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## The Team Teachers' Beliefs about Their Roles in Collaborative Team Teaching in Indonesia Context

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### ABSTRACT

*Keywords: local English teacher, native-English speaking teacher, teachers' beliefs, team teaching*

This study aims to report the results of qualitative research using a case study design on the team teachers' beliefs about their roles in collaborative team teaching between native-English speaking teachers (NESTs) and local English teachers (LETs) in Indonesian secondary schools and aspects that shape their beliefs. Two pairs of English team teachers at two Junior High Schools in Ponorogo were interviewed and their classroom practices were observed. Then, the data were analyzed by using the interactive model proposed by Miles & Huberman. The findings showed that NESTs and LETs possessed different beliefs about their roles in team teaching in which NESTs perceived their roles primarily dealing with linguistic and cultural aspects. Meanwhile, LETs played roles as the main teachers who led the classes by writing lesson plans, choosing the materials, focusing on theory (delivering basic materials), and assessing students. Furthermore, three factors shape teachers' beliefs about their roles in team teaching, namely training, teaching experience, and learning experience. This research findings are expected to provide some recommendations to wide range of stakeholders to re-examine the practice of team teaching between NESTs and LETs by focusing on their respective strengths to generate the best classroom practices.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

A paradigm shift of English Language Teaching (ELT) in non-English speaking countries, especially Indonesia, from memorization and form-focused learning to communicative competence results in comparing native-English speaking teachers (NESTs) to their non-native counterparts/ local English teacher (LETs). It assumes that native-speaking colleagues are more competent English language teachers than their non-native counterparts which are known as 'the native speaker fallacy' (Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016). The fallacy led to a dichotomy between two groups of teachers in which (Medgyes, 2003) stated that NESTs and LETs are "two different species" concerning language proficiency and teaching behavior.

Considering the differences between NESTs and LETs, one of the solutions is that grouping them together in a collaborative team teaching would improve language instruction. In numerous Asian nations, such as Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam, and others, collaborative team teaching between NESTs and LETs is a frequent practice (Chang, 2013; Chen, 2009; Wang & Du, 2016; Yeh & Wang, 2009). The team-teaching program is a part of the educational policy in those countries. In Indonesia, on the other hand, team teaching between NESTs and LETs is a non-governmental policy (Nuraini, 2018; Nuraini et al., 2017). It refers to a partnership between the Indonesian government and the Peace Corps, a US government-run volunteer program that

welcomes all bachelor's degree holders from any major to help with social and economic development in poor nations. In Indonesia, all Peace Corps volunteers are assigned to a specific project related to education.

In ELT situations, especially for EFL, sharing a classroom between NESTs and LETs to teach the same students is regarded as an important type of teacher collaboration. Furthermore, it is expected to create an optimum environment for teaching a foreign language. On the other hand, it has faced numerous hurdles in its implementation. Most NESTs and LETs do not always work well together in the classroom. It is probably due to personality conflicts, a misunderstanding of their respective roles under this approach, or a lack of understanding of their coworkers' culture and beliefs (Yeh & Wang, 2009).

Concerning the different beliefs between NESTs and LETs, understanding the ideas of NESTs and LETs is important because their beliefs influence them in developing instructional strategies to deal with their daily language teaching issues. It is supported by Khader (2012) who proposed that teachers' beliefs are a set of ideas rooted in the psychological and mental content of the teacher and play a central role in guiding his/her teaching behavior. Furthermore, (Fauziati, 2015) added that teachers' views influence their planning, goals, processes, resources, classroom interaction patterns, roles, students, and assessment of students, as well as the school in which they operate. Teachers' views on their roles are of critical relevance to research because what roles they play determines the success of their instructional process in the classroom.

Teachers as one of the components in the teaching and learning process have an important role in the class. They can take on more than one role in the class depending on the learning environment and the types of interaction needed in a certain context. Some teachers' roles in class are the controllers who are in charge to lead and transfer knowledge to students; the organizers who manage students to do various activities like giving information, telling them how they are going to do the activity, and putting them into pairs or groups; the assessors who are in charge to give judgment to the students' English competences; the prompters who support the students' difficulties in learning; the participants towards students' leaning process and offer feedbacks; the resources who are the sources of information; the tutors who combine two roles as prompters and resources; and the observers who observe students' performance (Fauziati, 2015; Harmer, 2006). Previous studies have discussed teachers' beliefs about their roles in team teaching. Wang & Dua (2016) investigated 12 native and non-native Chinese-speaking language teachers' beliefs about their roles in the Danish context using a qualitative study in which the data were drawn from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The results of the study revealed that the Chinese language teachers possessed multiple roles based on their plans, the ways they conduct teaching activities in the class, the learning objectives they want to achieve during the teaching and learning, and relationships with students and the school environment. Besides, (Sari, 2016) interviewed four experienced teachers' beliefs about their roles and strategies in enhancing EFL students' willingness to communicate in the classroom. The study found that teachers' roles in enhancing EFL students' willingness to communicate were as promoters of students' communication willingness. Reviewing those previous studies, the current study found a gap in which there is a rare study that investigates specifically dealing with team teachers' beliefs about their roles in collaborative team teaching in the Indonesia context and factors which shape their beliefs. Thus, this study intends to seek what NESTs and LETs perceived dealing with their roles in team teaching and the factors that contribute to their beliefs.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses qualitative research in form of a case study design in which it explores in-depth a bounded system includes an activity, event, process, or individuals (Creswell, 2014). In this case, the researcher focuses on the team teachers' beliefs about their roles in team teaching and the factors that shape their beliefs. The informants of this study were two pairs of English team teachers of two different junior high schools in Ponorogo implementing team teaching between NESTs and LETs. They are ISZ (LET) who co-teach with ECC (NEST) in x junior high school in Ponorogo and the other pair is co-teaching team which consists of INI (LET) and EKP (NEST) who teach in y junior high school in Ponorogo. The code with the letter I in their initials refers to Indonesian/ Local English teachers (LET) whose English educational background and experiences more than 20 years of teaching experiences and one year of team-teaching experience with LETs and NESTs. The code E in their initials refers to American/ native-English speaking teachers (NESTs) whose non-English education background. The data were gathered from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Classroom observations were conducted four times/ team-teaching by recording their team-teaching practices and taking notes some important events dealing with their respective and team-teaching roles. The data were gathered from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Then, the data were analyzed using interactive model proposed by Miles et al., (2013) covering data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Teachers' Beliefs about Their Roles

Teachers have various roles in the teaching and learning process. They transfer knowledge as well as build students' characters. The way teachers determine their roles in the teaching and learning process affects the way they teach. This segment would be categorized into NESTs' roles and LETs' roles.

### NESTs' Beliefs in Their Roles in Team Teaching

Both NESTs approved that they were more focused on linguistic and cultural aspects. Teacher ECC mentioned his roles in the teaching and learning process of team-taught class as follows:

*"My role usually involves supporting the explanations and activities delivered by my co-teacher with materials, activities, and additional explanations of my own."* (ECC)

He stated that he played as a resource for his partner by supporting the explanation and activities. That happened because he is a native English. Additionally, he added:

*"I focus on linguistic and cultural information because I am a native speaker..."* (ECC)

His co-teacher usually took the lead in deciding what topics would be covered in a particular lesson, which gives them an idea of what their learning objectives must be. If students faced difficulties in understanding the material given, they would try to repeat the explanation using more Bahasa Indonesia instead of English alone. They would also try explaining it in different ways: by creating visuals, by providing examples or soliciting them from other students, and so on.

The similar view was clarified by teacher EKP.

*"My role is to present as much information as possible in my native English and give my students the most accurate information possible."* (EKP)

Teacher KP underlined her statement that she had roles as a resource because she is a native speaker and she pronounced well. It was reflected in her statement:

*“A lot of time she worked on pronunciation...”* (EKP)

Besides, she performed as a controller teacher whose focus on what would be achieved in teaching and learning process. She sometimes motivated the kids because when there was a foreigner they wanted to talk to her. What makes her role different from her partner was she sometimes corrected if her counterpart or students made mistakes. She would try to fix it respectfully and quickly and try to bring a new way of teaching to the classroom. She also tried a lot of games to students and they become excited. If there is a student who faced difficulties, she repeated the explanation or asked her partner to explain it in Bahasa Indonesia.

### **LETs' Beliefs in Their Roles in Team Teaching**

Differ from their NESTs counterparts, LETs claimed that they took sole responsibility as main actors who lead the class and area of writing a lesson plan, choosing the material, focusing on theory (delivering basic materials), and giving students' final scores. It was proposed by teacher ISZ as follows:

*“My role is as the main teacher toward my partner who is a native speaker because I know the education system in Indonesia better than my partner and about school administration, about the final result of students' assessment is my task. My role toward students, I play a role as a facilitator because students in grade 8D are active students who have good ability in English. Besides, I am also a group organizer if there is a need to divide students into some group.”* (ISZ)

In her statement above, teacher ISZ mentioned some of her roles in the class. Referring to her partner, she played as the main teacher means that she was a resource dealing with deciding the topic, school administration, and the final decision of students' scores. Concerning students, she played as a facilitator who facilitates students in learning and a group organizer when students need to be grouped. Dealing with students whose difficulties in understanding materials, she would repeat her explanation or give him/her additional materials, practices, tasks, or even quizzes related to the discussed topic of the meeting, such as descriptive text, narrative text, recount text, tenses reinforcement (simple present tense, present continuous tense, simple past tense, etc.

Teacher ISZ's opinions about teachers' roles were supported by teacher INI.

*“That I am an Indonesian, I play as the main teacher of the team-taught class, so I will handle the basic tasks, such as deciding material based on syllabus and curriculum and giving the final result of students' assessment. Besides, I am also a facilitator and a motivator for students in the class.”* (INI)

Since teacher INI is an Indonesian who knows better about the education system in Indonesia, she played as the main teacher for her partner, teacher EKP who is a native-English speaking teacher. She would lead the decision on the topic and the final result of students' scores. Moreover, she was not only a facilitator but also a motivator in the class. She would repeat her explanation, or the worst she would give students additional material if they still did not understand.

In conclusion, NESTs and LETs had different roles. NESTs' primary roles were relevant to linguistic and cultural aspects since they are native-English speakers. Meanwhile, LETs took as the main actor who led the class and area of a writing lesson plan, choosing the material, focusing on theory (delivering basic materials), and giving students final scores. That happened because LETs are Indonesian who know better about the curriculum applied.

The current finding is inconsistent with (Chen, 2009; Yeh & Wang, 2009). Chen (2009) states that the FET (Foreign English Teacher) tended to play a main leading role as an 'actor' who lead a

team-taught lesson, while the LET (Local English Teacher) tended to be a 'supporter' or a helper who offered immediate support, such as translation for the FET and students and class management for the FET (Nuraini, 2018). Moreover, Wang & Dua (2016) revealed that all teachers, regardless of background, perceived their roles as facilitators of students' learning. In the case of the current finding, NESTs were unfamiliar with the curriculum applied in Indonesia since they are American and all of them lack experience in teaching. Moreover, they tended as assistants because they had many different team teachings with others LETs. It affirmed Chen (2009) who mentioned that one of the reasons was there might be no time to meet and discuss lessons together beforehand.

### **The Factors Shaping NESTs and LETs' Beliefs about Their Roles in Team Teaching**

The researcher discovered three elements shaping NESTs and LETs' beliefs regarding their roles in team teaching at Ponorogo Junior High Schools based on the interviews. They were training, teaching experience, and learning experience.

#### **Training**

Both NESTs and LETs acknowledged that training had a significant impact on their beliefs and classroom practices, especially related to their roles in team teaching. Learning the principles of the team teaching approach formed the basis of the training's belief system. Teacher ECC demonstrated this by saying,

*"Multiple training opportunities I had during service with the PEACE CORPS ideally could boost my classroom practice, especially my roles in collaborating with my counterpart despite my schooling background not being from an education degree. Pre-service training, in-service training, mid-service training, and a close-of-service conference were some of the training options. The knowledge I gained during training, whether regarding team-taught or teaching practice, was really beneficial in conducting this type of team-taught." (ECC)*

It is clear from teacher EECC's comment above that certain training he had aided him in enriching his teaching base and frequently shaped his opinions. It was in line with teacher ISZ who commented,

*"Training was also essential. In 2007, I attended a workshop on School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) which expanded my knowledge of how to administer a school-based curriculum. School-based Curriculum (KTSP) competencies are based on the concept of communicative competence. Furthermore, this curriculum's learning strategy emphasizes exploration, elaboration, and confirmation (EEK). Therefore, it strengthens me to understand better my roles in the class, especially dealing with team teaching in which I need to share my classroom with my native counterpart." (ISZ)*

Teachers who took part in the training gained knowledge about the implementation of the new curriculum, which influenced the strategy, technique, roles in the teaching and learning process, as well as the learning activities they practiced in class.

#### **Teaching Experience**

The fundamental source of NESTs' and LETs' beliefs about their roles in team teaching could be teaching experience. Teachers who have previously taught in a team-taught class knew how to collaborate and play their roles with their colleagues. The evidence of teachers' team-teaching experience as a factor that contributes to shape NESTs and LETs' beliefs about their roles in team teaching was as follows:

*"My one-year experience teaching English in a team-taught class with an Indonesian teacher (a LET) was a great source of experience for my team-taught with a native-English speaking teacher. There is a distinct difference between team-teaching with an Indonesian teacher (LET) and team-teaching with a native-English speaking teacher (NEST), for example, in terms of teachers' roles. I am an Indonesian who knows better dealing with the curriculum, I am responsible to lead the run of the class and play as the main teacher who plans the syllabus, decided the materials, and assesses students. Besides, I can also learn something new from my native counterpart. So we can learn from each other to improve our team teaching" (ISZ)*

According to teacher ISZ's comment, her teaching experience in a team-taught class influenced her thoughts about how to handle the next team-taught. Teacher SZ took advantage of the opportunity to learn something new by team-teaching with a native or non-native teacher. This allowed her to expand her knowledge and practice in the classroom. She also improved her partner's cooperation and teamwork.

In the meantime, her partner, teacher ECC, filled in the blanks with information about his teaching background. Her statement was as follows:

*"Aside from that, my teaching experiences as a tutor for college entrance exams (SAT) gave me confidence in class. I can apply my teaching and learning experiences in terms of my roles in the class, resources, technique, and how to engage with students in the classroom." (ECC)*

It can be observed from teacher ECC's statement above that his teaching experience gave him confidence in the classroom because he used it to interact with students and understand their characteristics. As a result, he was able to play his roles appropriately, comprehend the needs of the students as well as the right strategy employed in the classroom.

According to the foregoing explanation, teaching experience was one of the reasons that shaped NESTs and non-NESTs' beliefs about team teaching at Ponorogo Junior High Schools.

### **Learning Experience**

The majority of teachers stated that their learning experiences influenced their ideas and classroom practices, especially their roles in team teaching. Their classroom learning experience has an impact on the effectiveness of language instruction and learning. The following were shards of evidence from the learning experiences of teachers.

*"It's enormous to grow up and learn in an American educational system. The American learning approach is far more individual, and the learner is in charge of his or her own education. Cheating is not accepted at any level, forcing pupils to either study or fail the topic. But I think it's also important to keep an open mind about some of the qualities of other learning systems—the United States doesn't have the best education system; we don't do everything well. It's critical to constantly learn no matter where you are in the next future. Then, the American system emphasizes students-centered, so the teachers' roles are more solely as a facilitator. (EKP)*

Teacher EKP's comment above clearly explained how her learning experience as an American student was more personalized which impacted her teaching in Indonesia to be more tolerable, despite her opposition to cheating. She could only recall students if some of them had done so.

Further, she explained that the teacher's role is mainly as a facilitator regarding to the American system which focuses on being student-centered.

Teacher NI also shared her educational background.

*"Education has a critical role in molding the beliefs of NESTs and LETs to conduct the teaching-learning process. My undergraduate learning experience could be a source of inspiration for my classroom teaching. In class, I could use certain approaches or strategies. As a result, I was able to share it with my colleagues, despite the fact that the majority of the volunteers (NESTs) are not educators. As a result, sharing and learning together are two of the most important aspects in team teaching. In relation to the teachers' roles, I, personally prefer as the main teacher since it is my main responsibility." (INI)*

According to teacher INI's description above, the college learning experience she received played a vital influence in establishing their values and how those beliefs push them to put those beliefs into reality in the classroom. She may share her learning experiences with her partner for their team teaching to flourish. And she believed that her main responsibility to teach the students shaped her role as the main teacher.

The recent findings are consistent with Chang's findings. NESTs and LETs' ideas were complicated and were intimately tied to their life and learning experiences, their multiple identities, and various environmental affordances and restrictions (Chang, 2013). It was the result of NESTs and LETs having different educational systems and cultures, with NESTs being familiar with the American school system and LETs with the Indonesian education system (Nuraini, 2018; Nuraini et al., 2017). Teachers' Beliefs in Language Teaching were tied to their immediate context—the language classroom—and to their many identities as teachers, learners, and members of a certain culture of learning and teaching languages (Johnson, 2006; Liu, 1999). Furthermore, theoretical training assisted teachers in understanding the reasoning behind the procedures or strategies utilized in the classroom, even if the teachers were not conscious that they were attempting to apply any particular theories (Kim, 2011). Because none of the NESTs has an educational background in English teaching, training is critical in shaping their teaching philosophy and classroom practice.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Understanding teachers' beliefs about their roles in team teaching between NESTs and LETs is crucial since their teaching practice in the classroom is affected by their possessed views. Besides, they need to share the same students in the same classroom so it will give a clear description dealing with their roles in the classroom. The recent study revealed that NESTs and LETs' roles in team teaching were distinct. Since NESTs are natural English speakers, their major responsibilities were linguistic and cultural in nature. Meanwhile, LETs acted as the primary teachers who lead the class by writing lesson plans, selecting materials, focusing on theory (delivering basic elements), and assigning final grades to students. This occurred because the LETs are Indonesians who are more knowledgeable about the curriculum in use. Moreover, this study described that there were three aspects shaping their beliefs about their roles in team teaching, namely training, teaching experience, and learning experience. Having conducted this study, it is expected that the results of this study are able to give suggestions and insights to many related parties to re-examine the practice of team teaching between NESTs and LETs. Furthermore, this study needs to be elaborated further in different areas dealing with collaborative

roles as a team-teacher who teaches the same students so that they can support and facilitate students in the same roles and tasks regardless of their strengths and weaknesses as NESTs and LETs.

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