

## Teaching Grammar: The Intersection of Teacher Stated Beliefs and Classroom Implementation

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This study investigates the intersection between teachers' stated beliefs regarding grammar instruction and their actual classroom practices, focusing on two experienced English teachers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. While prior research underscores the influential role of teachers' beliefs in shaping instructional approaches, discrepancies between these beliefs and classroom implementation are frequently observed. This qualitative case study involved two English teachers from a junior high school in Yogyakarta who have completed their undergraduate degrees in English education and have over ten years of teaching experience. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to explore how teachers' beliefs about teaching grammar align or diverge from their practices. The findings reveal inconsistencies, demonstrating that while both teachers express a preference for implicit, communicative approaches, practical challenges such as large class sizes, curriculum demands, and varied student proficiency often necessitate the use of explicit instruction methods. These results support existing literature that highlights

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contextual factors as mediators between beliefs and practices. The study emphasizes the need for reflective practices and tailored professional development programs that help teachers align their instructional strategies with their beliefs. This alignment can enhance instructional effectiveness and foster a more cohesive learning environment. Future research should further investigate how professional development and reflective practices can support teachers in bridging the gap between their beliefs and classroom methodologies.

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## INTRODUCTION

Teachers' beliefs profoundly impact instructional practices and student outcomes (Double et al., 2020). Research indicates that these beliefs encompass views on language learning theories, instructional strategies, and the role of the teacher, thereby shaping teaching approaches (Borg, 2003). These beliefs are informed by various factors, including personal experiences, educational background, cultural context, and professional development, which significantly impact lesson planning, decision-making processes, and classroom methodologies (Kunter et al., 2013). A strong understanding of students' abilities enables teachers to tailor their methods to effectively meet diverse learning needs. Consequently, beliefs are not only integral to shaping classroom practices but also to professional growth (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017).

Borg (2003) asserted that teachers' beliefs, molded by experiences and institutional norms, form a set of organized principles guiding their teaching. Johnson (1994) complements this by emphasizing that beliefs influence teachers' perceptions, judgments, and actions, serving as an essential component of instructional decision-making. Therefore, understanding these beliefs is crucial for teacher education and the development of reflective practices aimed at improving teaching efficacy.

Beliefs about grammar instruction, in particular, are important in determining teaching practices and effectiveness (Larsen-Freeman, 2018). Wong

(2019) highlighted that personal views about grammar shape classroom strategies and ultimately affect teaching effectiveness. These beliefs function as filters for instructional decisions and provide teachers with a framework for systematic justification (Ezzi, 2012). Effective grammar instruction requires a comprehensive understanding of grammatical structures, enabling teachers to address errors effectively, provide clear explanations, and design engaging activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2018). The literature on beliefs underscores that these cognitive constructs guide teachers' perceptions and behaviors, forming a basis for how they interpret and respond to their teaching experiences (Connors & Halligan, 2015; Pajares, 1992).

Teachers' stated beliefs, defined as the ideas and perceptions they express regarding classroom instruction, offer valuable insights into their teaching methods and decision-making processes (Ellis et al., 2001). Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017) argued that these beliefs can function as schemas that influence instructional strategies and classroom management. However, while teachers' expressed beliefs are vital to understanding their instructional approach, discrepancies between what teachers say and what they do are common (Borg, 2003; Pajares, 1992). The literature highlights that while beliefs motivate instructional practices (Basturkmen et al., 2004), external factors, including institutional constraints and curriculum demands, can hinder their implementation. Larsen-Freeman (2018) noted that language learning is influenced by societal ideologies, making teaching practices susceptible to broader social and educational pressures.

While many studies have explored the nature of teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction and their practices, gaps remain in the understanding of the alignment between these beliefs and actual classroom behavior. Most studies tend to isolate beliefs from observed practices without examining the coherence between the two. Furthermore, there has been limited exploration of how personal, cultural, and professional experiences influence this alignment. To address these gaps, this study aims to investigate the extent to which teachers' stated beliefs align with or diverge from their teaching practices, focusing on experienced English teachers in

Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The research questions guiding this investigation were as follows: 1) What are the teachers' stated beliefs regarding grammar instruction? 2) How do these beliefs manifest in classroom practice?

Understanding the coherence between teachers' beliefs and practices is crucial for improving instructional effectiveness and informing teacher-education programs. Breen et al. (2001) argued that teachers' beliefs function as guiding principles that shape teaching strategies and influence professional development. Aligning teaching practices with these principles can foster a reflective approach that promotes professional growth and supports curriculum development. Successful educational innovation depends on incorporating teachers' beliefs into training and policymaking, ensuring that instructional changes are practical and sustainable (Basturkmen et al., 2004). By exploring the alignment between beliefs and practices, this study aims to contribute to the literature on grammar instruction by highlighting the importance of teacher beliefs in shaping pedagogical strategies. The findings are expected to provide insights for teacher educators and policymakers, guide the development of professional development programs that support reflective practices, and help teachers navigate the complexities of instructional decision making in diverse educational settings.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Beliefs about Teaching Grammar**

The teaching of grammar has long been an integral component of language instruction, serving as a framework through which learners can develop the accuracy and fluency required for effective communication (Richards et al., 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2018). Teachers' beliefs about the most effective methods for teaching grammar significantly shape their instructional practices, impacting student learning outcomes (Borg, 2003; Pajares, 1992). However, discrepancies often arise between what teachers state as their beliefs and how they implement them in their classrooms. This literature review explores the intersection of teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar and their classroom practices, examines

factors that influence these relationships, and highlights the challenges faced in aligning beliefs with practice.

Teachers' beliefs are cognitive constructs that encompass their ideas, values, and knowledge of teaching and learning (Pajares, 1992). These beliefs influence perceptions, judgments, and actions in the classroom, and are shaped by personal experiences, educational backgrounds, and cultural contexts (Borg, 2003). Teachers' beliefs are dynamic and can be influenced by new experiences, social interactions, and professional development (Connors and Halligan 2015). Johnson (1994) argued that these beliefs are critical in shaping teachers' instructional decisions and methodologies, serving as an essential lens through which teachers interpret their teaching contexts.

When examining grammar instruction, beliefs often align with two dominant approaches: explicit and implicit. Explicit grammar instruction involves direct teaching of rules, often accompanied by exercises and drills to reinforce these concepts (Ellis, 2009). Conversely, implicit instruction relies on immersion and context-based learning, in which grammar is naturally absorbed without overt explanation (Krashen, 1982). Teachers' stated preferences for these methods are influenced by their theoretical understanding of language acquisition and personal experiences as learners (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

The role of teachers' beliefs in shaping classroom practices is well-documented in the literature. Borg (2003) emphasized that teachers' beliefs are central to understanding their decision-making processes, impacting how they plan lessons, manage classrooms, and interact with students. Beliefs function as mental frameworks that filter instructional choices and provide justification for specific pedagogical methods (Ezzi, 2012). This cognitive function underscores the importance of beliefs in fostering reflective practices and informing teacher education (Breen et al., 2001).

Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017) highlighted that understanding teachers' beliefs can enhance teacher training programs by addressing potential gaps between theory and practice. If properly aligned with instructional strategies, these beliefs

can lead to more effective teaching and improved student outcomes. However, a significant body of research indicates that teachers' beliefs do not always translate seamlessly into practice, often because of contextual factors (Basturkmen, 2012).

### **Teachers' Beliefs and Classroom Implementation**

Despite the strong influence of beliefs on instructional practices, research has consistently shown discrepancies between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classroom behavior. For instance, Phipps and Borg (2009) found that teachers who expressed a belief in communicative approaches often reverted to traditional explicit grammar instruction methods. This misalignment is not unique to one context; similar findings have been reported across different educational settings and language-teaching environments (Farrell & Lim, 2005; Sugiyama, 2003). Basturkmen (2012) posited that these inconsistencies arise because beliefs are complex, multifaceted constructs that are often subject to contextual pressures. Factors such as class size, curriculum requirements, student proficiency levels, and institutional constraints frequently mediate the relationship between beliefs and practice. These external influences can create a gap between teachers' theoretical preferences and the practical realities they face in their classrooms (Sinprajakpol, 2004).

Institutional policies and curriculum demands are significant factors impacting the extent to which teachers can implement their stated beliefs. Teachers often report that rigid curricula and standardized testing prioritize certain teaching methods over others, limiting their ability to use the preferred approaches (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). For example, teachers who value inductive grammar instruction may find themselves constrained by time pressures or administrative requirements, forcing them to adopt more direct and deductive teaching methods (Borg, 2003). Research by Sugiyama (2003) on Japanese EFL teachers returning from training abroad highlighted that despite exposure to communicative teaching methods, many struggled to implement these practices because of unsupportive institutional structures. This evidence underscores the role of systemic and curricular constraints in shaping classroom practices, often at odds with teachers' beliefs. Class size and

the diverse needs of students further complicate the alignment between beliefs and practices. Teachers who advocate student-centered implicit instruction may revert to explicit methods in large or mixed-ability classes to maintain control and ensure clarity (Widodo, 2006). Dewi's (2019) study of EFL teachers in Indonesia showed that while teachers expressed a preference for engaging in communicative lessons, practical challenges such as managing large groups often necessitated more structured, teacher-led instruction. Classroom observations support these findings, illustrating that even when teachers articulate a belief in fostering learner autonomy, logistical factors often lead them to favor explicit grammar instruction (Farrell & Lim, 2005). These discrepancies suggest that teachers' instructional decisions are influenced not only by their beliefs, but also by the practical demands of their teaching environment. Teachers' professional experiences and exposure to professional development programs can also influence the coherence between their beliefs and practices. Experienced teachers may have established teaching routines that are difficult to change, even if they express interest in newer methodologies (Basturkmen et al., 2004). Conversely, ongoing professional development that encourages reflective practice and adaptation can help bridge the gap between beliefs and classroom implementation (Breen et al., 2001).

Promoting reflective practice is essential for aligning teachers' beliefs with classroom practices. Breen et al. (2001) advocate for professional development programs that encourage teachers to reflect on their beliefs and how they align with their instructional choices. This process can help teachers identify discrepancies between their stated beliefs and classroom practices, and develop strategies to mitigate these gaps. Recording and analyzing classroom sessions can be an effective tool for promoting reflective practice. By observing their own teaching, teachers can better understand how their beliefs manifest in practice and identify areas of change (Farrell, 2015). This approach can lead to intentional teaching that aligns with pedagogical beliefs.

Professional development programs should be designed to address the specific challenges teachers face when implementing their beliefs. Workshops and

training sessions that focus on practical strategies for managing large classes, differentiating instruction, and integrating communicative methods within constrained curricula can empower teachers to apply their beliefs more effectively (Larsen-Freeman, 2018). A balanced approach that combines explicit and implicit grammar instruction may be the most effective strategy for bridging the gap between beliefs and classroom practice (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). This approach allows teachers to maintain their structure while fostering learner autonomy and communicative competence. DeKeyser (2007, 2017) suggested that implicit methods can support fluency and intuitive language use, while explicit instruction is valuable for clarity and accuracy. Teachers who integrate both methods may find a greater alignment between their beliefs and classroom implementation. Creating collaborative learning communities among teachers can provide a platform for sharing best practices and discussing the challenges related to implementing beliefs. These communities can facilitate the exchange of ideas, encourage peer support, and promote a culture of continuous improvement (Breen et al., 2001). By participating in collaborative discussions, teachers can gain new insights and develop strategies to align their beliefs better with their teaching practices.

The intersection of teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar and their classroom practices reveals a complex and often inconsistent relationship, influenced by a range of contextual factors. While beliefs play a critical role in shaping instructional decisions, external constraints, such as institutional policies, curriculum demands, class size, and diverse student needs, often create discrepancies between theory and practice. Professional development programs that emphasize reflective practices and practical solutions tailored to teachers' specific challenges can support a more coherent application of beliefs in the classroom. Addressing these challenges will not only enhance instructional effectiveness but also contribute to more meaningful and contextually responsive language teaching practices.



## **METHOD**

### **Design of the Study**

This study adopted a qualitative research design to explore the following research questions: 1) What are teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar? 2) How do these beliefs inform classroom practice? Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for this type of inquiry, as they facilitate a nuanced exploration of how individuals interpret their experiences and construct meaning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This approach enabled the researcher to delve deeply into the subjective perspectives of the participants, capturing the complexity of their beliefs and practices in relation to grammar instruction. A case study methodology was employed to provide an in-depth examination of a bounded system, specifically, the experiences and practices of English teachers within their professional context. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), a case study is characterized by an intensive analysis and detailed description of a specific bounded system, making it an ideal approach for understanding how teachers' beliefs about grammar are enacted within the classroom. This method allows for a holistic understanding of the phenomenon by considering contextual factors that influence teachers' instructional decisions.

The case study approach aligns with the goal of examining how individual teachers' beliefs are reflected in their teaching practices in the natural setting of their classrooms. This design provides rich, detailed data essential for uncovering the alignment or discrepancy between theoretical beliefs and practical applications. Case studies are particularly effective in educational research, as they facilitate an in-depth analysis of complex issues in which context and process play critical roles (Yin, 2018). The bounded nature of the study ensured that the research focused on specific participants, enhancing the depth of the data collected.

### **Participant**

The study focuses on two English teachers (pseudonyms: Puput and Dewi) from a junior high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, each holding an undergraduate

degree in English education and possessing over ten years of teaching experience. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure an in-depth exploration of their stated beliefs about grammar instruction and corresponding classroom practices.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection methods for this study included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, which allowed for a comprehensive examination of teachers' experiences, beliefs, and practices. Each method was carefully chosen to support a multifaceted understanding of how non-specialist English teachers construct their professional identities and translate their beliefs into classroom practice. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary method for obtaining in-depth insights into teachers' perspectives, beliefs, and experiences. Semi-structured interviews are well-regarded in qualitative research for their balance of structure and flexibility, enabling the researcher to explore predetermined topics while allowing participants to share insights beyond the initial scope of questioning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This flexibility proved essential for uncovering the nuanced aspects of teachers' identity construction as generalist instructors teaching English. A predefined list of open-ended questions was developed, informed by the research objectives, and designed to prompt participants to reflect on their self-perceptions, teaching practices, and perceived challenges. By allowing for adaptive phrasing and sequencing of questions, the interviews yielded a rich variety of responses that significantly contributed to understanding the complex interplay between teachers' beliefs and their instructional choices.

Classroom observations were conducted to examine the alignment or divergence between teachers' expressed beliefs and instructional practices. Observational data offered a complementary perspective, enabling the researcher to capture authentic teaching practices as they unfolded in a classroom setting. Observations are a vital method for documenting real-time interactions and teaching dynamics, which may not fully emerge in self-reported data (Crocker,

2009). The researcher observed the teachers in their natural classroom environments, focusing on instructional techniques, interaction patterns, and classroom management strategies. The observation process was structured, yet open-ended, allowing the researcher to capture contextual nuances and adaptive strategies in response to students' needs. Observational field notes were systematically taken and later coded to identify recurring themes and patterns, contributing to a more comprehensive picture of how teachers' identities as English instructors were enacted in practice.

The document analysis involved an extensive review of pertinent materials, including interview transcripts, field notes from classroom observations, lesson plans, student work, and other instructional resources. This approach served a dual purpose: to corroborate and enrich the findings from the interviews and observations, and to provide additional contextual understanding of the educational practices within the classroom. Document analysis is particularly valuable in qualitative research, as it supports data triangulation, thereby enhancing the reliability and depth of findings (Bowen, 2009). By examining both official and informal documents, the analysis captured the implicit and explicit pedagogical choices and constraints faced by teachers as well as the institutional context influencing their practices.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis process was guided by thematic analysis, a method suitable for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis began with transcription of interview recordings and detailed field notes from classroom observations. These texts were then coded using inductive and deductive coding approaches. Inductive coding allowed for the emergence of themes directly from the data, whereas deductive coding ensured alignment with existing theories and research questions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Thematic analysis facilitated the identification of key patterns related to teachers' beliefs, the constraints they faced, and the extent to which these beliefs informed their classroom practices.

## **Trustworthiness**

To enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings, member checking was conducted by sharing the initial analysis with the participants for feedback and verification. This practice ensured that the interpretations accurately reflected participants' beliefs and experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The triangulation of data sources, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, further contributed to the trustworthiness of the study by providing multiple perspectives on the research questions.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Within-Case Analysis**

#### **Case 1: Puput – Grammar as Fundamental and the Communicative Approach**

Puput considered grammar to be the cornerstone of English language learning, likening it to the foundation of a house. She advocates a communicative approach, emphasizing real-life communication to implicitly teach grammar. Puput states,

“Think of it like building a house—you need a strong foundation. In English, grammar serves as that foundation”. (PI.16-17)

She also mentions,

"We focus on the communicative approach first, then delve deeper into the story, and after that, I ask questions." (PI.22-23)

Puput advocated for an implicit approach to teaching grammar, arguing that this method enhances students' ability to absorb grammatical concepts effortlessly. She emphasizes integrating real-life communication contexts and employing a "Communicative Approach." As in the interview, she asserted,

"Let's say it's morning, and I greet the students: 'Good morning, everyone! Pay attention.' Then Mrs. Puput walks, and I walk to class. Take Siti, for instance—she walks too. The students follow along, something like that." (PI.35-38)

This approach aims to equip students with practical language skills that they can directly apply to everyday situations, thereby fostering a deeper understanding and mastery of English grammar.

However, classroom observations frequently indicate reliance on the grammar translation method, despite Puput's advocacy of an implicit approach. For instance, she described a typical class interaction in which explicit grammar instruction predominates. When asked why she did not employ implicit grammar teaching using a communicative approach in her classroom, her responses were:

“Well, if we use that method occasionally, there won't be enough time. We have to complete the curriculum materials, and besides, the exams are not based on English communication but on written tests”. (PO.9-12)

This disparity indicates that practical factors, such as curriculum requirements, frequently impel teachers to depart from their preferred teaching methodology. Consequently, although Puput highlights the advantages of implicit grammar instruction via real-life communication, the reality in numerous of her classrooms demonstrates a consistent reliance on explicit teaching techniques, specifically the grammar-translation method.

### **Case 2: Dewi – Grammar as Fundamental and the PBL Approach**

Dewi considered grammar to be the theoretical foundation of the English language, which is crucial for forming accurate sentences. She emphasizes this perspective by stating:

"Grammar is really more for the theoretical side of things—it's the foundation of the English language itself." (DI.11-12)

In her view, a strong grasp of grammar is essential to understanding and mastering English. Dewi advocated a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach to foster a deeper understanding of language. This educational strategy encourages students to engage in critical thinking and problem solving, making the learning process more interactive and effective. Dewi explains, "*The approach I use is called Problem-Based Learning.*" By presenting students with real-world problems and challenges, she aims to develop their analytical skills and practically apply their knowledge. To make grammar lessons more relatable and engaging, Dewi integrated them into everyday contexts. She connected grammatical concepts to daily activities, making it easier for students to grasp and remember them. For instance, she may ask her students for help.

"What did you have for breakfast earlier? Did you buy anything special? I had fried rice. How do you change that to passive voice? The fried rice was eaten by me. It's pretty straightforward." (DI.17-21)

By linking grammar to familiar situations, Dewi helped her students see its practical applications and reinforced their learning through real-life examples. This combination of Problem-Based Learning and traditional grammar translation ensures that her students receive a well-rounded and effective English education.

However, during the classroom observations for this research, it was noticed that Dewi still valued traditional teaching methods. Like her colleague Puput, she often incorporated the grammar translation method into her lessons, revealing a disparity between her beliefs and practices. This method involves translating sentences between the native language and English to highlight grammatical structures and rules. Dewi believes that this approach can help students to understand the intricacies of English grammar. When asked why she employed the conventional method (grammar translation), her response was:

"...to be honest, I would prefer to use methods like those in the PBL approach, but unfortunately, the situation and conditions don't support it. Methods like PBL or the communicative approach require a lot of time. You such as know the large class, it's impossible, something like that. It's true that the results are long-lasting, but the students here have very limited English proficiency, not all but most of them, and I'm under pressure to complete the government curriculum materials on time". (PO.7-13)

Dewi holds the conviction that the utilization of problem-based learning (PBL) and communicative approaches yields more favorable results in the instruction of English grammar to her pupils. Nevertheless, the educational environment in which she operates does not facilitate the execution of these beliefs in classroom teaching. Instead, she decided to prioritize fulfilling the school's prerequisites and concluding all the essential materials that she perceives as essential to realize her ideals.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the intricate relationship between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classroom practices regarding grammar instruction. This discussion section delves into these findings,

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contextualizing them within the existing literature, and discussing the implications for teaching practices and professional development.

### **Discrepancy Between Beliefs and Practices**

A predominant theme emerging from this study was the discrepancy between teachers' stated beliefs about grammar instruction and their actual classroom practices. This result appears to challenge Basturkmen's (2012) assertion that experienced teachers typically show a stronger alignment between their beliefs and practices than less experienced teachers. According to Basturkmen, experienced teachers' pedagogical beliefs become more deeply rooted over time, leading to consistent application in their teaching methods. This coherence is attributed to years of practice and reflection, which reinforce these beliefs and their implementation (Basturkmen, 2012). However, the findings from this study suggest that even experienced English teachers in Indonesia, such as Puput and Dewi, demonstrate inconsistencies between their teaching practices and their stated beliefs regarding grammar instruction. This discrepancy can be attributed to the unique challenges faced in the Indonesian educational environment.

Borg (2003) emphasized that while teachers' beliefs play a significant role in shaping their instructional choices, various contextual factors, such as class size, curriculum mandates, and student proficiency levels, often mediate this relationship, leading to inconsistencies. The present study supports Borg's perspective, showing that both Puput and Dewi's beliefs do not always align with classroom practices. Factors such as institutional policies and curriculum requirements often constrain students' ability to fully implement preferred teaching methods. For instance, Puput, despite favoring an implicit, communicative approach to grammar instruction, often reverts to traditional grammar translation methods because of large class sizes and curriculum pressures. Similarly, Dewi's theoretical preference for a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach is frequently overshadowed by the need for explicit instruction, reflecting her reliance on deductive methods when faced with classroom management challenges.

These findings resonate with research by Sinprajakpol (2004), who observed that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers frequently struggle to align their beliefs with their classroom practices because of external pressures, including the need to adhere to rigid curricula and maintain classroom order. Sugiyama (2003) further supports this by noting that Japanese EFL teachers face difficulties in applying communicative language teaching (CLT) upon returning from training abroad due to resistance from colleagues and systemic barriers. These examples illustrate that contextual challenges play a crucial role in shaping teaching practices, even for those who theoretically endorse modern learner-centered methods.

### **Balancing Grammar Instruction with Communicative Competence**

The study also highlights that both teachers in question view grammar as an essential component of English language learning, echoing the perspectives of Richards et al. (2001), who argued that grammar is foundational for effective communication. Puput's analogy of grammar as the foundation of a house and Dewi's description of grammar as the theoretical basis of the language align with a broader understanding that grammatical knowledge is crucial for constructing accurate and meaningful sentences. However, the key challenge is balancing the focus on grammatical accuracy with the development of communicative competence. Larsen-Freeman (2018) advocates an integrative approach that blends inductive (implicit) and deductive (explicit) methods. This balanced approach caters to different learning styles and supports comprehensive language acquisition, addressing the dual goals of linguistic accuracy and fluency.

Despite their awareness of the benefits of communicative and PBL approaches, both teachers relied heavily on explicit grammar instruction. This reliance can be explained by the pressing need for clarity and structure in classrooms with a large and diverse student population. While implicit instruction is associated with fostering student autonomy and deeper learning (DeKeyser, 2003), it requires more time, smaller class sizes, and a flexible curriculum, resources that may be scarce in many teaching environments. Thus, while teachers'



beliefs align with the current best practices in second language teaching, their reliance on explicit methods underscores the practical realities of their educational context.

### **Professional Development and Reflective Practices**

The observed discrepancy between beliefs and practices underscores the importance of ongoing professional development and reflective teaching practice. Breen et al. (2001) emphasized that understanding teachers' guiding principles can inform teacher education programs and support reflective practices that bridge the gap between theoretical beliefs and practical reality. Professional development initiatives should be designed to help teachers integrate their preferred methods more effectively, even in constrained environments. Workshops, peer observations, and collaborative planning can provide platforms for teachers to share strategies and reflect on how to better align their beliefs with teaching practices.

Dewi's acknowledgment of the challenges of implementing differentiated instruction further highlights the need for targeted professional development. Differentiated instruction is crucial for addressing varying proficiency levels within a classroom, but it requires considerable planning, resources, and institutional support (Tomlinson, 2001). Teachers often struggle to effectively apply such strategies, particularly when faced with large class sizes and limited instructional time. Professional development programs should therefore equip teachers with practical tools and strategies for differentiated instruction, fostering an environment in which all students can benefit from effective grammar teaching.

This study's findings have several implications for teacher training and curriculum development. Addressing the misalignment between teachers' beliefs and practices requires systemic changes, including curriculum reforms that provide teachers with the flexibility to incorporate learner-centered approaches. Professional development should prioritize practical training to balance inductive and deductive methods, enabling teachers to adapt their practices to the needs of their classrooms while adhering to their pedagogical beliefs. Future research should focus on exploring strategies that mitigate the challenges associated with

implementing communicative and implicit grammar instruction in large resource-constrained classrooms. Such studies could provide further insights into creating supportive teaching environments that allow for the practical application of modern theory-driven approaches to grammar instruction. In conclusion, while Puput and Dewi's experiences highlight a preference for implicit student-centered teaching methods, their reliance on explicit instruction reveals the pragmatic adjustments necessary within their teaching contexts. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that combines professional development, reflective practice, and curriculum flexibility to better align teachers' beliefs with classroom practices.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study contributes to the existing body of research on the interplay between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices, particularly in the context of grammar instruction. The findings underscore the complexity of aligning theoretical beliefs with practical teaching methodologies, as both teachers in this study, despite their strong convictions, faced notable challenges in implementing their preferred teaching methods. Factors such as large class sizes, diverse student abilities, and curriculum mandates often compel teachers to adopt practices that may diverge from their pedagogical beliefs. These insights align with the existing literature that emphasizes the role of contextual constraints in mediating the relationship between beliefs and practices (Borg, 2003; Sinprajakpol, 2004). The implications of this study are significant for teacher education programs and professional development. To bridge the gap between beliefs and practices effectively, teacher educators should encourage discussions that elicit both explicit and implicit beliefs. This reflective approach allows teachers to critically evaluate their practices and identify discrepancies between their stated beliefs and their classroom actions. Incorporating video recordings of teaching sessions can provide a practical tool for examining these beliefs in action. Such recordings enable educators and teachers to observe and analyze unplanned teaching moments, offering deeper insights into implicit beliefs that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

Reflective practice, supported by structured observations and collaborative dialogue, can foster greater alignment between teachers' theoretical preferences and teaching practices. By promoting an iterative cycle of reflection, feedback, and adaptation, educators can enhance their ability to implement preferred instructional strategies, even in challenging educational environments. This approach not only bridges the gap between theory and practice, but also nurtures a more adaptable and resilient teaching methodology. Investigating the long-term impact of reflective practices on the alignment of beliefs and classroom actions could provide further insight into sustainable teaching practices that enhance both grammatical accuracy and communicative competence. This study reaffirms that, while challenges persist, targeted professional development and reflective practice can support teachers in achieving a more cohesive integration of their beliefs and practices, ultimately contributing to more effective and contextually responsive grammar instruction.

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