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English Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching and Learning a Second Language

Masoud Varnasseri Ghandali

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Abstract

This investigation about teachers' beliefs tried to find out information about the underlying structure of teachers' decision making, behavior, classroom practice and classroom management. Teachers' beliefs have been called the messy construct. Studying this messy construct in Iran is a new field of research. Thus, in this paper, the researcher focused on high school English teachers' beliefs. The content of beliefs was important for identifying and changing them. For achieving this goal, two questionnaires, IKTS and TABS, were administered to 261 high school English language teachers in Khuzestan province, and the data of the questionnaires were used to cover quantitative section of the research. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations, to obtain meaningful insights about the beliefs of English teachers. Sixty teachers participated in a semi-structured interview, thirty of whom were randomly selected for classroom observation. By transferring their responses into written form, the researchers found out a number of themes related to teaching, learning, and schooling in the speeches of participants. The themes were discussed in order to disclose the hidden part of the participants' mind, and consequently their performance in the classrooms. The results of quantitative and qualitative instruments were integrated and discussed to reveal the English teachers' beliefs maps about the importance of teaching language knowledge and the nature of teaching ability.

Keywords: English Teachers' Beliefs, Knowledge of Language Teaching, Nature of Teaching Ability.

Introduction

Scholars believe that English language skills are now a necessity and act as a bridge between Iran and other communities internationally, and, as a consequence, emphasize the need for intercultural exchanges (Ardavani and Durrant, 2015). Despite the disconnect between the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) and the major English-speaking countries over the last 35 years, teaching and learning of English in the IRI have been thriving (Chris Kennedy, 2015). On the other hand, Razmjoo and Mavaddat (2016) stated, "Every year, different countries spend a lot of time, money, and energy on learning English as an international language. But the results have not been so good. This has led to conducting many studies in the realm of EFL/ESL issues in order to find out the problems" (p.208). One of the roots of the problem of teaching English in a non-native context might be the teachers and their beliefs about teaching and learning a second language, specifically English.

Reynolds (2000) stated that teachers' beliefs have become the major concern for studies of teaching and teacher education problems. Studying teachers' beliefs means a changing and shifting of the researcher's view from tangible and visible world to the invisible world. Harste and Burke (1977) maintained that the important role of decision making of teachers is the result of beliefs they hold about teaching, learning, the classroom and students. The basis of language teaching, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001) emerged from their assumptions about language and learning. Today, within the world of second language education, the complexity of teaching as a cognitive activity is clear (Borg, 2003). As Borg (2003) stated, "teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs" (p, 81). The focus of this paper was on teachers' beliefs in high schools in Iran. This research can be a reflection of the condition of second language learning in a country in which foreign language learning has an important position in the syllabuses of schools and universities. The questions of the study are:

1. What do teachers of Iranian high school English believe about the importance of teaching knowledge and teaching ability?
2. What are Iranian English teachers' beliefs about education?
    a. Their beliefs about schooling, curriculum, student
    b. Their beliefs about textbooks, methods, teaching aids
3. What are the sources of teachers' belief?

Literature review

Pajares (1992) described the construction of teachers' belief as a messy construct, he believed that teachers' belief has been a missed

Masoud Varnasseri Ghandali
Ph.D. in TEFL, Islamic Azad University Masjed soleiman Branch, Iran.

and ambiguous construct, he said that the problem has been getting a clear and distinct definition for teachers' belief. Some other scholars have been in concordance with Pajares, and emphasized the difficulty in defining teachers' beliefs. Johnson (1994) who worked in the field of Teaching English as a Second Language, TESOL, stated that getting a clear definition for teachers' belief is not possible, because teachers' beliefs are not observable. Kagan (1992) disagreed and maintained that "anyway, all we know is that the teachers hold assumptions and perceptions about teaching and learning". But scholars accepted the influence of teachers' belief on the process of teaching and learning, such as Johnson (1994) who stated three fundamental principles for teachers' beliefs as: "(1) Teachers' beliefs influence perception and judgment. (2) Teachers' beliefs play a role in how information on teaching is translated into classroom practices. (3) Understanding teachers' beliefs are essential to improving teaching practices and teacher education programs" (p. 439).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), teachers' beliefs "form a part of the process of understanding how teachers conceptualize their work" (p. 42). Fives and Beuhl (2012) addressed two approaches for defining teachers' beliefs as a) descriptive perspective and b) categorizing the underlying constructs of teachers' beliefs . For the former, the contents of teachers' beliefs have been described such as (a) self, (b) context or environment, (c) content or knowledge, (d) specific teaching practices, (e) teaching approach, and (f) students. For the later, the characteristics of the construct of teachers' beliefs have: (a) implicit and explicit nature, (b) stability over time, (c) situated or generalized nature, (d) relation to knowledge, and (e) existence as individual propositions or larger systems. "Teachers' beliefs can be represented as a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge of objects, people and events, and their characteristic relationships (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Fang, 1996)" (Hermans, van Braak, & Van Keer, 2008, p. 128). Thus, Teachers' beliefs have various categories. Nespor (1987) suggested that teachers hold beliefs about "their roles, their students, the subject matter areas they teach, and the schools they work in" (p. 317). Teachers' beliefs in this study referred to the beliefs teachers hold in five main areas identified by Calderhead (1996). Calderhead (1996) listed slightly different categories, she argued that "there are five main areas in which teachers have been found to hold significant beliefs" (p.719). The first category suggested by Calderhead was teachers' beliefs about students and how they learn. Teachers hold various beliefs about how to teach and the way learners interact. The second category was beliefs about nature and aims of teaching. Teachers may believe that the second language should only be used for reading religious texts and not for communication, and others may believe in exclusively using language for speaking and listening. Calderhead (1996) maintained that the second type of teachers' beliefs has been rarely changed. The third type of beliefs is related to subject matter, for example Persian or English. The fourth type of teachers' beliefs was about learning to teach. Calderhead (1996) stated that "teaching is largely a matter of personality together with a few managerial tactics that can be learned from observing other teachers" (p. 720). The final type of belief in Calderhead's framework was teachers' beliefs about themselves, this type of belief might be related to classroom management which would influence the activities in the classroom.

Along with Calderhead (1996) and Richardson (1996), Borg (2006) suggested a framework for teachers' beliefs based on the role of key themes, gaps and conceptual relationships from previous researches in the field of teacher cognition.

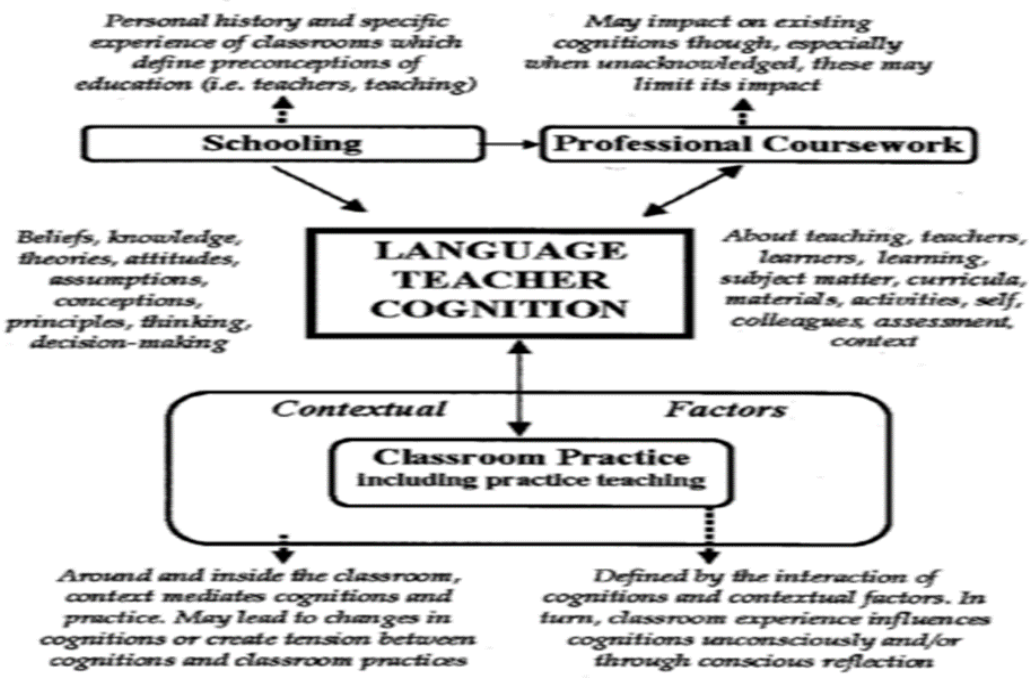

Figure 1: Teacher cognition, schooling, professional education, and classroom practice (Borg 2006)

In his framework, language teachers' early life, classroom context with teachers' cognition and practice, contextual factors inside and outside of the classroom are significant. In figure 1, the relationship between different factors has been presented.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method design. The quantitative approach was followed to gather data through two questionnaires which focused on a) The importance of language teaching knowledge (IKTS) and b) the nature of teaching ability (TABS). Qualitative data was collected through semi-structural interview and observation to get meaningful insight into the concerns of English teachers.

Participants

In performing a research, the sample size is characterized by the number and selection of participants. The sample size is often a serious problem for many researchers. It is important to remember that a large sample size is better in reflecting the features of the target population, which restricts the influence of researchers' mind and value system (Creswell, 2012; Morse, 2000). Sufficiently large sample size would be an essential feature to produce reliable results when variables of research are significantly different (Creswell, 2012; Morse, 2000).

For this research, 261 high school English teachers have been randomly selected from seven cities of Khuzestan, a province of Iran. The participants at least had a BA degree in English Education or other closely related fields such as general linguistics or English language literature. The sample population included 124 male and 137 female teachers.

Griffin and Hauser (1993) stated that "20-30 in-depth interviews are necessary to uncover 90-95% of all customer needs for the product categories studied", therefore, the number of participants should be 30. This recommendation was also made by Saiful (2012) who asserted, "a sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 is appropriate for most researches," added that sub-samples also require at least 30 observations when applicable. 30 participants were interviewed for the qualitative part of this study, and 30 teachers were selected for the class observation.

Instrument

The instruments in this study were interviews, observations and questionnaires. The official language in Iran is Persian; therefore, the guiding questions in the interviews were translated into Persian. A certified and licensed translator completed the translation process, and the professors and experts at Chamran University verified them.

- Questionnaires

Most researchers in the field of education, educational psychology and language teaching use questionnaires to explore the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and views of teachers and students (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Marshall and Rossman (1995) claimed that self-reporting is a reliable way of measuring beliefs.

The subsidiary topics of the questionnaire in this study were the beliefs of teachers about teaching, learning, schooling, students, management of the classroom, and methods of teaching. The parts of the questionnaires were arranged in a way to increase the clarity of structure in an attempt to maximize the co-operation of the participants.

Considering the above-mentioned points, two questionnaires were presented in a booklet format for the participant teachers' convenience. The first booklet was called, Importance of Teaching Knowledge Scale (ITKS), and the second was Teaching Ability Scale (TABS) (Fives and Buehl, 2012). They have been known as valid and reliable instruments, and their reliability indexes were 0.73 and 0.87; respectively as reported by Fives and Buehl (2012, p. 170).

ITKS consisted of 53 items, while TABS included 28 items. Each item used a 5- point Likert-type scale with the following anchors: 1- strongly agree, 2-moderately agree, 3-no idea, 4-disagree, and 5-strongly disagree. ITKS consisted of five subsidiary topics and subscales including Management and organization (9 items), Pedagogy (15 items), Content (9 items), Children (10 items), Theory (10 items). TABS was composed of five subscales: 1. (6 items) Innate, partly innate, 2. (6 items) requires polish, 3. (5 items) Innate for some, learned for others, 4. (6 items) Learned, 5. (5 items) A calling.

Due to cultural and social differences between Iranian and Western societies, a pilot study was conducted in order to determine how the questionnaires could be adapted to native Iranian social and cultural realities. For pilot questionnaires, the item pool was tested by administering the instruments to a group of teachers based on a think-aloud protocol. The group consisted of three to five participants. They checked the items of the questionnaires in order to report all details and nuances. Based on their feedback, the questionnaires might be improved. In the next step, the sample participants (usually the sample groups were 40- 50 participants) answered the questionnaires (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991; Dörnyei, 2010).

Finally, through SPSS software program, the constructs under the consideration were checked, and the fine-tuned and modified version of the questionnaires was used in the project.

Table 1: Scales of TABS with item numbers

TABS Subscales	(28items)
Innate(6 item)	2 ,12, 15,24,28
.Party innate, but requires training(6items)	6, 8, 10, 14, 21, 25
Innate for someone and Learned for others(5 items)	1, 7, 11, 16, 22
is Learned (6 items)	5, 9, 13, 18, 23, 27
A Calling(5 items)	3, 4, 17, 20, 26

Table 2: Scales and subscales of IKTS with item numbers

IKTS Subscales		,(53 ITEMS)
Management & Organization(9 items)	Control(4 items)	13, 20, 31, 53
	Organization(5items)	1, 16, 26,39, 46
Pedagogy(15 items)	Methods and Practices(7 items)	2, 7, 14, 23, 36, 38, 45
	Assessment(5items)	8,24, 34, 42, 52
	Motivation(3items)	12, 25, 41
Content(9 items)	Content(5 items)	10, 22, 33, 40, 51
	Pedagogical content knowledge (4 items)	28, 32, 37, 50
Children (10 items)	Learning theory and child developments (5items)	9,18, 30, 43, 48
	Students in own class (5 items)	4, 17, 29, 44, 49
Theory(10 items)	Theoretical foundation Of practice (5items)	3, 5, 11, 19, 27
	Strategies more important Than theory (5 items)	6, 15, 21, 35, 47

- Interviews

The interview in this study was semi-structured which was adopted from Robson (1993). The semi-structured interview provided opportunities and flexibility in the conversations to elicit the most appropriate information from the interviewees. In a semi-structured interview, the participants could clarify, complete and modify the answers.

The interview guide questions were prepared based on the interview questions developed by Borg (1998) and Fives and Buehl (2012). The guide questions were checked by experts in order to ratify the ambiguous or repeated items; there were 19 items covering the following themes: (1, 2 and 8) beliefs about teaching, (7) assessment, (3, 5 and 18) knowledge of teaching, (2 and 8) philosophy and goals of teaching, (9, 15 and 17) students, (4) talent of teaching, (6 and 19) syllabus and curriculum, (10 and 13) self-belief, (15) teaching aids, (17) management, (12) source of beliefs and (11) effects of belief on practice. In this project, 60 participants took part in the interviews, and each of them was rewarded. Each interview lasted almost half an hour.

In order to ensure that all the participants could express their ideas and feelings as fully as possible, the interviews were conducted in Persian, the first language shared by the researcher and the participants. All the interviews were audio-recorded with an Olympus WS 110 Digital Voice Recorder, and were transcribed verbatim as soon as possible following each interview. (See Appendix A)

Observation

An observation can be defined as a purposeful examination of teaching and /or learning events through the systematic processes of data collection and analysis (Bailey, 2001). Patton (1999) said, "The purpose of observation is to gather comprehensive, systematic and in-depth information about each case of interest. The starting point for case analysis then is making sure information for each case is as complete as possible" (p. 384). He argued that interviews are based on some selective perceptions, but observation helps the researcher not to be confined to the perceptions of others.

In this project, observations were used to investigate the real behavior of teachers in the classroom. The observation data were compared with those of interviews. The type of observation was based on Griffee's (2012) classification of observations in second language research. Based on the research questions, the observer and in-classroom observation was selected.

In order to clarify the checklist, and remove any ambiguity in the process of the observation, a pilot study comprising 10 observations was conducted.

Anderson and Arsenault (1998) said, "An essential component of qualitative research and the duration of it depends on the research design selected" (p.125). Due to the formal programs of the Iranian education department, the duration lasted 80 minutes for each.

Observation notes were used to triangulate any points that came out through interview analysis. The data was sorted using descriptive notes that were categorized under headings included in the observation sheets. (See Appendix B)

Results

The purpose of this study was to disclose the hidden aspect of t of in-service teacher participants about teaching and learning. The hidden section in this study referred to the teachers' beliefs which were involved in the mechanism of teaching, and how the reflection of it might be seen in the performance of teachers in the classroom and students' learning. The results presented here were based on a mixed method, qualitative and quantitative approaches, and three data collection measures including surveys, interviews, and observations.

Questionnaire Results

As described previously, two questionnaires were used, namely IKTS and TABS, which had some scales and subscales. In order to discover the belief map of the participants' descriptive statistics TABS and IKTS were applied, and in the first step, the mean and standard deviation of all scales and subscales of questionnaires were calculated. The results have been presented in the following tables.

Table 3: Descriptive results of **IKTS** for English teachers

	Mean	SD
Control	18.1992	1.81992
Organization	17.5810	1.75810
Methods and Practices	31.6284	2.85074
Assessment	22.6513	3.23638

Motivation	13.6513	1.27893
Content	22.6398	2.14668
Pedagogical content knowledge	17.9540	1.68186
Learning theory and child developments	22.5211	1.99724
Students in own class	22.2069	1.87168
Theoretical foundation of practice	22.6705	2.12283
Strategies more important Than theory	22.2989	2.15611

Table 3 shows a negative skewness because mean and SD values were closed to one direction. For example, in control subscale, the mean was 18.19, which was close to the maximum of the scores of four items (20). This skewness made the researchers test the normality of the data, and for the fulfillment of this purpose Klomogrov- Smirnov test was conducted. The following results show that the data did not meet the significance of normality because the significance level of the test was under 0.05 percent.

Table 4: Descriptive results of five subscales of TABS for English teachers

	Mean	SD
Innate	16.4866	3.31732
Party innate, but requires training	20.0192	4.34427
Innate for someone and Learned for others	18.3103	3.66578
is Learned	23.0958	3.82934
A Calling	14.7241	4.32619

Looking at table 4, it seems that the data were skewed. The Mean and SD values showed skewness in the data, specifically negative skewness. For example, in 'is learned' scale, the mean was 23.0958, which was close to the maximum of the scores of six items (30). This skewness made the researchers test the normality of the data, and for the fulfillment of this purpose Kolomogrov-Smirnov test was conducted.

Table 5: Results of klomogrov Smirov test for scales of TABS for English teacher participants.

		Innate E	Partly innate but requires E	Innate for Learned	Is Iearned E	A celling E
N		261	261	261	261	261
Normal	Mean	16.4866	20.0192	18.3103	23.0958	14.7241
Parameters[a.b]	Std. Deviation	3.31732	4.34427	3.66578	3.82934	4.32619
Most Extreme	Absolute	.090	.083	.084	.111	.103
Differences	Positive	.071	.056	.066	.054	.103
	Negative	-.090	-.083	-.084	-.111	-.057
Test Statistic		.090	.083	.084	.111	.103
Asymp. sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

As tables 5 and 6 show, the data were not normal, and the data did not meet the significance of normality, because the significance level of the test was under 0.05 percent. So, a nonparametric test should be used.

Table 6: Results of klomogrov Smirov test for scales and subscales of IKTS for English teacher participants.

		Management and organization	Organization	Control	Pedagogy	Method and practices	Assessment	Motivation
N		261	261	261	261	261	261	261
Normal	Mean	18.1992	18.1992	67.9310	36.3985	31.6284	22.6513	13.6513
Parameters[a.b]	Std. Deviation	1.75810	1.75810	6.30225	3.51620	2.85074	3.23638	1.27893
Most Extreme	Absolute	.276	.276	.165	276	.161	230	.260
Differences	Positive	.189	.189	.127	.189	.159	.230	.197
	Negative	-.276	-.276	-.165	-.276	-.161	-.141	-.260
Test Statistic		276	276	.276	165	.161	.230	.260
Asymp. sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 7: Continued of result table of Klomogrov Smirov test on scales and subscales of IKTS for English teacher participants.

		Content	Content	Pedagogical Content knowledge	Children	Learning Theory and Child developments	Student In Own class
N		261	261	261	261	261	261
Normal	Mean	40.5939	22.6398	17.9540	44.7280	22.5211	22.2069
Parameters [a.b]	Std. Deviation	3.64531	2.14668	1.68186	3.55814	1.99724	1.87168
Most Extreme	Absolute	.155	.217	.172	.125	.196	.135
Differences	Positive	.152	.172	.148	.123	.152	.135
	Negative	-.155	-.217	-.172	-.125	-.196	-.109
Test Statistic		.155	.217	.172	.125	.196	.135
Asymp. sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 8: Continued of result table of Klomogrov Smirov test on scales and subscales of IKTS for English teacher participants.

		Theory	Theatrical Foundation of Practice	Strategies more Important than Theory
N		261	261	261
Normal Parameters[a.b]	Mean	22.6705	22.2989	44.9693

	Std. Deviation	2.12283	2.15611	4.00469
Most Extreme	Absolute	.201	.153	.170
Differences	Positive	.187	.114	.123
	Negative	-.201	-.153	-.170
Test Statistic		.201	.153	.170
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000

As shown in tables 8, all the significant values were below 0.05 indicating that the data sets did not meet the assumption of normality and thus, it was not possible to run parametric tests. Thus, a nonparametric test should have been used, and the Friedman test was conducted to determine the position of each scale in the belief map of the participants.

Table 9: The results of Friedman test on different scales of IKTS and TABS for English teachers.

	Mean Rank	Ordering of all Scales of two questionnaires
Innate4	25	1
Partly innate but requires	8.39	3
Innate for learned	6.28	4
Is learned	11.94	2
A calling	3.44	5
Control	5.49	
Organization	5.49	
Management and organization	17.02	5
Method and practices	15.98	
Assessment	11.40	
Motivation	1.84	
Pedagogy	21.00	1
Content	11.54	
Pedagogical content knowledge	5.18	
Content	18.03	4
Learning theory and child developments	11.34	
Student in own class	10.89	
Children	19.43	3
Theoretical foundation of practice	11.59	
Strategies more important the theory	11.00	
Theory	19.49	2

Table 10: The results of Friedman test

Test statistics[a]	
N	261
Chi-square	4576.323
Df	2
a. Friedman Test	

A nonparametric Friedman test of differences among repeated measures was conducted and rendered a chi-squared value of 4576.323 which was significant ($p<0.05$). Different scales might be ranked to determine the position of different scales in each survey. In the following tables, the results of previous tables were processed into a rank order to show the degree of importance of the scales.

Table 11: The rank order of scales of the questionnaires

Scales of IKTS	Rank
Pedagogy	1
theory	2
children	3
content	4
Management and organization	5

Scales of TABS	Rank
Innate.	1
Is learned	2
Partly innate but requires	3
Innate for learned	4
A calling	5

A Friedman test was conducted to determine whether the participants had a differential rank ordered preference for the five scales of IKTS and TABS as well. The results of that analysis indicated that there was a differential rank ordered preference for the five scales of beliefs in IKTS which was $X^2 = 4576.323$, $p< 0.05$, and the differential rank ordered preference five scales of TABS was $X^2 = 3587.323$, $p< 0.05$.

Interview results

The transcribed results of the interviews were analyzed, and the recurrent themes were identified. The recurrent themes were subsumed under four categories, which were aligned with the questions of this study. The guiding questions of the interview were adapted from Borg (1998) and Fives and Buehl (2012). By analyzing the data, the following categories and themes were identified: teaching and learning, the importance of knowledge, nature of teaching and source of beliefs. The themes and subthemes have been illustrated in table 12. In the frequency column (F), the number of the related and concordant themes among all teacher participants were stated. The final column has been percent (P).

Table 12. *Categories, themes and subthemes identified in the interview data from English teachers*

	categories	themes	subthemes	F	P
1	Teaching and learning	For entrance examination of universities	----------	16	53.3
		A lesson should be passed	----------	8	26.6
		Ability to communicate in English	----------	6	20
29	Importance of knowledge	Child development and theories of leaning	The theories have been created by people who don't have enough experiences of working in our contexts, so they are impractical and useful for lecturing in the universities.	23	76.6
			Learning the theories can be fine	7	23.3

		Student	The teacher has duty to guide students as an authoritative source/learners are receivers of knowledge	22	73.3
			They are not real students except one or two in each class/ Not accept responsibility/ not motivated	8	26.6
		Knowing the Culture and personality of students	Not enough time	18	60
			Not important	12	40
		Knowledge of Educational psychology(such as: developmental theories, theories behind techniques and efficiency of techniques	It is good, but not enough time for leaning and study ing in this field	24	80
			Not effective in teaching our classed	6	20
		Curriculum and syllabus	Old and needs to change	19	63.3
			Not bad not good	9	30
			Arrange of materials is not sensible	2	6.6
		Content	Not interesting for students and trivial for teachers, but teachers should master it	16	53.3
			Not good not bad , a teacher should have a good knowledge of subject	12	40
			Old materials and knowledge of teachers are not important or difference for students	2	6.6
		management	Students should be silent and imitate	23	76.6
			Arrange the materials for teaching	5	16.6
			No ideal of management	2	6.6
		method	Grammar/Translation	21	70
			Eclectic method by focusing on grammar and vocabulary	9	30
		Teaching aids	Time consuming and extra work	21	70
			Can be useful	9	30
		Evaluation	Translation / grammar base	22	73.3
			No idea	8	26.6
		motivation	Getting extra scores	16	53.3
			Getting advices	14	46.66
		Strategies more important than theory’	Strategies and practical implications are more important	22	73.33
			Both of them are important	4	13.3
			No idea	2	6.66
3	Nature of teaching	Beliefs about self	We are neglected and second hand citizens; we do our jobs as well as our salary	13	43.3
			Most teachers haven’t enough knowledge We are not ideal English teachers/ Exclusively performer of the text books	10	33.3
			We are valuable and we do our best	7	23.3
		Talent of teaching	learned	21	70
			Genetics and Learned	7	23.3
			Genetics	2	6.6
		Definition of teaching/	Job	14	46.6
			Art	6	20
			Love	6	20
			Engineering and human making	4	13.3
		philosophy of teaching	Transferring information to someone	15	50
			Not special idea	12	40
			Promoting culture	3	10
4	Source of beliefs about teaching	Government	……..	21	70
		Society and family	……	9	30

Observation results

In observing the thirty teachers, one of the main observational items was the language of instruction. Three of the teachers sometimes used the target language for explaining the word meaning, then switched to their first language to explain rules and do the drills. The fourth teacher, only used the target language in warm up and in checking students’ attendance. The rest of the teacher participants made exclusive use of their first language in teaching the second language.

The other observational item was the contextualization of new vocabulary, and only one of them was interested in the contextualization. Another one rarely used the contextualization, and all the rest of the teachers directly translated the vocabulary.

Using authentic materials was an item of observation which was not in the concern of the teachers, and only three participants tried to use some modifications for textbooks. Following the authentic materials, 'lesson plan' has been a matter of observation for researchers. Only two participants had some notes as lesson plans; others didn't have any type of lesson plan.

Another observation item was 'time' and controlling it in the classroom, but the teachers didn't have any specific idea or time table.

One of the techniques of teaching has been grouping students; only five teacher participants used it. The chore technique was sometimes used by four participant teachers, and two participants rarely used it. Seven participant teachers used pair grouping, but eight of them rarely used the technique.

The method of teaching was in the checklist of the observers, and the observation report showed that twenty-five participants focused on reading comprehension and translation. On the other hand, the participants tested their students through objective testing with a tendency to details of grammar.

The observers reported 'punishment' as a key term for controlling the classroom by participant teachers. The way they punished the students were interesting: nine teachers neglected the students' errors or interrupting behaviors, fourteen teachers shouted on the students, and nine of the teacher participants used physical punishments in controlling and management of classrooms. Of course, ten teachers sometimes spent the time of the class on advising students in their first language.

The report of observers on 'the amount of teacher talk' showed that twenty-four participant teachers spent most of the time of class for speaking and lecturing, it means that they were active and students were passive. Technology and teaching aids were in the concern of observers, and they reported that none of the teachers used the teaching aids or technology.

The 'error correction' was an important item in the observation, and the results showed that: Seven participant teachers neglected the errors, five teachers punished the students, and three of them corrected students indirectly, meanwhile fifteen teachers corrected the students' errors immediately.

The motivation was another item of observing which was defined by the teachers as getting extra scores or motivating students by explaining future use of learning and practicing English. The observers reported an authoritative relation between teachers and students.

Discussion

Based on the results of the qualitative data, the scale of pedagogy in terms of 'methods and practice, assessment and motivation' was highly valued by an English teacher (table 3 the Friedman test) and the mean rank was 21, as the first scale in IKTS. This means that the teachers agreed to mention subscales. Thus, they should have followed communicative approaches, assessments, and techniques of motivation. However, the results of observation and interview revealed a mismatch. Seventy percent of the teacher participants in the interview had confirmed that GTM was the best method for teaching English, and the observation results supported that the teachers used GTM as the main method of teaching in the classroom. So the teachers' beliefs seemed to be:

Belief 1: Methods and techniques of teaching are in the service of teaching rules and translation. And using the first language is the facilitator for learning the second language.
Interview results showed 73.3 percent of the participants believed in assessment as a tool for evaluating vocabulary and grammar. This fact was supported by the observation results, and it sounded that the beliefs of the teachers were:

Belief 2: Testing is translation, and answering to written comprehension and multiple or essay items.
Regarding motivation, the interview results (table 12) and observation results proved that the teachers' belief could be:

Belief 3: Motivation is getting an extra score and giving the advice to the students.
Based on table 9, the Friedman test table, the 'theory' subscale with 19.49 occupied the second position which indicated a high tendency of the teachers towards a theoretical foundation of practice, and their high attention to strategies. The results of table 3 supported this high agreement. But, the results of the interview and observation showed a mismatch. Because the interview data showed that the teachers didn't believe in theories. This was supported by the observation. Therefore, the beliefs could be:

Belief 4: Educational psychology is not very important.
The subscale of 'Strategies is more important than theory and the results of questionnaires showed the high mean and SD value (table 3) and consequently, the high agreement of the teachers. But the results of the interview (table 12) and observation in real situation showed that the teachers believed in practice rather than theory. Thus, the belief of teachers based on the results could be:

Belief 5: Practicality is more important than theory.
'Children' subscale was the third in the Friedman test (table 9) with a score of 19.43 in mean rank table. The responses of participants showed a good agreement. It means that they should agree with the knowledge of child development and theories of learning. But by inspecting the results of the interviews and observations, a disconfirmation could be seen. So the belief of the teachers could be:

Belief 6: The theories and knowledge of childhood development are not important and effective in teaching.
And the interview results showed that the teachers didn't like or were not interested in the study culture and personality of students. The observation results also confirmed the interview results, and the teachers' beliefs regarding the subscale of 'Students' in their own classes could be:

Belief 7: Knowing the culture and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the students is not important.

Based on the results of the qualitative tests, the 'content' subscale placed as the fourth subscale which was highly valued by the English teachers (table 3). The results of table 3 supported the high agreement of the teachers with the command of teachers on the subject, and being aware of techniques of teaching in different contexts. But the results of interviews and observations indicated a mismatch; it means that the teachers in real situations only thought about grammar, vocabulary, and translation. So their beliefs in this subscale could be as:

Belief 8: The teachers should have commanded on the grammar of the textbooks and the translation of different parts of lessons.

Belief 9: Pedagogical content knowledge of teachers has been defined in GTM.

The results of table 9 of the Friedman test showed that the 'content' subscale was in the fifth position; this showed that the teachers agreed but the importance of this scale for them was at the end of the list. The teachers agreed with the matter of class management skills, organization, and control, but they didn't show the same results in the qualitative parts. The results of interviews and observations showed a mismatch, and in real classes, the teachers considered management and organization of the classroom as making it a silent place. They had no specific information about the field and even how to manage class time. Thus, their beliefs in the field might be:

Belief 10: The management and organization of the classroom are making the students quiet.

For disclosing the beliefs of the teachers about their ability of teaching; the second questionnaire was studied. The results of the Friedman test showed that the scale of 'is learned' got the highest rank position between five scales of TABS, and the results indicated that the teachers mostly believed in nature of teaching as a matter of learning rather than innateness. By reviewing the results of the interview, it was revealed that most of the teachers confirmed the results of the quantitative part. Therefore, the belief of participants could be as:

Belief 11: Nature of talent of teaching is a learned category.

For finding the answer to the question of the source of teachers' beliefs, the researchers referred to the interview and observation results. Most of the teachers stated that the source of teachers' beliefs was the government. Their belief could be manipulated as:

Belief 12: The main source of beliefs is the government with its economical and organizational performances about teaching and education.

By studying the interviews and observational results, the teachers' beliefs about teaching aids were disclosed. Most of the teachers in the interviews stated that using teaching aids has been a time-consuming work and the teachers didn't like to waste their time in teaching aids. The observation results supported the idea that the teachers didn't like to use teaching aids. Thus, the belief of teachers regarding teaching aids could be:

Belief 13: Teaching aids are time-consuming materials.

For understanding the teachers' beliefs about the students, the researchers referred to the interview results and the observation data. In the interview, the teachers said that the students were the receivers of knowledge, and they should be silent and imitators. The observation results confirmed it and the teachers' belief could be:

Belief 14: Students are the reciters of knowledge and they should be imitators.

Conclusion

The teacher's belief has been one of the important topics of research in the world of teaching and learning (Borg, 2003; Calderhead, 1996; Fives and Buehl, 2012). This important topic needs to be more in the attention of Iranian researchers. Along with the need, the focus of this paper was discovering the beliefs of Iranian high school English teachers. For achieving the goal, two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview were conducted, the instruments were followed by the observations to compare and justify the results. The integration of the results of all the instruments led the researcher to fourteen beliefs of teachers.

The beliefs helped the researcher to really find out some roots of the problem of English language teaching. For example, the belief number two said that methods and techniques of teaching have been in the service of teaching rules and translation. And using the first language has been a facilitator for learning the second language.

This belief was the belief of the most teacher participants, and in spite of the existence of different teaching aids and equipment which had been provided for teachers in some schools, the teachers returned to GTM. And even some of the teacher participants knew about communicative methods; they knew that in today's world, speaking is very important. The teachers used GTM intentionally, and even spent energy and time for proving that their method was better because they believed in GTM. This belief made them go on the channel of GTM.

All of the beliefs of this work would help the researchers to think about improving or changing the condition of second language teaching in Iran. The education department should work on the beliefs of teachers as a preliminary and emergency job.

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