Original Paper

English Foreign Language Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs:

Traditional Teaching and Language Socialisation

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Abstract

Teachers' beliefs play a key role in the selection of language teaching methodologies. They affect teachers' pedagogical practices and behaviors and are, consequently, integral in shaping the language learning classroom environment. This study investigates the beliefs of teachers of English as a Foreign Language in relation to the concepts of traditional teaching method (e.g., Grammar-Translation Method) and language socialisation which emphasises the importance of socialization within social norms of the target community through exposure and interaction. The study uses questionnaire and interview to examine the beliefs of 28 teachers about language teaching methods in a Saudi higher education context. The findings revealed that, despite the fact that teachers continue to believe in traditional teaching methods, they show considerable support for language socialisation in language learning. Therefore, the findings suggest the need for teachers to explore their beliefs on teaching the foreign language and creating teachers' awareness of teaching methodologies (e.g., awareness of factors associated with language socialisation such as interaction and the focus on meaning rather than form).

Keywords

English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Traditional Teaching Method (TTM), Language Socialisation (LS)

1. Introduction

Learning a Foreign Language (FL) is not simply about learning how to use grammatical forms, but entails learning about how meaning is socially structured. Learners' socialisation within the social norms of the target language community is embedded in the process of language learning as a result of social interactions with speakers of that community (Bongartz & Schneider, 2003; Duff, 2002). In addition, human interaction is perceived as a fundamental aspect of learning for providing scaffolding for individuals' behavior and reasoning (Duff, 2007; Duranti, Ochs, & Schieffelin, 2011). In this regard,

exposure to the Target Language (TL) is very important for foreign language learners, as it provides them with opportunities to interact with TL speakers in everyday contexts. However, in an English FL classroom, the focus may often be on linguistic forms rather than functions, despite the fact that recent pedagogical trends support socially-mediated approaches to instruction over form-focused instruction (Spada, 2007; Storch, 2018). Therefore, the aim of the present paper is to investigate the beliefs of English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with regard to pedagogical teaching methods using a Saudi university language learning context.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Traditional Teaching Methods (TTMs)

Many teaching approaches have appeared for teaching a FL, including traditional (e.g., the audio-lingual method, the Grammar Translation Method, GTM) and non-traditional (e.g., communicative language teaching and language socialisation teaching methods; Howatt & Smith, 2014). The use of a form-focused approach has been the main focus when teaching a language where planned or incidental instructional activities are included to bring students' attention to the linguistic form (e.g., accuracy) rather than to the meaning (Ellis, 2001). These traditional teaching methods develop certain language skills (e.g., reading and grammar as in GTM) and ignore others (e.g., speaking) (Bahar, 2013). Teachers who believe in teacher- centered teaching methods consider teaching as dissemination of information and encourage the reproduction of information (Berry, 2004). They are viewed as knowledge providers in traditional language classrooms, and they mostly dominate the learning environment while focusing on exercises and translating sentences or texts into the students' first language (L1) (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Students are perceived as receivers and have a passive role in learning the TL; a role that can make them feel boring and frustrated. In order to understand the TL, students rely heavily on memorisation of lists of isolated words and grammatical rules (Howatt & Smith, 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Zhou & Niu, 2015). They also rely on translation, translating new words into their L1, a strategy valued by many researchers for facilitating learning of the FL (Andi & Arafah, 2017; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Chang, 2011)

However, although many educators view these approaches negatively for having negative impacts on the development of learners' linguistic competency (Brown, 1994), many think that they builds learners' vocabulary equivalent to that of their mother tongue, and develops their grammatical knowledge; and that, therefore, it contributes to the acquisition of the TL (Cunningham, 2000). For example, Maulina and Rusli (2019) highlight the value of TTMs for helping FL learners to learn languages successfully and in developing their fluency and accuracy. They argue that, in TTMs, teachers and students show no hesitation in using their mother tongue for interaction, and that teachers use various activities to support students' learning including code-switching, repetition, and grammar game techniques.

2.2 Language Socialisation (LS)

As the main objective of teaching a language is to help learners to communicate effectively in different

contexts, FL learners need to learn how language functions in a range of social settings, negotiate meanings, and engage in complex spoken discourses (Kramsch, 1993; Swain, 2000; Vickers, 2007). These activities can be achieved through collaborative and interactive learning environments, as they promote language learning and, consequently, learners are able to put their learning into practice (Dooly, 2008; Ellis, 1999). Kim (2005) points out that individuals create meaning out of their learning through their individual interactions with each other and with the environment that they live in.

LS, therefore, can be defined as "the process by which individuals acquire, reproduce, and transform the knowledge and competence that enable them to participate appropriately within specific communities of language users" (Lee & Bucholtz, 2015, p. 319). It not only accounts for the ways in which participants socialize through language but also for the way they use language (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008). In relation to FL learning contexts, LS helps learners to understand how the TL is used by members of the target community through interaction between speakers of that community or exposure to the target culture (Bongartz & Schneider, 2003; Duranti, Ochs, & Schieffelin, 2011).

Research into language pedagogy emphasises the role played by the concept of culture in learning a language and stresses the role LS has in the development of syncretic linguistic and cultural practices. From LS perspective, language learning is perceived as cultural learning because language and culture are integrated wherein they interact with each other in ways that connect culture to all aspects of linguistic structures and uses (e.g., Duff & Hornberger, 2008; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). Thus, including TL cultural features when teaching a FL is important for helping students to understand target situations, and this is achieved through engaging students with activities that are highly relevant to verbal interaction about the TL culture (Lo Bianco & Crozet, 2003).

Researchers also highlight the significant role of being a member of the TL community (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011). They argue that becoming a part of the target community provides novice learners with opportunities to participate in the sociocultural practices of that community. Language instruction in combination with participation in particular speech communities serves to socialise non-native speakers into the community's speech norms, and therefore helps them learn how to use the target language appropriately (Duranti, & Goodwin, 1992; Vickers, 2007). In this regards, Brady (2004) pointed out that the implementation of this approach is driven by the belief that learning is an active construction and reconstruction of knowledge, and teaching is a process of guiding and facilitating students in the process of knowledge construction.

2.3 Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs

Teachers' beliefs are considered an important variable in teaching a FL as they influence teachers' attitudes, teaching methods and classroom behaviors; and therefore, beliefs play a significant role in informing teachers' teaching practices (Kaymakamoglu, 2018; Scott, 2016; Zohar & Alboher Agmon, 2018). Richards and Schmidt (2013) define teachers' beliefs as being "ideas and theories that teachers hold about themselves, teaching, language, learning and their students" (p. 586). These beliefs may also influence curricular, instructional or evaluative decisions because teachers develop their own solutions

based on their personal understanding of the circumstances (Good & Brophy, 2003, p. 67).

Although some research shows that not all teachers state their beliefs accurately in relation to their classroom practice (e.g., Ellis, 2004), the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices has been shown (Andrews, 2003). Good and Brophy (2003) and Vibulphol (2004) have confirmed that there is a relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching focus in the language classroom. For example, teachers' focus on language forms is influenced by their beliefs about the importance of grammar (Vibulphol, 2004). Moreover, many researchers point out that teachers' practices can also be affected by their language proficiency level (e.g., higher proficiency teachers tend to teach grammar implicitly), qualifications, learning experiences, and ages of their students (e.g., adults need to be taught grammar explicitly) (see Andrews, 2007; Richards & Lockhart, 2005; Önalan, 2018). On this, Karim, Mohamed, Rahman and Haque (2017) investigated the beliefs held by teachers and sources of those beliefs towards the communicative language teaching in Bangladesh, and found that teachers' own experience as language learners has an effect on teachers' beliefs in relation to using teaching methods in the classroom. Based on these, it can be inferred that the teachers' own educational background and beliefs about teaching play a significant role in teaching a foreign language classroom.

Despite the fact that, in the last twenty five or more years, many EFL teachers have moved from a grammar-based to a communicative-based approach to FL instruction (Richards, 2005), some teachers have increased the amount of explicit grammar work undertaken, focussing more on textbook-based instruction, rather than interactive approaches. In Arab contexts such as Saudi Arabia, for example, researchers have pointed out that TTMs (e.g., GTM) are still preferred and used by EFL teachers: the teachers dominate the classroom and focus more on linguistic form (see Alahmadi, 2007; Fareh, 2010). This approach fails to provide students with the kind of meaningful interactions needed and negatively impacts on their communicative ability and limits their classroom participation (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Omar, 2019). Recently, Mansory (2019) examined the impact of teachers' use of students' L1 in English classes, and found that the adoption of L1 has a negative impact on the development of students' English competency (i.e., a lower level of student proficiency was found in classes where the teacher used more L1). A justification given to such teaching practice in those contexts is that it keeps things easy and clear to the FL learners and allows them to use their mother tongue, especially at beginner level. They also help teachers with limited proficiency to teach English, and to control large classes of students (Aqel, 2013; Durrani, 2016; Mijan, 2019; Zhang, 2010). Additionally, in large classes, teachers may believe that they are unable to teach English effectively if they move away from GTM (Bataw, 2006).

However, some researchers highlighted the advantages of TTMs in facilitating the learning and teaching of the TL in FL contexts. For example, Bhooth, Azman and Ismail (2014) examined the use of L1 as a component of GTM in developing the English reading skills of Arab students and concluded that Arabic serves a number of functions including translating new words, defining concepts, giving explanations, and facilitating group discussions in the English FL classroom. Sinha and Idris (2017) also examined the effectiveness of communicative language teaching as a new teaching method in Asian

104

context, and pointed out that this approach is ineffective in such context for abandoning students' L1, which seen as the important tool for developing FL learners' language (Canagarajah, 2012; García, 2009; Garcia & Wei, 2013; Vogel & Garcia, 2017).

In this regard, Luan and Bakar (2008) discuss the importance of changing EFL teacher's role from that of a dominant information feeder to that of a facilitator, and highlight the teacher's role in changing the students' role in the learning process from being passive to active learners. The shift from the traditional teaching to a learning environment that encourages active participation and interaction in the learning process allows students to effectively practise self-regulated learning strategies (Ng, 2005). It also creates opportunities for teachers to build relationships with their students for filling the various roles of coach, facilitator and co-learner (Othman & Abdul Kadir, 2004, p. 4).

Furthermore, some EFL teachers are reluctant to teach the culture of the TL as a result of the belief that this might present a challenge to local cultural norms and values (Alrasheed, 2012; Mekheimer & Aldosari, 2011). Others support teaching both target and local cultures in the language classroom to meet students' need for understanding the differences between their own and the TL culture (Alfahadi, 2012; Prastiwi, 2013). Scholars also argue that such bi-cultural approaches help learners to avoid cultural misunderstanding when participating in intercultural communication situations and enable the development of attitudes of openness and tolerance towards others (Frank, 2013; Gonen & Saglam, 2012).

Despite the wide range of studies conducted into teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practice to facilitate FL learning, it is apparent that comparatively little research in this area has been undertaken in the Saudi higher education context, especially with respect to empirical investigations into EFL instructors' perceptions of TTMs and LS. Therefore, the present study was designed to address this gap by investigating the perceptions of EFL university instructors on teaching methods, thereby helping to broaden our understanding of language teaching in the Saudi higher education context. The study thus aims to answer the following two research questions:

1.   What are EFL teachers' perceptions about TTMs in a Saudi HE context?
2.   What are EFL teachers' perceptions about LS in a Saudi HE context?

3. Methodology

3.1 Context of Study

The study was conducted at the Preparatory Year Program (PYP), a centre for preparing students for university entry in one of the Saudi universities. It is a requirement all high school graduates to study and pass the PYP successfully to progress to university level in two semesters of continuous study. All students are full-time students and almost all of them are Saudis with Arabic background. During this program, students are taught English language extensively, 20 hours per week. Those English courses are taught by EFL teachers.

105

3.2 Participants

A total of 28 EFL teachers (19 females and 9 males), aged from 25 to 54 years participated in the present study. The power of this purposeful sampling lies in participants' relevant experience in the field of teaching English as a FL in the Saudi context (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). The teachers had varied experience in teaching EFL ranging from one to twenty years. They come from different countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Jordan, South Africa, the United States, Sudan and Philippines) and speaking different languages such as Arabic, Urdu and English. The teachers were appropriately qualified, with the majority of them holding an English language teaching degree at master's level. They teach English to students from a range of different levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

This study used a mixed-methods approach to obtain qualitative and quantitative data: An online survey and interview. A survey was designed based on a review of previous relevant studies (e.g., Chang, 2014; Duff, 2007; Duranti, Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011; Lam, 2004; Lee, 2010; Ochs, 1993). The survey comprised 25 opened and closed questions. The closed questions were based on a three-point Likert scale (i.e., disagree, neutral, agree) to ensure the quality of data as well as to encourage a good response rate (Sachdev & Verma, 2004). Although a scale without "neutral" is preferred among some scholars to make a definite choice and avoid social desirability bias that may result from the participants' desire to please the researcher (Garland, 1991), "neutral" on the Likert scale has been added to the survey to "avoid response bias" (Franklin, 2012, p. 179). In order to strengthen the validity of the survey instrument, it was piloted and revised accordingly prior to its distribution. Prior to the distribution of the final survey, an email was sent to the EFL teachers at the university research site inviting them to participate in the study. These emails also contained details about potential interview arrangements.

A semi-structured audio-recorded interview of 20 minutes was also conducted online (Skype) with five EFL teachers individually. The rationale for recruiting this sample size was to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' understanding of language learning and teaching methodologies (see Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014; Merriam, 2014; Punch, 2013). The interview consisted of four main open-ended questions (e.g., Do you think that learning a foreign language requires learning the TL culture? Why? Is it important for language learners to be part of the TL community? Why? How?) which allowed participants to offer as much detailed information as possible, to express their own opinions and for extended comments on issues they themselves chose to discuss further (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013; Franklin, 2012; Patton, 2015).

Teachers' responses to the survey were analysed quantitatively using descriptive analysis (frequencies and percentages) to bring objectivity to the study so the result would not be influenced by the analysis of the researcher (Punch, 2013). The interview data was analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis to capture the EFL teachers' in-depth views and reflect the key issues emerged in these data (Hatch, 2002). To maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the teachers, they are referred to as T-#, for example [T-1].

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Teachers' Perceptions of TTMs

Table 1 presents teachers' (Ts) responses to the first research question, "What are EFL teachers' perceptions of TTMs?". The analysis shows that the majority of the Ts (more than 56%) indicated high agreement with most of the items supporting TTMs, except for the last item which was rejected by half of Ts (50%). For example, the Ts believed that the role of the teachers is to "transmit knowledge to students" (72%) and "test students' recall" (57%). They also believed that "learning a language occurs primarily from drilling and practice" (71%). However, notably, the trend changed in Ts' responses when asked about the teacher-centered learning. Half of the Ts (50%) showed their disagreement to "A teacher-centered approach for teaching a language is best".

Table 1. Teachers' Perceptions of TTMs (Freq Stands for Frequency)

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Teacher's major role is to transmit knowledge to students	20	72	2	7	3	21
Learning a language occurs primarily from drilling and practice	18	71	4	15	4	14
Teacher's major role is to test students recall	16	57	5	18	7	25
A teacher- centered approach for teaching a language is best	11	50	3	11	14	39

These results were reinforced by interview data where some of the Ts indicated that students need to have basic knowledge about the TL, which is usually achieved through teaching the language directly before practicing it:

> I think foreign language learners need to have a basic structural knowledge of the target language before practicing it. [T-2]
>
> Learners need to be taught the language directly (e.g., teaching grammar) to know how to use it in such FL context. [T-4]

These findings show that most of the teachers' responses to the survey showed support for the factors associated with TTMs, and that the teacher's role is as a source of knowledge and knowledge provider and their responsibility is to communicate knowledge in a clear and structured way. They perceived learning the TL to be a matter of knowing and practicing well-formed utterances or a matter of drilling grammatical patterns, and that it is the responsibly of the teacher to ensure students' understanding of this knowledge through testing their students recall. These findings indicate that traditional teaching methods are still practiced in the Saudi context. They also suggest the teachers' power over students and show their dominance of their English learning classes, a similar result to those found in previous studies in the same context (e.g., Alahmadi, 2007; Alkahtani, 2010 Alrasheed, 2012). In fact, this practice is not only restricted to the Saudi English classroom, but is commonly used by other FL

teachers in the global context (e.g., Durrani, 2016, in Pakistan; Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016, in Iran; Lee, 2004 in China; Luan & Bakar, 2008 in Malaysia; Sultan & Jufri, 2019 in Indonesian). However, such teaching environments are proven to hinder students' communication ability and to limit their participation and interaction in the classroom (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Omar, 2019).

4.1.1 Factors Interacting with Teachers' Responses on TTM

The study also analyses the factors effecting on teachers responses in relation to the TTMs. The analysis does not show any significant interactions between teachers' perceptions and the gender, age, qualifications, teaching experience and class size. However, there are slight differences in agreement associated with gender and teaching experience on a teacher-centered approach. Although in most responses, female teachers showed more agreement with most of the statements associated with TTMs, males (6 out of 9) notably disagreed with last item" A teacher-cantered approach for teaching a language is best". Also, unlike teachers with little teaching experience, most of the experienced teachers (10 years experience) showed support for teacher-centered approach.

4.2 Teachers' Beliefs about LS

Table 2 and 3 present Ts' responses to the second research question, "What are EFL teachers' perceptions about LS?". The data shows a considerable change in the pattern of the Ts' responses compared to those related to the first research question. Teachers expressed strong agreement with most of the items connected to LS. For example, the majority of the Ts (96%) believed in the value of "group discussion", "collaborative learning" and "teacher-students interaction" (96% for each) and student-student interaction (93%).

Table 2. Teachers' perceptions of LS

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Effective language teaching encourages discussion in FL classroom	27	96	0	0	1	4
Collaboration promotes TL learning	27	96	0	0	1	4
Interaction between learners and teachers facilitates TL learning	27	96	1	0	1	4
Interaction between students in the classroom develops TL learning	26	92	1	4	1	4

When asked about teaching the language in context (e.g., teaching the TL culture), unlike EFL teachers in Alrasheed (2012) study, the majority of the Ts reported strong support for "teaching the target culture in a foreign language classroom" (82%), "interacting with native speakers' (71%) and "becoming a member of the target language community" (61%), as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Teachers' Perceptions of LS

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Integrating the TL culture promotes TL learning	23	82	3	11	2	7
Interaction with native speakers promotes language development	20	72	4	14	4	14
Becoming a member of TL community is part of the process of TL learning	17	61	9	32	2	7

The interview data also show that most of the Ts believed that learners need to have adequate exposure to the TL, a room to practice it, and knowledge about the TL society. For example, in relation to teaching the TL culture, all the Ts expressed high agreement with teaching the TL culture. This was reflected in their responses, using phrases such as "absolutely important" and "very important". They also believed that language and culture could not be separated because culture provides learners with exposure to the target cultural norms and understanding of how the language can be used appropriately in real contexts. For example, T-3 believed that language learners need to understand the TL culture in order to understand the TL. However, he emphasised the importance of having a 'living culture' to smooth communication processes. He narrated his experience when he first came to Saudi and was speaking the Standard Arabic, *Fushah*: he was surprised that some words he used are no longer used in the society, which made it difficult for him to be understood by common people. He explained:

> I believe that foreign language learners need to learn the target language culture and this culture should be a living culture to smooth communication. I used Arabic words which are no longer used in the society, thus they did not understand me. [T-3]

A highly experienced teacher, T-1, gave an interesting example of why we need to teach the TL culture, "greeting" in the Saudi context is different from other cultures where students shake their lecturers' hand when they are greeting them, and this is not accepted in other cultures:

> For example, Saudi students greeting their teachers shaking their hands. This act is probably unaccepted in other situations, e.g., American context, thus, they need to be exposed to the target language culture to use the appropriate linguistics together with behavior and be aware of the cultural rules in different societies. [T-1]

Despite these strong beliefs, some of the Ts, nevertheless, suggested the need for selecting appropriate content to meet the needs of local learners and to show respect to their culture, as pointed out by T-2:

> Teachers need to make a selection, because what is accepted in one culture may not be accepted in others. [T-2]

The teachers also believed that learning a target culture helps students understand the differences between their own culture and the target culture by using appropriate linguistics together with learning about appropriate behavioral expectations. Majority of the Ts reported an agreement with the

109

importance of becoming a member of the TL community (61%). This also was emphasesed in their responses to the interview. All teachers, except one, considered being a part of the target community as an important concept in learning a foreign language for helping students learn and understand how language is used appropriately by speakers from a particular community and avoiding language attrition:

> It is important for learners to be part of the target language community in order to know how the language is used by the native speakers in real contexts. It also takes students away from bookish to practice the language [T-4].

> It is important for language learners to be part of the target community, otherwise learners tend to forget the language in the long-term, e.g., Saudis who studied abroad fifteen years ago tend to forget English now". [T-1]

To substantiate these observations, T-5 gave the example of the word "cat" in English, which has numerous names used in Arab societies (e.g., *herrah, kettah and bessah*), supporting Vickers' (2007) statement that foreign language learners need to understand how languages are used appropriately by speakers of a particular community:

> It is important as it helps learners know how the word is used in a particular community, for example the word "cat" in English has different names in Arabic and these names are used differently from one community to another. [T-5]

These excerpts clearly indicate the teacher's awareness of the role of the TL culture in helping learners to understand the context of English and learn how language is used appropriately by its speakers, as opposed to textbooks which "cannot be counted on as a reliable source of pragmatic input" (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 25). These teachers' views confirm Dema and Moellers' (2012) statement that being a part of the community provides learners with opportunities to participate in the sociocultural practices of that community.

4.2.1 Factors Interacting with Teachers' Perceptions of LS

The study also looks at the factors interacting with teachers' perceptions of LS. The analysis shows that notably both females and males showed high support for interactive learning. However, the number of years of teaching revealed differences in teachers' responses. Experienced teachers (of more than 10 years) responded positively to "being a member of the target community" whereas teachers with little teaching experience (6 out of 13) did not consider it to be an important factor in learning a language.

Overall, these results show teachers' awareness of the importance of collaboration and interaction, and the role of context in promoting language learning and enabling students to put their learning into practice (Dooly, 2008; Gonen & Saglam, 2012; Swain, 2000). The findings also show teachers' awareness of the importance of integrating the target language culture when teaching English to FL students and at the same time, they show respect for the local culture. These findings are in line with previous research findings which emphasises the importance of integrating cultural features when teaching a FL to develop learners' linguistic knowledge, engage them in the context of the TL, provide

110

students with exposure to the norms and values in the target culture (e.g., Al-Asmari, 2008; Aydemir & Mede, 2014; Gonen & Saglam, 2012; Lo Bianco & Crozet, 2003; Taha, 2014; Watson-Gegeo, 2004).

The teachers' views on being a part of the target community shows their awareness of how participating in the TL community is important in learning a FL. The teachers believe that engaging with the target language community provides students with opportunities to actively participate and interact with the native speakers of that community, and consequently, they learn and understand how to use the target language appropriately. Those are similar to the views of those in previous studies who believed in being a part of the TL community provides students with opportunities to engage and participate in the sociocultural practices and learn how the language is used appropriately by speakers of a particular community and introduce a particular aspect of the cultural context (Dema & Moeller, 2012; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vickers, 2007).

5. Conclusion

The findings from the present study reveal that EFL teachers believed in the TTMs which focus on teaching the forms of the language rather than on its meanings. At the same time, they expressed support for LS, emphasised the importance of interaction and collaboration and stressed the role of culture and becoming a member of the target community in learning a FL. The findings also indicate that there is no significant interacting factor between teachers' perceptions and other factors: the gender, age, qualifications, teaching experience and class size, except for teaching experience and (i.e., more long experience more preference for teachers-centered approach and teaching experience and being a part of the target communities (i.e., more experienced teachers expressed strong support for being a member of the target community).

These findings show contradictory beliefs. Teachers showed support for both TTMs and LS, and this does not indicate a clearly preferred teaching methodology, suggesting the need for teachers to explore their beliefs on teaching of the foreign language. These findings contribute considerably to the field of education because they reinforce the importance of understanding teachers' belief. Therefore, teacher training programs need to focus more on teachers as they play a vital role in improving the quality of teachers, and consequently the quality of teaching in foreign language classrooms. The findings also emphasise the need for developing appropriate teaching methodologies and raising teachers' awareness of effective teaching methods (e.g., the role of LS in promoting collaboration and interaction) in the Saudi higher education context. In addition, in order to facilitate FL teaching and learning, promote LS and encourage students' participation and interaction, EFL teachers can integrate social networking sites (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Twitter) as part of technology into their classes.

As the study show a contradictory beliefs, a clear preference for teaching methodology could not be easily identified through teachers' self-reported perceptions and the opportunity of aligning teachers' perceptions with classroom practice was not available. Thus, future research such as direct observation of EFL teachers' classroom practice in the Saudi higher education context is suggested.

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116

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