Foreign language teaching: A study of teachers' beliefs about effective teaching and learning methodologies

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Abstract

This study reveals the beliefs of 25 foreign language teachers about effective teaching and learning practices and also evaluates the impact of a teacher training workshop on their beliefs. Teachers of Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Persian, and Turkish (five from each language) participated in the study. The data was analyzed quantitatively, using the lens of communicative teaching approaches. In general, the teachers demonstrated similar views about effective teaching and learning. The findings further indicated that the teacher training program impacted the teachers' beliefs; however, the impact, in most cases, was not statistically significant.

Introduction

The need for linguistically and culturally competent citizens is on the rise in the United States and more public and private educational institutions are offering foreign language classes (Charmey, 2009). The majority of foreign language teachers are hired from abroad on a maximum of three-year service contracts (Charmey, 2009). These teachers, who hold different views about effective teaching methodologies, often conduct highly teacher-centered classes where students presumably play a passive role in learning (ACTFL, 2012; Florence, 2011). With the increase of foreign language teachers, the question of how such teachers are being trained and how qualified they are to teach has become critical in the field of "language teacher education."

In this study pre-existent data, collected from 25 foreign-born teachers of Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs), was used to investigate (1) the perceptions that teachers of LCTLs had about teaching foreign languages prior to the start of a teacher training workshop, and (2) to determine if a two-week intervention had any impact on their beliefs about education. Five subscales were created to delve into teachers' beliefs concerning: Language and Culture, Teaching Strategies, Individual Differences, Assessment and Grammar, and Second Language Theory.

The study indicated that teachers had similar beliefs about effective teaching and learning methodologies, and the teacher training program significantly impacted teachers' beliefs about effective teaching and learning in the subscale of Teaching Strategies. The findings further suggest that the teaching training program did not have a significant effect on teachers' beliefs about the remaining four subscales. However, the teachers tended to agree more with positively stated statements in the post-test.

Literature Review

Research has demonstrated that pre-established beliefs about teaching and learning limit a teacher's ability to be open to new ideas, and consequently their grammar-based-beliefs about education prevail in their classroom environment (Freeman, 2002; Horwitz, 1988). Johnson (1992) claims that teachers enter the field of education with preconceived beliefs about teaching and learning that guide their classroom practices (Johnson, 1992). Johnston and Janus (2003) further assert that teachers who go through a training program that focuses on grammar and audio-lingual methodologies tend to employ the banking approach to foreign language education in their instruction (Johnston & Janus, 2003).

Borg (2003), after reviewing 64 scholarly works from the field of Foreign and Second Language Teaching, concludes there is a wide disparity among teachers' beliefs about (foreign) language education. He finds that seasoned teachers believe grammar should be taught through explicit instruction, while less experienced teachers favor teaching grammar implicitly by imbedding it into the lesson. Researchers assert that teacher training programs have had little success in resolving this disparity as they have little influence on teachers' pre-established beliefs about teaching and learning (Borg, 2003; Freeman & Brookhart, 1992; Johnson, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Nurmich, 1996; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996; Verloo et al., 2001).

Nurmich (1996) analyzed 26 diaries of ESL teachers who were enrolled in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) master's programs. The teachers were asked to keep the diaries to reflect on the factors that influenced their teaching methodologies (p. 131). Based on the diary data, and referring to Lortie's (1975) concept of "apprenticeship of observation," Numrich argues that teachers replicate the teaching methods they were exposed to as students. More specifically, they only replicate methods they had positive learning experiences with. Hence, teachers are not likely to use methodologies that they associate with their own negative learning experiences.

Other earlier studies offered insight on Nurmich's (1996) conclusions. After studying the beliefs of 25 ESL teachers about teaching and learning languages, Johnson (1992) claimed that teachers' early-life experiences as learners guide their teaching approaches. Also, Pajares (1992) cites Van Fleet (1979) who observed an eight-year-old child playing teacher. The child was holding chalk in her fingers and ordering her students (dolls) to pay attention. Van Fleet concluded the child was exhibiting and developing her beliefs about teaching. This image of a child who teaches her dolls by imitating her own teachers is an apt introduction to a number of relatively recent research studies that have shown that teachers' prior experiences as learners form their beliefs about education and influence their professional lives.

On the same topic, Farrell (1999) documented the beliefs of English language teachers in Singapore. He asked five pre-service teachers to write about their past experiences as students of English and mention whether they implemented inductive or deductive approaches when teaching grammar in a formal setting. Some participants indicated that they adopted approaches they were exposed to when they were in school regardless of whether these approaches involved uninteresting and tedious drills.

Algozzine, Kissau, and Yon (2012) studied teachers' preconceived beliefs about teaching and found that these beliefs varied among teachers. A total of 222 teachers and their supervisors, from different demographic groups, participated in the study. The teachers with 10 or more years of teaching experience were more likely to have strong beliefs about the importance of teaching grammar and leaned more towards grammar-based and audio lingual (GBAL) methods. Their less experienced counterparts, while acknowledging the importance of grammar, found extensive focus on grammar rules to impede the development of oral proficiency. According to the authors, experienced teachers favor GBAL methods because they are more likely to have been exposed to GBAL teaching methods in their primary education.

The Impact of Teacher Training Workshops on Teachers' Beliefs

Kagan (1992) argues that foreign language teacher trainees enter teacher training programs with an inappropriate and unrealistic understanding of teaching; and teacher training programs have been less effective on influencing their perceptions about education. Borg (2003) and Freeman (2002) agree and add that no clear evidence has demonstrated an impact by teacher training programs on teachers' behaviors and in-class practices. At the same time, they claim training programs may enable teachers to reconceptualize their understanding of teaching practices.

Nurmich (1996) studied 26 diaries of novice teachers during a ten-week teacher training program and found the program to be unsuccessful in mitigating the preconceptions of teachers about teaching. In his study, about 50% of the teachers continued to have issues with managing class time. Other areas of concern were providing clear directions, differentiating instruction based on students' needs, teaching grammar implicitly, assessing student performance, and keeping the class student-centered.

Additional studies reveal the inability of teacher training programs to impact teachers' beliefs. For instance, Almarza (1996) studied the effectiveness of teacher training on four student teachers in a 10-month Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) program. The students implemented what they had learned during the program in practice teaching sessions. However, during interviews the researcher found that the teachers' behaviors were influenced by the program's requirements and not necessarily due to changes in their beliefs. One of the students continued her prior teaching practices as soon as she saw herself free from the imposed requirements of the program. Almarza (1996) concludes that teacher training programs do not significantly alter teachers' beliefs about effective teaching methods.

Freeman and Johnson (1998) also discuss the lack of success of teacher training programs and add that "teachers are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills" (p. 401). Kettle and Sellars (1996) refer to the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices as symbiotic, and warn against the effectiveness of teacher training programs that underestimate the influence of teachers' prior beliefs about teaching and learning. Furthermore, Freeman (1989) argues that "language teacher education has become increasingly fragmented and unfocused" (p. 27). He believes that most research in the field of teacher education is focused on teachers' behavior and developing a set of techniques for instructors to adhere to throughout their teaching career. Freeman and Johnson (1998) refer to these types of studies as process-product oriented and claim that "most of these studies simply appraise a set of techniques thought to augment effective teacher behavior, ignoring the complex mental processes involved in the practice of teaching" (p. 627).

Freeman and Johnson (1998) explain that teacher training programs must focus on "the teacher who does it [the teaching], the contexts in which it is done, and the pedagogy by which it is done" (p. 379). The authors emphasize the importance of tailoring the curricula and contents of teacher training programs to the specific needs of participants. A fixed curriculum may not produce a significant result in every workshop.

Likewise, Peacock (2001) studied the beliefs of 146 ESL teachers during a three year teacher training program and found the program to have little impact on their beliefs. He states: "significantly, trainees' beliefs remained at the same level of mismatch with teacher beliefs throughout the Program (p. 184)."

Macalister (2012) studied 60 Malaysian pre-service teachers to understand the role of teacher training programs in shaping teachers' beliefs about the role of vocabulary in language learning. His study centered on assessing teachers' practices in teaching reading and writing, and their primary education orientation. His findings further demonstrated that teachers have varying beliefs about teaching. Macalister concluded that professional development that ignores

teacher trainees' prior beliefs might not be effective in influencing their beliefs about instruction.

Research on teachers' beliefs and practices indicates there is a difference in what teacher education deems necessary for novice teachers and what teacher trainees view as necessary. These findings contribute considerably to the field of Education because they reinforce the importance of understanding teachers' backgrounds. Therefore, teacher training programs need to focus more on teachers than on methodology (Florence, 2011; Nurmich, 1996).

Research Questions

1.   What are teachers' beliefs about effective teaching and learning methodologies?
2.   Do teacher training programs affect the beliefs of teachers who are native speakers of the language they teach, and if so, how?

Methodology

Preexistent data was used to (1) investigate the perceptions of foreign language teachers about effective teaching and learning methodologies, and (2) to evaluate the impact of a teacher training program on teachers' beliefs and practices. The data was collected by a Language Resource Center in Southern California from 25 foreign language instructors. The center offered an intensive two-week teacher training summer program in 2013 to train foreign language teachers in communicative teaching and learning methodologies. The center administered a questionnaire to the teachers at the beginning of the program. The teachers' responses were used to answer research question no. 1. The same questionnaire was administered to the teachers at the end of the program in order to understand the impact of the program on teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning foreign languages (research question no. 2).

Participants

The institution offered an intensive two-week teacher training program to beginning and emerging (intermediate) foreign language teachers during the summer of 2013 (*N=25*). The participants were teachers of Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Persian, and Turkish, and they taught different age groups (K-16). Each group consisted of four local and two out-of-state foreign language teachers. Twenty-one of the 25 participants were female. Also, 23 of the participants had less than five years of teaching experience and their average age was between 36-40 years old (*M=4.56, SD=1.39*). Thirteen participants had received their primary education in their home country and immigrated to the United States after the age of 30.

Instruments

A five-point Likert scale instrument was originally designed by Kissau, Algozzine, and Yon, 2012 to assess the beliefs of foreign language teachers. The Language Resource Center (LRC) modified the instrument to align it with the purpose of the current study. The changes that the center made focused on background information, experience in the United States (section A), and teachers' experience with teacher training education (section B). In addition, the center changed the "natural-N" option on the 5-item Likert type scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Natural, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) to "not sure –NS." An identification code was also added to the questionnaire for test-retest purposes. The portion of the questionnaire which collected information about teachers' perception about effective teaching and learning consisted of five subscales: Language and Culture (Q24-32), Teaching Strategies (Q33-40), Individual Differences (Q41-45), Assessment and Grammar (Q46-51), and Second Language Theory (Q52-67). Also, ten questions were negatively stated (Q49-50, 57-60, 63, 65-67) and reverse-coded. The modified version of the instrument that was used by the LRC is appended following the reference.

Data Collection Procedure

The center administered the questionnaire online using Survey Monkey. The same questionnaire was administered twice, two weeks apart, at the beginning and at the end of the workshop. The rationale behind using an online questionnaire was to obtain prompt feedback from the participants. Furthermore, it was considered cost-effective and the data could conveniently be exported into SPSS. The data was stored in the center's password-protected database.

The current researcher obtained permission from the center to use its data for the purpose of this study. The researcher imported the data to SPSS for inferential statistical analysis. The pre- and post-program questionnaire forms have been identified by identification codes.

Data Analysis and Findings

Research Question 1: What are teachers' beliefs about effective teaching and learning methodologies?

The teachers were asked to state their perceptions, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with what "the effective foreign language teacher (TEFLT)" does/does not do in his/her class.

In brief, the teachers had similar beliefs in regards to the subscales of Language and Culture, and Individual Differences but they exhibited a disparity in perception in Teaching Strategies, Assessment, Grammar, and Second Language Theory subscales.

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics of teachers' beliefs about each subscale (N=25)*

Subscale	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Language and Culture	20	45	38.04	5.33
Teaching Strategies	19	39	31.28	4.66
Individual Differences	5	25	20.84	3.79
Assessment and Grammar	19	28	23.32	2.23
Second Language Theory	46	70	57.00	5.74

Language and Culture

The first subscale in the questionnaire concerned Language and Culture. The teachers were asked to indicate their perceptions about the behaviors that contribute to effective language teaching (Table 2). This subscale contained nine questions (Q24-32). All teachers in the study (N=25) answered these questions (M=38.04, SD=5.33). Only items with varying beliefs have been reported in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of teachers' beliefs about language and culture (N=25)

Item # on the questionnaire	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q24. TEFLT is involved in and enthusiastic about the TL and the TL culture.					
	3	0	1	9	12
Q29. TEFLT provides opportunities for students to use the TL in and outside of school					
	1	0	2	12	10
Q30. TEFLT encourage foreign language learners to speak in the TL from the first day of instruction.					
	1	1	2	15	6
Q31. TEFLT gives examples of cultural differences between the student's first language and the TL.					
	0	2	3	12	8

TEFLT = the effective foreign language teacher   TL = target language

The teachers demonstrated similar beliefs in relation to Q25-28 and Q32; however, 3 out of 25 teachers strongly disagreed with the statement in Q24. In other words, they did not believe that an effective foreign language teacher should be involved in and be enthusiastic about the target language and its culture. In addition, 2 of the teachers strongly/disagreed with encouraging learners to speak the target language on the first day (Q30), and 2 did not agree with providing examples of cultural differences in Q31.

Teaching Strategies

This subscale contained nine questions (Q33-40). All teachers in the study (N=25) answered these questions (M=31.28, SD=4.66). Only items with varying beliefs have been reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of teachers' beliefs about teaching strategies (N=25)

Item # on the questionnaire	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q35. TEFLT gives learners tasks to complete (e.g., labeling a picture, filling in blanks) while reading or listening in the TL.					
	1	0	2	12	10
Q36. TEFLT provides opportunities for students to learn more about other subjects (e.g., math, science, social studies) in the TL classroom.					
	1	1	2	15	6
Q38. TEFLT asks students to find out unknown information from a classmate or another source.					
	0	2	3	12	8

TEFLT = the effective foreign language teacher   TL = target language

Individual Differences

This subscale contained five questions (Q41 – 45) and was intended to capture the teachers' beliefs concerning students' individual differences (Table 4). Almost all teachers had similar beliefs about what they deemed effective teaching strategies (M=20.84, SD=3.79). Only 2 out of 25 teachers strongly disagreed with the statement in the item (Q42) in the questionnaire, "the effective foreign language teacher plans different teaching strategies and activities depending on the learners' age."

Table 4: Frequency distribution of teachers' beliefs about individual differences (N=25)

Item # on the questionnaire	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q42. TEFLT plans different teaching strategies and activities depending on the learners' age.					
	2	0	2	10	11

TEFLT = the effective foreign language teacher TL = target language

Assessment and Grammar

Assessment and Grammar was another area that the teachers had differing beliefs (*M=23.32, SD=2.23*). This subscale had six items (Q46-51) and was intended to collect data about effective teaching strategies concerning assessment and grammar as perceived effective by the teachers. Only items with varying beliefs have been reported in Table 5.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of teachers' beliefs about Assessment and Grammar (N=25)

Item # on the questionnaire	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q49. TEFLT grades written assignments mainly on the amount of errors in grammar.					
	1	6	5	12	1
Q50. TEFLT grades spoken language mainly on the amount of errors in grammar.					
	0	3	5	16	1

TEFLT = the effective foreign language teacher TL = target language

With regards to the item (Q49) in this section (table 5), 13 of the 25 participants (strongly) agreed with the statement, 7 teachers (strongly) disagreed, and 5 teachers were not sure. Three out of 25 teachers disagreed with the statement in Q50. However, 17 believed that an effective foreign language teacher should grade spoken language mainly on the amount of errors in grammar (Q50).

Second Language Theory

The last subscale in the questionnaire was Second Language Theory with 16 items (Q52 – Q67). The teachers' beliefs in this section were spread out (M= 57.00, SD= 5.74). As the data in Table 6 reveals, the teachers had varying beliefs in regards to item # Q57-60 and Q62-64. Ten out of 25 teachers disagreed with the statement that "the more intelligent a person is, the more likely he or she is to learn the TL well," (Q57), 11 teachers agreed with the statement, and 4 teachers were unsure. In regard to item Q58, 10 teachers did not agree with the statement, while 13 believed that foreign language teachers must correct most of student's errors (Q58). In response to item Q59 almost half of the teachers did not believe in small group work as an effective teaching and learning methodology (Q59). When teachers were asked about their beliefs about having beginning foreign language learners speak too much with native speakers (Q60), 7 teachers disagreed with the statement. In other words, they believed that talking with native speakers helps students better learn a foreign language and 8 of the teachers were not sure. There was also a profound disparity in beliefs regarding item Q64 "adults learn a foreign language in a way similar to the way they learned their first language." Thirteen out of 25 of the teachers did not believe that a foreign language is learned in the same way that first language is learned. Seven of the teachers were unsure and only five of the teachers believed that foreign language and native language are learned the same way (Q64).

Table 6: Frequency distribution of teachers' beliefs about second language theory (N=25)

Item # on the questionnaire	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q57. The more intelligent a person is, the more likely he or she is to learn the TL well.					
	0	10	4	11	0
Q58. Foreign language teachers must correct most of student's errors.					
	2	8	2	10	3
Q59. Having students work in small groups is likely to result in them					

learning errors in the TL from each other.					
	0	11	2	10	2
Q60. It is not good to have beginning foreign language learners speak too much with native speakers because native speakers usually do all of the talking.					
	0	7	8	9	1
Q62. Exposing learners to written and spoken language that is a little bit above their current level of understanding is necessary for TL learning.					
	1	1	8	13	2
Q63. Making students speak quickly in the TL improves TL use.					
	0	5	8	8	4
Q64. Adults learn a foreign language in a way similar to the way they learned their first language.					
	1	12	7	3	2

TL = target language

Independent t-test results

To further understand if the male teachers' beliefs greatly differed from the female teachers' beliefs on each subscale in the questionnaire, the researcher ran an independent t-test.

Hypothesis: H0: u1 = u2, HA: u1 ≠ u2

In general, the researcher did not find a statistically significant difference (Table 7) between the two groups of the teachers in any of the five subscales. Thus, based on the set significant value at 0.05, the researcher accepts the null hypothesis that gender did not influence the participants' beliefs about effective teaching strategies. Nevertheless, it is worth-mentioning that the data (Table 7) indicated that male teachers scored higher (M=39.75, SD=3.03) compared to their female counterparts (M=31.71, SD=5.64) in the subscale of Language and Culture, meaning that male teachers agreed more with positively-stated statements in the questionnaire, but the difference was not statistically significant (p=.496).

Table 7: Mean and standard deviation (t-test) in beliefs on effective foreign language teachers according to gender group

Beliefs	Male (*N*=4)		Female (*N*=21)					
	M	SD	M	SD	df	t	P	Cohen's *d*
Language & Culture	39.75	3.30	31.71	5.64	23	.692	.496	0.44
Teaching Strategies	28.25	5.62	31.86	4.37	23	-1.451	.160	-0.71
Individual Differences	22.00	2.94	20.62	3.95	23	.659	.516	0.39
Assessment & Grammar	25.00	1.82	23.00	2.19	23	1.708	.101	0.99
SL Theory	59.25	4.99	56.57	5.88	23	.850	.404	.049

Sig at 5%

Research Question 2: Do teacher training programs affect the beliefs of teachers who are native speakers of the language they teach, and if so, how?

The researcher ran dependent *t*-test procedures to analyze the differences between teachers' beliefs before and after the teacher training program based on subscales in the questionnaire. As the data in Table 8 indicates, the majority of the teachers' responses did not change from the pre-to-post-questionnaires. This lack of change demonstrates that the training program had little impact on the participants' beliefs. The only subscale that revealed a statistically significant difference in teachers' beliefs was Teaching Strategies ($p = .020$).

Table 8: The difference between the results of pre- and post-test based on each subscale total (N=25)

Subscale	M	SD	Min.	Max.
Language and Culture: *t* (24) = .240, *p* = .812				
Pre	38.04	5.33	20.00	45.00
Post	38.52	8.50	9.00	45.00
Teaching Strategies: *t* (24) = 2.491, *p* = .020 *				
Pre	31.28	4.65	19.00	39.00
Post	34.44	5.47	14.00	40.00
Individual Differences: *t* (24) = .988, *p* = .333				
Pre	20.84	3.79	5.00	25.00
Post	21.88	3.78	8.00	25.00
Assessment and Grammar: *t* (24) = 1.339, *p* = .193				
Pre	23.32	2.23	19.00	28.00
Post	22.08	3.36	16.00	30.00
Second Language Theory: *t* (24) = .959 , *p* = .347				
Pre	57.00	5.74	46.00	70.00
Post	58.00	5.46	47.00	67.00
Total Pre: *t* (24) = .881, *p* = .387	170.48	16.92	111.00	193.00
Total Post	174.92	20.33	100.00	195.00

Note: * = sig at 5%

In order to better understand which items showed variability between the pre- and post-tests, the researcher ran a dependent *t*-test on each question. As the data in Table 9 shows, the teachers demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the results of pre- and post-tests in item numbers Q35 (*p*=.020), Q37 (*p*=.022), Q38 (*p*=.061) and Q40 (*p*=.057). The researcher ran further analysis and reported the degree to which the teachers expressed their agreement with these items in the subscale. The first item was Q35. The mean score of Q35 increased in the post-test, one teacher still could not agree or disagree with the statement. With regards to Q38 and 40, two teachers disagreed with the statements in the post-test. In

addition, as the data in the NS column reveals, the teachers who were unsure in the pre-test were decisive by the end of the program about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a strategy.

Table 9: The percentage of the teachers' responses in the pre - and posttest (N=25)

Teaching Strategies:	SD	D	NS	A	SA	*M*	*SD*
Q. 35. TEFLT uses small groups so that more students are actively involved. *t* (24) = .287, *p* = .020							
Pre	4.0	4.0	20.0	48.0	24.0	3.84	.98
Post	-	-	4.0	56.0	40.0	4.36	.56
Q. 37. TEFLT provides opportunities for students to learn more about other subjects (e.g., math, sciences, social studies) in the TL classroom, *t* (24) = 2.449, *p* = .022							
Pre	-	20.0	16.0	48.0	16.0	3.60	1.00
Post	4.0	4.0	8.0	36.0	48.0	4.20	1.04
Q. 38. TEFLT asks students to find out unknown information from a classmate or another source. *t* (24) = 1.963, *p* = .061							
Pre	-	4.0	16.0	56.0	24.0	4.00	.76
Post	4.0	-	-	40.0	56.0	4.44	.87
Q.40. TEFLT uses computers (e.g., computer-based exercises, email, Internet resources). *t* (24) = 2.000, *p* = .057							
Pre	-	8.0	8.0	64.0	20.0	3.96	.79
Post	4.0	-	-	48.0	48.0	4.36	.86

TEFLT = the effective foreign language teacher

The researcher then hypothesized that factors such as the teachers' native language, type of programs that they teach in, and years of teaching experience do not influence their beliefs about effective teaching and learning practices. He ran Repeated Measure Analysis (ANOVA) on each variable separately to determine if

participants' responses changed from pre- and post-test. The results confirmed the researcher's hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

The study focused on the beliefs of foreign language teachers about effective teaching and learning practices in a foreign language class, and also the impact of an intensive two-week teacher training workshop on teachers' beliefs. The findings indicated that generally teachers have identical beliefs about effective teaching methodologies (research question no. 1). Although a few teachers had differing beliefs in specific areas such as teaching strategies and second language acquisition theory, those findings were not statistically significant. The study further revealed that factors such as gender, type of program that teachers teach in, and teaching experience did not play a role in shaping the teachers beliefs about effective teaching and learning a foreign language.

In regards to the second research question, the pre- to post-test results did demonstrate that the teacher training workshop impacted the teachers' beliefs, at least in the area of Teaching Strategies and the difference was statistically significant (p=.020). While further research is needed to find out why only this subscale showed a statistically significant difference in the post-test, one can speculate that teachers are more concerned with concrete statements and examples based on items in the subscale (Q33-40). Teachers find greater value in learning specific strategies that they can apply to their classes.

In regards to the other sub-scales (e.g., Language and Culture, Individual Differences, Grammar and Assessment, and Second Language Theory) the analysis of data demonstrated that the teacher training program impacted teachers' beliefs about certain methodologies and the teachers tended to agree more with positively stated statements in the subscale of the post-test. However, the impact was not statistically significant.

The study further cautions that a teacher training workshop can impact teachers' beliefs negatively. For instance, the mean score of male and female teachers decreased in the post-test with regards to Assessment and Grammar. In other words, the teachers agreed less

with the positively stated statements in the post-test. It is worth mentioning that the main goal of the teacher training program was to convince foreign language teachers to teach grammar through implicit instruction; however, this finding indicates that the reverse occurred.

Conclusion

This study, comprised of a small sample size, serves to caution and reform teacher training programs. Through the use of questionnaires, the study determined that foreign language teachers have identical beliefs about teaching and learning foreign languages and that teacher training workshops do not change teachers' beliefs significantly. However, a well-designed teacher training workshop may impact teachers' beliefs and eventually their in-class practices. The findings affirm that change is a hard and slow process. In other words, it would be unrealistic to expose teachers to certain teaching strategies for a short period of time and expect them to embrace and immediately adopt those methodologies. It is also important that educators consider teachers' backgrounds and diversify their curricula when they design a workshop.

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Foreign Language Teacher Belief
Pre and Post Survey

Instruction: Please choose a four-digit identification code, as you will receive the same survey at the end of the training workshop. The number could be last **four digits** of your phone number, street number, or something that you could easily remember.

Please complete all sections to the best of your ability. When you are finished, click Submit.

Identification code:_____

Section A: Background Information

Please provide the following information:
1. What is your age? 18-25   26-30   31-35   36-40   41-45   46 and above
2. What is your gender?_____ Male _____ Female
3. What is your native language?_____
4. In what country were you born? _____
5. If you were born outside of the United States, at what age did you come to this country?
   _____ 0-5 years old _____ 6-10 years old _____ 11-20 years old _____
   _____21-30 years old _____ over 30 years old
6. In which country did you receive your primary education (high school)?_____
7. In which country did you receive your post high school education (BA)?_____
8. In which country did you receive your post bachelor education (MA)?_____
9. Have you completed any teacher education/certification in your home country? Yes   No
10. Have you ever taught a language in the country of your origin? Y/N,
    if yes, for how many years?_____ and what level(s) _____

Now I am asking you about your experience in the United States?

11. What is your career goal?
    Teacher_____   Administrator_____
         Researcher_____   Other_____
12. What foreign language do you teach now or plan to teach in the future? _____
13. In what type of school setting do you teach?
    _____ K-8 _____ high school _____ other (please specify)
14. In what types of foreign language program do you currently teach?
    ____ GBAL (K-12) _____ Immersion _____ Other (please specify)
15. For how many years have you been teaching a foreign language in the United States? _____ less than 5 years _____ 5-10 years _____ more than 10 years
16. What level(s) do you teach?
    K-8 _____   Collage _____ Post College _____   Other (please specify) _____
17. Who are your students?
    Native Speaker of the Language____ Non-Native Speaker of the Language _____

Section B: Teacher Training Education

18. Have you ever completed a foreign language teacher - training program in the United States? if yes, for how many hours?
    10-50   50-100   100-150   More than 150
    Other (please specify) ____
19. How often did you participate in professional development workshops:
    Monthly   Quarterly   Semi-annually
         Annually

20. Please rate the effect of professional development workshops on your teaching methodology.
    Highly effective   Effective   Less Effective
          Not effective at all
21. How much were you involved in the development of the curriculum you use?
    Highly involved   Involved   Less involved   Not involved at all
22. Please rate the efficacy of the curriculum you use?
    Highly effective   Effective   Less Effective
          Not effective at all
23. Please rate your teaching efficacy?
    Highly effective   Effective   Less Effective
          Not effective at all

Section C: Teacher Behaviors

Direction: Using the scale below, indicate your perceptions of the extent to which the following behaviors contribute to effective foreign language teaching. Click the response that best represents your answer.

Language and Culture TL = Target Language/Foreign Language	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
The effective foreign language teacher:					
24	Is involved in and enthusiastic about the TL and the TL culture.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
25	Has good oral and written skills in the TL.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
26	Teaches familiar expression (e.g., It's raining cats and dogs) to help learners communicate successfully in the TL.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
27	Often uses authentic materials (e.g., maps, pictures, clothing, food) to teach about the TL and culture.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
28	Uses the TL as the main language of communication in the classroom.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
29	Provides opportunities for students to use the TL in and outside of school.	SD	D	NS	A	SA
30	Encourage foreign language learners to speak in the TL from the first day of instruction	SD	D	NS	A	SA
31	Gives examples of cultural differences between the student's first language and the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA
32	Selects materials that present viewpoints that are unique to the foreign language and its cultures (e.g., a text that shows how people greet each other differently in the target culture	SD	D	NS	A	SA

Teaching Strategies **TL = Target Language/Foreign Language**						
The effective foreign language teacher:						
33	Uses small groups so that more students are actively involved	SD	D	NS	A	SA
34	Gives learners a time limit to complete small group activities	SD	D	NS	A	SA
35	Gives learners tasks to complete (e.g., labeling a picture, filling in blanks) while reading or listening in the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA
36	Provides opportunities for students to learn more about other subjects (e.g., math, science, social studies) in the TL classroom	SD	D	NS	A	SA
37	Has students take part in role-plays from the beginning of TL instruction	SD	D	NS	A	SA
38	Asks students to find out unknown information from a classmate or another source	SD	D	NS	A	SA
39	Has students act out commands or do other physical activities to practice listening comprehension in the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA
40	Uses computers (e.g., computer-based exercises, e-mail, Internet resources)	SD	D	NS	A	SA

Individual Differences **TL = Target Language/Foreign Language**						
The effective foreign language teacher:						
41	Plans activities to meet the ends of foreign language students with a variety of interests	SD	D	NS	A	SA
42	Plans different teaching strategies and activities depending on the learners' age	SD	D	NS	A	SA

43	Encourages students to explain why they are learning the TL and how they learn best	SD	D	NS	A	SA
44	Teaches foreign language students to use various strategies to improve their vocabulary learning (e.g., creating a mental picture of the word, memory aids)	SD	D	NS	A	SA
45	Teaches foreign language students to use various learning strategies (e.g., self-evaluation, repetition, draw a picture)	SD	D	NS	A	SA

Assessment and Grammar						
TL = Target Language/Foreign Language						
The effective foreign language teacher:						
46	Understands the basics of linguistic analysis (phonology, syntax) as they apply to the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA
47	Uses activities and assignments that draw learners' attention to grammatical points	SD	D	NS	A	SA
48	Bases at least part of students' grades on completion of homework	SD	D	NS	A	SA
49	Grades written assignments mainly on the amount of errors in grammar	SD	D	NS	A	SA
50	Grades spoken language mainly on the amount of errors in grammar	SD	D	NS	A	SA
51	Bases at least some part of students' grades on how well and how often they speak in the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA

SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, NS = not sure, A = agree, SA = strongly agree

Section D: Second Language Theory

Direction: Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. Click the response that best represents your answer.

52	Foreign language learners should speak with native speakers of the TL as often as possible	SD	D	NS	A	SA
53	An understanding of theories of second language acquisition helps foreign language teachers teach better	SD	D	NS	A	SA
54	Foreign language learners do not always learn grammatical points by means of formal instruction	SD	D	NS	A	SA
55	Using small group activities helps make students less nervous in the classroom	SD	D	NS	A	SA
56	Activities that focus on the exchange of meaningful information between two speakers are more important than activities that focus on the use of grammar	SD	D	NS	A	SA
57	The more intelligent a person is, the more likely he or she is to learn the TL well	SD	D	NS	A	SA
58	Foreign language teachers must correct most students errors	SD	D	NS	A	SA
59	Having students work in small groups is likely to result in them learning errors in the TL from each other	SD	D	NS	A	SA
60	It is not good to have beginning foreign language learners speak too much with native speakers because native speakers usually do all of the talking	SD	D	NS	A	SA
61	Foreign language learners can learn to use a foreign language well simply by exposing them to it (e.g., reading in or	SD	D	NS	A	SA

	listening to the language)					
62	Exposing learners to written and spoken language that is a little bit above their current level of understanding is necessary for TL learning	SD	D	NS	A	SA
63	Making students speak quickly in the TL improves TL use	SD	D	NS	A	SA
64	Adults learn a foreign language in a way similar to the way they learned their first language	SD	D	NS	A	SA
65	Teaching about the TL culture is not as important as teaching grammar and vocabulary	SD	D	NS	A	SA
66	Native or near-native language skills of the teacher are more important than his or her teaching skills	SD	D	NS	A	SA
67	Learners must understand every word of a spoken message to understand what is being said in the TL	SD	D	NS	A	SA

SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, NS = not sure, A = agree, SA = strongly agree