A Study of Modifications in Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs: Pre-Service Versus Novice Teachers

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Abstract

Pedagogical beliefs as an important concept in psychology are one of the most influential and decisive factors in learners' success. Recently, teacher beliefs have attracted the attention of many researchers in English language teaching contexts; therefore, the current study investigated non-native novice English Language Teachers' pedagogical beliefs and the extent to which their pedagogical beliefs modified in the first year of their teaching experience in comparison to pre-service teachers. The required data were collected through a belief questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Although the results of the questionnaire demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences between pre-service and novice teachers, the findings of qualitative data illustrated that the majority of pedagogical beliefs were reformed. The findings indicated that several factors stimulated reformation in teachers' beliefs; the overlooked importance of teachers' role in materials development; lack of teaching practices in teacher education programs; cultural and contextual factors; and assessment procedure. Therefore, teachers need authority and power in educational contexts; teacher educators should specify a specific time to teaching practices to pre-determine the possible problems of the actual teaching practices in the classrooms; and a strong need for assessment practices in teacher education programs is required.

Keywords: education reform, English teacher education, international teacher education, teacher beliefs, teacher education program

Introduction

All students deserve trained and motivated teachers who enjoy their work under the support of efficient educational systems and proper management (Aspfors & Bondas, 2013; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The teachers should also have the ability to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and provide proper feedback (Beijaard, 2019; Delano-Oriaran, 2012). Therefore, good teaching means adhering to professional behavior and trying to help students learn, to the best of the teacher's knowledge and ability, in the best possible way (Cheng et al., 2009; Impedovo & Khatoon Malik, 2016). Good teachers reduce the gap between poor education and efficient teaching by increasing the learning benefits for each class and for each individual student (Harfitt, 2015; Joyce et al., 2018). Since teachers are the mainstay of the education system, and their ability to motivate students depends on their own beliefs (Mellati et al., 2015; Schaefer, 2013; Szeto & Cheng, 2018), the teachers' beliefs about how to teach more effectively and the factors that motivate or discourage teachers should be carefully considered.

As an important concept in psychology, teachers' pedagogical beliefs that are their understandings, premises, or propositions about teaching are one of the most influential and decisive factors in learners' success, which determines the type of activity that teachers want to do and the desire to continue (Maulana et al., 2015; Schaefer et al., 2014). Understanding teachers' pedagogical beliefs and attitudes about educational strategies plays a key role in improving EFL teachers' performance and the effectiveness of their activities (Aspfors & Bondas, 2013; Hoffman & Seidel, 2015; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Levin et al., 2013; Trent, 2019; Yuan & Lee, 2014).

Recently, teachers' beliefs have attracted the attention of many EFL researchers. Many recent studies in the field have examined the effect of teacher education programs on teachers' beliefs, teachers' belief on students' belief, and challenging situations that teachers face in their first year of their career (Borg, 2011; Maistre & Paré, 2010; Szeto & Cheng, 2018). For instance, Sage (2011) believes that it is necessary to improve professional preparation as well as teachers' teaching methods to understand their belief structures. Teachers' performance is directly related to their beliefs and well-being. Moreover, in the process, teachers' performance has a direct impact on students' motivation and learning outcomes (Hoffman & Seidel, 2015; Yuan & Lee, 2014). Levin et al. (2013) emphasized that educational reform involves helping novice teachers develop constructive beliefs and practices for teaching and learning that are necessary to meet the diverse and growing needs of student learners. Shifting towards constructivist approach appears to be a universal tendency among language teachers, and Iranian teachers are not exception to this trend.

Nevertheless, Karimi et al. (2010) argued that while constructivist approach has been added in teacher training programs, actual language teaching practices in the classrooms have not altered noticeably (Rahmati et al., 2019). In theoretical foundations, the programs focus on constructivist approach, but they offer similar practices that are similar to previous teaching approaches (Szeto & Cheng, 2018).

Likewise, Fahim and Samadian (2011) believed that teachers' practices are based on the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and this teaching method is completely different from what are taught in teacher education program as constructivist approach. They stated that in contrast to constructivist approach teachers have not a central and significant role in the intricate and multidimensional process of language teaching and learning. In confirmation, some studies show that there are discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices (Boyd & Ash, 2018). These discrepancies might be related to modification in teachers' beliefs from teacher education programs to the actual teaching context. While many teachers have valuable reasons to enter the profession, they are not trained enough and do not have the necessary skills (Chaaban, 2017). This lack of knowledge and skill may cause some kind of reality shock at the beginning of their career (the first year of their teaching) that influences their performance and the program outcomes. Therefore, the causes of any modification in teachers' pedagogical beliefs should be investigated.

Teachers' beliefs can shape teachers' instructional behaviors (Levin et al., 2013). Therefore, to improve teacher effectiveness and student learning, it is imperative to comprehend the responsibility of EFL instructors' educational beliefs about the language teaching and learning process. It is also vital to recognize how these pedagogical beliefs differ depending on their backgrounds, training, and learning contexts. These differences may cause reality shock that will lead to some modifications in teachers' pedagogical beliefs in the first year of their teaching.

Recently, educational programs such as professional development and teacher training programs in Iran have been focused on constructivist approaches, and teachers intended to use this approach in their instructions (Kiany et al., 2013). The approach is based on understanding, critical thinking, and question and answer. The constructivist approach is in contrast to traditional paradigm of the teaching and learning process that emphasizes memorization (Levin et al., 2013). Proponents of this approach intended to use learners as a central part of the classrooms to generate a comfortable and effective learning environment that motivates language learners and improve their understandings and language achievements (Szeto & Cheng, 2018). While the research studies on novice teachers are growing internationally, there is little research investigating the beliefs of novice teachers in Iran; therefore, the findings of the present study addressed novice teachers' pedagogical beliefs. The specific purpose of this study was to shed light on modifications in teachers' pedagogical beliefs in the first year of their teaching. To consider this concern, the present study compared the pedagogical beliefs of Iranian pre-service teachers with novice teachers (teachers who are in the first year of their teaching).

Literature Review

According to the definitions of the experts in the field, beliefs can be considered as a set of acquired hypotheses that are rooted in personal experiences or expert knowledge (Polat, 2010; Shirrell et al., 2018). In contrast to knowledge that must be justified and derived from valid evidence and arguments, beliefs express claims or expectations about reality. Belief formation presumes that a proposition is

represented in the mind. Beliefs are strongly influenced by the social and cultural environment (Mellati et al., 2018; Suchodoletz et al., 2018). Contrary to knowledge, which is conscious and fixed, beliefs are unconscious and often fictitious and are subject to change (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Teng, 2016). Teachers' pedagogical beliefs in this study are beliefs in specific cases, such as teaching and learning methods that affect their view of classroom activities (Borg, 2011). Some scholars consider pedagogical beliefs as the consequence of scientific knowledge formed in real environments that have evaluative nature (Decker et al., 2015; Fives & Buehl, 2014; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). Fives and Buehl (2014) argued that teachers' beliefs can be investigated from different perspectives: teachers' identity and motivation, context, and teachers' beliefs about knowledge, and teachers' beliefs about learners. From this perspective, teachers do not yet have the professional knowledge necessary to reorganize and re-shape their beliefs, and their beliefs are formed more directly in the classroom through their educational experiences (Szeto & Cheng, 2018). Therefore, teachers' teaching practices can have a remarkable impact on the formation and even on the reformation of these beliefs (Suchodoletz et al., 2018).

A review of available literature suggests that a number of studies have been conducted on the belief change from different perspectives (Flores, 2017; Levin et al., 2013; Sage, 2011). Liao (2007) revealed that personal experiences might be the first source of teachers' beliefs. What they experience as adulthood in their schools shapes the foundations of the teaching beliefs. In the same vein, Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015) stated that teacher cognition is one of the major sources that shape teachers' beliefs. They also asserted that beliefs that established by teacher cognition are stable and resistant to change. In contrast, Borg (2011) investigated the impact of teaching experiences on teachers' beliefs and consequent modifications. He believed that the reality of the classrooms could redefine teachers' beliefs. Shirrell et al. (2018) investigated how teacher education programs change student / pre-service teachers.

Reviewing the literature, the researchers found controversial evidence of impact of TEP on teachers' pedagogical beliefs. Some scholars strongly believe that effective TEPs shape the mainstay of teachers' pedagogical beliefs (Boyd & Ash, 2018; Zhang & Liu, 2014). However, some other researchers considered it only as a source of belief. They argued that other sources of teachers' beliefs such as teaching experience and contextual factors play more significant role in establishing the beliefs (Chaaban, 2017; Pilitsis & Duncan, 2012; Szeto & Cheng, 2018). Caudle and Moran (2012) investigated beliefs changes in teacher education programs and teaching practices. They found that teacher education programs had little influence on revising teachers' pedagogical beliefs while classroom practices could change their beliefs to a large extent. In contrast, Chaaban (2017) investigated changes in teachers' beliefs over a teacher education program. They found that the majority of teachers in the study experienced considerable modifications in their pedagogical beliefs. Zhang and Liu (2014) argued that teachers' beliefs were context-dependent. It means that contextual factors such as principals' restrictions, curriculum design, and educational tests shape teachers' beliefs and determine how much they influence teachers' previous beliefs. In a similar statement, Boyd and Ash (2018) stated that

classroom practices could change teachers' prior beliefs. They focused on teaching mathematics and found that actual teaching practices in class can modify teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

Today, with the introduction of theoretical debates related to classroom challenges, individual differences, and communicative classroom activities, teachers received sufficient academic knowledge about the reality of the classroom. However, the extent to which this awareness is effective in changing beliefs and enabling them to free themselves from the shackles of traditional teaching methods that they have experienced as language learners and pre-service teachers and making possible better education through adequate educational behavior in accordance with the principles of language teaching approaches requires empirical research. In other words, reviewing the literature reveals that there are questionable findings about stability or modification of teachers' beliefs after teaching experiences in their real classrooms. Most of studies about the change in teachers' beliefs were conducted in native contexts and this left us with minimal insights into non-native contexts. Therefore, the current study investigated the difference in teachers' beliefs about different aspects of language teaching between pre-service teachers (teachers who are at the end of TEP in different Universities) and novice teachers (those who have one year of teaching experience).

Research Questions

With the goal of comparing teachers' beliefs between pre-service teachers and novice teachers, three interrelated research questions guided this study:

1. Are there any statistically significant differences in teachers' pedagogical beliefs between pre-service teachers and novice teachers (first year)?

2. Are there any statistically significant differences between pre-service teachers and novice teachers in terms of their attitudes towards subcategories of teachers' beliefs such as classroom assessment, curriculum design, teachers' role, and language teaching activities?

3. What are teachers' perceptions towards modification in teachers' pedagogical beliefs from TEP to the first year of teaching experience?

Method

The detailed information and procedure of conducting this study is presented in the following parts.

Research Design

The researchers of this quasi-experimental study chose exploratory mixed methods design to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The purposes for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data were triangulation of the data and to achieve complementary that reduce the likelihood of unfairness in the study and collect deep data about the specific topic (Riazi & Candlin, 2014). In addition, Mackey and Gass (2005) stated that employing a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data paved the way to attain more accurate and reliable findings.

Participants

The population of the study contained teachers who were at the end of their teacher education programs in different universities in Iran and those who entered their profession as novice teachers (First year) (Tsui, 2011). To gather the required data, the researchers compared teachers who enroll in the first year of university teaching with those who enroll in the third year of teacher education program. Searching the sites and surfing the net, the researchers invited all of them into the study. Due to time limitation, cost, and practicality, the researchers used convenience sampling to select their participants (Cohen et al., 2007). Fifty-one Pre-service EFL teachers and 56 novice EFL teachers accepted to participate in the current study (N = 107). Seventy-six of the participants were male and 31 were female. Among them 71 were under the age of 30, 29 were between 30-35, and 7 were 35-40 years of old.

Materials and Instruments

To collect the required data, the following instruments were used.

Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire

To elicit participants' pedagogical beliefs, the researchers employed Teacher Belief Questionnaire (TBQ) developed by Mellati et al. (2013). The reported reliability index of this questionnaire is .74 (r = 0.74) that is acceptable for the purposes of the study. It has forty questions. This questionnaire contains four parts and these parts are: beliefs about classroom assessment, curriculum design, teachers' role, and language teaching activities.

To be sure about its validity, three experts in the field checked the questionnaire to check its face and content validity. In addition, it was piloted with 20 participants of the same population. The questionnaire was revised based on the comments of the experts and results of reliability analysis. The reported reliability index of this questionnaire was .81 (r = 0.81) that is acceptable for the purposes of the study. To increase the number of participants, the researchers distributed the questionnaire in both paper and pencil format and online format.

Semi-Structured Interview

To eliminate the possible bias that is inevitable in the use of a single way of data collection and collect a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon in question, the researchers conducted semi-structured interview with 20 novice teachers. In a thirty minutes' interview, the researchers focused on the subcategories of the questionnaire (teachers' role, curriculum design, language teaching activities, and classroom assessment) to achieve comprehensive information about the topic under study. In addition, the participants were allowed to express their own attitudes about different aspects of the topic. The interviews were transcribed for further analyses.

Procedure

To conduct the study, researchers invited Iranian pre-service and novice teachers. Among them, 56 non-native novice teachers and 51 pre-service teachers

accepted the invitation. From the beginning, the researchers informed all of the participants of the nature and purpose of the research project through written information form. In addition, they could leave the study on their wills and without penalty. To investigate the modifications in teacher pedagogical beliefs of novice teachers, the researchers compared their beliefs with senior student teachers. To do this, the TBQ was distributed among novice teachers who graduated from different universities of Iran in both paper and pencil and online format. At the same time, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 novice Iranian EFL teachers. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to conduct further analyses.

Data Analysis

To answer the first research question, the researchers used T-Test and MANOVA. To answer the second research question, they used MANOVA. Since there are two groups (independent variables) and several continuous variables (Subcategories of the TBQ: language teaching, interaction, teacher role, assessment, and classroom management) in the current study, MANOVA analysis would be an adequate analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). To answer the third research question that has qualitative data, the results of interviews were transcribed and thematic analysis was employed. The goal of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, for instance patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research questions. In this method, the texts were studied several times and common themes and pattern were identified.

Results

Quantitative Data Analysis

To answer the first research question and check teachers' pedagogical beliefs between pre-service teachers and novice teachers, the researchers conducted independent-samples t-test.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Service & Novice Teachers

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Beliefs	Pre-service	52	126.5385	8.57598	1.18928
	Novice	56	141.9821	9.50501	1.27016

The results of Table 1 showed that novice teachers had different beliefs and different scores on TBQ. To check the validity of this finding, the researchers conducted independent-samples t-test. The results of this analysis are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2

The Results of Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Beliefs	Equal Variances Assumed	.132	.717	-8.842	06	.000	-15.44368	1.74670	-18.90669	-11.98067

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores of TBQ for pre-service and novice Iranian EFL teachers. There was a statistically significant difference in scores for pre-service ($M = 126.53$, $SD = 8.57$) and novice teachers ($M = 141.98$, $SD = 9.50$); t (106) = -8.8, $P = .000$. The results demonstrated that there were beliefs' discrepancies from teacher education program to the first year of actual teaching practices. The magnitude of the differences in the means was also very large (eta squared = .42).

To answer the second research question and check teachers' pedagogical beliefs about the subcategories of the questionnaire (assessment, curriculum, teacher role, and classroom activities) between pre-service and novice EFL teachers, the researchers conducted MANOVA. At first, they checked the assumption of the analysis and then conducted the MANOVA. The results of these analyses are presented in the following tables.

Table 3

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices[a]

Box's M	6.281
F	.602
df1	10
df2	51646.321
Sig.	.813

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Group

The results of Table 3 show that the sig. value is larger than .001; therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices is not violated.

Table 4

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Curriculum	.220	1	105	.640
Activities	.713	1	105	.400
Role	.003	1	105	.960
Assessment	.011	1	105	.916
a. Design: Intercept + Group				

The results of Table 4 reveal that all of the sig. values are more than .05. It means that the assumption of equality of variances is not violated.

Table 4

Multivariate Tests for Beliefs Differences Between Pre-service and Novice Teachers

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
	Pillai's Trace	.436	19.724[a]	4.000	102.000	.000	.436
	Wilks' Lambda	.564	19.724[a]	4.000	102.000	.000	.436
Group	Hotelling's Trace	.773	19.724[a]	4.000	102.000	.000	.436
	Roy's Largest Root	.773	19.724[a]	4.000	102.000	.000	.436
a. Exact statistic							
b. Design: Intercept + Group							

Since the assumptions of MANOVA were not violated and we deal with normal data, the main entry of Table 4 is Wilks' Lambda value that shows a significant difference between two groups.

Table 5

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Pre-Service and Novice Teachers

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	f	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
		Curriculum	329.200	329.200	28.768	.000	.215
Group	Dimension 1	Activities	335.068	335.068	27.276	.000	.206
		Role	619.486	619.486	48.136	.000	.314
		Assessment	391.860	391.860	33.865	.000	.244

A one-way between groups multivariate analysis of variance was performed to investigate teachers' pedagogical beliefs differences between pre-service and novice teachers. Four dependent variables were used: curriculum design, teacher roles, classroom teaching activities, and classroom assessment. The independent variable was teachers' teaching experience (pre-service or novice teachers). Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no violations noted. There was a statistically significant difference between Iranian pre-service or novice EFL teachers on their attitudes towards teachers' pedagogical beliefs such as curriculum design, teacher roles, classroom teaching activities, and classroom assessment, $F(4, 102) = 19.7$, $P = .000$; Wilks' Lambda = .56; partial eta squared = .43. When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, all differences reached statistical difference, using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of 0.01; curriculum design $F(1, 105) = 28.76$, $p = .000$, partial eta squared = .21, teacher roles $F(1, 105) = 48.13$, $p = .000$, partial eta squared = .31, classroom teaching activities $F(1, 105) = 27.27$, $p = .000$, partial eta squared = .20, and classroom assessment $F(1, 105) = 33.86$, $p = .000$, partial eta squared = .24. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that Iranian EFL novice teachers reported higher level of agreement on different aspects of teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data of this particular study was obtained through conducting a semi-structured interview with 20 novice teachers; the teachers were selected randomly. The researchers used the following procedure for analyzing the obtained qualitative data: they read the collected data several times to find the main ideas of them. Then they analyzed and coded the findings' main points subjectively and manually. Therefore, they converted the collected data in the interviews into texts. Finally, they used open coding to code and explain the transcribed texts. Some of the main beliefs about teachers' pedagogical beliefs and its subcategories after one year of language teaching experience in the interviews are presented here:

- Teachers play a key role in classrooms.

- Teachers complained that have no control over teaching materials.

- Teaching materials are out-of-dated.

- Teacher education programs lack enough practice.

- Teachers are not providers.

- Programs do not prepare teachers with cultural diversity of classrooms.

- The assessment procedure taught in programs is out-of-dated.

- The focus of programs is on norm-referenced tests.

- Teachers are supporters.

- Teachers are not able to follow political language polices.

In confirmation with the results of quantitative data, Iranian novice EFL teachers criticized their undergraduate education programs in the interviews. They believed that educational setting did not prepare them sufficiently for complexities of actual teaching environments.

Teachers play a key role in classrooms.

They illustrated how fundamental it is the teachers' intellectual and moral sensibility in developing a sense of friendship and trust in the classrooms.

"I think one of the problems that all teachers face with is the diversity of students in a classroom. They are different and have different interests, so they prefer different teaching methods. They play a key role in language classrooms. Holding a class in such a situation is somehow difficult. The teacher education program highlighted this diversity theoretically. We did not have any experience of such difficult situations; therefore, we had to change our beliefs about the best way of language teaching in our specific teaching context" (Two teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

They also stated that while the focus of the TEPs was on teaching methods and effective materials, they found that teachers play the most important role in real classrooms. They highlighted the significance role of teachers and suggested that a teacher-centered method that teachers can employ their intellectual and moral sensibility would be the best solution to the diversity of classrooms.

Teachers complained that they have no control over teaching materials.

While principals and policy makers claim that teachers have freedom on their jobs, teachers usually argued that they were under mounting inspections and growing challenges. They also asserted that their monitoring - from the quality of their teaching or even what they wear in the classrooms - directly relates to what organizations they join. They believed that educational and legal challenges or restrictions could significantly influence their job quality.

"Today, many sources of information are in access for students. The materials are available everywhere and students can study them based on their own interests. However, teachers have to follow a predetermined curriculum. They have no control over choosing the teaching materials. While there are numerous up-to-dated teaching materials on the market, the teacher education program focused on some out-of-dated materials. In addition, the materials that we read in the program were different from what we have to teach in actual classrooms. When we have no control over the materials, we cannot follow the objectives of the program. We have to change them based on the existed teaching materials" (Most of the teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

Almost all of the teachers criticized that they had to follow predetermined syllabus while they knew the determined syllabus is not adequate for the specific context where they taught.

Teaching materials are out-of-dated.

It is generally believed that interactions with teachers and instructional materials affect learners' understanding in learning environments. However, teachers believed that policymakers and stakeholders overlooked these important factors in their curriculums. Instructors claimed that no one could deny the effects of supplementary materials in teaching and learning process, but the main concern in using supplementary materials was availability.

"Unfortunately, the problem is that the existed materials on educational programs are not comprehensive from different language teaching and learning perspectives and teachers have no control over them" (Three teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

Teachers mostly benefited from materials that were not in access for all learners. In addition to their lack of availability, both principals and learners did not accept the supplementary materials and considered them as additional pressures in the education system.

Teacher education programs lack enough practice.

Regardless of the quality of teacher education programs, many student teachers stated that the real teaching experience happens only in school and universities not in the program.

"In the program, we as student teachers become familiar with different teaching methods theoretically, but we are not allowed to experience them practically in the classrooms. Lack of experience in conducting a specific teaching method influences its effectiveness in real classroom. Moreover, it can lead the class to a state of confusion. I modified my understanding about teaching theories and methods after the first session of teaching practice" (Most of the teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

It can be concluded from these statements that although the teacher education program had no significant impact on teachers' pedagogical beliefs, teaching practices have a considerable impact on further modifications in their beliefs.

Teachers are not providers.

Teachers argued that teachers can be the best providers of teaching materials since they can elicit learners' needs, select the most adequate existed materials, adopt them to their specific contexts, and even develop authentic materials appropriate for four language skills in classrooms.

"Teachers' role is the most important role in teaching circle. Even in the most fixed schedules, teachers can be very reflective. They are providers. They are providers of learning opportunity for students, providers of rich sources of materials, providers of perfect language task that help learners to practice learned materials. They also control the provided materials to fit students' interests and needs. These are some sentences that I have heard several times during teacher education program, but in reality, everything was different. Since they have no role

over teaching materials, it is somehow difficult to tell them be creative in your classroom" (Four teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

The results of interviews revealed that Iranian EFL teachers believed like traditional teacher-directed method, the roles of teachers are so important, but today their role has changed to some extent.

Programs do not prepare teachers with cultural diversity of classrooms.

Teachers believed that increasing diversity among learners and continuing demographic alterations in any teaching context indicate that if they want to reach a deep understanding of different learners, they have to increase an in-depth understanding of their cultures.

"I read somewhere that language is a window to the culture. In my opinion, it is the culture that determines the most appropriate materials, method, and classroom activities in every teaching context. While I learned in teacher education program that close relationship with learners increases their motivation and participation, what I have found in real classroom was completely different. I think teachers' close relationship ends their authority in the class and I'm sure that is the culture of my context" (Five teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

Culture is not isolated from teaching contexts. As researchers believe, an ongoing implicit and explicit interaction is happening between teachers, learners, context, and culture that can influence every teaching and learning context (Kirkebæk et al., 2013).

The assessment procedure taught in programs are out-of-dated.

One the main factors in successfulness of a teaching course is the role assessment in that context. Teachers believed that adequate assessment activities along with effective teaching can certify the adequacy of a teaching program.

"While the necessity of assessment has been emphasized in the education program and numerous methods of conducting effective assessment have been taught, there is no priority over the use of assessment procedures in real classrooms. It can be said that assessment is the least important matter in real educational setting" (Three teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

Collecting data about the specific level of every learner in a course (weakness and strengths) is essential in improving further teaching and learning programs. In addition to collecting such information, they should be shared with stakeholders and policy makers to support them in making precise decisions for learners' future learning procedures.

The focus of programs is on norm-referenced tests.

Teaching to the test can be a big concern in many teaching contexts.

"Priority of criterion referenced tests over norm-referenced was highlighted in many sources of the education program, but those theoretical concepts are absent in actual teaching environment. The only applicable testing procedure in real

classrooms is norm-referenced and criterion referenced tests are overlooked completely" (Most of the teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

Teaching to the test has a negative impact on teaching procedure and learning outcomes. There are some examples in the literature that the teacher demonstrated that the improvement in learners while standardized test did not prove that enhancement.

Teachers are supporters.

Teachers believed that when they have role in material development, when they know enough about different notions of assessment and the way that they can conduct them in classroom, they can play their main role as "supporter".

"It is clear that one of the most important roles of a teacher is to be a supporter and no one can deny this role and responsibility. However, we should keep in mind that as teachers, we are not knower and we just deliver the knowledge. We should encourage students to find out the right answer and lead them to be independent step by step" (Most of the teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

The teachers asserted that the main role a teacher in learning environment is being a supporter. However, they argued that teachers should be skilled in supporting learners in different ways to help them to reach their final goal that is autonomous learners.

Teachers are not able to follow political language policies.

Language policy and sociopolitical concerns of educational system is out of teachers' access and usually there are controversies between teachers teaching goals and macro-educational policies.

"Teachers have other problems rather than lack of experience or mixture of their students in classroom. Language policy can affect teachers largely. They cannot follow their beliefs because of political language polices. Students also have different purposes; a variety of purposes along with a variety of preferences create a complex situation that even professional teachers would not able to handle it" (Four teachers stated the same concept, but in different words).

A majority of teachers stated that teacher trainers did not use different teaching methods to stimulate real learning in the program. The results of interviews demonstrated that teachers had beliefs and attitudes toward language teaching that are different from policy makers. They stated that to act according to their beliefs requires dedicating a large amount of time and money and is not allowed by policy makers.

Discussion

The findings of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that teachers have noticeable challenges in their educational program that eventuate in chaos in language classrooms. Iranian EFL teachers argued that they need to reform their ideas and beliefs about language teaching, but they see that this reformation requires

countless prerequisite knowledge that were absent in their teacher education programs. The results of the current study demonstrated that several factors such as curriculum design, teacher roles, classroom teaching activities, and classroom assessment work simultaneously in shaping teachers' beliefs. It can be interpreted that teachers' beliefs are not a one-dimensional phenomenon. In other words, to investigate teachers' beliefs factors such as teachers' cognition, teachers' teaching experiences, and the quality of teacher education programs should be considered. Among them, the quality of teacher education programs play a key role in determining teachers' pedagogical beliefs. The findings of the current study confirmed Chaaban (2017) who stated that teachers are not trained enough in teacher education programs and do not have the necessary skills to handle the teaching context. The statements of the teachers in the interviews demonstrated what Joyce et al. (2018) argued that this lack of knowledge and skill may cause some kind of reality shock in novice teachers in the first year of their career that can influence their performance and the program outcomes. Similar to Suchodoletz et al. (2018), the findings of the present study demonstrated that social and cultural environment play a significant role in shaping teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

The findings are in accordance with what reported by Szeto and Cheng (2018) that contextual factors that are overlooked in teacher education programs play a significant role in the modification of the teachers' pedagogical beliefs. In contrast to Liao (2007) who found that personal experiences might be the first and important source of teachers' beliefs, the findings of present study demonstrated that no matter what is the source of beliefs' formation, teaching practice is the major source of reforming of preexisted pedagogical beliefs and establishing more stable beliefs.

The findings of the study indicated that teacher educations programs have some shortcomings that are common in the literature. When comparing the findings of the current study to those of older studies, it must be pointed out that there some important points in many studies that are generally overlooked in teacher education programs:

- While teacher education program highlighted the importance of teachers' role in teaching environments, the adequate facilities for implementing such a significant role is absent in teacher education programs and teaching contexts (Aspfors & Bondas, 2013).

- Teacher education programs emphasizes the control of the teachers over teaching materials; however, this control is absent in actual teaching contexts. In addition, they generally focused on out-of-dated teaching materials (Levin et al., 2013).

- Practice is the major shortcoming of the teacher education programs. The results of the study demonstrated that teacher had to reform their pedagogical beliefs after the first session of teaching practices (Cheng et al., 2009).

- The culture of teaching contexts is overlooked in teacher education programs. This point leads novice teachers to culture shock state (Trent, 2019).

- Assessment theory and practices are completely different from what happens in actual teaching contexts (Shirrell et al., 2018).

- Policy makers are not aware of language changes and the modifications in theories of teaching and language teaching and learning (Fives & Buehl, 2014).

Conclusion

This study evaluated possible modifications in teachers' pedagogical beliefs from pre-service period to the first year of teaching practice. The findings of the study demonstrated that teacher beliefs are multi-dimensional. Several factors such as teachers' teaching experiences, teachers' cognition, and the quality of teacher education programs should be considered simultaneously. The study also highlighted the key role of the quality of teacher education programs in shaping and modifying teachers' pedagogical beliefs. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews indicated that Iranian novice EFL teachers criticized their undergraduate education programs. They believed that educational setting does not prepare them sufficiently for the complexities of teaching environments. They stated that the teacher education program did not appear to enhance teachers' elasticity adequately in employing various teaching methods and strategies for diverse teaching environments. One explanation about this phenomenon is that when novice teachers entered the classroom, they faced a complex situation that was not explained in the program. They believe that many factors can be attributed to this inadequacy. Educational policy, broad curriculum design, material availability, learners' diversity, and the culture of the teaching contexts are among the most important factors that can influence teacher education programs and teacher performance in language classrooms.

The results of the study demonstrated that experienced and novice teachers were different in their beliefs about curriculum design, teacher roles, classroom teaching activities, and classroom assessment. Based on the specific findings of the current study and challenges which were not predicted in the teacher education program, some suggestions are presented here:

- Teachers need authority and power in educational contexts. There are some problems in teaching contexts that are unpredictable and should be solved only by the creativity of the teachers. If they have no power in their teaching contexts, they cannot solve these problems.

- The overall teaching materials should be designed by the stakeholders and policy makers, but those teaching materials should be under the control of the teachers. They should be able to modify or change them if it is necessary (based on their specific culture and context).

- Lack of teaching practice is one of the major shortcomings of most teacher education programs. Teacher educators should specify a specific time to teaching practices to pre-determine the possible problems of the actual teaching practices in the classrooms.

- Policy makers should be familiar with the new theories of teaching. They need to modify their teaching policies based on the new teaching approaches and theories.

- Many modifications have happened in assessment procedure theoretically; however, a strong need for assessment practices in teacher education programs is required.

Although this study was conducted on Iranian EFL teaching contexts, reviewing the literature demonstrated that these findings and suggestions can be generalized to other EFL contexts. This study focused on pre-service and novice teachers; future studies can be focused on experienced teaching and the impact of teaching experiences on their pedagogical beliefs. The study showed that teaching context and culture play a significant role in effectiveness of teaching practice; therefore, it is worth considering these important factors in future studies. Teaching preferences, accepted assessment activities, teachers-students interaction, and material development are among other factors that need to be highlighted in future studies.

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