I do not think that this was a unique case. Although English had been a compulsory subject in schools and had been used more widely than other foreign languages in Indonesia (Lauder, 2008), students were not easily motivated to learn it because they did not always need
to use it outside the classroom (Masduqi, 2011). This condition made me think that English was difficult and that reaching an adequate mastery to communicate with it was an impossible task. This unpleasant experience had taught me about what not to do after I became a teacher.

In high-school, I encountered a different type of teaching and learning. There, the classes were still rather teacher-centered, but the students had more opportunity to practice what they learned in class through tasks, such as concept mapping\(^1\), and presenting the map in front of the class. Accustomed to being a timid child, these activities helped me build more confidence and experience what it meant to be excited to learn something. I started to see what I preferred in my learning process. This identification of my preferred learning style, strategies, and processes made me feel like I was a better student. In addition, my view of English as a difficult language gradually changed, and I started to do a lot of independent learning\(^2\) to support what I received in the class.

My independent learning continued after I graduated from high school and had to stop my education for one year. Although I did not immediately attend higher education, I did extensive independent English learning. I did this by using various media such as songs, poems, movies, magazines, TV, and radio shows to give me as much exposure to the English language as possible and to teach me more about English grammar. In this way, I managed to develop my skills mostly in listening, reading, and writing, which then helped me significantly in my undergraduate study, where I majored in English Education\(^3\). This success was likely because I

---

1 Nunan (2004) described it as “[s]howing the main ideas in a text in the form of a map” (p. 59)
2 The term independent learning here refers to the “self-directed learning,” proposed by White (2008) who stated that:

\[L\]earning in this sense is based on students’ understanding of their own needs and interests and is fostered by creating the opportunities and experiences which encourage student choice and self-reliance and which promote the development of learning strategies and metacognitive knowledge (p. 5).
3 This is a common term for EFL teacher education programs in Indonesia.
had full “control of learning experiences” (White, 2008, p. 6). This also inspired me to use various media in teaching, especially the media I had used in my own independent learning.

I later found that university life was very different from K-12 education. I learned that I was expected to be more independent, and to have more critical thinking skills. This meant that I needed to use my “interpretation and evaluation of observations, communications” skills, and seek “other source[s] of information” than the one I received, and build my skill of “issuing and arguing issues through” (Fisher, 2011, p. 15). My professors mostly positioned themselves as facilitators, and as the ones I could consult about academic problems, but they would then help me find the solution myself. Later, they became my role models in setting-up my class once I was in a similar position of teaching preservice teachers. It is a possibility that the way my professors taught me had shaped my behavior as a teacher even though I was not teaching in an identical context to theirs (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007).

Another support to my independent learning was the extracurricular activities I was involved in. One of them was taking part in several dramatic plays. All of these plays were performed in English and held by the English student organization, of which I was a member. With my interest in the arts and performance, along with my desire to improve my English skills, I ended up being involved in eight plays. My involvement was both on and off the stage. This involvement gave me a place to practice my English in a real-world context. For example, reading the script helped me understand a story, a character, and their complexity; writing the script helped me to improve my skills in composing words and expressing meanings; and the

---

4 White (2008) further explained that this control requires the combination of the following:

   [E]xperiences by the learners themselves; this requires a combination of independence (the opportunity to explore and make choices), proficiency (the ability and competence to engage in learning experiences) and support (resources that facilitate personally meaningful learning) (p. 6).

5 I quoted parts of Fisher’s (2011) definition of critical thinking which reflected the way I understood the term at that stage of my life.
performance helped me to listen to my peers and helped me improve my speaking skills. In addition, being involved in a play taught me about teamwork, empathy, emotion, creativity, and decision making.

To sum up, regardless of the type of learning and teaching that I experienced during my education, I always learned something from my past learning experiences, which eventually shaped what I believed about learning and teaching. This personal learning experience became the idea that encouraged me to take this topic as my study. With this teacher research, I aimed to investigate my students’ personal experiences and draw implied beliefs that might emerge from their reflections of their experience.

**Statement of the Problem**

Studies on pedagogical beliefs of preservice teachers have been conducted throughout the years in the field of teacher education. Some of these studies investigated the preservice teachers’ beliefs about language learning conceptualized in Horwitz’ Belief About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) in a locally situated learning (Altan, 2012), in relation to contextual settings (Bernat, 2006), in relation to gender (Tercanliaglu, 2005), and how they were affected by a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) course (Busch, 2010). Other studies focused on exploring various themes such as the relationship between epistemological beliefs and preservice teachers’ conceptions of teaching (Cheng, Chan, Tang, & Cheng, 2009), the connection between beliefs about language to prior beliefs, interaction with peers, course textbooks, lectures, and practicum (Fleming, Bangau, & Fellus, 2011); the impact of the school setting to preservice teachers’ efficacy beliefs (Knoublauch & Chase, 2015); and the exploration of beliefs for change in an education system within a specific context (Muthanna & Karaman, 2011). The various themes of these studies show that it is important to investigate the beliefs of preservice teachers because
these beliefs will have a significant influence in the journey of these preservice teachers
becoming professional teachers.

Some studies showed that preservice teachers’ beliefs tended to change or develop over
time (Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000; Debreli, 2012; Mattheudakis, 2007; Ng, Nicolas, & Williams,
2010; Peacock, 2001) even though the change might not be a fundamental one (Inozu, 2011). This change happened because of various factors that could form a belief such as the preservice
teachers’ prior experiences as learners (Aguda, 2014; Gürsoy, 2012; Yüksel & Kavanoz, 2015) and experiences as teachers in teaching practicums (Sánchez, 2014; Stoughton, 2006). This is the root of the idea to conduct the current study.

The current study aimed to explore five EFL preservice teachers’ experiences in the
classroom and practicum. The investigation of these experiences was hoped to give an insight
into the preservice teachers’ beliefs about English language teaching. The experiences revolved
around role-play based activities, which I prepared for one of the courses I taught in the study context in 2014, and the first teaching practicum that the participants conducted in the same year.

My reason for choosing role-play was that the role-play I prepared in my class was a
series of various activities that would expectedly give the students varied experiences in learning. This type of activity might provide insight into more variety of beliefs about English language teaching.

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

This study aims to investigate the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers in a private
university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences as learners and teachers in role-play based activities. The background context of this study was the class I taught in the even semester of 2014 and the participants’ first teaching practicum in
the same semester in the same year. However, the teaching schedule for practicum normally did not start on the first day of the semester because of the different schedule between the high school and the university and because there were briefings and meetings with the networking school representatives to settle the logistics before the actual teaching assignment began.

To meet its goal, this study aimed to examine the following two research questions.

1. What are the beliefs about English language teaching implied in the five EFL preservice teachers’ reflections on their experiences in role-play based activities?

2. How do experiences in the first teaching practicum of these five EFL preservice teachers contribute to their understanding of the experiences in those role-play based activities?

The result of this study will first be beneficial for me as a teacher because I can see how my students received the activities I prepared for the class and what they learned from them beyond language skills. This finding will give me insight as a teacher and a foundation from which to approach my teaching in the future. For a broader audience, the results of this study will add to the body of literature on preservice teachers’ beliefs about English language teaching to contribute to the field of teacher education. It can also be useful for English language teachers and preservice teachers as an additional reference to consider when they plan to use role-play based activities in classrooms, as it can help them think about what might work or not for their students in their classrooms.

There have been a multitude of scholarly works on investigating preservice beliefs and/or experiences in the ELT field. However, none of them have used role-play as the context of the study. This study supports the idea that role-play based activities can be one medium to support a variety of experiences for preservice teachers as part of their training to become professional
teachers, which then potentially becomes the tool to understand their beliefs about teaching. In addition to this, in the field of TESOL, this study can add to the research on performance and art-based studies, the area of drama pedagogy, and experiential learning.

**Overview of the Chapters**

This study report is presented in five chapters. In the first chapter, I explain my background for conducting this study, the problem underlining this study, my purpose in conducting this study, and the significance of the study. The next chapter presents the relevant current literature pertaining to the topic of this study, which includes my discussion on preservice teachers’ beliefs on English language teaching, the relation of these beliefs to preservice teachers’ experiences, and the implications of these beliefs and experiences. Later, I will also discuss several studies that investigate drama/role-play pedagogy, and how it can accommodate certain experiences. The third chapter presents the detailed procedure of executing this study, which includes the description of the research design, study context, data source, data collection procedure, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical issues. The next chapter will show what I found from the data collected according to trends. Finally, the fifth chapter will synthesize the result of this study in relation to past literature, draw some pedagogical implications, and my reflection as a teacher and researcher.
CHAPTER TWO  
LITERATURE REVIEW

The current study aims at investigating the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers in a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences as learners and teachers in role-play based activities.

This chapter presents the literature review that will serve as the foundation for conducting this study. The presented review will give support and argue for the necessity of conducting this study and how the results may add to the existing literature. To present this review, first, I will talk about past literature pertaining to preservice teachers’ experiences and its relationship to the formation of beliefs. The experience discussed consists of experiences attending university courses and experiences in teaching practicums. Second, I will briefly discuss the nature of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Indonesia to contextualize the study and to give a glimpse of the broader background context of where the preservice teachers formed their beliefs. Lastly, since this study investigates the preservice teachers’ experiences in role-play based activities, I will also present a discussion pertaining to literature on the use of role-plays, especially in English teacher education. Finally, I will synthesize all the literature that I have collected to show the framework of this study.

Preservice Teachers’ Experiences and the Formation of Beliefs

There is no single way of defining belief because this term is used differently in different contexts (Pajares, 1992). In educational studies, it has been called by different names, such as “attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions,” and many more (p. 309). In this study, beliefs of preservice teachers were understood as any attitudes pertaining to the nature of teaching. Rokeach (1968) argued that to understand beliefs, “inferences” should be
made from “individuals' underlying states” and that “beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do” (as cited in Pajares, 1992, p. 314). The inferences that I will make in this study will be based on the participants’ reflections on the experiences that they talked about in the interview and their essay.

Understanding preservice teachers’ beliefs is important in the field of language teacher education because these beliefs will likely determine the way teachers teach in the future (Ng, Nicholas, & Williams, 2009; Pajares, 1992; Zheng, 2009), which will then consequently form their students’ beliefs about learning (Peacock, 2001). Pajares (1992) further analyzed that prior educational experiences of preservice teachers likely influence their beliefs about teaching and learning. Therefore, to understand the nature of these beliefs, “the power of stories” from preservice teachers’ experiences needs to be taken into account (Johnston, 2004, p. 662).

Different studies on the beliefs of preservice teachers about language teaching and learning resulted in contradictory claims about the nature of these beliefs. The first claim is that beliefs are inflexible or cannot be changed even after years of teacher education programs (Inozu, 2011; Peacock, 2001). Those are usually the beliefs that preservice teachers bring from their years in school (Agudo, 2014; Pajares, 1992). (Agudo, 2014; Pajares, 1992). These beliefs cannot be transformed immediately by theories and formal education because studies have shown that teachers rely more on their personal experience when developing beliefs about language learning (Kagan, 1992a; Kagan, 1992b; Pajares, 1992). The next claim is that preservice teachers’ beliefs can still change after a teacher education program.

Contrary to the studies above, other studies found that beliefs of preservice teachers can still be flexible. Pajares (1992) asserted that “belief is based on evaluation and judgement” (p. 313). This means that whatever beliefs are formed in the early life and education of a preservice
teacher is also based on his/her continuous evaluation of what he/she experienced, including what he/she believes to work and not work for him/her. Further, Pajares concluded that after a belief is formed, a person has the tendency to “build causal explanations surrounding the aspects of those beliefs, whether these explanations are accurate or mere invention” (p. 317). When a new experience challenged those explanations, a change of belief might take place. The following sections will present several studies that showed the formation or transformation of preservice teachers in its relation to experiences in attending university courses and teaching practicums.

Experiences in Attending University Courses, Conducting Teaching Practicum, and Beliefs About Teaching and Learning

The focus of my study is not to see the formation or transformation of beliefs of EFL preservice teachers. However, presenting the studies investigating the formation or transformation of beliefs of preservice teachers contextualized in a teacher education program will give insight into the role of teacher education in preservice teachers’ beliefs.

Mattheoudakis (2007) studied the development of the beliefs of preservice teachers in an English language teaching education program in Greece and found that few prior beliefs of the participants remained the same and most of them were transformed after three years of training. Prior beliefs here referred to the beliefs about language learning that the preservice teachers brought with them when they entered the teacher training program. The author mentioned that the teaching education program as the context of this study focused more on theoretical teaching. The beliefs investigated in this study were presented in five categories, namely beliefs about “language learning process,” “foreign language aptitude,” “the difficulty of language learning,” “learning and communication strategies,” and “the role of the teacher,” which were all taken
from Horwitz’s BALLI (p. 1277). The study found that there was a significant change in the preschool teacher’s beliefs by the end of their teacher training program. Early in their education, the participants believed that grammar and vocabulary are important in language learning and that learning languages is different from learning other subjects, and by the end of their education, these beliefs had weakened. Concerning language learning aptitude, most participants still held strongly to the beliefs that some people have an aptitude for language learning and that children would learn languages more easily than adults even though they also believed that everyone can learn languages. The majority of participants also still believed that some languages are easier to learn than the others. In addition, their belief that English is a difficult language to learn decreased by the end of their education. In the next category, the preschool teachers’ belief that it is important to use a language in communication was strengthened through their education. However, their belief in the importance of correct pronunciation and error correction weakened. They also strongly disagreed that they could only speak if they know the words. Lastly, when it came to teachers’ role, most participants gradually came to believe that the role of a teacher is to “help students learn” and “share knowledge” and not as a student controller (p. 1280). However, the author expressed concern that the preschool teachers who had conducted teaching practice were the ones that still strongly held the belief that a teacher’s role is “to control the students” (p. 1280). The conclusion was that there was a significant change in most of the beliefs about language learning, while only a few of these beliefs remained the same. What needs to be noticed is that even though there was a significant change from the beginning to the completion of the program, the changes shown in each academic year were not as significant. This means that transformation of beliefs in this study took place gradually over the course of the education of these preschool teachers.
All of the categories of belief that Mattheoudakis (2007) investigated above were based on the categories of belief in BALLI, which is a series of questions designed by Horwitz in 1995 to “investigate beliefs about language learning of trainee foreign language teachers” (Peacock, 2001, p. 178). This model of inquiry has been used in several studies of preservice teachers’ beliefs, mostly for collecting quantitative data (Busch, 2010; Mattheoudakis, 2007; Peacock, 2001). Although this tool might be administratively convenient and help with categorizing data, it might also “constrain responses, use wording that may be problematic, and provide no insights as to why the beliefs are held” (Busch, 2010, p. 321). Additionally, the themes of BALLI were “clichéd” (Debreli, 2012, p. 369). This is where my research differed from the past studies using this particular tool. The beliefs that I looked for naturally emerged from my data because participants were given more freedom to answer the inquiries I gave them through interview and reflective essays.

Arguing that most studies on preservice teachers were conducted with a quantitative approach, Debreli (2012) conducted a study on preservice teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning English as a foreign language with a qualitative approach with “the intention of revealing a more holistic picture of their belief structures” (p. 367). The participants were three preservice teachers of an English department in Cyprus in the beginning of their teacher training program, which was a kind of practicum program. This program was a two-term program that was held at the end of their study in the department. The program required the preservice teachers to attend a methodology course, observe teaching activities in public schools and teach in the schools. Three semi-structured interviews were used to collect data over the course of nine months. The result showed two main categories, namely the “beliefs about teaching” and “beliefs about learning” (pp. 370-371). The first category pertained to “effective foreign language
teaching,” “language skills,” and “error correction” (pp. 370-371). The findings showed that in
the beginning of the program, the participants believed that teaching methods which promoted
communicative language teaching such as games were the most effective methods to teach
languages. However, after they experienced their teaching practice and used this method, they
found that they lost control of the class, which made them believe that they failed and choose not
to use it too often. Concerning language skills, the study showed that in the beginning of the
program, participants believed that grammar was the least important thing to learn in a
classroom, but after the teaching practice, they thought that grammar was at times necessary. The
beliefs about error correction seemed to be split between the belief that it should be made
immediately after an error was made and that it should be made implicitly to encourage students’
self-learning. The split happened because each participant had different experiences in the
practicum class. The second main category pertained to beliefs about learning, which consisted
of the beliefs about “language aptitude” and “effective use of material” (p. 371). In the beginning
of their training, the participants believed that some people were born with a special ability to
learn language and that was the key to successful learning. However, after they had the
experience of teaching, they rejected this idea. Concerning the belief about material use, two
participants believed that materials would be the key to engaging students’ participation and
effective learning. However, after their experience of teaching in a school where materials were
very limited, their belief changed, and they instead believed that the most important thing was
the teacher’s creativity to encourage students’ participation.

Overall, the categories in this study at some points resembled the ones from the study that
used BALLI; however, what this study offered was the explanation of how participants arrived at
these beliefs through their experience. The study showed that field teaching could have the
potential to make the preservice teachers rethink certain ideas that they held before the field experience. The data collection of this study and the training program resembled what I did in my study. The difference was that the participants in this study were at the end of their teacher education and that they learned some teaching methods before their field teaching. Meanwhile, my participants were first year students who had only been taught language skills and had had no courses about theories of education or teaching methodology. Their ideas about teaching were likely only based on their observations of other teachers’ teaching, including my teaching. This allowed me to see how they perceived what they witnessed, which can inform my personal reflection on my teaching practice.

The beliefs about teaching and learning showed in both studies above were not the only beliefs that might be formed during a teacher education program. Some other studies found that teaching practicum could increase beliefs about self-efficacy. Klassen and Durksen (2014) found that during a teaching practicum, the preservice teachers participating in their study showed a positive increase in their self-efficacy, or their belief about their own ability. Despite this optimism, the researchers doubted that this increase would not last because, when these preservice teachers entered the professional world, they might not find helpful support that they received from the teacher mentor in the practicum. In a different study, Knoublauch and Chase (2015) found similar results concerning the increase of preservice teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs. However, they failed to see clear evidence of what caused this positive improvement.

Beliefs formed in a teaching practicum can be caused by a tension that a preservice teacher has to face. Mak (2011) studied the journey of one preservice teacher in Hong Kong in a one-year post-graduate teaching program. There were four emerging categories of beliefs found in the study pertaining to “[t]he suitability of the approach and its implementation,” “[c]lassroom
communication and interaction (e.g. student talk vs teacher talk in the target language, group work and pair work, student-student interaction,” and “[t]he roles of English teachers” (p. 57). These beliefs emerged firstly because of the participant’s belief of the need to survive her teaching practicum and to adapt to the existing “teaching culture” (p. 57). This belief was caused, for example, by the idea that the in-service teachers were role-models. This idea led her to think that the in-service teachers’ teaching methods were the right ones, even though, sometimes, it was contradictory to what she initially believed. As many studies had found, the preservice teacher’s past experience as learners had also influenced her beliefs about teaching and what teaching method she should apply. One example of these beliefs was the one concerning teacher talk, which was the idea that teachers were the knowledge transmitters, and communicative language teaching (CLT), which was understood as giving the students more opportunity to practice the language. However, after several experiences of teaching in different classes, she started to modify her beliefs. The tensions between what she wanted to do in class based on her belief in using the CLT and her belief that teacher talk was important caused her to hesitant to make decisions, and finally to come up with the idea to integrate both teacher talk and CLT into her teaching methodology.

The author, Mak (2011), citing from past studies about the issues of applying communicative language teaching in Asia, argued that the participant’s decision to use teacher talk, which caused the modification of her beliefs, seemed to be influenced by cultural values that support the dominance of teacher talk. This might be a reasonable interpretation of the author based on what past studies about teaching in Asia. Moreover, if beliefs were understood as being “created through a process of enculturation and social construction” (Pajares, 1992, p. 316), it might be reasonable to make such an interpretation; however, in the data presented, it
was clear that the preservice teacher’s modification of beliefs emerged after her personal experience in the classroom when she had to deal with the responsibility of delivering the material and giving her students the chance to participate in class. This modification of beliefs seemed more a display of her analysis of the current situation and her quick thinking for a problem solution than a result of the culture in which she was teaching. In addition to this, the data in this study were also collected several times, including after each practicum experience. The interviews, along with the feedback from the in-service teachers, seemed to be the participant’s media to reflect on her previous teaching and beliefs about it. It allowed her to think about her practice as well as to think about her own thinking. Therefore, it could be said that her decision in class was the result of a reflective look at what she observed and practiced. Seen from this perspective, my study would also be my way of learning the way my students thought and reflected on their experiences as students and teachers.

The few studies discussed above showed that beliefs may remain or may transform. The data found showed contradictory results. The more in-depth studies showed that there was a rationale behind these two natures of beliefs. There was a reflective process that participants participated in after they received knowledge and then implemented what they learned into practice, which eventually built new or modified beliefs or validated the previously held beliefs.

In the next section, I will discuss the literature pertaining to the nature of English teaching in Indonesia to give a glimpse into the background context of this study and my participants. Discussing this will provide the readers one of the external aspects, which might have a connection to my participants’ beliefs.
Indonesian Context

In this section, I will talk first about the status of English in Indonesia with its unique history. Next, I will discuss the nature of TEFL in Indonesia. The discussion will refer to teaching English in a K-12 education context because it is the one that provides early experience which shapes a person’s beliefs about education as Pajares (1992) discussed in his work. Moreover, my participants were first year students when they were involved in the role-play based activities. This means that their beliefs were likely still highly influenced by the school culture of their past education. The last discussion will talk briefly about English teacher education in Indonesia to show the scope of the education that the participants started to enter. The more specific context, which is the class I was teaching when I used the role-play, will be discussed in Chapter Three.

English Status in Indonesia

Historically, Indonesia had been colonized by the Dutch for almost three and a half centuries. Despite this fact, Dutch is not a familiar language to its society. There are some possible explanations to this condition. First, Lauder (2008) mentioned that during Indonesia’s colonization, the Dutch were against providing adequate education to the local people. School was only available for Dutch children and Indonesian children from selected families. Second, as Thomas (1968) stated, Dutch is “the language of the enemy” (as cited in Mistar, 2005). After centuries of pain and struggle, Indonesians refused to use the language of the people who made them experience the misery of being colonized. On top of that, when the Japanese conquered the Dutch in Indonesia, they demolished everything related to the Dutch and English teaching (Mistar, 2005). In addition, Dutch did not have the international reputation that English did.
Therefore, English teaching was not entirely stopped, and the language itself was decided to be the first foreign language in Indonesia (Lamb & Coleman, 2008; Lauder, 2008).

As the first foreign language, English received a special status in Indonesia in various aspects. Firstly, as Komaria (1998) stated, it is the only foreign language that is taught as a compulsory subject in secondary schools, and later allowed to be taught in primary schools\(^6\) (as cited in Lauder, 2008). In addition, there is an increasing demand for English competency in job markets and an increasing use of English in popular culture products such as songs, movies, novels, etc. (Lamb & Coleman, 2008).

Despite its special status in the country, English literacy is not easily achieved. One reason is that it is not used in daily communication and, hence there is no direct need to learn the language. This is proven by the number of people with inadequate command of and proficiency in the language (Lauder, 2008). Another reason English literacy is not easily achieved is that it has to compete with other languages used in the country, namely the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, the indigenous languages spread across the country, and several non-indigenous languages (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). First of all, Bahasa Indonesia, as the proclaimed national language, holds a more privileged status than English in Indonesia. This is the language that unifies the rich and diverse cultures in Indonesia (Mistar, 2005; Zulfikar, 2013). It is taught in schools and has achieved what Lamb and Coleman (2008) called the “unassailable position as the language of central government, of national unity and of modernization” (p. 2). Meanwhile, with the diverse population of 255,462,000 in 2015, Indonesia is reported to have 714 different languages (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig, 2016) that mostly are vernaculars. This means that for many people, English will be the third language they learn (Lauder, 2008), even though in some

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\(^6\) There has been changes in curriculum on this matter. It will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.
areas it becomes the second language because some people are monolinguals and only speak *Bahasa Indonesia* (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Another point of competition for English is other foreign languages that can be put in the category of non-indigenous languages, such as Arabic, as the language of Islam\(^7\), and Chinese (Lamb & Coleman, 2008).

Apart from the challenges above, Indonesian ideology has also resulted in contradictory views on English. On one hand, it is viewed as the international language necessary to help the nation compete with the international world, and, on the other hand, it is viewed as an imperialist language that threatens the culture and national language of the country (Lauder, 2008). The former view has made English the privilege of anybody who is proficient in it and the later view has caused changes in the education curriculum for a number of times. One example is what happened to English teaching in primary schools. In the earlier curriculum, it was given a space in the curriculum, but the latest curriculum, established in 2013 and effective in 2014, eliminated English for primary schools and decreased English hours in the high school curriculum (Panggabean, 2015). Panggabean added that there was no clear explanation as to why the decision was made, but the general conception that English endangered the national language and culture seemed to be one of the reasons for the curriculum change. This bittersweet view on English likely plays a part in the challenges that educators have to face in the field of TEFL that I will discuss in the next section.

**TEFL in K-12 Education in Indonesia**

With its long colonial history and influence from the Javanese tradition, Indonesia is deeply rooted in the top-down tradition which believes in the centralization of authority, including the one in its education system (Bjork, 2005). However, Bjork further added that since

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\(^7\) Although Indonesia is not an Islamic country, the majority of its population is practicing Islam (Bjork, 2005; Lamb & Coleman, 2008).
1994 decentralization policy had been made to improve its education quality. This means that teachers have more freedom to choose what will work best for their classrooms and to put local content to the nationally centralized curriculum. This more democratic effort however, failed to be implemented as planned. In his ethnographic study of several secondary schools in West Java, for example, Bjork found that decentralization failed because of the “deeply engrained views about the role of the Indonesian teacher within the school and the state” (p. 174). The traditional view of teachers as “dutiful civil servants” is been contradictory to what the decentralization aimed (p. 174). This failure to adapt to a more democratic education system also seemed to resonate to a more specific field, TEFL, which was considered as having a disappointing state despite its frequent curriculum changes (Bradford, 2007).

With a more decentralized curriculum, a more student-centered approach in teaching was expected (Zulfikar, 2013). One of the efforts to support more democratic system of education in Indonesia is called PAKEM system, which “mandates teachers to be classroom facilitators, and student participation is highly encouraged” (p. 126). However, Zulfikar argued, it was also far from a success. Zulfikar theorized that it was due to the deeply engrained belief in the superiority of teachers—that they were considered the source of knowledge and wisdom and the ones that gave the knowledge to students, and students were merely receivers of this knowledge. This prevented students from being independent thinkers. Another reason that Zulfikar proposed was even though teachers were given the space to be creative in their teaching, they were still overloaded with responsibility to meet the standard of national curriculum, along with having to teach overcrowded classes. This prevented them from focusing more on their students than the curriculum target. Another problem was that the overall curriculum had forced students to learn

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8 For example, from my personal experience when I was teaching in a high school, I had to teach around 40-45 students in one class.
subjects that did not meet their interests, which caused students’ reluctance and made them
grade-oriented. Musthafa (2001) also argued that these last two problems were the ones causing
the challenges to implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Indonesia
besides the lack of instructional media in English and the misinterpretation of the approach.

Few empirical studies have been conducted to investigate the nature of TEFL in
Indonesia. Of these few studies, the findings seemed to support some of the arguments on the
issues in Indonesian TEFL. A survey conducted by Marcelino (2008) to five high schools, for
example, indicated that teachers failed to implement the Competency Based Learning (CBL)
because most of them did not really understand the concept it offered. In addition to this, despite
their opportunity to be more independent thinkers and learners, students still remained “passive,
[did] not critically respond to the teacher’s argument or explanation, and compliantly abide by
their teacher’s instructions” (p. 63). Marcelino proposed three reasons for this. First, they were
not accustomed to the new more independent way of learning because they had been accustomed
to the teacher-centered learning. Second, there was a belief that actively participating using the
target language would be perceived as showing off by peers. Lastly, students’ poor command in
English forced them to use more Indonesian language than English. This ‘passiveness’ slightly
correlates to the study by Suryati (2015) on classroom interaction between eighteen lower
secondary school teachers and their students. This study found that the teachers’ talk was
dominant in the classroom interaction. Suryati argued that this would potentially hinder students’
ability in communicating in English.

In both studies, students were interpreted as passive learners and teachers as active, who
had control over the class. This felt like a simplified rationale. The idea of being ‘active’ in the
class was understood simply as verbally expressing ideas. When students chose not to express
verbally their ideas, this seemed to be immediately taken as a form of passiveness. As previously mentioned, one of the challenges of English learning in Indonesia is that there is no direct need to be proficient in the language since it is not the language used in daily communication. Therefore, students’ reluctance was in a way understandable. In addition, there was no evidence that students would also be as nonverbally active if the class used a medium of their vernacular or national language.

The immediate interpretation that Indonesian students’ reluctance to verbally express their opinion means that they were passive learners might also be the impact of the way Asian students were perceived in the educational field, especially in the point of view of Western education. Kubota (2001) stated that Asian students have been perceived as “inclined to respect authority and maintain group harmony and interpersonal relationships rather than to seek truth through analytical and critical thinking” (p. 14). What needs to be understood is that such perception was not always based on “objective truth” but “discursively produced” by “another culture” (p. 32) even though this image was also not immediately wrong. With the long history of colonization, such perception might have also been engrained in Indonesians’ view of themselves because they have been accustomed to seeing from others’ perspectives.

As mentioned previously, Indonesians do not have a direct need to learn English because it is mostly not used in daily communication. This situation leads to a question of what can motivate Indonesians to learn the language because students’ motivations in learning English became important driving force to succeed in this mandatory subject. Studies found several factors that influenced Indonesian students’ motivation to learn English. First, teachers’ behavior (Maulana, Helms-Lorenz, & van de Grift, 2015) or attitude (Lamb, 2007) would influence students’ academic motivation and participation in class respectively. This is not a surprise with
how teachers are viewed as very prominent figures in education. However, this does not mean that students did not practice their own agency as learners. One of the highly motivated students in Lamb’s study showed that her love of English shaped her good perception of her teacher despite the contradictory views about that teacher from her peers. This might suggest that this particular student’s motivation was not really influenced by his/her teacher’s behavior. Another factor that influenced students’ motivation to learn English was related to how this language was perceived by Indonesian people in general. As mentioned earlier, English skills have been highly demanded in job markets. Students perceived it as the tool that can help them make a better future to gain assets or funds through professions (Bradford, 2007; Lamb, 2007). However, before they gained the assets, students also needed to already possess certain assets to provide them with learning media and additional courses to the one they had in regular classes, which could also influence these students’ motivation to learn (Lamb, 2007; Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Finally, the influence of peers could also be significant. The idea that actively using English in communication would be considered the sign of arrogance or a show-off had been found to affect the students’ motivation to learn or to practice their English skills (Lamb, 2007; Lamb & Coleman, 2008; Marcelino, 2008).

All of these problems in the Indonesian TEFL field imply that the country still has many home-works to do in order to reach the expected result without sacrificing their cultural value. One of them is by improving EFL teacher education.

**EFL Teacher Education**

Despite all the problems in Indonesian TEFL mentioned in the previous section, Indonesia had once been quite successful in creating school graduates who could use English in communication adequately. Sadtono (1997) mentioned that around the early 1900s, TEFL met its
goal because classes were not yet overcrowded (as cited in Mistar, 2005). This is due to the fact that schools in that era were only available for privileged children. However, Mistar added, when more students were enrolled, the problem of a qualified teacher shortage rose. Some trainings to create more qualified English teachers were then established, starting in around 1954, and in 1961, each of the colleges of teacher training was called “fakultas keguruan dan ilmu pendidikan (FKIP; the [college] of teacher training and education)” (p. 73).

In terms of curriculum, higher education receives more freedom than the K-12 education. The national standard of higher education declared in the decrees of Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 49/2014 and the decree about higher education core curriculum No. 45/U/2002 were created as guidelines. Based on these guidelines, higher education was expected to follow a Competency Based model. In the decree of Ministry of National Education, competency is defined as a set of smart, responsible actions taken by a person in order to be considered as capable by the society of completing certain tasks related to certain professions (p. 1). This indicates that each higher education program in the country has the freedom to translate the regulation into their own curriculum as long as they meet the national standard. A brief explanation of how the program that becomes the setting of my study translates this in its curriculum will be provided in the methodology chapter.

Unfortunately, there have not been many empirical studies conducted to see the nature of the EFL teacher education in Indonesia. However, the problems arising in the area of K-12 education might indicate that the teacher education programs offered across the country have not been very successful. Having said that, the current teacher education might give a slight hope for change in the future. There seems to be a growing movement to a new teaching approach, which is more student-centered (Zulfikar, 2013) and a slightly more critical belief about teaching
profession (Kuswandono, 2014). For example, Kuswandono, in his study on the motivation of preservice teachers to become English teachers, found that some preservice teachers were determined to become teachers despite their knowledge of the challenges they might face in the future because of their concern about the problems in the TEFL field that they also witnessed as students and in their environment. Yet, this was not a common case, and motivation could still be impaired by various issues. One of the issues was the preservice teachers’ efficacy belief about their teaching skill (Kuswandono, 2014) or their English language competence (Koesoemo & Shore, 2015). Part of Kuswandono’s findings showed that some preservice teachers struggled to commit to teaching course subjects because they still questioned their identity as teachers, and this resulted in their lack of teaching efficacy. The other study by Koesoemo and Shore (2015) found that many preservice teachers entered teacher education with limited command in English, and that influenced their motivation to use the language because of the fear of making mistakes. Even though many of these preservice teachers came to the program with a desire to be English teachers, the struggle they had to cope with during their education did not support their commitment to become good English teachers.

It is clear that more empirical findings are needed to study deeply the EFL teacher education in Indonesia with the lack of published research and the various issues perceived or found in its educational context. This study will be one of the endeavors to meet this goal by looking at what preservice teachers experienced, and their beliefs about English language teaching emerging from within the reflection of those experiences.

**Role-play to Accommodate Experiences in Learning and Teaching**

Using role-play as a teaching method in language learning and teaching is not new. There has been a myriad of studies conducted in the use of role-play in language education. However,
many of them were in the scope of child education. Its application in higher education is still relatively scarce. This is likely due to its “attendant emphasis on ‘play’ [that] is perhaps seen as more naturally suitable for learning environments in which play is still an integral part,” which in higher education context, is “perhaps viewed as inappropriate and/or superficial” (Sharp, 2014, pp. 20-21). However, it depends on how this activity is viewed and treated. As an instructional tool, role-play in a higher education context was mostly found to enhance oral communication (Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2010; Cho, 2015; Kumaran, 2010; Rahimy & Safarpour, 2012; Sağlamel & Kayaoğlu, 2013). However, if this method is implemented in teacher education programs, it might have more merit than language skills.

Sharp (2014), in his analysis on universities in Germany and the UK, which started to incorporate drama pedagogy in their curriculum, stated that this trend stems from the notion that drama in education functions with “double duty” in which “students practice and improve their spoken English through the familiar educational medium of drama, while learning more about the very field of drama-in-education itself, an area of immediate practical relevance to their future lives as teachers” (p. 20). It can be said that in this type of pedagogy, learning is done while doing. This is in line with what Pineau (2005) stated about the potential “kinetic and kinesthetic understanding of real and imagined lived experience” (p. 27). This is relevant to the context of my study, where participants formed their experiences through plays while at the same time learning the possibilities that can be relevant to their future teaching. To see how this process of learning from experiencing works, I will discuss two studies conducted in the past that corroborate this idea.

A drama training project was utilized with a group of in-service teachers for their “professional and personal development” (Beaven & Alvares, 2015, p. 5). None of the five
teachers participating in this training had ever received a formal drama education, but one had experience as a performer. The idea behind the project lay in the argument that there had been many evidences that drama-based activities were beneficial for the field of language teaching and learning, and the teacher was the person responsible to ensure its success in achieving the goal. Therefore, they needed to be trained on how to execute the method by being involved in it as a student. The project included visits to three European countries and workshops with local professional actors, observation and reflection on the performative activities in their home institution, and “collaborative writing of drama-based activities” to be peer reviewed (p. 9). As Pineau (2005) put it, a play enables a person to “learn from the inside” by being given the space for “full body involvement” and “keen reflection of the nature of [his/her] action” (p. 27). The result showed that these teachers grew empathy because they were put in the position of a learner again and learned what it meant to be one, which in turn made them reflect on their teaching and see what needed to be changed, such as keeping their teaching pace slow. In addition to this, because the training also took place in a foreign environment, these teachers also became aware of the different aspects involved in effective, expressive intercultural communication from their social survivals.

A slightly different self-transformation was shown in a preliminary study with EFL student teachers by Crutchfield (2015). This study took place in a Creative Writing course that Crutchfield taught. Even though the original goal of the course was to teach creative writing, Crutchfield added a public reading as the performative aspect that he was interested in investigating. The focus of this study was to see what was manifested in the students’ experience in performing. The descriptive data had shown a thick explanation that conclusively indicated “that the experience of performance, both in terms of the practical orientation toward it over time
and the final realization of it, induces a deep investment of emotion” (p. 27). What happened was that the students showed a journey from many negative feelings that they felt before the performance to positive feelings afterwards. Some of the students in this course initially rejected the idea of performing their work, but finally agreed to do it and succeeded in their performance. Performing the play that they had written seemed to be their “self-discovery and validation” (p. 28). What is also interesting in this study is the experience of the author. As the teacher that initiated the performance, at first Crutchfield believed that his students showed some hostility by being reluctant to perform. Crutchfield immediately interpreted his students’ behavior as the sign of rebellion and dislike. However, after he read their journals, he realized that he had misunderstood those behaviors and that he, with his years of experience in performance, failed to read the situation correctly. This means that even the teacher who did not experience the performance (or I would say he played the role of audience) also learned about himself, and this became a self-reflective experience for him as well. This way, there is a co-construction of knowledge taking place between the students and the teacher.

Aside from these studies, I would also like to mention one interesting theatrical performance that involves children playing their future selves as adults (Westphal, 2015). Even though this project was done with children, the concept of “children for adults” put the children in the position of adults (p. 135). They were treated as adults, which meant that they also had to take the performance seriously, were given the working environment that was normally preferred by the adult artists, and they had to understand what to do based on their understanding of themselves. Their understanding of themselves was important here because it would reflect on the way they performed their adult-self, which was the act that they would perform. In other words, this was not a children’s play. This was a “performance from their perspective as children
with their observations of themselves and others” (p. 136). This concept of playing the role of future self resonates to what my participants did in my class. Of course, there is a vivid difference in here. This particular performance was a real on-stage theatrical performance while my students’ stage was the classroom. However, what I would emphasize here is that in this form, performance becomes the medium of “interaction with oneself” (p. 140). This way, the performers were given a space to experiment in constructing their future selves, which, in a way, could give the sense of “self-empowerment” (p. 142), something that I also believed to have witnessed in my students, who were involved in the role-play based activities, which I prepared.

In this section, I have presented literature to support the argument that role-play can be a medium to facilitate certain experiences related to oneself, and that experience is an influential aspect in the formation of belief. I would not, however, argue that the experience, which my participants had in the role-play based activities discussed in this study formed or transformed their belief since they only took part in it for about two months and I did not do a preliminary study to investigate their initial beliefs before the performance.

**Connecting the Puzzle**

I have presented this literature review by focusing on three main foci, namely preservice teachers’ beliefs, Indonesian TEFL field, and role-play. The underlining argument that I draw from this literature is that the beliefs of preservice teachers about English language teaching can be formed in their educational experiences. The experiences might include the ones from their prior education (K-12) and the ones in the teacher education program, where experiences took place in classrooms of university courses and in teaching practicum contexts. The past studies indicated that a more in-depth study could give clearer answers of how and why certain beliefs were formed. Reflective practices were also mentioned to be beneficial for preservice teachers to
understand the way they thought about their experiences, and as a place where they thought about their thinking, and a research could be a place to implement such practice.

In addition to personal experiences, cultural values are also influential in shaping a preservice teachers’ beliefs. In this chapter, I presented the literature of how English teaching has been viewed in an Indonesian context to give insight into what might influence the participants’ beliefs about the teaching and learning that they experienced through classroom practices. The depiction of Indonesian culture in some of this literature however, was based on the authors’ opinion and not necessarily based on empirical evidence. Therefore, there is a possibility that my research resulted in emerging themes that might not always resonate to what had been conceptualized in limited literatures about Indonesian TEFL. Finally, the literature on the past studies on the use of role-play in English teaching serves as my argument that this particular teaching method is still rarely implemented for studies in the area of teacher education. In addition, the limited number of the related studies has shown that it can be beneficial for preservice teachers as learners and for future teachers who might use the method in their future teaching.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers in a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences both as learners and teachers in role-play based activities. The inquiry used participants’ reflective essays and a semi-structured interview. All data gained revolved around the following two research questions:

1. What are the beliefs about English language teaching implied in the five EFL preservice teacher’s reflection on their experiences in role-play based activities?
2. How do experiences in the first teaching practicum of these five EFL preservice teachers contribute to their understanding of the experiences in those role-play based activities?

To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, a detailed methodology was prepared and implemented. This chapter will present the research design, study context, data source, data collection procedure, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical issues, and a summary of the methodology.

Research Design

This study uses the design of a teacher research, which Brown (1999) defined as “a method of gaining insight from hindsight” (qtd. in Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2001, p. 5), and serves as my effort to understand my teaching practice through the lenses of my students. Teacher research is also known under different names such as “teacher inquiry” and “action research” (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2001, p. 4). Teacher research could “be used by teachers to untangle some of the complexity that occurs in the profession, raise teachers’ voices in discussions of
educational reform” (p. 2). This type of research, unlike the other ones, will provide the view of the insiders, namely the “teachers (not outside researchers) and engages teachers in the design, data collection, and interpretation of data around their question” (p. 4). In the end, this research can also be the support for my “professional growth” (p. 5) because the result of this research could be my “vehicle for learning and reform” (p. 5).

Elliot (1988) stated that this study design consists of “reflection and action” (as cited in Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2001, p. 4). Later, Dana and Yendol-Silva added that teacher research is conducted by “posing questions, […] collecting data to gain insights, […] analyzing the data along with reading relevant literature, making changes in practice based on new understandings developed during the inquiry, and sharing findings with others” (p. 5). This study serves as the first step, namely the reflection, toward learning what action I might be able to take in the future with similar teaching practices. Therefore, the change making was not yet a part of the current project.

**Study Context**

**Setting**

This study was conducted with preservice teachers in an English Education Department in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, which was founded in 2010 and operates on the ground of a Competency Based Curriculum. Based on the 2014 Curriculum, the program aims at creating graduates who have pedagogic competency, professional competency, personal competency, and social competency.

In the first academic year, all courses are skill-based. In the second semester of the first year, one of the compulsory subjects is English for Career Development, which aims at preparing...

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*All information in this section is based on the 2014 curriculum and the 2014 version syllabus of the related class. The curriculum is not mentioned to protect the anonymity of the participants and the context of the study.*
students for employment and entrepreneurship. The materials and the assignments revolve around job interviews and developing a business plan. This particular subject is divided into two classes; one focuses on listening and speaking skills, and one focuses on reading and writing skills. Both classes are interconnected. The reading and writing class teaches students to write business and formal letters, documents for a job interview such as CV and cover letter, and to prepare a business plan proposal. Meanwhile, the listening and speaking class focuses on preparing students for an oral job interview and the presentation of a business plan.

The class that I was assigned to teach was the listening and speaking class for English for Career Development. The class met once per week for 16 weeks and lasted for 200 minutes per meeting because it was a four-credit class. The first half of the semester was dedicated to preparing students for a job interview, and the next half of the semester focused on preparing a business plan presentation. For this study, I focused on the set of activities that the students had to do during the first half of the semester (8 meetings/weeks). The role play was performed in the eighth meeting after preparatory activities in the previous weeks. The set of activities are summarized as follows:

**Self-inventory.** During the first three class meetings, the activities focused on understanding the nature of working and facing a job interview. Students were asked to develop a personal inventory, which meant that they should ask themselves the basic question of who they are. This included their strengths and weaknesses that might support or hinder their chosen career. The activities were conducted individually and in groups. From these activities, students were expected to develop a better understanding of themselves through their own self-analysis and feedbacks from others (peers, family members, etc.), which then would be used as the guideline to decide the characteristics of the role that they played in a job-interview simulation.
**Questions.** During the fourth and fifth meetings, the discussion focused on the questions commonly faced in a job interview. I brought in several common job interview questions that I found from a variety of sources (mostly in the form of videos) and discussed them with the students in the class. Because a job interview is not an exact science, I provided the questions to encourage discussion from the students’ perspectives. For example, the discussion was about why such questions were given, what was the best way to answer the questions, and the implications of certain answers. I also shared my knowledge and experiences as a person who used to be a job seeker and a gatekeeper. In addition, if in a class there were students who had prior job interview experience, I asked them to share it with their peers.

During these two meetings, there were short impromptu role-play activities that the students participated in. Half of the class (around 20 students) played the role of interviewers and half of them played the role of job seekers (interviewees). The interviewers were divided into groups of three or four, and the group represented on an imagined company, which did not have to be related to education. Then, they told the class about their company and about the available position. This information would be used by the prospective interviewees to prepare themselves for the interview. The interviewer groups were given time to discuss with their fellow interviewers in the same group what kind of employee they were looking for and to create guideline questions. Meanwhile, the interviewees prepared their self-inventory that they could use to promote themselves in the interview based on the positions for which they applied.

By the time the interviewer groups were ready, interviewees started to visit each group to be interviewed. When they finished the interview with one company, they moved on to the other companies. After about 30 minutes, I stopped the activity, and asked both parties about their experiences. Finally, I asked the interviewers to choose the person they would hire, and the
interviewees to choose which group they thought had the most prepared questions, the best interview, and the reasons underlying their choices.

**Presentation.** A job interview is not only about answering questions and being able to promote oneself. It involves other things such as mannerisms, appropriate grooming, and cultural and professional etiquette. To cover these other areas of the interview process, the students searched in various sources (books, internet, personal experience, experienced acquaintances, etc.) about these areas and presented them in a classroom presentation in groups of three to four. This assignment was explained in the first class meeting when I discussed the syllabus. Thus, students had enough time to gather information and to prepare their presentations. The topic of the presentation was “the dos and don’ts in a job interview.” I did not have to explain how to deliver a formal presentation because the students had learned it in other classes since their first semester in the program. However, I gave them tips on making good presentation slides. The students would share their information in a normatively formal presentation, but they could be creative when creating their presentation, so it would interesting without being too informal. Some groups decided to provide actual examples, such as showing a good versus bad outfit, and how one should shake hands. After each presentation, the audience had the chance to ask questions or provide comments. My position here was to give feedback on the students’ performances and the content of the presentations by relating it to my own experience.

**Role-play.** From the beginning of the semester, students were asked to look for a job vacancy from any source. They were free to choose the job of their choice, but a teaching position was suggested. This vacancy became the topic of their role-play. Based on the knowledge that they had gained from their teacher, their own research, and discussion in class, the students prepared their role-play in pairs. They had the freedom to translate their prior
knowledge to the roles that they played in this activity. They also created their own dialogue and decided how the play went. The pair would take turns as both an interviewer and interviewee. The only audience in these plays was me. In these two plays, they performed the role of their imagined selves in the future either as a job seeker or a person assigned to interview a future employee. As interviewee, they should use their analysis on the aspects pertaining to their identity. For example, they could choose what time they imagined the interview happened. If they decided to apply for the job as a fresh graduate, it meant their experience in teaching that they used to promote themselves should meet the logical calculation of their teaching experience. Hence, they should not say they have 10 years of experience in teaching. One of my participants told me that some students chose to be a highly experienced job seeker to elevate their profile, which she seemed to find annoying.

**Teaching Practicum**

The main focus of this study was the set of role-play based activities that I facilitated in my class. However, because the participants were also having their first teaching practicum, and they also mentioned some experiences of their teaching assignments and the use of role-play based activities, I decided to provide the nature of the practicum program in the study context.

Teaching practicums in this department were assigned the first semester and lasted until their eighth semester. Therefore, teaching practicums were assigned for four years, so that students gained as much experience in a school as possible and would be familiar with the school system. All teaching practicums were held in primary and secondary schools. In the first year, the semester is dedicated to observing the classes and teaching activities of the mentor teacher. Students are required to take notes on their experiences and compose a report at the end of the semester. In the second semester, they start their first teaching assignment. Because most of the
students do not have any formal teaching experience, they are usually assigned to teach extracurricular courses, and are not required to grade assignments. However, each school differs. This depends on the policy of the school, the principal, and the mentor teacher. When the data for this study was taken, participants were in their second year. This means that they had already attended classes that taught them pedagogical theory, namely Principles of Teaching and Learning, and Language Learning and Acquisition. Therefore, this might influence the way they analyzed their experience.

**Sampling Criteria**

This study used purposeful sampling. Therefore, I “intentionally” selected individuals and the site of my study “to understand the central phenomenon” (Cresswell, 2010, p. 206). I chose this sampling strategy because my context was very specific and the site of my study was also very particular. In addition, because I wished to “describe some subgroup in depth” (p.207), I used a homogeneous sampling. The characteristics of my participants were as follows:

- Participants were preservice teachers enrolled as students in an English Education Department, who had attended the listening and speaking class of English for Career Development and completed the role-play assignment in 2014.
- Participants were all of Indonesian nationality and had never lived in other countries.
- All participants had conducted their first teaching practicum when the data were collected.

Although all of these participants showed homogeneity, there were several characteristics that made them differ from each other.

- Participants were male and female students.
- They come from different parts of Indonesia, which might influence their perspectives.

- They belonged to different classes. The 2014 cohort was divided into five classes (Class A, B, C, D, and E). However, the participants were only from Classes A, B, and D. Classes C and E did not respond to my offer to volunteer.

- Four of them had no experience in teaching except for the experience in the practicum. They were assigned in different schools with different mentor teachers. One participant did have experience with private tutoring.

**Data Source**

The data for this study were collected from the participants’ reflective essays and interviews.

**Reflective Essay**

The participants were asked to write a personal reflection about what they experienced in the past during their involvement in the role-play activities. They were given about two weeks to write their reflection. Although the time range might not be adequate, it was hoped that this would give them enough time to recall their experiences in 2014. A guideline was given to help them compose their reflection (see Appendix C). The correspondence was done through emails.

**Interview**

This method of data collection was used “to uncover the meaning structures that participants use to organize their experiences and make sense of their worlds” (Hatch, 2002, p. 91). The interview was semi structured. This means that I used “guiding questions” (see Appendix D) and I was “open to following the leads of informants and probing into areas that arose during interview interactions” (p. 94). I used the interview to confirm what I gathered from
the participants’ reflective essays and to gain more insights to enrich my data. Because my participants were in Indonesia at the time of data collection and I was in the US, the interviews were conducted using video calls. All interviews were conducted via Skype and recorded. It is important to note that the interview with Participant 1 experienced some technical problems, so that it was not recorded properly. As a result, I had to redo the interview.

As Hatch (2002) stated, in an interview, “[q]uestions should use language that is familiar to informants” (p. 106). Therefore, all interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Language), which was the language chosen by participants. However, when they were given freedom to write their reflections in either Bahasa Indonesia or English, all participants chose to write in English.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The data were collected through the following procedure. First, I contacted the chief of each cohort to help me connect to all students of the 2014 batch. Eventually, one or two students chose to participate. Then I contacted the participants individually by email to send the consent form. The signed consent forms were submitted to one of my colleagues in Indonesia. After the participants signed the form, I sent all participants guidelines for writing their reflections. After they sent their reflections, I scheduled an interview with them. The interview was recorded and transcribed immediately after the interviews were conducted. The transcription was conducted verbatim. However, in the data chosen as examples in the findings, fillers were eliminated. In the data presentation, I added words or phrases to improve the clarity of the sentences or words. The added words or phrases were put in parentheses and brackets. The parentheses ‘(words/phrases)’ were used to add words to help clarify a sentence. I mostly used this for missing object or verb.
The brackets [words/phrases] were used for similar expressions or synonyms to help clarify the meaning of a sentence.

Data Analysis

The data collected from reflective essays and interviews were then coded and analyzed based on the emerging themes pertaining to experiences in the Career Development class or the teaching practicum class. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) defined codes as “labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (p. 71). The coding process was conducted in several cycles until I was assured that all emerging themes had been included. This phase was a challenging part for me because the data on experiences sometimes overlapped or contained more than one belief. Therefore, the coding system that I used was “simultaneous coding” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 80). According to Saldaña, this type of coding can be used when the data show complexity and can have more than one meaning so that multiple codes are necessary. My data showed this tendency.

In conducting the simultaneous coding, I first highlighted the stories in the data that pertained to the experiences of the participants. This included their observation of what happened in class, their story of completing tasks, their feelings, their perceptions about what they saw and felt, and the reasons for their decisions that inferred certain beliefs about teaching. After that, I copied the chunks of the highlighted parts and put them in a table. The table contained a column where I put phrases that indicated certain categories. For example, the category of “teacher”. This category will be filled with experiences that I consider as depicting beliefs about being a teacher. When I found that participants’ foci were still varied, I added a sub category. After I finished the coding, I rechecked my core data again to make sure nothing important was left unrecognized. Once I finished coding and started to present my findings, I translated some parts
of my coded data to English and asked a fellow Indonesian MA TESOL student, who is also an English teacher in Indonesia to check my translation and give his feedback to improve it.

**Trustworthiness and Ethical Issues**

To validate the results in this study, I collected the data from two sources: namely, participants’ reflective essays and interviews. By having both data sources, I could gain richer data. In addition, the past literatures also played a role in my data interpretation, so that my analysis was not solely based on my own personal judgment. This way, I hoped to be able to “analyze data in a manner that avoids misstatements, misinterpretations, or fraudulent analysis” (Lichtman, 2010, p. 57).

Before this study was conducted, I had obtained approval from the institutional review board (IRB). To protect my participants’ privacy, I used pseudonyms in place of the participants’ real names. In addition to this, confidentiality was taken seriously in this study. The data collection and report were only conducted with the consent of the participants. A consent form was sent to participants prior to the data collection.

**Summary**

In order to explore the beliefs and attitudes of Indonesian EFL preservice teachers, I conducted a qualitative study. By selecting several preservice teachers, I collected my data using their personal reflections and interviews. The information I gained from this data collection was based on the experience that the participants had during the role-playing activities that they were involved in a speaking and listening class. To ensure the trustworthiness of my findings, I used two methods in collecting data, explained my positionality as a researcher and used prior research as a way to compare my findings.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. This study aims at investigating the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers in a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences as learners and teachers in role-play based activities. The background context of this study was the class I taught in 2014. Two research questions were composed in order to meet the goals of this study:

1. What are the beliefs about English language teaching implied in the five EFL preservice teacher’s reflection on their experiences in role-play based activities?
2. How do experiences in the first teaching practicum of these five EFL preservice teachers contribute to their understanding of the experiences in those role-play based activities?

In presenting the result of the study, I will categorize my findings based on emerging themes related to participants’ beliefs about English language teaching. The experiences that the participants had in the class as students and in the teaching practicum as teachers will be explained to show the data where these beliefs were inferred from. As a note, all beliefs presented in this study are the ones derived or concluded from the participants’ experiences in applying some ideas that they believed and how they worked with them.

There are three core themes serving as the main categories of the participants’ beliefs, namely, beliefs about being a teacher, beliefs about lessons, and beliefs about school culture. Because each participant has unique views on specific things, each category also holds subcategories. Most beliefs were not explicitly stated by participants but they were elicited based on the broader assumptions about the nature of being a teacher, of a lesson, and a school culture.
In addition to that, one experience may imply more than one belief. Therefore, some categories might be overlapped and interconnected, which will be discussed in after the discussions of the three categories. My focus in categorizing is not to distinctively dichotomize beliefs, but to explore the way participants made meaning of what they saw and experienced. The categorization serves as a technical way to see each belief more clearly. The categories are as follows.

1. Beliefs about being a teacher
   a. Belief about the expectation of what a teacher should be like
   b. Belief about teacher’s creativity
   c. Belief about teacher as a role-model

2. Beliefs about lessons
   a. Belief about the need of clear instruction and adequate preparation for students
   b. Belief about practicing knowledge
   c. Belief about group work
   d. Belief about adaptation in applying teaching method in different context

3. Beliefs about school culture
   a. Belief about grades as teacher’s power tool
   b. Belief about teacher hierarchy

Even though the contextual settings of this study is the listening and speaking class I taught and the classes that participants taught in their teaching practicum, I should not claim that the beliefs presented here are merely influenced by experiences in both settings. As explained in the methodology chapter, participants still hold unique backgrounds, conducted their teaching practicum at different schools, and also attended classes that taught them about pedagogical
theory the semester after the class that I taught, which may influence the way they viewed their experiences.

**Beliefs About Being a Teacher**

One of the topics that clearly appeared in the participants’ reflective essays and interviews is their views related to teachers. The ideas mostly revolved around the expectation of what a teacher should be like and how it would affect the students’ learning and beliefs about teacher’s creativity. These views emerged in their reflections of what they experienced in the role-play based activities and teaching practicum in their reflective essays and interviews.

**Beliefs About the Expectation of What a Teacher Should Be Like**

Each participant had his/her idea of what attitude or behavior constituted a good teacher. The participants believed that a teacher should always be well-prepared, have a good self-control, have good discipline, and be motivating. These ideas were implied in their reflections on themselves, what they took from a teacher that they considered to be a role-model in class, and the success or failure they felt in their role-play performance.

Participant two, Budi, for example, shared his experience in performing his role as a job seeker. When asked had the role-play been real if he believed that he would get the job he answered no. His reason was based on what happened in the role-play.

… soalnya, soalnya bagi saya, bagi saya, ketika menjawab (pertanyaan) cara menanggulangi weaknesses, atau cara menanggulangi weaknessesnya itu kurang, kurang kayak kurang unwell-prepared. Maksudnya saat itu, saya tuh unwell-prepared banget.

(Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)
...because, because I think, I think, when I gave the answer (to the question) about how to handle weaknesses, or how to handle the weaknesses, I did not do it properly. It felt ill-prepared. I mean, at that time, I was really ill-prepared. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

As explained in Chapter Three, before the role-play performance, students learned about the best possible ways of answering certain questions frequently appearing in a job interview. Therefore, they performed with a certain standard of what a good answer means. However, reflecting back on his experience in performing, Budi believed that his answers did not meet his standard and this implied the idea that if he had been better prepared, he would have gotten the job he applied for. The job that he applied for in this role-play was a teaching position. Later in the interview, he also mentioned that he believed being a teacher would require the same manner because students could ask different questions any time and a teacher should always be well-prepared for that. This view was also shared by another participant, Tuti. In her interview, she stated that she believed strongly that she would have gotten the teaching job she applied for had the job-interview role-play been real. Her reason was that she had done everything that was suggested. Even though both participants had contrasting feelings about what they experienced in their role-play, the underlining belief that was implied was the same. Since it was related to professionalism, and the role they performed was a teaching position applicant, the way they talked about their experience in that performance might also depict their belief about what a teacher should be like, which resonates to the belief that a teacher should be well-prepared.

Another example of a belief in this category from participant one, Wati, was slightly different. Wati talked about her self-reflection, her discussion with her peers about her strengths and weaknesses, and her experience in performing her role-play, which she connected to her idea
of being a teacher. In the discussion with peers in the ‘self-inventory’
activity, she encountered multiple contestations from peers about her habit of losing focus when she speaks and her tendency to exaggerate her tone. She indicated that at first she did not think they were weaknesses until many peers said that her mannerism in speaking annoyed them or cost them in a way. In her interview, she stated her analogy that if she annoyed her peers when she talked to them in a certain manner such as losing focus on her talk and exaggerating her speech, she would also annoy her students if she did the same thing. Even though she believed in what her peers said, she seemed to still find it hard to focus on what she should do. She shared her experience when she found her improvisation went a little bit too far and lost focus of her performance.


Because every last word, last word, which I said sometimes influenced what I had to say next. Therefore, (my words) developed uncontrollably. So they went everywhere. That’s why, my friends always reminded me. Lately, they always reminded me. Especially Budi and Lina. (They told me), “Just focus! Focus!” (Wati, September 11, 2015, interview)

All the participants told me that they improvised in their role-play performance. However, in Wati’s case, she could not follow the plot of the script that she had made with her partner, Lina. The agreement was to improvise the words but not the plot of the dialogue. Because her partner seemed to have a more limited vocabulary, she could not follow Wati’s lead

10 The detail of the activity is explained in methodology section in ‘study context’
in the conversation, which led her to a less successful performance. The struggle that Wati’s partner showed through her body language made her realize her mistake of improvising ‘too much’, so she made an effort to come back to the agreed plot. Despite her success in returning to the intended plot, she still received protests from her partner and a classmate who recognized her habit. Because of her guilt about going off-script and the contestation she received, she could see this as her weakness. Because Wati had pointed out that she believed that the way her peers perceived her could also reflect how her students perceive her, it could be inferred that she also believed that the ability to focus, along with the moderation of tone in speaking, is part of her expectation of what a teacher should be like.

All of the examples above presented beliefs that were related to direct physical experiences in the performances. The experience might be very personal, but it also seemed to reflect their broader idea about being a teacher.

**Beliefs About Teacher’s Creativity**

The term ‘creative’ here is borrowed from one of participants’ exact word to explain how different methods of teaching could motivate students in class.

Participant four, Tuti, shared her feeling of being involved in different activities such as watching videos, writing self-reflections after some class meetings, presenting in groups, and having discussions with peers. All of these activities were part of the role-play based activities that I facilitated in the career development class that I talk about in this study. She mentioned that different activities helped her enjoy learning more and gain more understanding about herself. In addition, she later explained that in her previous education (K-12), the classes she attended were more teacher-centered and the activities were more monotonous. Therefore, the type of learning where she was given more personal agency to gain knowledge left a strong
impression on her. Experiencing two contrasting feelings of being involved in different styles of teaching gave her the space to analyze which one provided her with a positive feeling of learning. This resonates to what participant two, Budi, experienced in his teaching practicum.


At that time, the kids looked bored. In one class, one class, actually there were two people in control. There were two students\(^\text{11}\) who took control. But when my friend and I lost words, for example, or we had no material to teach anymore, or our students started to get noisy, I drew a picture. I actually had drawn it at home. I had prepared it at night, and in the morning I brought it to class. My students really liked my picture, the one I drew with my hands instead of the one I created in Microsoft and printed. It’s because apparently my elementary school students also liked drawing pictures. After that, I put

\(^{11}\) Students here means preservice teachers
arrows, arrows, and numbers and I asked them to match the numbers with the pictures. For example, which one is ‘hand’ in English, and they would answer by mentioning number two is N, number three is A, etc. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

What Budi shared shows his pleasant experience where he believed that his artistic skills, which I included under the creativity category, helped him and his peers handle noisy classes in times of need. This is a boost to what he already believed about his efficacy because he could sense how others reacted to his works. In addition to this, Budi also mentioned in his interview that this particular skill would help him teach certain types of learners.

Nah, pertama yang visual (learner). Itu tuh mereka senang melihat. Kalau dia tuh melihat sesuatu yang interesting, maka dia tuh akan lebih suka untuk belajar dan lebih gampang untuk mendapatkan materi yang akan saya berikan kepada mereka. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

Well, the first one is the visual (learners). They like to see. If he sees something interesting, he will enjoy learning more and will receive the materials that I will prepare for them more easily. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

In addition, when Budi was asked whether he would use visual media all the time, he stated that he would not because he believed that it would cause students to be bored, despite his belief in his artistic skill. He later mentioned that he had also used songs in his teaching.

Even though both examples showed experiences from different perspectives, the first from the perspective of a student, and the second from the perspective of a teacher, the same line can be drawn related to the participants’ belief that a teacher’s creativity can support teaching and learning in the classroom.
Beliefs About Teacher as a Role-Model

From the interview and reflective essays my participants wrote, I can see how my participants often mentioned their teacher’s behavior as something that would influence students’ behavior. They seemed to indicate that a teacher really should care about how he/she behaved. Therefore, one theme that I could see from some of their experiences is that they believed that a teacher is a role-model and that students will always look up to them.

Participant four, Tuti, wrote in her essay about the influence of the teacher’s behavior in a class that she tended to copy.

She is the most discipline lecturer I have ever had. It makes us more discipline also. She never comes late to come to the class and she never had miss class [cancelled class].

…

First, to be a good teacher, I have to be discipline. Don’t be late so that our students will behave like we do. (Tuti, June 29, 2015, reflective essay)

Both excerpts from the essay showed how Tuti learned to be punctual because of the example that her teacher showed. However, some decisions that I made in class, as her teacher, might also have influenced what she believed about students. In the Career Development class that I taught I made a deal with the students in the beginning of the semester about punctuality. The deal was that when the students were late more than fifteen minutes, the consequence was that they may not sign the attendance list, which means that they would be administratively considered as absent. For the sake of fairness, I was also included in this lateness policy. My offer was to give them one extra point to their grade every time I was late. The students were given the freedom to negotiate, but they tended to agree with the deal. From Tuti’s essay, it
seemed like being in a classroom where a teacher was not the absolute power left a strong impression, and later in her reflection she mentioned the following.

Don’t blame our students if they are late to come to the class or late to submit the assignment. That’s because we as the teacher also sometimes late. (Tuti, June 29, 2015, reflective essay)

Similar to the idea that teachers are role-models, another participant, Iwan, shared his observation of what happened to his peers. In his interview, he mentioned that his peers seemed to change. He said that his peers took some rules more seriously than they used to because they saw the consistency of their teacher in applying the rules. Later Iwan stated that if a teacher only came to class and taught without taking the rules seriously, students would also do the same. This take on what he observed and how it made him feel shows that Iwan believed in the notion that teachers are role-models and that whatever they do, students will tend to follow.

Beliefs About Lesson

The term ‘lesson’ here is used to cover aspects that help a teacher conduct a teaching and learning activities in a classroom. In this section, the discussion will involve the topic of instruction, practices, group works, and adaptation.

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the class that I taught as the setting of this study involved a variety of activities. The activities consisted of the combination of lecture and independent learning in the form of tasks. Most activities allowed students to work with their peers. In addition to that, participants also used some similar activities in their teaching practicum. The combination of both experiences of being involved in these activities, both as students and teachers, created certain experiences that indicated participants’ beliefs in the
necessity of clear instruction and adequate preparation time for students, practices, group works, and adaptation of teaching in different contexts.

**Beliefs About the Need for Clear Instruction and Adequate Preparation for Students**

The experiences that the participants shared were related to their performance in the job-interview simulation and their experience in applying role-play in teaching. Some of their shared stories showed that they considered instruction and students’ preparation as the keys to the quality of learning. For example, a clear instruction and an adequate time to prepare for the role-play helped the participants handle their nervousness during their performance (Tuti, July 1, 2015, interview), compose the script of the dialogue (Lisa, July 1, 2015, interview), and stay focus on the planned role-play plot (Wati, September 11, 2015, interview). This is in line to what participants two and three experienced as presented in the following excerpts.

Budi is one of the four participants who had the chance to use role-play in teaching. He shared his experience in his teaching practicum.

… for example, my student felt more comfortable when given a case, a case. Then he played the role, did a role-play. They felt more comfortable in performing the role-play than when I only explained (the lesson) on the board. They would feel sleepy. When I gave them the role-play assignment, they were enthusiastic. They really made an effort to speak because when some students made mistakes, the others would laugh. That was what made them enthusiastic. They would prepare themselves well before the day of their performance because they were afraid of being laughed at by their friends. So, that’s their motivation to be well-prepared. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

It can be inferred from this excerpt that Budi believed that giving time for students to prepare for a role-play was necessary because it could help them avoid embarrassment from peers. This reflected Budi’s observation on his students’ behavior where the aspect of audience became the motivating factor to perform well because otherwise, it could be a face-threatening situation. This belief was shared by another participant, Iwan, when he talked about his experience in applying role-play in his teaching practicum.

At first, in his essay, Iwan shared his feeling about his performance in the job-interview simulation. He stated that in that performance, he “felt confident because” he “already knew how to face the job interview”, including matters pertaining to “the appearance, the answers of the questions” and so on (Iwan, June 30, 2015, reflective essay). In his teaching practicum, he decided to use role-play to teach. However, what happened was not as he expected. He stated that his students tended to be shy to speak. He perceived the reason for his students’ reluctance to speak as follows.

Iwan: Mungkin saya harus lebih membuat siswa untuk tertarik dulu apa yang akan saya sampaikan dulu gitu Miss, agar siswanya memperhatikan saya.
Researcher: Emang sebelumnya nggak diterangkan?

Iwan: Ya cuman saya suruh maju aja (dan bilang ke mereka), “Kamu tolong baca dialog ini”.

(Iwan, July 10, 2015, interview)

Iwan: Maybe, I had to make them interested first in what I’d like to say, Miss\textsuperscript{12}, so they would pay attention to me.

Researcher: Did you not explain it to them first?

Iwan: Well, I just asked them to step to the front of the class (and tell them), “Please read this dialogue.”

(Iwan, July 10, 2015, interview)

From what Iwan explained, the role-play that he used for his students was an impromptu one that resulted in students’ lack of readiness in performing it, which Iwan seemed to not expect. At first, he believed that he was confident with his role-play because he was given clear instruction and adequate preparation, but he did not apply that to his students. As a result, he witnessed his students’ reaction that differed from what he hoped for when he prepared the role-play activity for them. Iwan then seemed to connect his own experience in performing role-play and his experience in using a role-play to teach and made a conclusion to see the rationale behind different results.

Beliefs About Practicing Knowledge

Because the class the participants took part in was a class labelled as a ‘speaking and listening’ class, the activities were all prepared to encourage students to speak and use their oral communication skills. They had to practice speaking in English for example in discussions,

\textsuperscript{12} In Indonesia, it is common to call a female English teacher either in K-12 or college education by “Miss”.
presentations, role-plays, and even practice applying for real part-time job opportunities. This aspect of practice seemed to be the one participants perceived as important in their learning. I will discuss two examples of different takes on the meaning of practices for the participants.

First, Tuti, participant four, shared her experience in having discussions with her peers and her experience in asking her students to have discussions in class. This is what she wrote in her essay:

In her class, I also improved my speaking. Sometimes she allowed us to discuss with other friend to know and compare our opinion about her lecture. I remember when I practice speaking with my groups, it was about how I wanted to be. I shared my mind to my friends that I wanted to be an English teacher. I told about my strengths and weaknesses. My friends also gave me some suggestion and support me to be teacher for kids. That was unforgettable moment, because I also knew how my friends judge me. From that discussion also I finally knew how my friend wanted to be and what they strengths and weaknesses. (Tuti, June 29, 2015, reflective essay)

In this excerpt, Tuti expressed how important the discussions she had with her friends were because it not only forced her to use her skills in communicating orally in English, but also allowed her to gain a new understanding in her friendship. Later, she told me that she also asked her students to have discussions in class as her way to help students improve their speaking skills:

… di situ, setiap siswa tuh lebih dikasih kesempatan untuk berbicara itu, (memberikan) pendapat mereka itu, sama apa yang ada dalam pikiran mereka itu.
Tuti’s experience in applying the method of group discussion in teaching her students seemed to not go as she expected because some students kept quiet and did not verbally participate in the discussion. However, it seemed that the good impression of this method did not immediately evaporate. She just decided to find a way for it to work by giving persuasive encouragement to urge students’ participation.

The second example of how a participant made meaning of practice is shown by participant five, Lisa, in a different way that is outside the context of a classroom and beyond language skills. She wrote about her experiences after learning a few common questions in job interviews, which she described as difficult to answer:

Thus, after knowing these well-known questions on the interview, I directly observed myself as well as I tried to find out my uniqueness, so that I won’t be refused whenever I apply for something. Also, the bravest thing I did after learning this was I looked for a

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13 In Indonesia, some people replace the pronoun “I” with their own name to show politeness to the person they are talking to.
job which required us to have an interview, yes… actually, we were instructed by the teacher to do so, yet it increased my audacity in doing something new and useful. I bought and asked my friends for newspapers to look for a job on it, and I found it, being a teacher at English course … Soon, I applied for that job and I was invited to a student’s house to meet their parents to arrange the schedule, and so on. Sadly, it was disappointing because it wasn’t like I expected. However, I accepted the job and worked there for two months….. Even though, it was not like I thought; having a real interview, yet I have gotten guts in socializing and learning more English in order to be looked like a knowledgeable future teacher. (Lisa, June, 12, 2015, reflective essay)

The excerpt shows how Lisa tried to practice what she had learnt in class, content-wise. She did not merely focus on her language skills. Practice also meant trying to implement the knowledge in real-life situations. Further, in her essay, Lisa also wrote about her determination to succeed in a job interview by applying to different places for volunteering opportunities on the campus. She applied with a student exchange program, where she failed, and to volunteer for an international event, where she finally succeeded in getting a position. She explained how she still used some knowledge that she gained from her Career Development classes. Her determination to keep trying regardless her failure in several attempts showed her belief that practice makes for good learning.

**Beliefs About Group-Work**

Almost all of the role-play based activities discussed in this study were done in groups. Because of that, students had the opportunity to learn to work with others. Each participant shared unique experiences. In this section, I will take two examples of two participants’ experiences and the beliefs about group-works implied from their stories.
In the presentation about the dos and don’ts in a job interview, Budi had to work with two classmates, and one of them was often absent from class. Since the beginning, as their teacher, I had told students that the presentation was the responsibility of the whole members of the group, and they needed to find a solution if not all members took the responsibility well. Budi shared his experience of ensuring the success of the presentation in his group:

Jadinya dalam satu kelompok itu misalnya, kita tuh semua, setiap, setiap member, harus menguasai (power point) slidenya. Jadi nggak ada pembagian-pembagian ini. Jadinya ketika ada yang nggak masuk, kita sudah siap (untuk presentasi) gitu. Biar jadi expert.

(Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

So, in one group, for example, all of us, every member, must master the (power-point) slides. There was no work distribution. Therefore, when one member did not show up, we would still be ready (to do the presentation). It will make us an expert.

(Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

The concept of taking care of the responsibility of others who abandoned theirs for the sake of group’s performance seemed to not only apply to this particular situation. Later in the interview, Budi mentioned that something similar happened to one of his friends in their role-play performances. One of the students did not show up because of a particular reason. Seeing that his friend lost his/her partner, Budi volunteered to replace the absent student. This resonates to his belief about a group work where somebody eventually had to do a cover even though in this case, it was not his group, but others’. This might be due to his strong belief about group work or his empathy.

Another participant shared her experience in a group work, which implies her belief about using it in teaching. Participant four, Tuti, stated that in her presentation group, she
encountered difficult peers to work with. She stated that her two group mates were both adamant and each believed that he/she had the best idea. Among her group members, Tuti saw herself as the only who could be flexible. Finally, she decided to be the peacekeeper and accommodate everybody’s opinion. With this experience, she later stated that her experience of working in a group is a good way to learn respect. In her teaching practicum, she also asked her students to work in groups with the goal of teaching them about respect for others’ opinions.

**Beliefs About Adaptation in Applying Teaching Method in Different Context**

It is expected that all my participants believed that their oral communication skills were they felt improving as a result of attending the Career Development class because it was a ‘speaking and listening’ class. However, they also stated that they learnt some grammatical aspects such as vocabulary mastery and sentence composition.

In his interview, participant three, Iwan, stated that through role-plays, he learnt about the degree of formality of some words and sentence compositions. He independently learned them from the sources he gained to prepare the script for the role-plays because grammar was not taught directly in this class. He stated it helped him learn although he did not like English. This linguistic knowledge improvement became part of the reason he used role-plays to teach. He expected his students to learn certain language expressions from playing the roles he prepared for them, especially how to pronounce certain words. The following excerpt shows his expected lesson to learn through a role-play:

Iwan: Ya kemampuan tata bahasanya Iggrisnya, Miss. Saya ingin mereka tuh tahu gimana cara misalnya ngucapin “Selamat pagi” tuh gimana, terus jawabnya gimana. …

Researcher: Oh, jadi cenderung ke oral skill ya? Jadi speaking?

Iwan: Ya. Sama pronunciation-nya mereka juga agak nggak jelek sih ya, kurang baik.
Researcher: Itu Iwan membenarkan atau membiarkan dulu?

Iwan: Ya, saya dulu membenarkan sih. Tapi cuman kayak membaca “bicycle” itu cara bacanya gimana, kayak gitu (Iwan, July 10, 2015, interview).

Iwan: Their English grammar knowledge, Miss. I wanted them to know, for example, how to say “Good morning” and how to respond to it.

Researcher: Oh, did it tend to be an oral skill? Speaking?

Iwan: Yes. And also, their pronunciation was, well, not bad, but not so good either.

Researcher: Did you correct them?

Iwan: Yes, I did. But it was only, for example, how to pronounce “bicycle” (Iwan, July 10, 2015, interview).

First of all, there was an indication that Iwan believed in the idea of a ‘good’ pronunciation, which his students had not showed yet. Second, it can be seen that Iwan believed that role-plays could be a tool to learn some linguistic aspects. However, it seems that he had different expectation of what his students should learn from what he had learnt himself as a student. This is shown from the examples of the expression and word he gave that he considered as simple. It can be said that Iwan believed that role-play could be used for students at different ages or levels, but the goal should be adapted. As he wrote in his essay, Iwan wanted “to improve the activities but (with) just a little improvement” (Iwan, June 30, 2015, reflective essay).

Another interesting take was expressed by participant five, Lisa. In her interview, she stated that she thought of using role-plays in everything she taught. Her reason was that practicing what she learnt, even though in an unreal situation, helped her comprehend and preserve the knowledge she gained. With this belief in mind, she tried to apply the role-play
method to teach her students. She told me that she happened to get a challenging class. The mentor teacher had warned her at first that the students in that class were not easy to control. She mentioned that they were hyperactive. Lisa shared how she tried to handle this situation:


So … I guess, I had no choice. I think …that’s when I thought that role-play would be exciting for these kids, Miss. Because they were hyperactive, let them be active as well in front of the class. So finally, I told these naughty kids to step in the front of the class, and I whispered to them, “Now, let whisper something to you. You play this role. Show it to your friends.” But he said, “No, I feel shy.” Then I said, “Well, if you are active in class, you should as well be active in learning.” And yes, they finally did it, but they did it playfully [tended to do it not seriously]. (Lisa, July 1, 2015, interview)

In the excerpt, Lisa told her story of how she struggled to make the students do as she said. Even though her students finally did what she asked them to do, they did not take the role-play seriously and they just wanted to play around. She might have been feeling exhausted and annoyed at that time; however, her thoughts on this experience were positive. She told me that what happened had made her realize something important:
Kan itu, namanya kan anak-anak? Kalau nggak kayak gitu namanya bukan anak-anak dong Miss? (Lisa, July 1, 2015, interview)

Well, they were kids, right? If they didn’t act like that, they’re not kids. (Lisa, July 1, 2015, interview)

Lisa’s belief about children and their tendency to play around and not take learning seriously is quite interesting here because this seems to be not shared by other participants. All four other participants seemed to hold the belief that successful teaching is when students behave in a controlled manner. This is also a contrastive idea from her previous story of what happened in class. In the first excerpt, she called her students “naughty” because they were “hyperactive,” but then she said that if they did not behave the way they did, they did not behave as they should as kids. She later added that the possible reason that the role-play did not work as she wanted was bad management. This way, this role-play activity had indirectly become a reflective tool for Lisa to understand the different nature of teaching adults from children. One of the conclusion that Lisa made was that role-play is not suitable for children, at least in her teaching context.

Both participants showed how they adapted their goals and their point of view when they applied the role-play to teach young learners. The way they separated their expectations and their rationale between their own learning and their students’ learning indicates their belief that age should be one of the considerations in teaching.

Beliefs About School Culture

In this category, the beliefs included are the ones that in a way reflect the culture of the school system. These beliefs might pertain to a classroom context, but the implication can be related to a broader context. I put them in the topic of grades as a teacher’s power tool and teacher hierarchy.
Beliefs About Grades as Teacher’s Power Tool

At some point in the interview, all participants mentioned a situation where they observed certain behaviors of their peers or their students that they perceived as influenced by the consequences they would face. They mentioned how students could be more responsible with their learning when they would receive some sort of reward.

Participant one, Wati, stated that in the presentation of dos and don’ts in a job interview, she had to work with peers who, in her opinion, counted on her too much. She then decided that they should work together in finding resources and practicing the presentation because she could not trust her group members would be as responsible as she wished had she distributed responsibilities. However, she stated that after the presentation material was ready, she mentioned that her friends showed eagerness to practice presenting so that they could perform well. She explained her theory of the reason to that eagerness:

Ya mungkin, mereka sadar kita bakal dinilai per individual, jadi mereka punya pertanggungjawaban sama diri sendiri. Kalau nggak kan nggak master the material.

(Wati, September 11, 2015, interview)

Well, maybe they realized that we would be graded individually, so they had to be responsible for themselves. If that’s not the case, they wouldn’t master the material.

(Wati, September 11, 2015, interview)

Based on her observation, Wati was convinced that the power of grades was the key to the students’ eagerness to take responsibility. When I asked her if that experience gave her idea in teaching, she said that she did a similar thing to her students, which was giving individual grades in a group performance. She explained what she did in the following excerpt:

So, that time I was teaching introduction. The first time you meet someone. So, I put them into pairs, and I explained the examples. And at that time, I happened to receive help from the mentor teacher too. We did a role-play, showed (examples) to the students, then they became both characters; they became the one that asked the questions and the one that responded to them. (Wati, September 11, 2015, interview)

Of the four participants who tried to apply role-plays in class, Wati was the only one that did not seem to struggle to ask students to do it. Based on this excerpt, she seemed to believe that it was due to the presence of the mentor teacher and the grading system that she used. This is also in line with another participant, Budi, who used grades as a tool to gain students’ respect. Budi, in his interview, stated that the students showed disrespectful manners to him and his peers. One solution that he used was as follows:

Ya, saya bilang kalau memang saya bukan guru aselinya. Cuman saya juga mengambil nilai mereka. Trus, ya, saya bilang seperti itu, mereka tuh lumayan respect lah. Terutama juga, ketika saya mengajar. Kan banyak anak-anak yang keluar, trus ini, ini itu… jadinya ketika saya menjelaskan itu, bahwa saya juga mengambil nilainya dia, trus saya akan mengasihkan ke gurunya, lalu dia itu lumayan respect. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

Well, I told them that I was indeed not their real teacher, but I also graded them. Yes, I told them that, and they had more respect to me. Especially at that time, when I was
teaching, many students just went out of the classroom. So, after I told them I also graded them, and would give the grades to their teacher, they started to pay some respects. (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview)

From both examples, it can be concluded that these preservice teachers considered that grades were a powerful tool to gain students’ respect, even though the respect was likely temporary. This belief seemed to be shared by their students. This indicates that belief about grades as the aim of learning has been a common hegemony that is possibly part of the school culture, or even broader, part of the nation’s educational culture.

Beliefs About Teacher Hierarchy

‘Real teacher’ is one of the terms that seemed to appear several times in the participants’ interviews. They used the term to refer to the in-service teachers. There seemed to be a shared belief that there was some type of teacher hierarchy in the school that would dictate students’ reception of their teachers. The following two excerpts will be presented as a discussion.

In the context of this study, when students were in their teaching assignments, it was suggested they wear black bottoms in the forms of a pair of black trousers for male students and a black long skirt for female students, a white top in the form of white long-sleeved blouse, and the university blazer. In Indonesia, universities usually have their own uniform in the form of a blazer with a specific color and the university emblem attached on the chest. This uniform is usually worn for certain academic occasions. On the other hand, teachers of K-12 educational institutions also have their own uniforms. Thus, when students had their teaching assignments, it would be easy to differentiate the in-service teachers from the preservice teachers by their outfits. Budi shared his experience concerning this:

… because they saw … my friends and I wore the university blazer. So, they told their peers that we were not really teachers who gave them grades. Thus, they did not respect us … sometimes they asked unrelated questions. I mean, questions that were out of context, and they also used impolite words. For example, they called me Budi instead of addressing me by “Sir” or “Uncle” (Budi, June 24, 2015, interview).

What is implied in this excerpt is first, Budi believed that there was some kind of teacher hierarchy in school and the preservice teachers were in the lower level of that hierarchy. From Budi’s point of view, his students seemed to also share this belief because even though at that time he was the one in charge of the class, his students did not want to abide by his role. This way of thinking was not only shared by Budi. Participant five, Lisa, also struggled in applying role-plays in her teaching.

As explained in the previous subcategory on beliefs about lesson, Lisa was initially really excited about using role-play to teach because of her strong impression from being involved in plays in her class as a student. However, when she tried to implement the method in her teaching practicum, what happened was not as she expected, and, therefore, she believed that role-plays
were not suitable for children. When I asked her to share her experience in her practicum, she explained as follows:


Because there were some of us who still did not look like a teacher. Therefore, the students behaved as they wished. I mean, they were like, “Ah, I don’t care. I just want to play” in the classroom. And then, when some students were performing, they were just laughing at each other. But they did not get the knowledge because they were laughing at their friends. When they were acting, they were laughed at. They just did not get the message. (Lisa, July 1, 2015, interview)

Lisa’s comment on appearance here resembles Budi’s idea about his university blazer. However, this is not only about the look. The belief about teacher hierarchy is also implied here. It was implied that Lisa believed that if her peers and she appeared in a way that reflected what a ‘real teacher’ should look like, they would have received more respect from the students, which in turn, would support her teaching practicum.

This notion of looking like a ‘real teacher’ challenged their belief about the look of a professional that they had held after the role-play based activities that they were involved in as students. As I mentioned earlier, the role-play was a job-interview simulation. Prior to this performance, participants had to search for information of the dos and don’ts in a job interview, and one of the aspects was related to the appropriate outfit that could showcase their
professionalism. Budi and Lisa both stated that they wore what they considered to be suitable outfits in their interview role-play based on the examples they could find from various sources.  

**Conclusions**

As stated earlier, the aim of this study is to investigate the beliefs of five EFL preservice teachers in a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia about English language teaching based on their experiences as learners and teachers in role-play based activities. The previous section of this chapter has presented a list of belief categories found in the data. Some conclusions can be drawn from these categories.

First of all, the experience of each participant is unique to their condition, and so is the belief inferred from it. Second, performing knowledge, either in a classroom or in a real situation, has given the chance to participants to learn from their experience. However, even when the participants failed to translate their belief about, for example, certain teaching methods into a new context when they had a different role (student to teacher), their beliefs about those methods was not entirely different from the beliefs about this method when they were involved as students. They tended to figure out other reasons which resulted in the failure of the method in the new circumstance. Another conclusion is that there is a tendency that participants saw teachers as the one solely responsible for the success of the teaching and learning process in class. This is indicated by participants’ tendency to give credit to their teacher when they made an accomplishment and to blame themselves when their teaching was not as successful as they wished because they had not acquired the status of an in-service teacher yet.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

This study aims at investigating how the beliefs of five Indonesian EFL preservice teachers were formed by their experiences in role-play based activities. The data were collected from participants’ reflective essays and interviews. In order to meet the aforementioned aim of this study, the information collected from the data were based on the two following questions.

1. What are the beliefs about English language teaching implied in the five EFL preservice teacher’s reflection on their experiences in role-play based activities?

2. How do experiences in the first teaching practicum of these five EFL preservice teachers contribute to their understanding of the experiences in those role-play based activities?

The previous chapter discussed the results based on the belief categories found in the participants’ shared experiences. From those themes, several conclusions can be drawn. I will discuss the important key conclusions drawn from the findings, their connection to past literature, and draw the pedagogical implications. In addition, I will present the limitations of this study, provide suggestions for future studies, and reflect on my journey of conducting this study.

Discussions

Throughout the three categories of beliefs presented in the previous chapter, there are several key points that can be concluded related to participants’ beliefs about English language teaching. I will discuss them in three sections, namely beliefs through reflections, the power of educational values, and learning from experience.
Negotiating Beliefs Through Reflections

In Chapter Four, I listed three core categories of emergent beliefs that I found in my participants’ essays and interviews. Looking at the past literature, these beliefs are not unique to preservice teachers. To name a few examples, some studies also found the beliefs of preservice teachers about controlling students’ behavior (İncel, 2011; Matheoudakis, 2007; Stoughton, 2007) with some strategies (Ng, Thomas, & Williams, 2010), beliefs about some characteristics of good teachers (Ng, Thomas, & Williams, 2010), and belief about the importance of practice (Erlenawati, 2002). This shows that regardless of differences in time and place, preservice teachers might think and react in similar ways to their experiences as both students and new teachers.

Britzman (1991) argued that “those learning to teach, draw from their subjective experiences constructed from actually being there” (p. 3). Britzman spoke about teaching practice here, but the participants in this study had also shown that even when they were students they learnt to teach and what it meant to be a teacher. This is in line with what Pajares (1992) stated about beliefs of preservice teachers formed from their past experiences as learners, such as by observing their teachers. In their experience of being involved in role-play based activities as students and teachers, participants implied some beliefs which I then categorized as related to the nature of being a teacher and of a lesson. The beliefs about language learning formed from experiences as learners have been constantly investigated in studies on this subject (Gürsoy, 2012; İncel, 2011). Some participants brought these beliefs to their teaching practicum and there, they gained new experiences of first teaching, which at times were challenging for them. However, the findings showed that these preservice teachers have their own way of thinking about the possibilities of why the challenges happened. An example was with the participants’
beliefs about using role-play to teach. Having a satisfying experience in performing their role-play in class, participants seemed to believe that this method could support effective teaching and learning. Bringing this belief into their own classrooms, most participants made an effort to use it in their teaching with the hope that what their students experienced would resemble what they had experienced as students. However, it did not always turn out as they expected, and they felt frustrated.

Tensions such as what my participants experienced between their expectations before and after their practicum are familiar in the teacher education field. Borg (2006), in his discussions of past studies on preservice teacher’s beliefs, found this gap between preservice teachers’ beliefs and their teaching practices existed in many past studies. Even so, in the interview, most participants still held the belief that role-play is a good method to use in their teaching. When reflecting on what happened in their practicum, they seemed to negotiate their beliefs. This negotiation of beliefs about language teaching caused by the challenge provided by the realities in the classroom corroborates with the studies on preservice teachers’ beliefs in relation to teaching practice, such as the ones by Debreli (2012), Mattheoudakis (2007), and Ng, Nicholas, and Williams (2009). In this case, the teaching practicum serves as the medium that “actually reveals to them the classroom reality and helps them test their knowledge and become aware of their personal beliefs about learning and teaching” (Mattheoudakis, 2007, p. 1283). From this perspective, experiences in class as both students and teachers can be seen as enriching the preservice teachers’ journey of becoming professionals. This shows that in reality, preservice teachers might have the “willingness to think analytically about taken-for-granted practices” (Stoughton, 2007, p. 1035), but this needs to be facilitated because by learning from experience, preservice teachers will be mostly driven by “common sense,” (Britzman, 1991, p. 7) and it
might result in “fragmented learning,” where knowledge will not be learned as a whole (Ahonen, Pyhältö, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2015, p. 160).

In the case of my study, I also found that each of my participant’s experiences was unique. For example, Budi’s experience in getting a pleasant response from his students when he used certain teaching media gave him knowledge about visual learners, and Wati’s experience of receiving contestation against the way she spoke influenced her idea about her expectation of being a teacher. Both participants experienced different things which resulted in different ideas about what it means to be a good teacher, and, therefore, may likely choose different paths in approaching their professionalism as teachers. What is similar among all participants is that they seemed to do some kind of reflection on what they experienced previously. The way they reflected on their experience then lead to the new unique experiences that each participant had.

**The Power of Educational Values**

One phenomenon that I saw in the data was participants’ focus on the role of a teacher. My participants seemed to see that what will happen in a classroom highly depends on how a teacher handles the class. One example is their belief about a teacher being well-prepared. One of the examples of the data was from Tuti’s pleasant experience in her performance. Because of what she considered as her success in performing her roles, Tuti believed that her ability to be well-prepared was the reason why she would make a good teacher. However, her idea of being ‘well-prepared’ meant that she had done everything that her teacher suggested. This means that the teacher is still considered the one that is always right and knows everything. The fact that all participants were still in their first year of teacher training likely explains why this belief was still strongly held. A study involving Hong Kong preservice teachers by Mak (2011) supports this notion. The study found that in their first teaching practicum, preservice teachers still strongly
believed the role of a teacher from their K-12 education was to be the knowledge holder. However, another study conducted with preservice teachers in Australia by Ng, Thomas, and Williams (2010) found that after their first direct teaching practice, the preservice teachers started to change their beliefs about teachers having to be right all the time to teachers being humans who can make mistakes. These conflicting findings can be influenced by a variety of reasons, including the background culture of where these studies were conducted. Concerning the setting of my study, Maulana, Helms-Lorenz, and van de Grift (2015) stated that “Indonesian culture highly values obedience to an authority and respected figure like teachers,” and that their behavior can highly influence students’ motivation to learn (p. 109). This likely explains why my participants still held this belief despite the types of teaching and learning they received in higher education that differed from their K-12 education. This might be the participants’ way of understanding the culture that they were accustomed to. Besides, changing beliefs can take quite a long time (Mattheoudakis, 2007). In the case of my study, my participants might change their belief after several teaching practicums as did the preservice teachers in Mak’s (2011) study.

Another case related to the power of teachers is shown in the beliefs about school culture. There is a notion of identity in this case. In this belief category, participants indicated that they believed in what seems to be a teacher hierarchy. Even though they played the role of teachers in their teaching practicum, they believed that they did not hold as much power as the in-service teacher because they believed that they were not the ‘real teachers’. This belief emerged from their struggle to manage the class and to gain respect from the students. The struggle to manage a class has been found in many studies (Borg, 2006; Debreli, 2012; Gan, 2013; He & Lin, 2013; Mattheoudakis, 2007; Ng, Nicholas, & Williams, 2009). In these studies, preservice teachers would rethink their beliefs about teaching or find a way to make their plan work. However,
‘blaming’ the challenge of managing the class on the identity of not being real teachers seems to be unique to my study. The possible reason of this is related to Indonesian educational culture. In Indonesia, teachers are called ‘guru,’ which literally means ‘teacher’. Gandana and Parr (2013) stated that the term “guru” stands for “Sing diGugu lan ditiRu\textsuperscript{14}” which means “somebody who deserve[s] to be listened and modelled upon” (qtd. in Afrianto, 2014, p. 52). This gives teachers a powerful influence on their pupils’ motivation to learn that “might represent a unique feature of Indonesian classroom practices” (Maulana, Helms-Lorenz, & van de Grift, 2015, p. 109). In addition to this ideology, there is also a religious influence that might shape Indonesian preservice teacher’s beliefs about being a teacher. One of my participants, for example, stated the following idea in her essay:

I once heard a scholar of Islam stated, “The degree of a teacher is almost similar as a prophet, which means s/he educates, teaches, and guides students from stupidity to cleverness, from darkness to lightness.” (Lisa, June, 12, 2015, reflective essay)

There might be only one participant who stated this idea, but this religious view on the nobility of this profession is not unique. Afrianto (2014), in his study on Indonesian EFL preservice teachers, found that religious reasoning is one of the emerging themes of choosing the teaching profession. Viewing the profession in this way, which is strongly influenced by Indonesian culture and religion, is likely one of the reasons why my participants thought that the teacher’s presence in the classroom could really solve the problem of classroom chaos because this belief is also likely to be shared among their students. In addition, the fact that they had to wear the university blazer confirms their identity as students and not as teachers.

\textsuperscript{14} This is a Javanese philosophy that I have also been familiar with since my childhood. I cannot, however, claim that other parts of Indonesia are also familiar with this philosophy since it is also in Javanese language.
In this study, the solution that participants used to solve the problem of ‘uncontrollable’ students was to give grades as rewards, which they believed to be an effective way to gain students’ respect. In a different study, Gan (2013) found preservice teachers who tried to solve similar problems by consulting with their supervising teachers, even though it did not always turn out as effective when the teacher was less cooperative. Another study by He and Lin (2013) found that one preservice teacher solved the classroom management problem by building rapport with students, which was found to be effective in motivating them to learn and to respect the preservice teacher. This familiarity of the preservice teacher’s focus on disciplining students might be due to the idea “that having a well-behaved and motivated class of students” will “allow her or him to concentrate on the pedagogical aspect of teaching” (Gan, 2013, p. 100). My participants’ choice to use grades as the tool to solve their problem is likely due to the grade-oriented tradition, which is believed to be engrained in the Indonesian EFL educational terrain (Musthafa, 2001; Zulfikar, 2013).

**Learning From Experience**

I started this study with the belief that role-play, as a method of teaching that uses students’ performance, can produce experiences that will show how my students think and help me to understand their beliefs. The results of this study showed that certain beliefs about English language teaching could be inferred from participants’ experiences in being involved in these performances. In this study, the one that became the topic was the set of role-play based activities as the performative aspect. However, the participants’ teaching practicum can also be seen as performance because they were learning by performing the teaching. From the reflection on both experiences, I could learn the beliefs implied. Seeing from this perspective, the classroom becomes the place where both teachers and students “engage and negotiate
knowledge, systems of understanding, and ways of being, seeing, knowing, and doing […] through social performance; engaged practices of relations and interrelation” (Alexander, Anderson, and Gallegos, 2005, p. 3). This means that even when these preservice teachers played the role of audience by being my students, they were not passive but active agents who constructed their own knowledge even when they were spoon fed with knowledge by their teacher.

Learning took place because the performances have the reflective capacity to help participants understand their identity as future teachers. It started from the self-inventory activity where all participants confirmed that they learned something about themselves that they never really thought before, followed by their reflection on their performance in role-plays, and what they believed to work or not in their experimentation of teaching techniques. These activities helped them understand the quality and capacity that they currently have that can be used to support their future career as a teacher. This kind of self-exploration as a future teacher has also been studied by Özmen (2011) with three preservice teachers using a theatrical method called Believe, Experiment, Invent, Navigate, Generate (BEING), where participants were involved in a series of theatrical activities focusing on exploring their future selves as teachers. This study was different in the way that performance was only conducted in real teaching projects, unlike my participants who performed twice in the class role-play and practicum. However, the exploration of self in Özmen’s study was conducted more thoroughly, such as the exploration of gestures and body language to be used in teaching before the actual teaching practice.

In addition, performing has also facilitated participants’ emotional journeys. Their disappointment of performing not as expected, the satisfaction of performing well, the nervousness that they felt before and during their performance, their frustration of finding
classroom conditions that were not as ideal as they thought, showed participants’ emotional development that in the end helped them learn something about their capacity as teachers. This “emotional evolution” was also found in Crutchfield’s (2015) study on EFL student teachers in the performance of a public reading of their creative writing works.

It can be concluded that role-play based activities, or performances in general have a reflective capacity and the space for emotional development. Drawing from past theories, Pajares (1992) mentioned that beliefs are formed from reflections on life experiences and can be the source of certain emotions.

Limitations of the Study

The conclusions of this study should be taken cautiously since this study holds many limitations that will likely caution their application within a broader context. The first limitation is that this study only involved five participants who come from varied backgrounds. The participants were also enrolled in a teacher training program with a unique policy to engage preservice teachers in teaching practicum from their first year of training, even before they learned any pedagogical theory. Another limitation is that this study was conducted one year after the participants experienced their involvement in the role-play based activities. This means that the data depends solely on their limited memory of their experiences. Finally, my roles as the teacher facilitating the role-play based activities and the researcher of this study might reflect a bias in interpretation and analysis of the data, which might influence, to a certain degree, my participants’ responses to the questions I posed in the reflective essay and interview.

Pedagogical Implications

There are several implications that can be drawn from the findings of this study.
This study serves as my reflective study to understand my teaching practice to see what I could do for my future classes as an intervention. The preservice teachers in this study showed reflective exercises that can be depicted in the following figure.

Figure 1. Reflective process through experience

In this study, I have found that the participants’ reflections of what they experienced in the past indirectly showed what they believed about English language teaching. Reflection time is the time when preservice teachers learned from their experience and started to connect what they saw, heard, felt, etc. When they learned from the experience by themselves, they mostly would use common sense and the values that they already believed. This shows that the reflective moment is the crucial time for a pedagogical action that can facilitate better learning. What might be the best way to do it is by teacher research/teacher inquiry. By conducting a teacher inquiry and publishing it, preservice teachers will be exposed to “discussion, sharing, debate, and purposeful educative conversation” (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2001, p. 7), so that their learning will not solely based on their subjective beliefs, and eventually, will help shaping more meaningful new experiences.

Second, the findings show that preservice teachers took indirect lessons from witnessing the performance of their more experienced counterparts in many aspects. This should be a lesson for teacher educators and teacher mentors to be cautious in the teaching and learning process in class so that they will not cause misconceptions.
Another implication is that there seems to be a development of classroom community. The participants’ reflections on their experiences showed that the opinion of their teacher, their peers, and their students mattered in deciding what they would do, how they felt about their experience, and what they learned from that experience. This might call for some kind of reflective program for preservice teachers to understand themselves. This could be in the form of self-study, which can help them become “self-observers of their own metacognition regarding teaching and learning” and their own “metacognitive development” (Fitzgerald, Farstad, & Deemer, 2002, p. 210).

Finally, I was intrigued by how drama pedagogy has been taken seriously for many decades, but its involvement in teacher education is still very rare. More studies and the application of this form of performance in teacher education need to be conducted. Performances in any form, such as teaching simulation, can be a reflective medium to prepare for preservice teachers’ future teaching practicum before they face the real situation. However, the setting needs to be made as real as possible, which means that it should provide challenges for the preservice teachers to decrease the shock of finding gaps between theories and practices, and to find solutions that are more aligned to pedagogical theories.

**Reflections**

As a teacher educator and the researcher of this study, I was surprised to see how strong my influence on the students was, and how, at times, it hindered their ability to think critically about what they learned in the classroom and beyond. Even though some values they gained might be positive, this is a lesson for me to revisit all the decisions I made in my teaching so I can induce that critical thinking more directly to habituate my students’ critical thinking, since
direct teaching of critical thinking has been found to be more effective in education (Fisher, 2011).

Through this study, I also realized the emotional burden that my students had to face during their teaching practicum that my fellow teachers and I might have unintentionally failed to fully recognize. This is an important insight for my fellow teachers and me into our relationship with the networking schools and as a review of the future teaching practicum programs that can reduce students’ feeling as outsiders.
References


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Ng, W., Nicholas, H., & Williams, A. (2010). School experience influences on pre-service teachers' evolving beliefs about effective teaching. Teaching and Teacher Education, 26(2), 278-289.


Appendix A

RTAF Approval

June 25, 2015

Ariah Mardingerum
1302 Oakland Avenue
Indiana, PA 15701

Dear Ms. Mardingerum:

Now that your research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, I have reviewed your Research Topic Approval Form and approved it.

The Thesis/Dissertation Manual, additional resources, and information to help you start writing can be found at http://www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/thesis/default.aspx

Your RTAF indicates your anticipated graduation date as May 2016. This means that you must defend by no later than April 1, 2016 and all necessary documents are due by this date. A description of the required documents can be accessed at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=116439. Your thesis or dissertation must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies & Research by April 15, 2016 if you desire to graduate by your anticipated date. You must apply for graduation by May 1, 2016. For deadlines for subsequent graduation dates, please access http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=18889.

Finally, if you change your topic, the scope or methodology of your project, or your committee, a new Research Topic Approval Form must be completed.

I wish you well and hope you find this experience to be rewarding.

Sincerely,

Hillary E. Greely, J.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Research

HEC/to

xo; Dr. Yaw Asamoaah, Dean
Dr. Sharon Dechert, Graduate Coordinator
Dr. Curtis Porter, Thesis Chair
Ms. Julie Bassaro, Secretary
Appendix B

Consent Form

To whom it may concern,

You are invited to participate in the research study entitled *English Preservice Teachers’ Beliefs and Attitudes to Dramatic Activities in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Classroom*. You are eligible to participate because you are a student in English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogysakarta, and have completed the courses of English for Career Development in 2014.

This study is aimed to explore the beliefs and attitudes of English preservice teachers to dramatic activities in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. The information gained from this study will help us understand more deeply how the preservice teachers perceive the use of dramatic activities both as a learner and as a future teacher.

Participation in this study will require you to write a personal reflection and to be involved in a one-on-one interview through Skype with me. Your participation or non-participation will not affect your grade in the courses mentioned nor affect you academically. If you decide to participate, after you sign the consent form, I will ask you to write a personal reflection about your learning, experience, feelings, and your thoughts concerning the activities that you did during the first half of the semester in speaking and listening class of English for Career Development. I will provide a guideline to help you compose your reflection if you need one or you can contact me anytime via Skype or email if you need to ask anything. I will give you about one to two weeks to complete this reflection and you should send it to me via email. After your submission, we will discuss the best time to do an interview. In the interview, I will ask you about your beliefs and attitudes to the activities you did in the class and your teaching experience and I may ask about your personal reflection too if I need deeper understanding. After all interviews with all participants are conducted, I will process the data, and I will ask for your time to have another interview to crosscheck my data and my understanding.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators, UMY, or IUP. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the investigator via email. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your academic standing or services you receive from the University. The information
obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below and submit the signed form to Mr. Puthut Ardianto. He will keep the printed document until my return to Indonesia, scan it, and send the soft copy to me by email. Take the extra unsigned copy with you.

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: +1-724/357-7730).

Sincerely,

Arifah Mardiningrum
MA TESOL student of Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Email: nlcv@iup.edu, arifahmardiningrum@gmail.com
Phone (US): +1-724-541-4121
Phone (Indonesia): +6281578746033
VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Name: ____________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________

Phone number or email address where you can be reached: ________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Best days and times to reach you: ________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C

Reflection Instruction

Reflection Instruction:

Please answer the following questions based on your personal views and experiences. You can write as detailed as you can. Write it like you write a diary. I will not limit the page of your reflection. Tell the stories about how you truly feel about each of the activities that you had done in the classroom related to the role play that you performed in the first half of the listening and speaking class of English for Career Development in 2014 and your teaching experience after that class. You are free to use Bahasa Indonesia or English to write your reflection. Use one which is more convenient for you.

You can talk about the following activities that you had been involved:

- Self Inventory: knowing about the nature of a job interview, and understanding yourself
- Questions: finding common questions in a job interview and the best ways to answer them
- Presentation: finding and sharing information in the dos and don’ts in a job interview
- Role Play: simulating a job interview
- Any other aspects you can think of related to these activities.

I would like you to write your reflection on the activities

1. as a learner (how do you feel, what do you think improve in your skills or knowledge, etc.)
2. as a preservice teacher. (Have the activities influenced your teaching practice or inspire you as a teacher? Why or why not? You can also tell about your teaching experiences after the class that you think is inspired or connected to those activities above. Or anything that you want to say as a future teacher).

Should you need to ask further questions, don’t hesitate to contact me via the following contact.

Arifah Mardiningrum
MA TESOL student of Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: nlcv@iup.edu
Phone (US): +1-724-541-4121
Phone (Indonesia): +6281578746033
Appendix D

List of Interview Questions

1. Discussion on the nature of a job interview (Self Inventory and Questions)
   - What do you think about this part? Can you tell me something that you learned from this activity?
   - How does this activity help you understand the role that you would play in a job interview?
   - Anything from this activity that you used in your teaching practice or you will likely use in your teaching in the future? Please elaborate.

2. Presentation on dos and don’ts (group work)
   - Does the group work help the role play process? How did it help?
   - Do you think this activity is necessary to prepare for a job interview simulation or a real job interview? Does this activity inspire you as a teacher? Why or why not?

3. Role play (elements)
   - What do you learn from that role play about real job interview? (theme)
   - When you planned the role play, did you consider things that will make you accepted? What were some of the things you considered while planning your role play? (plot)
   - How do you manage the role to be an interviewer and interviewee? How do you feel when you became one of the role? Which one you prefer? Why? What do you find about yourself? (characterization)
   - How did you decide what to say? Did you improvise or stick to the script? How each way made you feel?
- As a future teacher, how do you think this might apply to your students?

4. Language proficiency

- Do you think this role play helps you improve your English skills? In what way, if it does? Why, if it does not?

- Do you find anything that you didn’t know before about your ability or knowledge?

- When you practiced teaching, did you use one of more of these dramatic activities to improve your students’ language proficiency? If you do, how do you think it went? If you didn’t, what is the reason?

5. Ideas/suggestion

- Any thoughts about this type of activities?

- What to improve?

- What’s missing?

- Any specific happening you saw from the class (your friends) that influence the way you think and act as a future teacher?