EXPLORING THE FIT BETWEEN THE EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE IN CYPRUS TURKISH SECONDARY STATE SCHOOLS REGARDING CONSTRUCTIVIST AND TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

AN EdD THESIS

Submitted to the

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

in accordance with the Regulations of the School of Education

UK

OCTOBER 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

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This study investigated the EFL teachers' beliefs and practice in the Cyprus Turkish secondary state schools context. The data was collected through quantitative and qualitative means. The questionnaire findings were compared with the qualitative data which were obtained from 10 EFL teacher interviews and the observation of these teachers' lessons.

The quantitative findings revealed that the teachers' beliefs seemed to be congruent with their perceived practice. Their beliefs and perceived practice also seemed to be in line with the ideas of the new curriculum which was a blend of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Constructivist framework. The analysis of the influence of gender on teachers' beliefs and practice showed that the male teachers were more consistent in their beliefs as compared to their confessed classroom practice than the female teachers. Regarding the impact of gender diffrences on teachers beliefs and practice, it was found that female and male teachers differed only in two belief items and only in one practice item. Regarding experience and beliefs, it was found that more experienced teachers were more likely to favour Constructivist beliefs than less experienced teachers. Similarly, more qualified and more experienced teachers seemed more likely to implement Constructivist practices when the teachers' practices were considered. The male and female teachers' were more similar in their practices than in their beliefs. The quantitative findings of the study indicated that there were discrepancies among the participant teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and actual classroom practice most of the time. The discrepancy between the teachers' beliefs and actual classroom practices might have been because of the contextual constraints the teachers face in their school context and culture as it was the case mentioned by the teachers in this study that most of the participant teachers complained that the contextual factors were impediments to the implementation of their beliefs in their instructional context.

KEY WORDS: Teacher beliefs, teacher practice, craft knowledge, educational innovation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A	Assumptions
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
B	Beliefs
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BAK	Beliefs, Assumptions and Knowledge
Cert.	Certificates
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
COLT	Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching
COTE	Certificate for Oversees Teachers of English
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second language
EU	European Union
K	Knowledge

L	Listening
L2	Second Language
MA	Master of Arts
Mins.	Minutes
N	Number
NC	North Cyprus
Observ.	Observation
P	Practice
Qual.	Qualification
R	Reading
RA	Reading Aloud
S	Speaking
SD	Standard Deviation
Ss	Students

S-S   Student to Student Interaction

S-T   Student to Teacher Interaction

SPSS   Statistical Package for Social Sciences

T-C   Teacher to Class Interaction

T-C/S-C   Teacher to Class and Student to Class Combined Interaction

T-S/G   Teacher to Students or Group Interaction

TRNC   Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

US   United States

W   Writing

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores EFL teachers' beliefs about the nature of EFL teaching and learning in the Cyprus Turkish State Secondary Schools context to see to what extent their beliefs are compatible with their own classroom practice and with a Constructivist view of learning and teaching. Since a new EFL curiculum which holds firmly Constructivist views has been introduced into Cyprus Turkish state secondary schools, it is believed that exploring teachers' beliefs in learning and teaching EFL from this perspective might shed light on issues of implementation of this reform in actual practice. This study also aims to discover the mismatch, if there is any, between teachers' beliefs and classroom practice since in some cases belief does not influence practice in the way one might expect.

The next section presents a brief outline of the background to the study, the general structure of the New Cyprus Turkish Education System, followed by a statement of purpose and significance of the study.

1.1. Background to the Study

1.1.1. Educational Reform in Cyprus Turkish State Schools

The Cyprus Turkish Education System has begun a process of reconstruction due to the influence of other significant changes in the society. The impact of politics has been the main cause of this. The referendum for the European Union membership in April 2004, which caused rapid changes in many aspects, was a turning point in Cyprus Turkish society. To keep up with the modern education systems of the western world and the requirements of the new century, and in an attempt to satisfy a demand for quality education in Cyprus Turkish society, a reform of the education system was inevitable.

As part of this process, a Constructivist perspective has officially been adopted in the place of Traditional teaching. The curricula are designed within an understanding of education as

learner-centered and Constructivist. In this new program the development of understanding and skills replaces the transmission and memorizing of knowledge. Learner-centered education is aimed for, in contrast to teacher and program-centered education (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2005, p.40). This new education reform has brought 8 years Compulsory Basic Education (see Table 1.1, page 8) which was 5 years in the old system. The grades were changed as 6, 7 and 8 corresponding to grades I, II and III in the old system, respectively. Such a radical change has never before been experienced in the educational arena of Turkish Cyprus.

1.1.2. The Traditional and Constructivist Perspectives

Here, Traditional and Constructivist perspectives will be discussed briefly for further clarification of the current educational context in North Cyprus (Cyprus Turkish). In this study, the term "Traditional" will refer to a teaching approach where learners are seen as passive recipients of the teachers' knowledge. A fixed body of knowledge is transmitted from the teacher or text to the learners. This view (i.e. transmission of knowledge) tends to lead to a teacher-centered classroom. Foreign language is taught through exposing the learners to mechanical exercises and drills. "[Students] learn facts about language rather than how to use it communicatively" (Nunan, 1999, p.74). The teacher presents and explains knowledge and learners memorize what has been taught. It is "empty" (McInerney & McInerney, 2002) learning in which the instructional sequence is important rather than real learning (i.e. spontaneous use of language in which learners can use the language available spontaneously and automatically without stopping to think and to check the rules of the language in their mind). In this teacher-centered teaching, the teacher is the controller/authority in the class and learners are believed to learn through conditioning behavior with the use of positive and negative reinforcement. "The primary role of the learner is as a passive recipient of teacher's knowledge. The teacher's role is to provide that knowledge by transmitting it to the learner, largely through lockstep, teacher-fronted modes

of learning" (Nunan, 1999, p.74). In North Cyprus (NC) this is the prevalent approach to teaching, which the new curriculum is now aiming to replace.

In contrast, Constructivists (e.g. von Glasersfeld, 1995) view learning as a process of construction in which learners develop new knowledge through active participation.

Similarly, Woolfolk (2004) indicates that "Even though there is no single Constructivist theory, many Constructivist approaches recommend that educators:

- embed learning in complex, realistic and relevant learning environments;

- provide for social negotiation and shared responsibility as a part of learning;

- support multiple perspectives and use multiple representations of content;

- nurture self-awareness and an understanding that knowledge is constructed; and

- encourage ownership in learning (Driscoll, 2000; Marshall, 1992 cited in

Woolfolk, 2004, p.327).

In this process, the focus is on self-regulated (i.e. autonomous), contextualized learning in which the aim is to engender intrinsically motivated learners. Constructivism emphasizes learners' understanding and meaning making and aims to adopt a learner-centered teaching in which learners are supported, guided and assisted through scaffolding (i.e. supporting) to become autonomous learners (i.e. to take control of their own learning). McInerney & McInerney (2002) emphasize that "Learners ultimately appropriate and internalize the knowledge transacted through assisted performance so that it becomes their own" (p.46). In this new perspective, the importance of peer interaction is emphasized to help learners construct knowledge in a social setting since "learning occurs in social contexts" (e.g.Vygotsky's Social Constructivist view (see Chapter 2) summarized by McInerney & McInerney, 2002, p.46).

In Constructivism, learning is viewed as not only learning subject knowledge but also learning how to learn. This approach aims to motivate learners intrinsically through making

use of authentic (i.e. spoken or written language that have not been specifically written for the purposes of teaching language (Nunan, 1999, p.270)), stimulating activities, tasks and materials, and creating real life situations in which learners can practice real life language in class. Besides, it suggests providing students with challenging tasks, especially problem-solving tasks, to promote higher-order thinking rather than making the students memorize knowledge.

Woolfolk (2004) claims that "Constructivists believe that students should not be given stripped down, simplified problems and basic skills drills, but instead should encounter complex learning environments that deal with "fuzzy", ill-structured problems" (p.327).

What prompted the curriculum was the desire for becoming an EU member and adopting the curriculum was a way to satisfy the demands of that desire as a general educational need. However, in my view, based on my experience as a learner who has received Traditional teaching, this change in the curriculum should rather have been the result of a perception that a Traditional way of English language teaching has caused some problems in English language learning in the NC state schools for 30 years. Students' productive skills (i.e. speaking and writing) do not develop and since rote learning is promoted, students memorize the grammatical rules of the language but cannot use language in context because this way of teaching does not aim for productivity. It does not help individuals to become self-directed independent learners and users. In this way, language is not learnt for the purpose of communication. In the new curriculum "The main principle in teaching language is to acquire and use communication skills instead of grammatical rules" (Department of Educational Planning and Program Development, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of National Education and Culture, September, 2005, p.23).

Constructivism has taken the place of Traditional teaching as the philosophy of EFL teaching in the new curriculum in a theoretical sense. The new curriculum has been piloted in some state schools and teachers have been trained for this purpose, yet the authorities have realized that although the teachers follow the topics of the curriculum they do not apply the essentials of Constructivist teaching in their actual practice. In my view, one of

the reasons for this is the underestimation of the role of teachers in this educational innovation.

Brown et al. (1989) stress the significant role of teachers in educational innovations:

> Research on educational innovation has confirmed that teachers are never empty vessels into which new ideas can be poured. To be effectively implemented, an innovation has to take account of the ways in which teachers already construe their teaching, and of the classroom practices which they find comfortable and successful. If these matters are ignored, then the 'costs' of implementing changes may seem very great to the teacher in comparison with the 'benefits' which the innovator is attempting to sell (p.1).

In my view, curriculum developers or educational reformers are not fully aware of the impact of teachers' beliefs on the learning and teaching process. While attempting to integrate academic theories into the educational system, in an attempt to reform it, they disregard that teachers are guided by their beliefs and values while making decisions and implementing educational activities. It needs to be understood that "Curriculum innovation can hardly be successful unless teachers' conceptions and beliefs about teaching and learning are taken into account" (Van Driel J.H., Verloop, N., Van Wergen, H.I., & Dekkers, H., 1997, p.105).

In this respect, focusing on teachers' craft knowledge or practical knowledge, which "is the professional knowledge gained by experience which teachers use everyday in their classrooms but which is rarely articulated in any conscious manner (Day, 2005, p.21), would help us understand the role of teachers in a curriculum change (Duffee and Aikenhead, 1992 cited in Van Driel et al., 1997, p.106) because it is believed that "the personal craft knowledge of teachers will exert a major influence on the way teachers respond to a new curriculum" (Van Driel et al., 1997, p. 106). Besides, "In general, it is assumed that insight into teachers' practical knowledge can...lead to better implementation of innovations in education" (Beijaard et al, 1999, p.47).

For this reason, this study aims to explore teachers' beliefs in connection to their practice by adopting a craft knowledge perspective connects teachers' knowledge and beliefs to their classroom practice and considers the contextual aspects of instructional practice (Deforges & McNamara, 1979, Brown & McIntyre, 1993).

1.2. General Structure of the New Cyprus Turkish Education System

The Cyprus Turkish Education System is divided into three main levels: Basic Education, Secondary Education, and Higher Education" (see Table 1.1, page 8, below).

Basic Education is composed of three stages: Pre-school stage, Primary School stage and Secondary School stage.

Pre-school. Pre-school education is compulsory in NC. It covers pre-school class (age of 5-6) and play-class (age of 4-5).

Primary School. Primary School education is the stage between the ages of 6-7 to 10-11 which covers the 1st-5th grade. Education at this stage is compulsory.

Secondary School. Secondary School education is composed of the 6th-9th grade and it is the stage between the ages of 11-12 and 14-15. It is a part of compulsory education.

Secondary Education. This stage is not compulsory. Depending on the programs, it lasts 3 or 4 years in 10th-12th or 10th-13th grade. This stage includes high school programs which are divided into four categories:

1) Multi-Program Modern High Schools
2) Colleges and Anatolian High Schools
3) Modern Vocational Technical High Schools
4) Final Arts High School

Higher Education. Higher Education is the stage that comes after Secondary Education and includes university education.

In this new system, education in EFL has received more attention than previously in the state secondary schools. Compared to the other 12 compulsory courses in the curriculum, English, receives the highest number of teaching hours (8, 7 and 7, respectively) for all grades, i.e. grades 6, 7 and 8. In addition to this, one fourth of the total teaching hours of the compulsory courses (32 hours in a week) is allotted to English in the overall curriculum for all grades. Besides, there has been an increase in the number of hours of compulsory and elective English language courses regarding grades 6, 7 and 8. For instance, the compulsory English course for 6th grade has increased from 7 hours to 8 hours. "Academic English", "Theatre (English)", "English Maths" and "English Science and Technology Knowledge" are the new elective courses, the first two of which are offered to grades 6, 7 and 8, 2 hours weekly whereas the third and the last electives are offered to only grades 7 and 8, 5 and 4 hours weekly, respectively. When students finish primary school, to study 6th grade they enter an English language exam in order to be placed into either a college class where English-medium instruction is followed or into a normal class where the students receive education in their native language (Turkish).

According to a recently published document by the Ministry of Education (Department of Educational Planning and Program Development, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of National Education and Culture, September, 2005, p.23), the main characteristics of the teaching of a foreign language and thus English at all levels in all schools should be as follows:

1. Pupils are presented the language used in real life,

2. Teacher creates opportunities for real communication,

3. Pupils are given opportunities to express their ideas,

4. Mistakes that are made during the activities are regarded as natural outcomes of the communication skill acquisition process and eliminated through various methods,

5. Pupils build interaction among themselves rather than the teacher. The teacher

helps and guides pupils,

Table 1.1. General Structure of The Cyprus Turkish Education System

	Age						
Higher Education		Doctoral degree					
		Master's degree					
		Bachelor's degree					
	18-19	Fine Arts High School	College				Apprenticeship Education
Secondary Education	17-18		Anatolian High School	Multi-program Modern High Schools	Modern Vocational Technical High Schools		
	16-17						
	15-16						
Compulsory Basic Education	14-15 / 13-14 / 12-13 / 11-12	Basic Education Secondary School					Special Education
	10-11 / 9-10 / 8-9 / 7-8 / 6-7	Basic Education Primary School					
	5-6	Pre-School Class / Basic Education Pre-School					
	4-5	Play-Class					

Source: Department of Educational Planning and Program Development, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of National Education and Culture, (September, 2005).

6. The program is drawn up according to the pupils' abilities in using English and the topics that they need to talk about,

7. Project-based, pupil-centered and interactive activities are used,

8. Efforts are made to enable pupils to be aquainted with other cultures, to acquire social skills and intellectual background,

9. Emphasis is given to "autonomy of the learner",

10. Computer technology and other technical facilities are utilized,

11. Reading and writing awareness is developed,

12. Studies are made on research and improvement [of the students] at individual level.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

It is expected that this study will provide insights into the teachers' beliefs and practices in their social context. This study is expected to contribute to the understanding of teacher cognition in the English language teaching and learning arena and thus to have some impact on theoretical and methodological assumptions about teacher education and teacher development (i.e. in teacher training). Besides, this study is expected to increase our understanding of how and to what extent teachers' practical professional frameworks for EFL learning and teaching are influential in the implementation of the educational practices within the new Cyprus Turkish Education System.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. It may extend awareness in educators of the complexity of EFL teaching and learning by gaining insights into the psychological context of language learning and teaching. It may also provide empirical support for teachers' practical and professional theoretical framework which are developed through their own learning and teaching experiences and professional socialization. Such an investigation could be the basis of the essentials of teacher education programs and may help educators to develop an understanding of teacher behaviors, classroom decisions and actions and furnish English language classrooms with effective teachers in the Cyprus Turkish EFL context.

In addition, if material from this study is published or presented, it may raise teachers' awareness of the significance of beliefs in classroom practice and of their existing beliefs about EFL learning and teaching.

Moreover, since this study aims to investigate EFL teachers' practical and professional beliefs (craft knowledge) about learning and teaching, the dissemination of the findings in journal papers and conferences could contribute to EFL teaching and teachers.

Besides, the studies on teachers' practical knowledge (craft knowledge) have been mainly focused on investigating teachers' knowledge and beliefs, yet the studies focusing on their relevance to practice are scarce. Besides, their relevance to the practice of teaching has not been clarified yet (Calderhead, 1996). Therefore, this study might be one of the studies that might clarify the craft knowledge-belief relationship.

Also, this study will have the significance of being the first on the Northern part of the island since a study investigating the EFL teachers' beliefs in Cyprus Turkish state schools has not been conducted yet. It provides a framework for drawing a picture of English language teaching in state schools and understanding at least some of the reasons for the problems in foreign language education in Cyprus Turkish EFL contexts in which Traditional practices of language teaching have been adopted for over 30 years.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, presents the theoretical framework of the study. It first presents a broad definition of teachers' beliefs. Next, it discusses beliefs and knowledge. Then, it addresses learners, learning and teaching. A literature review of studies on the influence of the culture of work context on teachers' beliefs and practice follows. Next, the review casts light on teachers' beliefs and classroom practice. Then, the teachers' role in innovations is presented followed by the change to Constructivist teaching. Lastly, teacher learning is discussed.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodological framework of the study. It, first presents the objectives. Then, it draws the attention of the reader to the methodological approach of the investigation. Next, it explains the method of the research by presenting the participants of the study, the instruments used in the investigation, the procedure and the methods of data analysis employed.

In Chapter Four, the results of the study are presented. It reveals the results of quantitative investigation by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Chapter Five presents the results of the qualitative part of the investigation through case studies.

Chapter Six presents an analysis, synthesis and evaluation of the findings.

In Chapter Seven, the main conclusions derived from the study within the theoretical framework of the investigation, its strenthgs and limitations and the educational implications are presented.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

During the last two decades there has been a growing interest among researchers in education in exploring what goes on in the mind of the teacher. For this purpose, they have focused their attention on investigating concepts such as, 'teacher thinking' (e.g. Clark & Peterson, 1986) 'teacher beliefs' (e.g. Pajares, 1992) , 'teacher knowledge' (e.g. Borko & Putnam, 1995), 'teacher craft knowledge' (e.g. Cooper and McIntyre, 1996), 'teacher images' (e.g. Black 2002), 'teacher metaphors' (e.g. Black 2002), 'teacher cognition' (e.g. Borg, 2003), and so on.

This growing interest has stemmed from the recognition that the beliefs individuals hold influence their decisions and the choices they make during the course of everyday life (Bandura, 1986). In this respect, it has been suggested that teachers' classroom decisions and actions are guided by certain practical and professional theoretical frameworks, which derive from beliefs and are developed through their own learning and teaching experiences and professional socialization.

Research literature suggests that teachers' beliefs directly affect their perceptions and judgment of learning and teaching interactions in their classrooms and they in turn influence their classroom behavior (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Clark & Yinger, 1987). Besides, teacher beliefs may function as a "contextual filter" through which teachers may screen their classroom experiences, and interpret and adapt their subsequent classroom practices (Clark & Peterson, 1986). For this reason, Higgins and Moseley (2001) indicate that for professional development "an understanding of teachers' thinking and beliefs is a vital ingredient in effective support" (p.205). Since teachers' thinking and beliefs play an important role in their classroom practice and influence their learning and teaching interactions (Borko & Putnam, 1995), it is essential to find ways of exploring teachers'

beliefs and thoughts to provide insights for teacher educators to better help teachers develop.

The above claim has been taken further by Richard and Lockhart (2000) who remark: 'Teaching is a very personal activity, and it is not surprising that individual teachers bring to teaching very different beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching" (p.36). Teaching decisions are made under the influence of beliefs, and teaching becomes a personal act because beliefs are "accepted as true by the individual" (Borg, 2001, p.186).

As well as being personal, teaching is, however, to a large extent a public activity. In most countries, teachers face bureaucratic demands and can be forced to engage in externally imposed pedagogical practices which they might not believe in. Since they are required to implement a highly prescribed curriculum, they experience a lack of autonomy which may result in them keeping their personal views and beliefs to themselves and not opening them up to external scrutiny. This does not necessarily mean that their teaching is not influenced by these 'hidden' beliefs.

Having raised the issue of the effect teachers' beliefs may have on teachers' practice, in the following sections teachers' beliefs will be discussed from different perspectives in relation to the existing literature.

2.1. Beliefs

The concept of 'belief' has been studied by many researchers and defined differently. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) a belief is a representation of the information a person holds about an object which can be "a person, a group of people, an institution, a behavior, a policy, an event, etc., and the associated attribute may be any object, trait, property, quality, characteristic, outcome or event" (p.12) or a "persons understanding of himself and his environment" (p.131). For Rokeach (1972), a belief is "any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable

of being preceded by the phrase 'I believe that…' (p. 113). Sigel (1985) defines beliefs as "mental construction of experience- often condensed and integrated into schemata or concepts" (p.351). Pajares (1992) labels beliefs as "messy constructs" expressing that "the difficulty in studying teachers' beliefs has been caused by definitional problems, poor conceptualizations, and differing understandings of beliefs and belief structures" (p. 307). According to Pajares (1992)

> They [beliefs] travel in disguise and often under alias- attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertories of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature (p. 309).

Although the difficulty and complexity of studying them have been stressed by many researchers, beliefs have been the subject of research for more than three decades since they play an important role in peoples' intentions, decisions and actions. It has been realized that in order to understand peoples' behaviors it is essential to understand their thinking, what they believe in. In an attempt to uncover the mystery of beliefs, researchers direct their attention to not only understanding what beliefs are but also their relationship to knowledge, practice, experience, culture and context. The research on beliefs has been taken further to investigate how beliefs can be altered.

Due to the complexity of beliefs and definitional problems, 'beliefs' have often appeared in the relevant literature alongside the word 'knowledge'. Similarities and differences between the two concepts have also been the subject of discussion in an attempt to understand teachers, learners, teaching, learning and particularly, teachers' thinking. Therefore, the following section will discuss the relevant literature about belief and knowledge.

2.2. Belief and Knowledge

The concepts of "teacher knowledge' and 'teacher beliefs' have been studied by many researchers in the field of education. Shavelson and Stern (1981) stress that when knowledge is not available teachers draw for direction on their existing beliefs, implying that belief and knowledge are separate concepts. Clark and Peterson (1986) and Nisbett and Ross (1980), in contrast, state that a belief is a type of knowledge. Kagan's (1990) ideas overlap with Clark and Peterson's and Nisbett and Ross's; to Kagan a belief is a kind of personal knowledge: a teacher's tacit knowledge. More specifically, Kagan (1992) defines belief as a "particularly provocative form of personal knowledge" and explains that

> A teacher's knowledge of his or her profession is situated in three important ways: in context (it is related to the specific group of students), in content (it is related to particular academic material to be taught), and in person (it is embedded within the teacher's unique belief system) (p. 74).

On the other hand, a very different view from the aforesaid is expressed by Rokeach (1968) who suggests that beliefs have three components and knowledge is a component of belief. All the beliefs have a cognitive component for knowledge, an affective component representing emotion and behavioral component for action. Similar to Rokeach's assertion, some researchers characterize beliefs as more affectively based and knowledge as more cognitive. For example, Ernest (1989) claims that knowledge is a cognitive outcome of thought while belief is an affective outcome of thought, yet beliefs also have a small but significant cognitive component.

Nespor (1987) argues that while knowledge systems are of a cognitive nature, belief systems are affective. In this respect, for him there is a knowledge-theory and a belief-practice relationship. Similarly, Pajares (1992) considers knowledge to be based on objective facts whereas beliefs are based on personal evaluations and judgments. Therefore, beliefs are "the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives" (Pajares, 1992, p.307).

Pintrich (1990) claims that both "knowledge and beliefs… influence a wide variety of cognitive processes including memory, comprehension, deduction and induction, problem representation, and problem solution" (p. 836). According to Calderhead (1996) "Although beliefs generally refer to suppositions, commitments, and ideologies, knowledge is taken to refer to factual propositions and the understandings that inform skillful action" (p. 715).

In the 1980s, a plethora of terminology such as 'personal practical knowledge' and 'images' (Clandinin and Connelly, 1986), 'formal theoretical knowledge' and 'practical knowledge' (Calderhead, 1988) emerged in the literature, in an attempt to clarify the concepts of teacher knowledge and beliefs, but it only achieved a further blurring of the distinction between the two concepts. Grossman et al. (1989) point out that "while we are trying to separate teachers' knowledge and belief about subject matter for the purpose of clarity, we recognize that the distinction is blurry at best" (p.31). More recently, Woods (1996) articulates a similar conclusion. The reason for this confusion has been indicated by Verloop et al. (2001): "in the mind of the teacher, components of knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuitions are inextricably intertwined" (p.446).

In an attempt to address this, Woods (1996) had already proposed the concept of BAK (i.e. Beliefs, Assumptions and Knowledge) to show the relationship among knowledge, assumptions and beliefs and explains "Like schemata, BAK networks are structured in the sense that knowledge, assumptions and beliefs can be posited in terms of interrelated propositions, in which certain propositions presuppose others"(p.196).

My own position is similar to Woods's that knowledge and beliefs are very closely connected and have an effect on each other. Wood's definitions further clarify the relationships. For Woods, knowledge refers "to things we 'know'-conventionally accepted facts" (p.195) and he defines assumptions as "the (temporary) acceptance of a 'fact' (state, process or relationship) which we cannot say we know, and which has not been demonstrated, but which we are taking as true for the time being" (p.195). Beliefs, finally, "refer to an acceptance of a proposition for which there is no conventional knowledge, one that is not demonstrable, and for which there is accepted disagreement" (p.195).

Due to the difficulty of distinguishing among beliefs (B), Assumptions (A) and knowledge (K), it seems useful to regard them as a composite notion, intertwined as BAK. In theory, it might be possible to define knowledge and beliefs distinctively, yet in the practice of teaching and learning it might not be so easy to draw the distinction between the two since their function is intertwined. One's beliefs may affect the organization and the implementation of one's knowledge. Teachers can become influenced by their beliefs when organizing their knowledge in deciding what to teach and how to teach. Therefore, it would be simplistic to ignore the impact of beliefs on teachers' knowledge. Pajares (1992) claims that

> Beliefs are instrumental in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding such tasks; hence they play a critical role in defining behavior and organizing knowledge and information (p.325).

For this reason, I adopt Woods' notion of BAK in this study and teachers' beliefs will be used as shortened term to refer to beliefs, assumptions and knowledge taken together.

Teachers' beliefs do not merely affect pedagogical decisions but also influence teachers' interpretation of classroom events. Woods (1996) states that

> the teachers' beliefs, assumptions and knowledge play an important role in how the teacher interprets events related to teaching (both in preparation for the teaching and in the classroom) and thus affect the teaching decisions that are ultimately made (p.184).

To sum up, considering that teaching is a complex cognitive and affective activity beliefs and knowledge cannot be thought of in isolation from each other. Sometimes it may be difficult to decide whether what a teacher does is because of his/her beliefs or his/her knowledge because "in their use, [they] may overlap with each other" (Woods, 1996, p.195). Thus, sometimes what teachers think they know may be a deeply held belief. For

this reason, researchers need to be careful when exploring teachers' beliefs. Woods (1996) suggests that "In many cases it cannot be clearly determined whether the interpretation of the events are based on what the teacher knows, what the teacher believes, or what the teacher believes s/he knows" (p.194).

Teachers' beliefs are such powerful forces in teachers' decisions and actions that they have been said to also influence learner achievement. In other words, teachers' beliefs are linked to student performance (Good, 1987).

In some cases, academic failure of students has been attributed to teachers' expectations of students. Sometimes teachers hold low expectations of their students, which can become a self-fulfilling prophecy because the teacher's behaviors, classroom decisions and activities are guided by those beliefs.

It has been argued that because they hold low expectations for their students, teachers in low ability classrooms prepare low quality materials and exhibit low quality of teaching. Woolfolk (2004) indicates that "Low-ability classes tend to receive lower-quality instruction in general. Teachers emphasize lower-level objectives and routine procedures, with less academic focus" (p.116). According to Good and Brophy (2003) this is because:

> In planning for and interacting with students, teachers are guided by their beliefs about what students need and by their expectations about how students will respond if treated in particular ways. Also, teachers' beliefs about the academic ability of the class or of individual students may influence their curricular, instructional, or evaluative decisions (p.67).

Similarly, Miller & Satchwell (2006) claim that

> Teachers' beliefs about students' potential academic achievement are…shaped by their beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the nature of learning and, in relation to our specific interests, their beliefs about the nature of literacy (p.138).

Yet, there is a need for research studies investigating to see if/to what extent teachers' beliefs have a significant effect on pupil achievement.

In the act of learning and teaching, teachers' beliefs about what learning is, how learners learn best, who the ideal teacher is, who the ideal learner is and about other factors related with learning and teaching might determine their classroom actions. For this reason, Williams and Burden (2007) suggest that

> If the teacher-as-educator is one who is constantly re-evaluating in the light of new knowledge his or her beliefs about language, or about how language is learned, or about education as a whole, then it is crucial that teachers first understand and articulate their own theoretical perspectives (57).

Having discussed beliefs and knowledge, the following section will shed light on the network among learners, learning and teaching in the learning and teaching process since teachers' beliefs about them are influential in their pedagogical and methodological choices, decisions and actions.

2.3. Learners, Learning and Teaching

Teachers' beliefs about learners and teaching are inextricably linked. For instance, Meighan & Meighan (1990) categorize teachers' constructions of learners and how they teach in relation to these constructions. They argue that teachers who see learners as 'resisters' or 'receptacles' or 'raw material', teach in a teacher-centered way. However, teachers who see learners as 'clients' or 'partners' or 'individual explorers' or 'democratic explorers', teach in a learner- centered way since learners are regarded to be active rather than passive.

In the process of learning and teaching, the roles that teachers adopt are consistent not only with their own beliefs but also with their professional context. In a study, Richards et al. (1991) found that Hong Kong English teachers' beliefs about their classroom role were that they should:

(1) provide useful learning experiences, (2) provide a model of correct language use, (3) answer learners' questions, and (4) correct learners' errors. They also believed that their main role as English teachers was to (1) help students discover effective approaches to learning, (2) pass on knowledge and skills to their pupils, and (3) adapt teaching approaches to match their students' needs. (cited in Richards and Lockhart, 2000, p.37).

In summary, since professional context in Hong Kong requires teachers to adopt Traditional roles in their classes, Hong Kong teachers perceived their roles as to provide a correct model for the students, answer their questions, correct learners and transmit their knowledge to the students.

Traditional and Constructivist perspectives of education exhibit differences in many aspects in terms of learning and teaching. As illustrated in Figure 1, below, Kohonen (1992) compares Traditional and Constructivist Models of Education in terms of teachers' view of learning, power relations in class, teachers' role, students' role, view of knowledge, view of curriculum, learning experiences, control of process, motivation and evaluation. Figure 1, below, illustrates how Traditional and Constructivist Models of Education are different from each other in many ways and how teachers' views of teaching and learning can shape classroom instruction.

According to Figure 1, for example, if the teacher believes in knowledge transmission, s/he provides mainly frontal instruction to the students and s/he is the authority in the class. Learning is teacher-structured. Learning experiences students get are based on knowledge of facts, concepts and skills and the focus is on content and production. Learners are seen as passive recipients of information and they are mainly expected to work individually. Knowledge is presented as "certain" and the curriculum has a predefined content. Learners are mainly extrinsicly motivated and the evaluation of students' learning is product-oriented. However, if the teacher believes that learning can be provided through transformation of knowledge, s/he facilitates learning mostly in small groups and favors collaboration, and active participation of learners is important. Learning is self-directed.

Emphasis is on learners, on process, learning skills, self-inquiry, social and communication skills. In terms of power relations, the teacher is seen as a "learner among learners" and

Figure 1. Comparison of Traditional and Constructivist Models of Education:

Dimension	*Traditional Model: Behaviorism*	*Experiential Model: Constructivism*
1. View of Learning	Transmission of knowledge	Transformation of knowledge
2. Power Relation	Emphasis on teacher's authority	Teacher as "learner among learners"
3.Teacher's Role	Providing mainly frontal instruction; professionalism as individual autonomy	Facilitating learning (largely in small groups; collaborative professionalism
4.Learner's Role	Relatively passive recipient of information; mainly individual work	Active participation, largely in collaborative small groups
5. View of Knowledge	Presented as "certain"; application problem-solving	Construction of personal knowledge; identification of problems
6.View of Curriculum	Static; hierarchical grading of subject matter, predefined content and product	Dynamic; looser organization of subject matter, including open parts and integration
7. Learning Experiences	Knowledge of facts, concepts and skills; focus on content and product	Emphasis on process; learning skills, self-inquiry, social and communication skills
8. Control of process	Mainly teacher-structured learning	Emphasis on learner; self-directed learning
9. Motivation	Mainly extrinsic	Mainly intrinsic
10. Evaluation	Product-oriented: achievement testing; criterion- referencing (and norm- referencing)	Process- oriented: reflection on process, self- assessment; criterion- referencing

(Kohonen, 1992 cited in Nunan 1999, p.7)

construction of personal knowledge is emphasized. Curriculum is seen as dynamic and learners are mainly intrinsically motivated. Unlike a Traditional model of education, evaluation of students' learning is process-oriented. In other words, teachers, whose view of teaching and learning is Traditional, are very much in control of the instructional process and prefer to devote much more time to engage students with high-structure tasks (i.e., in which teachers have all the power and control (Nunan & Lamb, 1996 cited in Nunan, 1999)). On the other hand, in Constructivist classrooms, although high-structure tasks are not totally avoided, students work with low-structure tasks (i.e., in which power and control

are devoted to the students (Nunan & Lamb, 1996 cited in Nunan, 1999)) for most of the learning time. This illustrates how teachers' beliefs are likely to have an impact on teachers' practice. I believe that a teacher may follow both since these two models are not so absolutely dichotomous.

Teachers' beliefs do not, however, exist in a vacuum. In the following section, the influence of the work context will be discussed in some more depth because cultural beliefs, work culture and classroom culture can create some difficulties and constraints on teachers and can influence their teaching and learning decisions and actions.

2.4. Influence of Culture and Work Context on Teachers' Beliefs and Practice

The work context in which learning and teaching take place reflects the cultural assumptions of society, and so the decisions teachers make about teaching, learning and learners are highly context bound, thus culture bound. For Richards and Lockhart (2000) "beliefs and values serve as the background to much of the teachers' decision making and action, and hence constitute what has been termed the "culture of teaching" (p.30).

Cultures have great influence on learning and behavior (Pollard et al., 2005). How teachers learn to teach, how they interpret new knowledge and how this knowledge is transferred into practice are all influenced by beliefs which are the result of their own socio-historical and cultural experience because "every teacher is the product of their culture, their training, their learning and their experiences" (Harmer, 2003, p. 291).

Therefore, teachers need to be understood as identities with their experiential backgrounds and in their social contexts. With this understanding, in the late 20th century, a considerable amount of pedagogical research based on a view of teaching and learning as a cultural construction was conducted in cognitive psychology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and comparative education (McClure, 1999).

Richards and Lockhart (2000) assert that

Teaching is an activity which is embedded within a set of culturally bound assumptions about teachers, teaching, and learners. These assumptions reflect what the teacher's responsibility is believed to be, how learning is understood, and how students are expected to interact in the classroom (p.107).

In this respect, it is suggested that belief construction occurs in different sociocultural contexts and that beliefs about learning modulate teachers' approaches and are observed in teachers' behavior or teaching style (Flores, 2001).

In some cultures, where teacher-centered teaching is favored, the decisions teachers make about classroom tasks/ activities, classroom environment, relationships in the classroom, classroom management, teacher's role and learners' role and many other methodological and pedagogical decisions tend to reflect the requirements of such teaching. When both learners and teachers have expectations shaped by teacher-centered beliefs and assumptions, the roles adopted by learners and teachers are the outcomes of these cultural, context bound expectations.

It would be simplistic to disregard that the situation at hand, in other words, the context the teachers function in, can impede teachers implementation of their beliefs. Therefore, work context and classroom context cannot be disregarded when examining what teachers do in their actual classroom practice. Hallden et al. (2007) argue that

to identify what a person does, we have to take into account both the person's beliefs about an actual problem, as well as beliefs about the situation at hand in which the task is presented. What someone is doing is thus determined by that person's beliefs about possible means to arrive at an end, as well as beliefs about what is appropriate to do in a specific situation (p.28).

Figure 2, below, illustrates determinants of or resources for action. In the figure, not only competence-oriented determinants such as beliefs, wants and abilities but also discourse-oriented determinants such as duties, norms and opportunities influence teachers' actions.

In other words, it is argued, teachers' choices and actions depend not only on their own beliefs but also on the social discourse, i.e. their awareness of what is expected of them, what is considered right or wrong, what is possible in a specific work context and cultural context. For example, a teacher might believe in learner-centered teaching; however, s/he might be required to teach in a teacher-centered way by management, so s/he has to adopt his/her teaching according to the requirements of the work context and cultural context.

However, not mentioned in Figure 2, is the fact that external factors include not only social discourse, but also practical realities, such as the layout of the classroom, number of students in class, type of furniture, etc. which might exert some constraints on teachers' choices and actions. For example, if a language teacher is required to teach English as a foreign language to 70 students in a lecture hall; it is very difficult to do it communicatively, even if the teacher is in favor of communicative practices.

Figure 2. Determinants of or Resources for Action
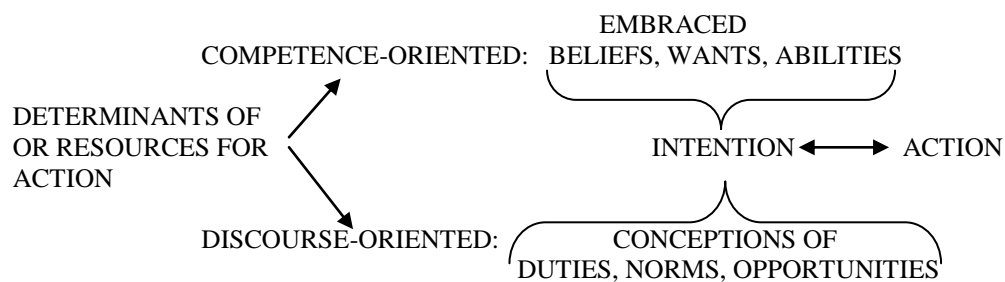
(modified from Hallden, 1999, and based on von Wright, 1971, 1974, 1979, and 1980 cited in Hallden et al, 2007).

There is thus a close relationship between the school context and teacher performance on both the personal and the social discourse level. In a study in 78 elementary schools in the US with 1213 teachers Rosenholtz (1989) found that there were 13 learning–enriched school cultures where teachers tended "to hold a sustained view of their learning so as to better meet the challenge of students' diverse learning needs" (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 103) and learning-impoverished where teachers tended "to hold a terminal view of their learning, entailing mastery of routine practices and procedures" (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 103). Kleinsasser (1989, 1993) investigated 37 teachers in high school foreign language classes

and found strong empirical support for Rosenholtz's (1989) study. Kleinsasser (1989, 1993) found that learning-enriched school context teachers tended to use more communicative activities alongside Traditional grammar exercises whereas in learning-impoverished school contexts teaching focused on Traditional approaches, such as grammar-focused and skills based teaching.

While figure 2 above stops at the 'Action' stage, what happens as a result of the action can also have an impact on teachers' beliefs. Figure 3, below, illustrates the relationship of teachers' beliefs, teaching situation, classroom culture, teachers' actions, classroom activities and tasks and learners' actions and feedback.

Figure 3: Teacher Conceptualizations and Classroom Practice
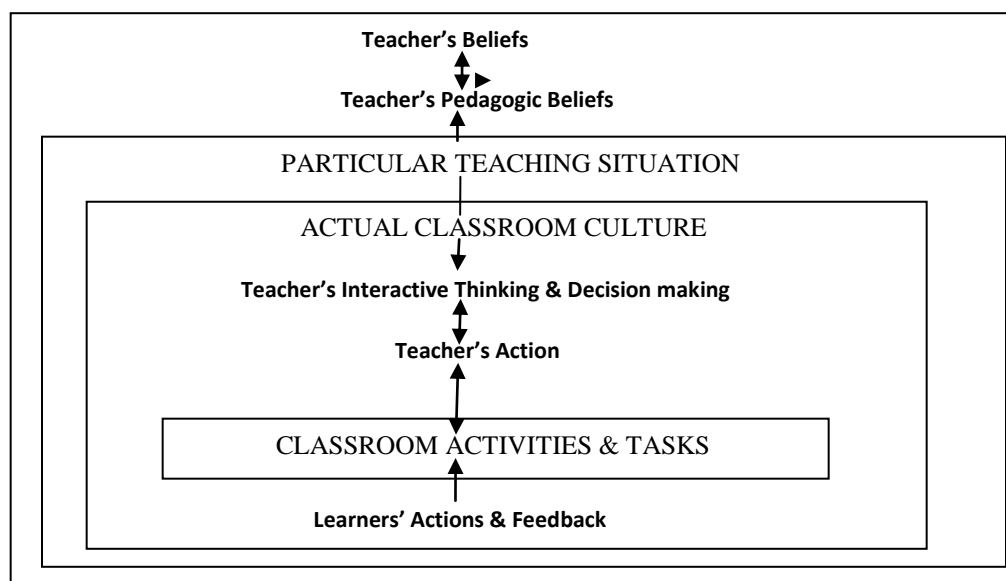
(Breen et al., 2001, p. 473)

Figure 3 illustrates that while beliefs influence the classroom culture and classroom practice, it is equally true that classroom culture and what happens in the classroom have an effect on teachers' beliefs. It also indicates that teaching situation and classroom culture have an impact on both teachers' beliefs and actions. Besides, the classroom activities and tasks the teacher gives to the students influence the teacher's actions depending on the learners' actions and the feedback. In particular novice understanding "emerges from a

process of reshaping existing knowledge, beliefs, and practices' (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p.2).

The influence of context on teachers' practice has been reported by researchers in EFL. For example, Borg (1999), in his study about the grammar teaching practices of four teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Malta found that "teachers' decisions about the role of grammatical terminology in their work are influenced by an interacting range of experiential, cognitive and contextual factors" (p. 118). Golombek (1998) who studied how two in-service ESL teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their practice suggested that "L2 teachers' personal practical knowledge is embodied in people; fluid in response to the particulars of context; and permeated with moral, affective, and consequestial concerns" (p.461). Similarly, Mangubhai, Marland & Dashwood's (2005) study which investigated six secondary school teachers' conceptions of CLT in Queensland, Australia indicated that the teachers in "their classroom practice draws on a smaller practical version of [their] abstract understanding that…is attuned to their personal use of CLT approaches in their own unique work context" (p. 59).

A good example of how context, in the form of work culture (social discourse) can be influential on teachers' beliefs is Kleinsasser's (2004) study. In this study it was reported that

> Individual (personal) beliefs, practices, and interactions take a backseat to the community's (technical)[1] culture. One teacher may think that teaching language for communication is important, but that teaching language for communication within this environment is too difficult so the individual belief appears to be placated by the community belief (p.813).

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[1] Technical culture here refers to the two school cultures as 'learning-enriched' and 'learning-empoverished' identified by Rosenholtz (1989).

This situation was interpreted by Kleinsasser (2004) as follows:

> Although several teachers expressed their dissatisfaction, at times, they continued to teach the same way. We see that the school's (technical) culture influences to a greater extent an individual's beliefs, practices, and interactions than an individual's beliefs, practices, and interactions influence a school's (technical) culture (p. 814).

With that in mind, the following section will discuss teachers' beliefs and classroom practice in greater depth.

2.5. Teachers' Beliefs and Classroom Practice

Although a relationship between beliefs and classroom practice is well established, it is not as straightforward as it might seem. Hativa & Goodyear (2002) state that "research has shown, though not necessarily simple, links between these areas of (a) teacher thinking, beliefs and knowledge, (b) teachers' classroom practices and (c) student learning" (pp.1,2).

Researchers conducted some studies to investigate the relationship between beliefs and practice. Borg (1998) studied an experienced EFL teachers' personal pedagogical system (i.e. stores of beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions, and attitudes) and his practice regarding grammar teaching in an English language institute in Malta to discuss the nature of the teachers' pedagogical system that influenced his practice. In his study he illustrated how the teachers' instructional decisions were influenced by the interaction of his personal pedagogical system, his educational and professional experiences and the contexts he teaches in. In another study, Borg (2001) investigated the relationship between the two EFL teachers' perceptions of their KAG (Knowledge about Grammar) and their practices and found that the teachers' perceptions influenced their practice.

The connection between teachers' beliefs and practices is, however, complicated by the fact that teachers may sometimes not be able to adopt practices that reflect their beliefs. Some

researchers have thus found inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practice (e.g. Calderhead, 1996; Ertmer, Gopalakrishnan & Ross, 2001; Fang, 1996; Kane et al., 2002).

Basturkmen, Lowen and Ellis (2004) investigated the relationship between stated beliefs and practices of focus on form of three ESL teachers who worked in a private language school in Auckland, New Zeland and found that a relationship hardly existed. Kane, Sandretto and Heath (2002) found little evidence for the existence of a relationship between academics' espoused beliefs and practice. Similarly, Hativa et al. (2001) found no relationship between the participant university teachers' espoused beliefs and practice. Such discrepancies have been interpreted in different ways. Fang (1996), for example, emphasizes the contextual factors which may hinder teachers from applying their beliefs consistently in practice. Feryok (2007) who studied the practical theory of an Armenian EFL teacher found that some of her cognitions seemed to diverge in practice because of the contextual factors. Similarly, Phipps and Borg (2009) examined tensions in three experienced EFL teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices in the preparatory school of a private English-medium university in Turkey and reported that there were cases that a strong contrast between the teachers' professed beliefs about language learning and the observed practices existed. According to them, this mismatch was because of the contextual factors such as student expectations and preferences, and classroom management concerns.

Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) conducted a study with Japanese second language inservice teachers to investigate the their views and practices regarding communicative language teaching (CLT) and reported that there were tensions between the teachers' practices and theories. Calderhead (1996) states that "it has been found that teachers can sometimes hold quite conflicting beliefs that create dilemmas for them in thinking about practice or result in contrasting beliefs being used to justify contradictory actions in different contexts" (Cornett, 1990).

Similarly, findings reported by Ertmer et al. (2001) indicate that teacher beliefs about technology use in the classroom, and classroom practice did not always show consistency.

Although the teachers in that study stated that they follow a Constructivist approach in their teaching, in the implementation they followed a mixed approach. The teachers put this discrepancy down to the influence of contextual constraints such as curriculum requirements and social pressure of parents, peers and administrators. As illustrated in Figure 2, discourse-oriented determinants of action, in other words contextual constraints such as duties, norms and opportunities can keep teachers from implementing their actual beliefs.

Murray & McDonald (1997) suggest three possible explanations for the inconsistencies:

> Teachers might be frustrated in their true aims by contextual constraints; teachers' true beliefs about teaching might be more accurately reflected in their actual practices rather than in their espoused conceptions (cf. Argyris and Schön, 1974); and teachers might not have undergone sufficient training or staff development to enable them to operationalise their conceptions of teaching in appropriate teaching strategies.

The above explanations by Murray and McDonald indicate that discourse-oriented determinants such as duties, norms and opportunities (as in Figure 2) and practical issues such as class size can put constraints on teachers. Another possibility might be that teachers may have difficulty reflecting on and putting into words what their actual beliefs are. A third possibility, as indicated by Figure 2, is that teachers may not have the skills to put their beliefs into practice. A fourth possibility might be that teachers express beliefs they think they ought to have, and avoid expressing others which they think would not be approved of. For example, since it is easier to fake by words, when the national curriculum is full of references to "learner-centered teaching" and "Constructivist learning" it might increase the frequency of teachers mentioning those features if asked what they consider to be important. Since it is not easy to fake by action, when they are observed in actual classroom teaching it might be realized that their teaching is different from their expressed beliefs.

Argyris and Schön (1980) suggest that there is a theory consistent with what people say and there is a theory consistent with what they do. Thus, the distinction is not between "theory and action" but it is between two different "theories of action" (Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985, p.82). They explain the concepts of "Espoused theory" as "The world view and values people believe their behavior is based on" and "Theory-in-use" as "The world view and values implied by their behavior, or the maps they use to take action". They suggest that people are not aware that their theories-in-use are often not the same as their espoused theories and they are often unaware of their theories-in-use.

As Figure 2 illustrates, discourse-oriented determinants play an important role in teachers' implementation of their beliefs. What the teachers say would represent their own espoused 'theory of action'; what they do would represent and is likely to be influenced by the 'theory of action' of the 'authorities' such as school and Ministry because it has been imposed on them.

Due to the limitations of curriculum, school environment, practical classroom realities, social context in which they operate and many other factors, teachers may not implement their beliefs. The limitations may shape their practices. Thus, this may result in a mismatch between what they believe and what they do. Such an experience may cause frustrations and dissatisfaction in teachers because they perceive lack of autonomy at work. Cooper (2004) cites in a publication of Institute of Public Policy Research (Johnson and Hallgarten, 2002) as saying that the teaching profession in the UK has become "a dissatisfied and demoralized profession" (p.2).

As well as contextual limitations, the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practices may be the result of the teachers' lack of awareness of their classroom practices. Sometimes teachers are simply unaware of what they do in class, so a discrepancy between what the teacher thinks s/he does and his /her actual classroom practices emerges. Good and Brophy (2003) exemplify this lack of awareness as "Many teachers cannot accurately recall the extent to which they call on boys versus girls, the frequency with which students approach them, the number of private contacts they initiate with students, or the amount of class time

they spend on procedural matters" (p.24). However, it does not mean that teachers' lack of awareness in their practice is always due to teachers' unawareness of his/her beliefs. This mismatch may also occur because of the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the classroom teaching in which teachers need to make immediate decisions while teaching. In many situations teachers do not have the time for logical thought processes (Kagan, 1992, Carter, 1990).

On the other hand, sometimes teachers may be aware of the mismatch between their beliefs and classroom practices but be unable to alter that situation due to lack of the competence which would provide them with alternatives (Johnson, 1992), as illustrated in Figure 2, page 24. It is therefore important to understand the sources of teachers' classroom practices. Reflecting on their beliefs about teaching and learning has the potential to help teachers realize what guides their classroom practice and enable them to construct a rich repertoire of strategies and skills for teaching.

The following section will highlight teachers' role in innovations and their influence on the implementation of any innovation.

2.6. Teachers' Role in Innovations

Teachers are central figures in any educational innovation whether radical or slight, since they are the ones who are expected to implement them. Many studies in general education and second/foreign language teaching, have confirmed that the success of any educational reform resides with the teacher (Clandinin & Conelly, 1992; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Hargreaves, 1989; Markee, 1997; Munn, 1995). There is an increasing awareness that the teacher is central to any attempt to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Calderhead 1996, p. 721). Curricular innovations cannot be thought of in isolation from teachers. Clandinin and Conelly (1992) claim that "the teacher is an integral part of curriculum constructed and enacted in classrooms" (p.363).

Yet, it should be noted that teachers' beliefs, values, and ideas can either ease or impede their acceptance of any educational innovation. Any innovation requires some sort of change in beliefs and practice. For this reason, Ertmer (2005) emhasizes that "Although it is not clear whether beliefs precede or follow practice (Guskey, 1986), what *is* clear is that we cannot expect to change one without considering the other" (p. 36). Opportunities for *radical* change can be found in the discourse of beliefs about teaching (Hativa & Goodyear, 2002).

Karavas- Doukas (1996) states that "When introducing a new approach in the classroom it may be necessary for the teacher to revise, refine, or change attitudes which may not be compatible with the principles of that approach" (p.188).

Similarly, Hargreaves (1989) believes that

> change in the curriculum is not affected without some concomitant change in the teacher ...What the teacher thinks, what the teacher believes, what the teacher assumes- all these things have powerful implications for the change process, for the ways in which curriculum policy is translated into curriculum practice (p.54).

There are plentiful EFL studies investigating changes in teacher beliefs (e.g. MacDonald, Badger & White (2000), Borg, 2005, Watzke, 2007, Peacock, 2001). Some studies have shown that in-service courses or teacher development programs can promote conceptual changes in teachers when they foster critical reflection in teachers. Farrell's (2009) study with seven MA participants taking a TESL course in Canada is a good example to show how critical reflection can help conceptual changes in teachers. Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) conducted a study with twenty-five student teachers attending a 36-week PGCE Secondary course in Modern Foreign Language Teaching at the University of Reading in the UK to explore the nature of the belief development. The course model was reflective and experiential. At the end of the study the researchers reported that the participants' beliefs showed some development.

Kubanyiova (2006) also examined the impact of a 20-hour experiential in-service teacher development course on cognitive and behavioral change of 8 EFL teachers in Slovakia and reported that in most cases no change occurred and she discussed the possible reasons of this negative outcome as: a 'wrong' type of teacher motivation, absence of reflective teaching culture, and unsupportive system.

Change in teachers is not easily brought about. El-Okda (2005) expresses this idea as follows:

> It is currently well known that teachers will not automatically change their practices once they are told about any new idea or familiarized with it. The main determinant of teacher behavior is said to be his/her theory-in-action or personal practical theory….However, the major component of teachers' personal practical theory would be their tacit beliefs and values about what constitutes effective foreign language teaching and learning. Such tacit component of the teachers' personal practical knowledge is formed throughout his/her past experiences as a learner (pp. 5,6).

For instance, when teachers have Traditional learning experiences, they are likely to form educational beliefs and values in line with a Traditional perspective of education.

Rather than being entirely an individually determined phenomenon, however, teacher change is also shaped by the social context in which they function (Richardson and Placier, 2001). Change can occur within the workplace culture of which teachers are part. Although every teacher has individual beliefs and ideas about how learning and teaching should be, these beliefs and ideas are also influenced by the teaching culture of the work place and co-workers.

This is emphasized by Wang & Cheng (2005) in a discussion of curriculum innovation where they state that

[policymakers] also need to bear in mind that the cultures of teaching will determine whether a desired result can be realized in the working context, where individualism gives place to collaboration and collegiality (p.17).

For innovation to be accepted, teachers need to be psychologically comfortable with it and to be working in an environment in which colleagues trust each other, share ideas with and learn from each other. In other words,

> The administration also needs to recognize that teachers need to feel "safe" before they can be fully involved in any innovation… efforts should be made by institutional administrators to promote and nurture an environment where it is safe and unthreatening for teachers to observe each other without losing face or confidence (Wang & Cheng, 2005, p.16).

Acceptance or rejection of any curriculum innovation is also very closely connected with the teaching culture of the society and the school. If it is based on Traditional principles whereby knowledge is transmitted from the teacher to the students, it is not so easy to accept teaching based on Constructivist principles where knowledge is constructed by the students together with the teacher. Thus, according to Wang & Cheng (2005) "No matter what the reform intends to achieve, if the cultures of teaching fail to provide the desirable context for teachers, eventually it is no surprise to expect discontinuation or failure in the implementation phase" (p.12).

Orafi and Borg (2008) examined three secondary school English language teachers' implementation of a new communicative English language curriculum in Libya and reported that "the uptake of an educational innovation can be limited when it is not congruent with and does not take into consideration the cognitive and contextual realities of teachers' work" (p.243).

Teachers need to understand the reform, give importance to it, believe in it and accept it in order to put it into practice. Wang & Cheng stress that (2005)

Within any teaching culture, it is always the teachers who play a deciding role in shaping the nature and extent of implementation. The success of curriculum reform and its implementation depends on whether teachers willingly participate in and are valued and acknowledged in the process. Teachers' understanding of the innovation is also indispensable in contributing to or impeding long-term success (p.4).

It would be naïve to assume that major innovation can be accepted without problems. Since innovations constitute a challenge to the present ideas, beliefs and practices problems can be expected when implementing them. Especially, if the innovation is 'top-down' because in this model:

the teachers' role will be confined to implementation of the new product in exactly the same way in which expert designers intended it to be implemented. All measures are taken to suppress/circumvent any criticism; and any difficulties encountered by implementers will normally be interpreted as indicators of their ignorance of, or at least lack of familiarity with, the new product (El-Okda, 2005, p.3).

In the top-down model, since teachers are not involved in the decision-making process, it is difficult to sustain the innovation because it "can lead to teacher resistance to or misinterpretation of innovative features" (El-Okda, 2005, p.1). Similarly, Johnson and Hallgarten (2002) state that "Teachers resent work both when it is imposed and when it is not valued because it seems unnecessary or pointless" (p.1).

For the above mentioned reasons, reform is more likely to be sustainable and successful when teachers realize a need for a change in the existing system and have the opportunity to make suggestions to change it together with the authorities. Otherwise, when the decisions come from the authorities without liaising with the teachers about the current problems and their possible solutions, success is much less likely.

The Cyprus Turkish Education Reform has the characteristics of 'top- down' innovation occurring in a highly controlled environment in which education is directed and strongly

framed from the top (Mertkan-Ozunlu & Thomson, 2008). This has created problems in education in Northern Cyprus. General Secretary Çavuşoğlu of the UBP (National Party, the main opposition party) blamed problems at the start of the new academic year (2008-2009) on the Cyprus Turkish Education System and held the Ministry of Education responsible for it since they had not taken into account teachers' and their representatives' (i.e. teacher unions) views. It was also stated that there are serious gaps between the Ministry and the education unions regarding practice and vision. As a result of wrong attitudes and practice and not supporting the state schools enough, it was claimed, the education has moved to the private sector and to the Cyprus Greek side (Cyprus Newspaper, Public's Voice Newspaper, 11 September, 2008).

A top-down approach in curriculum innovation can even sometimes cause failure. For instance, Wang & Cheng (2005) explained the reason for the failure of a two- year (1998-2000) project in an English department at a university in China as "the consequence of the top-down approach to curriculum innovation during which the majority of the teachers, despite being the main stakeholders, were excluded from full involvement in the decision-making process" (p.2).

Teachers' place and influence in the implementation of any educational innovation should not be underestimated. The teacher is the key person in the success of an educational reform. Therefore, it is essential to understand the teachers and their beliefs about learning, teaching and learners, their work conditions, the work context in which they function and their needs. Cheng & Wang (2004) points out that

> The neglect of what the teacher is and what role the teacher plays in the school undoubtedly brings about problems such as teachers' lack of interest to implement new curriculum, passive involvement in the teaching activity, low motivation to improve in terms of pedagogy, resistance to innovation, and so on (p.3).

In Cyprus Turkish secondary state schools the innovation has brought some changes. Newly adopted practices of EFL teaching and learning have been based on a Constructivist perspective and also emphasize the 'communicative aspect of foreign language teaching'

(Department of Educational Planning and Program Development, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2005). In the new system new text books have been introduced for all grades. The exam formats have changed. Students' learning has been evaluated through not only testing grammar, as it was in the old system, but also through testing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. The new curriculum has a more challenging content to get through than the old one. The Ministry of Education has also organized in-service training courses for the teachers.

The following section will therefore focus on The Change to Constructivist Teaching.

2.7. The Change to Constructivist Teaching

Recently, it has been realized in Northern Cyprus that there is a growing consensus among teachers in NC about the need to move education in general from Traditional teaching where knowledge is transmitted from the teacher to the students to Constructivist teaching where knowledge and meaning are constructed together (see Figure 1). This has also been stressed by Hativa & Goodyear (2002):

> Teaching needs to concentrate on developing students as self-directed learners, on the promotion of thinking skills and of understanding, on the capacity to apply new knowledge to a variety of tasks and situations such as solving novel problems (p. 11).

Similarly, Wideen (1997) emphasizes that

> teaching must be reconceptualized around Constructivist teaching in which teachers facilitate learning as opposed to delivering information. Students are not empty vessels waiting to be filled; rather, they are intellectually active beings, posing their own questions and generating their own understandings (pp. 357, 358).

However, as discussed above, a Constructivist theory requires a radical shift in thinking and in teachers' roles and makes greater demands on teachers (Prawat, 1992). For teachers to shift to accommodate a Constructivist epistemology would require them to develop new practices and to abandon well-established and seemingly successful practices (Taylor, 1990). In his study Taylor observed that the participant teacher was "limited by constraints which he associated with the inherent nature of both the curriculum and the students" (p.19). Taylor concluded that the teacher's positivist epistemology, along with constraints which the teacher associates with students and curriculum policies limited the adoption of more Constructivist beliefs.

The need to move from Traditional to Constructivist teaching has also been recognized in the arena of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching as well. However, the form of Constructivism proposed in the new curriculum is a blend of CLT, Constructivism and Humanism. In my view, this blend has led to a confusion of terminology and ideas and sometimes misnaming. For example, in the Ministry document the rationale underpinning of the curriculum is stated as Constructivist approach which is explained as follows:

> The curriculum is humanistic, aiming at the development of a whole person, mentally, morally and aesthetically refined, healthy, active and creative, able to promote intercultural understanding, tolerance, cooperation and respect among individuals so that the ideals of democracy, freedom, justice and peace can prevail and the European dimension of education can be realized (Ministry of national Education and Culture, 2005, p.4).

As can be seen in this quote, the definition of Humanistic approach is given under the title of Constructivist approach. In addition, in the Ministry document, there is no reference to the core idea of Constructivism which is that knowledge is constructed rather than absorbed.

In the new curriculum "The prevailing emphasis in English language teaching is on using the language to accomplish a purpose: to communicate with others" (p.29).

However, in Constructivism individuals construct meaning and understanding within a specific context through social interaction whereas Humanistic approaches emphasize 'the importance of the inner world of the learner and place the individual's thoughts, feelings and emotions at the forefront of all human development' (Williams and Burden, 2007, p.30).

Although the rationale underpinning of the curriculum was claimed to be Constructivist, the curriculum displays a lot of characteristics of CLT at the same time. In the new curriculum "The prevailing emphasis in English language teaching is on using the language to accomplish a purpose: to communicate with others" (p.29).

Communicative Language Teaching can be one way of implementing Constructivist pedagogy. Therefore, the common views of Constructivism and CLT will be briefly discussed here with reference to the information in the curriculum document. In explaining the communicative view of language learning, I will consider CLT as an approach rather than a method. In addition, some other features of contemporary language education will also be presented since they have been mentioned in the new curriculum.

In the Ministry document the contemporary language teacher and learner roles are described. The teacher is seen as adopting multiple roles such as an advisor, a co-participant and a resource. The learner is seen as an active agent continuously moving towards being autonomous. These key ideas are stated in the curriculum as follows:

> The teacher is no longer seen simply as a transmitter of knowledge, but at times s/he takes the role of an advisor, a co-participant, and a resource. The learner too is no longer viewed as a passive recipient, but one who is continually moving towards self-knowledge and self-direction. The learner is empowered to have his/her own agenda and to take responsibility for his/her learning (2005, p.4).

In addition, in the new curriculum the teacher is expected to go beyond the Traditional and follow new teaching and assessment methods, promote creativity among learners, challenge the learners, and help learners' personality development. In the learning and teaching

process the teacher is seen as the one who promotes learning how to learn, as a material developer and a resource manager besides the other roles described above. These ideas are presented as follows:

> To promote creativity among learners, the teacher is encouraged to be as creative as possible, inexhaustible source of inspiring/engaging ideas and techniques. This can be achieved if the teacher makes an effort to go beyond the Traditional and to select innovative instructional and assessment methods appropriate for his/her learners, to challenge them, and in doing so, to help develop their personalities. The teacher becomes a materials developer, a resource manager and promotes learning to learn. The learners engage in meaningful and demanding activities and negotiate meaning in the learning environment that actively supports creativity (2005, p.9).

According to CLT, similar to the roles described in the curriculum, one of the main roles of the teacher is being a facilitator besides the others roles such as acting as an independent participant, an organizer of resources, a resource himself, a guide, a researcher, a learner (Breen and Candlin, 1980 cited in Richard and Rodgers, 2002, p.167), needs analyst, counselor and group process manager (Richards and Rodgers, 2002, p.167). The role of the learner is seen

> as negotiator- between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning- merges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way (Breen and Candlin, 1980, p.110, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2002, p.166).

Other concepts emphasized in the new curriculum are 'learner-centeredness' and 'learner autonomy'. The former places the learner at the center of the learning process and the latter puts emphasis on the learner again to take responsibility for his/her own learning to become independent. Learner autonomy is expected to be promoted with the help of appropriate tasks and learning activities. This is explained as follows:

The curriculum is learner-centered. This shift in focus from the teacher to the learner needs to be emphasized for it is by accustoming responsibility for their own learning and development that they will be helped to grow to be independent thinkers and doers. In such a curriculum, the role of appropriate tasks and learning activities is crucial because it is in this way that flexibility, creativity, and autonomy can be promoted. Lifelong learning, based on the valuable skill of 'learning how to learn', is also cultivated (p.8).

The new curriculum also aims 'to create an environment that encourages risk-taking and tolerance of uncertainty' (p.11)

Risk taking and providing learners with challenging tasks for the purpose of creating learner autonomy are also emphasized both in Constructivism (Bruner, 1960, 1966 cited in Williams and Burden, 2007) and CLT (Johnson and Johnson, 1998, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2002, p.173). Constructivist pedagogy suggests that in the case of language learning learners need to be taught "how to learn languages, so that they are equipped with strategies to learn on their own, or to learn in class as effectively as possible" (Williams and Burden, 2007, p.73).

Learner-centeredness is another prevailing concept both in Constructivism and CLT. In Constructivism learner is at the center of the learning process because the underlying assumption is that learners are actively involved to construct personal meaning. "In other words, everyone makes their own sense of the world and the experiences that surround them" (William and Burden, p.21). "Therefore, it is important for teachers to help and encourage learners in this process, rather than seeing them as passive receivers of the language (Williams and Burden, p.23). CLT is also learner-centered. 'Individual learners were also seen as possessing unique, interests, styles, needs and goals, which should be reflected in the design of methods of instruction' (Richards and Rodgers, 2002, p.158).

The new curriculum also puts emphasis on mixed ability classes because it is believed that "In the true spirit of democratic curriculum, the teacher offers equal opportunities to all

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learners so that, irrespective of aptitude/abilities, they can realize their full potential working in mixed ability classes" (p.7).

In Constructivism for Vygotsky and Feuerstein (cited in Williams and Burden, 2007)

> Basically, the secret of effective learning lies in the nature of the social interaction between two or more people with different levels of skill and knowledge. The role of the one with most knowledge, usually a parent or a teacher, but often a peer, is to find ways of helping the other to learn (p.40).

The curriculum also aims 'to encourage the development of a spirit of cooperation among pupils, as it is conducive to learning' (p.11). This idea would relate to interactive communicative tasks such as information-gap, jigsaw, decision making, problem solving and opinion exchange in CLT that are used to promote the development of cooperation between and among learners.

In Constructivist pedagogy, social interaction is crucial because we learn through interaction. A theoretical underpinning of CLT is that we learn a language through using it for the purpose of meaningful interaction. Williams and Burden (2007) who adopt a Social Constructivist approach to language teaching emphasize that they "see knowledge as essentially constructed by individuals rather than transmitted from one person to another, but which recognizes also that such constructions always occur within specific contexts, mainly as a result of social interactions" (p.46). In CLT, constructing meaning is of paramount importance and it is constructed by the learner through interaction.

Since learners make sense of the language and tasks around them in a social context through social interaction, pair and group work activities are essential to provide that cooperative and collaborative environment. When a learning task entails 'sharing' that is 'co-operation among learners, together with the recognition that some problems are better solved co-operatively' (Feurstein et al, 1980 cited in Williams and Burden, 2007, p.69) it can become beneficial. In CLT pair work and group work activities are given importance since learners are expected to interact with each other.

"In this curriculum, linguistic content is held to include not only vocabulary and grammar but notions and functions that the learner needs to communicate" (pp.6,7). In CLT

> What to teach (utterances as well as sentences, functions as well as grammar) and how to teach it (meaning-focused communicative tasks as well as more Traditional study techniques), has become a generalized 'umbrella' term to describe learning sequences which aim to improve the student's ability to communicate (Harmer, 2007, p.70).

The curriculum also emphasizes 'to enable learners to apply analytical and synthesizing skills' (p.11) which is essentially a Constructivist notion. In Constructivist pedagogy it is believed that teachers should teach learners

> 'how to break a problem down, to gather and assess information, to process the information, and to express results logically. In this way individuals can learn to take control of and responsibility for their own learning, so that they do not only become more effective learners, but also independent ones (Williams and Burden, 2007, p.73).

The curriculum also aims to create opportunities for learners to learn language in an enjoyable way. The Ministry document states that "Though cognitive development is important, the material used should also offer opportunities for fun (songs, games, crosswords) and moral development" (p.29).

Regarding language skills the curriculum states that "they should be integrated so that one reinforces the other" (p.31).

In the curriculum another important dimension of communication is stated regarding receptive skills (listening and reading) as follows:

> [the material] should also be challenging in the sense that it should be of a slightly higher level than the learners feel entirely comfortable with ('comprehensible input' Krashen). Otherwise, it will not be possible for language gains to occur (p.32).

In Constructivism, when a learning task provides a 'challenge', in other words, when it creates 'an internal need to respond to challenges and to search for new challenges in life' (Feurstein et al, 1980 cited in Williams and Burden, 2007, p.69) the significance and strength of the learning experience can be enhanced.

Since in the new curriculum there is a conflation of Constructivism and CLT, I based my theorizing on the above mentioned key concepts and ideas about Constructivism and CLT when preparing the questionnaire items and I used COLT Observation Scheme to collect data. Thereafter this form of Constructivism, which is a blend of CLT and Constructivism, will be referred as Constructivist in the rest of the thesis.

Here, I would like to acknowledge that the ideas in the curriculum are all explained at a theoretical level. However, school leaders, course coordinators and classroom teachers should be provided with practical ideas as well. For this reason, the usefulness of the ideas given in the new curriculum for school leaders, course coordinators and classroom teachers is questionable. No suggestions in regard to establishing the connection between the ideas in the curriculum and the teachers' teaching exist in the curriculum document. Neither does it present any solutions to the problems that the teachers might have encountered in the implementation of the ideas of the curriculum. The curriculum could be clearer and more helpful in this respect.

Besides, the authorities who prepared the curriculum would have considered the general characteristics of the teachers' work context (including existing learner characteristics, cultural expectations, practical classroom realities, and work culture) and teachers' existing knowledge and experience regarding the ideas in the curriculum and provide help and guidance for the teachers regarding how to implement the ideas in the curriculum in the existing context. Teachers' should be equipped with the essential practical knowledge rather than expecting a rapid assimilation of the new ideas and helped to move towards accommodating themselves to these ideas.

A Constructivist view of learning cannot confine itself to the language classroom but should extend to teacher education, including training and development. Teachers' teaching related work such as planning and preparation is part of teachers' ongoing development, i.e. a form of learning is going on. Hence Constructivist principles should apply here too. Therefore, the next section will discuss teacher learning from a Constructivist perspective.

2.8. Teacher Learning

It seems that accepting and adopting new practices based on Constructivist teaching is not an easy task when teachers come from Traditional learning and teaching experiences and possess beliefs shaped through these experiences. This understanding becomes even more difficult when in-service training programs focus on theoretical knowledge rather than practice, in other words when information about Constructivist teaching principles and educational targets is presented to the teachers in a Traditional, non-Constructivist manner, in which the authorities lecture and the teachers as learners receive knowledge passively.

Putnam and Borko (1997) emphasize that as current learning theories are Constructivist in nature and view learners as active participants who "construct new knowledge and understandings based on what they already know and believe … teachers should be treated as active learners who construct their own understanding" (p. 1225).

This is already happening in some contexts. Cochran- Smith & Lytle (1999) state that in the U.S. "The new orientation of the "new" approach to teacher learning is more Constructivist than transmission oriented- that is, it is recognized that both prospective and experienced teachers (like all learners) bring prior knowledge and experience to all new learning situations, which are social and specific" (p.258).

Golombek and Johnson (2004) believed that "learning to teach is a socially mediated activity and how different concepts and functions in teachers' consciousness develop depend on the specific social activities in which they engage" (p. 309).

McGrath (2006) states that

> there is evidence, most obviously in the practices of *un*trained teachers, that when teacher beliefs have been shaped by long experience as a learner they will not change unless something happens to challenge and require the reassessment of these beliefs. Participation in in-service programmes which are transmission-oriented seems unlikely to have this effect (p. 314).

As long as the in-service courses do not challenge the teachers' current beliefs and do not provide teachers an environment in which they have the opportunity to construct knowledge, they will fail to produce real learning in teachers.

In-service courses should also foster collectivity and collegiality in teacher learning since a Constructivist view of learning requires interaction and collaboration.

Hargreaves (1993) states that

> Teacher individualism, teacher isolation, teacher privatism- the qualities and characteristics that fall under these closely associated labels have come to be widely perceived as significant threats or barriers to professional development, the implementation of change, and the development of shared educational goals (p.53).

Unfortunately, in Cyprus Turkish Educational contexts teacher individualism has always been common. In their study Mertkan- Ozunlu & Thomson (2008) identify the lack of a collaborative environment even in The Ministry of Education and claim that this 'non-collaborative culture' of The Ministry of Education has been an impediment to solving problems in education. If that is in fact the case, it would be another indication of a widespread culture of non-collaboration.

To sum up, it is essential to create awareness in teachers that learning is a lifelong process and in this process they need to scrutinize their existing beliefs and practices, be reflective about them and update them when needed in the light of the contemporary practices in EFL learning and teaching. Since the influence of contextual constraints on teachers practice

cannot be denied, there is also a need for teachers to be aware of external forces such as school culture that can prevent them from implementing their beliefs in their teaching.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents a detailed account of the methodological framework of the investigation. It explains the research problem, the research aim and objectives and the key research questions followed by the method of the investigation. Then, methods of data collection and analysis are presented followed by a discussion of the ethical issues of the study.

3.1. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

The problem under investigation arises from the new EFL curriculum which holds a firmly Constructivist view, and which was recently (2004) introduced into Cyprus Turkish State Secondary Schools. It is questionable whether most of the teachers' beliefs are in harmony with the new curriculum. It is therefore timely to investigate the EFL teachers' beliefs on the nature of EFL teaching and learning to see to what extent their beliefs are compatible with Constructivist classroom practice as set out in the curriculum.

This study aims to explore the fit between EFL teachers' beliefs and classroom practice in terms of Constructivist learning and teaching in Cyprus Turkish State Secondary Schools. For this purpose, the following objectives were adopted:

1. To gain greater insight into the beliefs held by EFL teachers and their actual classroom practice regarding EFL learning and teaching.
2. To understand how their beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice relate to Traditional and Constructivist frameworks.
3. To determine whether there are any differences in beliefs and practice according to gender, length of experience and qualifications.

4. To further understanding of the relationship between teachers' beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice.

This study aims to uncover if there is a mismatch between the teachers' beliefs and the curriculum, and between their beliefs and their practice. The study tries to establish whether in some cases at least, belief does not influence practice in the way one might expect.

This study is a mixed-methods study. In this study, teachers' beliefs and practice were investigated through a descriptive survey and a small scale qualitative study. For the descriptive survey, a questionnaire was distributed to all the EFL teachers in Turkish Cypriot state secondary schools. Then, interviews and observations were employed with purposively selected participants (see further discussion below).

Following from the objectives, the key research questions in this investigation were:

1. What are the beliefs held by the EFL teachers and how do they perceive their practice regarding learning and teaching?
2. How do their beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice relate to Traditional and Constructivist frameworks?
3. Are there any differences in beliefs and practice according to gender, length of experience and qualifications?
4. What relationship is there between the EFL teachers' beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice?

3.2. METHOD

3.2.1. Research Design

This study is a mixed-methods study. The research questions were explored using quantitative and qualitative research methods. The survey yielded quantitative data while the interviews and the observations yielded qualitative data. "Typically [a survey] is used to scan a wide field of issues, populations, programmes etc. in order to measure or describe any generalized features" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.171). However, since its "degree of

explanatory potential for fine detail is limited" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.172), I carried out interviews and observations to help me gain a more in-depth understanding about the teachers' beliefs, their perceived practice and actual classroom practice.

In the qualitative part of the study, I adopted a "craft knowledge paradigm" (Deforges & McNamara, 1979, Brown & McIntyre, 1993) which connects teachers' knowledge and beliefs to their classroom practice and considers the contextual and cultural aspects of instructional practice. According to Cooper & McIntyre (1996),

> Professional craft knowledge is the knowledge that teachers develop through the process of reflection and practical problem-solving that they engage in to carry out the demands of their jobs. As such this knowledge is informed by each teacher's individual way of thinking and knowing (p.76)

and it "guides teachers' actions" (Beijaard et al., 1999, p.47).

However, it has been stated by many scholars that investigating teachers' practical professional beliefs is not an easy task because they are usually tacit. For Day (2005)

> The craft knowledge of teaching, ... is the professional knowledge gained by experience which teachers use everyday in their classrooms but which is rarely articulated in any conscious manner (p.21).

The reason for this is "the culture of teaching and the nature of schools" in which there is "little space for reflection and consultation with colleagues" (Cooper & McIntyre, 1996, p.76). Locating this study within the craft knowledge paradigm enabled me to connect teachers' beliefs to their classroom practice by considering the context they function in.

In the qualitative investigation, when investigating teachers' craft knowledge, I collected data collected through interviews, observation instrument (i.e. the COLT which will be explained later in detail) and the field notes. I collected the data from the people who have

experienced the phenomenon (the teachers). Then, I analyze the data to identify the significant statements or quotes that consisted of the participants' subjective views and accounts.

In this study, I interviewed the teachers to elicit their subjective views about their beliefs and perceived practice regarding the themes, that are the classroom activities, the teacher and learner roles in EFL, teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching in the context of their instructional practice. Then, I analyzed the data in order to de-contextualize the significant statements or quotes for each participant. Following this process, I grouped the teachers with similar characteristics based on what they have said regarding each theme (Classroom activities, the teacher and learner roles, and teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching). As a result of the detailed analysis of the teachers' expressed beliefs and their perceived practice some subcategories under in each theme emerged (e.g. 'Traditional' and 'Both Traditional and Constructivist' were the emerged subcategories under the theme 'classroom activities'). Then, I presented the teachers' beliefs, and their perceived practice based on the interview data and the teachers' actual classroom practice based on the observational data (obtained with the help of the COLT Observation Scheme and the field notes which will be explained in detail later) under the three themes and the subcategories.

Figure 5, at the end of this chapter, provides an overview of the research process. It illustrates the stages of the study and informs the reader about the research participants, method of data colection and data analysis at each stage.

3.2.2. Participants

In the quantitative part of this study, I targeted the entire population of EFL teachers (N= 140) in all the Cyprus Turkish State Secondary Schools (N=20). For this purpose, I obtained the list of all the English language teachers working in the state secondary schools from The Ministry of Education and visited the schools to ask for the EFL teachers'

voluntary participation by explaining the purpose of the study and paying attention to the other ethical issues (which will be explained in detail later). None of the teachers refused to fill in the questionnaire yet 80 teachers filled in and sent the questionnaires back to me.

In the qualitative investigation, 10 EFL teachers who had also participated in the quantitative investigation of the study were purposively selected by criterion sampling. In this strategy, the sample is selected according to "the researcher's judgement as to typicality or interest. It is an approach commonly used within case studies" (Robson, 1993, p.142). Since teachers' craft knowledge is personally constructed and accumulated through experience, an equal number of experienced male and female teachers who were similar in terms of length of experience were selected for the in-depth interviews and observations.

The teachers were asked to indicate whether they volunteered to take part in the second phase of the study when submitting their questionnaires to me. Considering the volunteered teachers and the analysis of the demographic information received from the questionnaires, I decided to chose 14 experienced EFL teachers from the high schools which were selected as pilot schools for the new curriculum by The Ministry of Education. When choosing the participants among them I also considered to have a variety among the paricipants regarding their qualifications, length of experience and gender since I wanted to investigate whether these factors can have any effect on teachers' beliefs and practice. 4 teachers who indicated voluntary participation at the beginning, later refused to take part in it for different reasons. The rest were eager to talk about their experiences and how they experienced them in their work context, without any hesitation. Indeed, some of them specifically emphasized that they were glad and willing to contribute because they believed that the study would help their voice to be heard by the authorities. Besides, they hoped that the results of the study when communicated to the readers would sensitize the authorities to the problems they experience and prompt them to seek solutions.

3.3. Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

As clarified above, data were collected and analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methods. The instruments were questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Validity and reliability were addressed differently at different stages of the research. In quantitative research, "validity might be improved through careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatments of the data" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.105). In qualitative research, however,

> validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2004, p.105).

In quantitative research reliability can be achieved through controllability, predictability, consistency and replicability of instrumentation, data and findings. However, in qualitative research reliability can be achieved through the match between the collected data and what actually happens in the natural setting researched, in other words, 'a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage' (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p.48 cited in Cohen et al., 2004, p.119).

Therefore, I chose a questionnaire survey which I felt it would provide consistent and replicable results. On the other hand, I needed to know if what the teachers said in the survey was matched by actual practice, so that maximum reliability could be achieved in the study. For this reason, I interviewed the teachers and observed their actual teaching.

To increase the validity of data, two types of triangulation were employed: data triangulation and methodological triangulation. Data were collected through a variety of data sources (i.e. questionnaire, interview and observation) and quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in the study since "the strengths of one approach can compensate for the weakness of another approach" (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, pp.79-111, cited in Patton, 2002, p.306) and "no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective" (Patton, 2002, p.306).

3.3.1. Questionnaire

To detect possible problems in advance and to modify the instrument before it was used in the actual study, the questionnaire was piloted twice on some EFL teachers at tertiary level. Piloting was carried out in the first week of March, 2007 with 20 EFL teachers at tertiary level.

When the questionnaire results were subjected to *Pearson's r* correlation test, 3 pairs of items which were expected to correlate with each other did not correlate in the practice part of the questionnaire. These items were P23 & P32, P21 & P29, and P27 & P32. After the specified items had been modified, in other words, their wording was changed, a fortnight after the first piloting, the questionnaire was administered to the same participants for the second time and the responses were compared. It was found that the responses given to the unchanged items did not change but for the modified items they changed. The reliability coefficient of the specific questionnaire items which were designed to mean the same idea and thus expected to correlate was calculated and it was found that they all correlated. Then, the belief and practice items were subjected to relability tests respectively and the Cronbach alpha scores were calculated as .8580 and . 8240, respectively. Then the questionnaire was administered to 140 EFL teachers in Cyprus Turkish secondary state schools in the first week of April, 2007.

The questionnaire distributed to the EFL teachers consisted of two sections: (1) beliefs and (2) practice (see Appendix 1). It was prepared based on my knowledge about Traditional and Constructivist teaching gained through my 14 year teaching experience, through my experiences as a learner and through the knowledge that I had gained by reading relevant literature, and the ideas of the new curriculum. The questionnaire consisted of 34 items: 17 items about teachers' beliefs (first part) and 17 items about teachers' practice (second part). In both parts, a 5 point Likert-scale format was used because Likert scales are "powerful and useful", "for they combine the opportunity for a flexible response with the ability to

determine frequencies, correlations and other forms of quantitative analysis. They afford the researcher the freedom to fuse measurement with opinion, quantity and quality" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.253). Besides, Likert scales are considered reliable (Oppenheim, 1997, p.200).

I strove for internal-consistency in the item selection to collect trustworthy data. For this purpose, some items focusing on the same idea were worded differently both in the beliefs and practice parts of the questionnaire. For example, in the beliefs part *B3: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment* and *B11: A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners* were the two items designed to gather data about the teachers' perceptions regarding the value of interaction between and among learners in foreign language learning and teaching. Both of these items were designed to see the teachers' ideas about group work and pair work for interaction. Similarly, *P23: I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities* and *P32: I consider the individual differences among my students we*re the two practice items designed to gather data regarding the value of paying attention to individual variations among learners in foreign language teaching.

The theoretical foundations of my questionnaire were 'EFL Teacher's and Learner's Role', 'Learning Environment', and 'EFL Learning'. These theoretical concepts informed the construction of the Belief and Practice items.

The items designed to elicit data regarding the theme EFL Teacher's and Learner's Role are presented in Table 3.1. below.

Table 3.1. *EFL Teacher's and Learner's Role*

B1: Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge.
B5: A foreign language teacher should be a facilitator.
B6: Learners need to be active participants in the learning process.
B17: Learners should <u>not</u> be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge.
P18: I give my students tasks which encourage risk-taking.
P23: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
P26: I give my students challenging tasks.
P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.
P33: I help my students to become autonomous learners.
P34: I encourage my students to participate in the lesson.

The following items, given in Table 3.2. below, were designed to elicit data regarding the theme Learning Environment.

Table 3.2. Learning Environment

B3: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.
B9: A foreign language teacher should create a learning environment in which students can tolerate uncertainty.
B11: A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners.
P19: I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.
P25: I do <u>not</u> prefer my students to work individually.

The following items, given in Table 3.3. below, were designed to elicit data regarding EFL Learning.

Table 3.3. EFL Learning

B2: Learning a foreign language is meaning making.
B4: Students' interests have an important effect on learning.
B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
B8: Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.
B10: Learners need to be encouraged to take risks.
B12: Teaching a foreign language should include an element of fun.
B13: Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know.
B14: A foreign language teacher should consider the diversity of learning and learner needs.
B15: Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills.
B16: Using games in language teaching is <u>not</u> a waste of time.
P20: I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.
P21: I use games to teach language.
P22: I base knowledge on students' existing knowledge.
P24: I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning.
P27: I assign my students tasks in which there are no set solutions to the problems.
P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.
P29: I consider the individual differences among my students.
P31: I encourage my students to learn and use language in context.
P32: I teach some strategies for my students to check their own learning.

In the questionnaire, the response categories for beliefs were: "Strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree" and for practice: "Always, most of the time,

sometimes, seldom, never". The questionnaire items were designed to elicit information about teacher's role and learners' role, learning environment, and EFL learning within the framework of the new curriculum, in other words, CLT and Constructivist framework.

These themes were reflected in both parts of the questionnaire. The items about beliefs had corresponding items in the practice part.

While the dependent variables were 'beliefs' and 'practice', the independent variables were 'gender', 'length of experience' and 'qualification'. To prevent participants' confusion, I explained them that the questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first part to gather data about their beliefs and the second part to elicit data about their perceived instructional practice. It needs to be acknowledged that I assumed that the teachers who disagreed with the Constructivist statements held more Traditional views, although it was difficult to be certain about teachers' replies without interviewing all of them. Since the questionnaire data would not help me explore the participants' subjective meanings, I conducted interviews to generate data yielding the teachers' subjective views and to get a better understanding regarding their actual practice I benefitted from the observational data.

The questionnaire was translated into Turkish by the researcher and by another colleague since it was the teachers' native language. The two translations were compared to see if they were the same, and one version was arrived at. Then, this was given to another colleague to back-translate into English, to check the reliability of the translation. The back-translation resulted in different wording for some items so I asked the advice of another colleague who was expert in translation. Then, the necessary modifications were made in the light of his advice.

Various measures were taken to ensure a maximum return rate. Feedback received from the participants of the questionnaire at the piloting stage indicated that the questionnaire was easy and quick to fill in. Interesting questions were put at the beginning and the questions for demographic information were asked at the end. The participants were thanked at the beginning and at the end of the questionnaire. Also, they were informed about why their

participation was important and appreciated. The information for returning the questionnaire (i.e. where and how) was also supplied.

Including all the EFL teachers in Cyprus Turkish secondary state schools had the potential to strengthen the external validity of the study and thus make the quantitative findings more easily generalizable (Cohen et al., 2004, p. 109). However, the researcher was aware that it could never be guaranteed that all the EFL teachers would return the questionnaire. Since in surveys a bias that may result from non-response is a threat to the external validity of the study, the researcher visited the schools and gave the survey instrument to the participants herself. The questionnaires were distributed according to the previously allocated pseudo identity codes for individual teachers. This process helped me to determine the possible interview and observation participants by examining their responses to the demographic questions in the questionnaire. I especially wanted to have an equal number of experienced (i.e. minimum 6 years and above) male and female teachers from the pilot schools where the new curriculum was implemented. The rationale for choosing equal number of males and females was for being fair to both sex and see if there were any significant diffences in regard to gender.

The final response rate was 58 %, which meant out of 140 teachers 81 of them returned the questionnaires. Those who did not respond had different reasons. Some teachers did not want to take part in the investigation and did not give an excuse. Informal discussions indicate that most of the teachers seemed tired, bored and fed up with filling in the many, long and impractical questionnaires which had been given to them before my study. One group of teachers refused because of their heavy teaching loads. Some others were in a rush to get through the syllabus.

3.3.1.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire Data

Parametric tests were employed for the analysis of the questionnaire data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 13. The statistical analysis was carried out in two stages: 1. Descriptive Statistics, 2. Inferential Statistics.

Descriptive Statistics. The purpose at this stage was to provide information about the sample with regard to beliefs and classroom practice about learning and teaching within Constructivist and Traditional frameworks. Frequency distributions (to examine the pattern of response related to each of the independent variables), percentages, means (to measure the central tendency), standard deviations (to measure how spread out the scores were, i.e. how much variability there was) were calculated.

Inferential statistics. Two-tailed "t" tests were administered to test whether there was a significant difference between the means of

      1) males' and females' beliefs,

      2) males' and females' practices,

      3) females' beliefs and practice,

      4) males' beliefs and practice.

I administered the t-tests to investigate the gender differences, if there are any, regarding beliefs and practice because some research studies showed that teachers might adopt different educational beliefs depending on their gender (Kalaian & Freeman, 1994; Lin, 1992).

I administered the first t-test to see whether males' beliefs were different than females' beliefs. I administered the second t-test to see whether the male teachers' practice was different than the female teachers' practice. The third and fourth t-tests were administered to see whether the female teachers' beliefs were compatible with their practice and the male

teachers' beliefs were consistent with their practice, respectively. For this purpose, I paired the belief and practice items as presented in Table 3.4., Table 3.5. and Table 3.6. below.

Table 3.4. Theme 1: EFL Teacher's and Learner's Role

Pair 1	**B15**: Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills. **P23**: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
Pair 2	**B6:** Learners need to be active participants in the learning process. **P34**: I encourage my students to participate in the lesson.
Pair 3	**B1**: Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge. **P30**: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.
Pair 5	**B7**:Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. **P33**: I help my students to become autonomous learners.
Pair 12	**B17:** Learners should *not* be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge. **P34**: I encourage my students to participate in the lesson.
Pair 18	**B10**: Learners need to be encouraged to take risks. **P18**: I give my students tasks which encourage risk-taking.

Table 3.5. Theme 2: Learning Environment

Pair 6	**B3**: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment. **P19**: I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.
Pair 7	**B3**: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment. **P25**: I do not prefer my students to work individually.
Pair 20	**B11**: A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners. **P19**: I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.

Table 3.6. Theme 3: EFL Learning

Pair 4	**B2:** Learning a foreign language is meaning making. **P31**: I encourage my students to learn and use language in context.
Pair 8	**B4**: Students' interests have an important effect on learning. **P24**: I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning.
Pair 9	**B16**: Using games in teaching a foreign language is not a waste of time. **P21**: I use games to teach language.
Pair 10	**B10**: Learners need to be encouraged to take risks. **P26**: I give my students challenging tasks.
Pair 11	**B13**: Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know. **P22**: I base knowledge on students' existing knowledge.
Pair13	**B7**: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. **P32**: I teach some strategies for my students to check their own learning.
Pair14	**B7**: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

	P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.	
Pair 15	**B8**: Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.	
	P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.	
Pair 16	**B12**: Teaching a foreign language should include an element of fun.	
	P21: I use games to teach language.	
Pair 17	**B14**: A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.	
	P20: I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.	
Pair 19	**B14**: A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.	
	P29: I consider the individual differences among my students.	

To determine whether there was a significant difference between the means of the two dependent variables (beliefs and practice) when independent variables (gender, length of experience, qualification) were considered, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out. In other words, ANOVA was carried out for the purpose of testing whether the differences between teachers' beliefs and their perceived practice possibly occasioned by the amount of experience and qualification since research findings indicated that teaching experience of pre-service and in-service teachers seemed to influence beliefs regarding the role and position of learners in teaching, in other words, to what extent teachers can handover responsibilities to learners (Brousseau, Book & Byers, 1988). Some research studies have indicated that teacher development courses can be influential in changing teachers' beliefs (e.g. MacDonald, Badger & White (2000); Borg, 2005; Watzke, 2007; Peacock, 2001; Farrell, 2009; Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000).

3.3.2. Interview

The interview was piloted with four EFL teachers in tertiary education before it was actually conducted. In the light of the feedback received from these teachers, it was decided to add one more question (Question 5, see Appendix II) to the interview schedule and re-word some of the other questions. After the necessary modifications had been done, the interviews were conducted over eight weeks starting from the first week of April, 2007, until the end of May, 2007.

Based on the analysis of questionnaire data, the participants who agreed to take part in the qualitative investigation were interviewed about their beliefs and their perceptions of their own practice.

The interviews were carried out in Turkish and they were semi-structured (a sample transcript, see Appendix III) for the purpose of exploring teachers' beliefs and perceived practice through probing whenever needed. I conducted the study in Turkish to minimize the tension that could result from any difficulties in communicating in English. Besides, I believed that the participants would be able to express their ideas better in their native language.

The interview questions were derived from the research questions and the themes of the questionnaire (EFL Teacher's and Learner's role, Learning Environment, and EFL Teaching) which were informed by the key concepts of the new curriculum (2005) and Traditional and Constructivist teaching frameworks as described by McInerney & McInerney (2002). They focused on eliciting teachers beliefs and perceived practice on;

- the nature of the tasks and activities they give to the learners in class and their main

  considerations in designing tasks and activities

- teachers' role and learners' role in class

- their ideas about learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching

In the interview, the first question aimed to yield data regarding the nature of the tasks and the learning activities the teachers believed to be given to the students and their perceived practice in relation to the tasks and the activities. The second interview question was designed to investigate the teachers' main considerations in designing the tasks and the activities.

The third ineterview question was designed to collect data about the teachers opinions about the curriculum. The fourth interview question was designed for the purpose of eliciting data regarding their ideal teacher and learner roles and their claimed current roles

in the learning and teaching process. The fourth interview question aimed to yield data regarding the teachers' beliefs and perceived practice in relation to learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching. The last question was asked to see whether there were any other issues that the teachers might want to talk about.

The interviews were complementary, to gain some more in depth understanding regarding the teachers' beliefs and their perceived practice, and each interview took approximately 20-25 minutes. I feel that the interviews helped me explore the teachers' ideal beliefs and their perceived practice in their current context. Also I was able to explore the reasons of their perceived practice which was different than their stated beliefs most of the time, due to their context of instructional practice.

A combination of "a guide approach" (Patton, 2002) and a standardized open-ended interview format was used. In the former approach, the interview guide provides the interviewer with the topics or subject areas to help him/her explore, probe, and ask questions that will explain and make that particular subject clear. The usual open-ended format, on the other hand, consists of a set of prepared questions, taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words (Patton, 2002). This combination allowed the interviewer flexibility in probing and in determining when it is appropriate to explore certain subjects in greater depth, or even to pose questions about new areas of inquiry that were not originally anticipated in the interview instrument's development (Patton, 2002, p.347).

A verbal probing technique was used, where the participants were asked for exemplification when they articulated generalized statements. In this 'concurrent probing approach' (Willis, 1999, p.7), I asked the interview question (step 1) and the interviewee answered (step 2). Then, I asked a probe question (step 3) and the interviewee answered (step 4).

During the interview, both scripted and spontaneous probing was employed depending on the issues that might emerge. For example, I was not expecting the teachers to voice their

complaints about the Ministry of Education; however, when I realized that they were willing to talk about it I spontaneously probed and received valuable data.

In the interviews I asked "opinion and values questions" which inform us about what people *think* about some experience or issue (Patton, 2002). I was careful not to ask leading questions that would reveal my own, Constructivist stance on language teaching and learning. Instead, I strove to preserve neutrality, i.e. not judging people for the content of what they say but giving importance to what they say, their emotions, their attitude, experiences and beliefs (Patton 2002). When passing from one question to the other, transition statements were used to enhance flow and sometimes to direct the attention of the interviewee to the next question.

The interviews were carried out in a quiet room allocated by the headteacher in each school. The physical location of the room did not pose any problems. The interviewees were at ease. They answered with enthusiasm and they were very much interested in the topics raised since I was interested in listening to their problems. Everything went smoothly.

The interviews were audio-recorded for the purpose of a detailed analysis afterwards by myself and by a colleague. Audio-recording caused some tension in some of the participants because they had not participated in such a study before. Therefore, to relax them, I told them that they could control the recording process, that is they could switch off the recording machine when they did not want what they said to be recorded. Sometimes, the participants asked what they said to be off the record. The recordings enabled me to analyse the interviews without loosing any detail that might have escaped me during the interview.

The interviews were transcribed. After each interview, the recorded data and the details noted down about the context and any queries the interviewee might have had during the interview (such as not recording) were reviewed. This helped me to become more aware of my stance as an interviewer and reflect on my strenghts and weaknesses. Also it helped me to pay "constant attention to both *content* and *process*" (Patton, 2002) to increase the

quality of the data. I left a time interval between the interviews for the purpose of transcribing, reading them and the field notes to reflect on each interview.

In order to enhance authenticity and trustworthiness during the interviews, I asked "reflexive questions" given in Figure 4: 'Reflexive Questions: Triangulated Inquiry', below, to myself about the participants, the audience, and myself throughout the qualitative investigation.

Figure 4: Reflexive Questions: Triangulated Inquiry

Reflexive Questions: Triangulated Inquiry

Those studied (participants):
How do they know what they know? What shapes and has shaped their worldview? How do they perceive me? Why? How do I know? How do I perceive them?

Reflexive screens:
Culture, age, gender, class, social status, education, Family, political praxis, Language, values

Those receiving the study (audience):
How do they make sense of what I give them? What perspectives do they bring to the findings I offer? How do they perceive me? How do I perceive them?

Myself:
(as qualitative inquirer):
What do I know?
How do I know what I know?
What shapes and has shaped my perspective?
With what voice do I share my perspective?
What do I do with what I found?

Patton, 2002, p.66

I considered how the participants know what they know, what shapes and has shaped their worldview, how they perceive me, why , how I know and how I perceive them. Regarding the audience, I asked myself how they make sense of what I give them, what perspectives they bring to the findings I offer, how they perceive me, and how I perceive them. I also

questioned myself by asking what I know, how do I know what I know, what shapes and has shaped my perspective, with what voice I share my perspective, and what I do with what I found. For instance, I was aware that the teachers views were shaped by their educational backgrounds, their experiences in learning and teaching, and their work context. I was also aware that the participants regarded me as an outsider since I was not from their work context. Yet, this position may have made it easier for me to preserve my objectivity in the interviews and gain insights into the teachers' thinking about English language teaching in state secondary schools and the difficulties and the problems they had experienced due to their adoption of the new education system.

During the interviews, I realized that the participants also perceived me as a listener who could understand and articulate their ideas and especially their problems. They believed that the outcomes of the study would inform the authorities as well as the teachers about whether and how the objectives set for ELT in state secondary schools work in reality. Therefore, the participant teachers were very eager to express their ideas about the new system and its impact on their actual teaching.

The interviews were individual rather than group interviews, for the purpose of helping individual teachers to explore their personal thinking in depth without being influenced by their colleagues. I probed the participants gently whenever needed and was actively listening without interrupting them to show that their views were valued and respected. I tried to encourage them to focus on positive elements of their classroom teaching for the purpose of "removing possible anxieties that they might have about betraying trust, being unfairly critical of themselves and others" (Cooper & McIntyre, 1996, p.25). Besides, to prevent researcher bias, an open approach that "frees informants to explore their own concerns, within the limits of the research categories, and, therefore, facilitates subject confidence from the outset" (Cooper & McIntyre, 1996, p.37) was adopted in eliciting the teachers' beliefs.

To facilitate the ease of interaction between the researcher and the participants, I strove to employ "empathy, unconditional positive regard, congruence and repeat probing" (Cooper

& McIntyre, 1996, p.26). I showed my empathy with the teachers' ideas through back-channeling (i.e. using oral or visual non-verbal cues) in order to help them express their personal views. I paid attention to congruity by using positive verbal and non-verbal cues (e.g. nodding) to help the participants feel at ease and secure. Whenever clarification for further explanation could not be supplied by the participant, I repeated the request later when there was an opportunity.

The articulation of teachers' thinking "is both demanding, owing to its difficulty, and potentially threatening to those concerned with possible perceived weaknesses in their thinking or practice" (Cooper & McIntyre, 1996, p.31). Therefore, building a relationship between the researcher and the participants can help elicit authentic and honest data. For this purpose, I carried out informal visits to the schools before the actual interviews and the date and the time of the interviews and observations were decided together by me and the participants.

3.3.2.1. Analysis of the Interview Data

The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and reviewed several times to gain full understanding of the interviewees' perceptions pertaining to the research questions. Then, for the purpose of thematic coding, I read and reread the interview transcripts employing color coding (using colored highlighting pens) and marginal note taking techniques (Patton, 2002, p.463) as a means of identifying the similarities and differences in the data (for a sample transcript, see Appendix III). The codes were developed during the analysis considering the theoretical frameworks I drew on which were: classroom activities, teacher and learner roles, and teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching. For example, group work, pair work, games, role-play, speaking activities, listening activities are the example codes for classroom activities.

This process helped me to detect patterns and themes so that generalizations could be made across the data. Later, a colleague coded some of the data in accordance with my criteria

that I briefed her (i.e. group work, pair work, games, role- play, speaking activities, listening activities were the codes for classroom activities) to enhance the reliability of the original data coding. Then, a comparison was made to see if both I and the colleague had coded the data in the same way. Any discrepancies which could reveal weaknesses in the coding system could then be discussed and adjusted. Then, the data was described and interpreted. Since the aim was to look for the subjective view of each participant, as far as possible without distortions brought by the researcher, the transcripts and analysis of the interviews were shown to the participants and their agreement was sought. Having obtained respondent validation (Cohen et al., 2004, p.120) the qualitative findings about the teachers' stated beliefs and their perceived practice regarding the themes, Classroom Activities, EFL Teacher's and Learner's Role, and Teacher-centered and Learner-centered teaching were written by grouping the teachers' with similar views under certain emerged subcategories (i.e. 'Traditional', and 'Both Traditional and Constructivist').

3.3.3. Observation

The observations were carried some time after the interviews had been completed. The teachers were observed for the purpose of exploring to what extent their beliefs were reflected in their classroom practice. Structured observations were carried out since I decided in advance what to look for in the observations. For this purpose, I used the COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) Observation Scheme as the data collection instrument. I used a separate observation instrument which I designed in addition to the COLT but I found that it did not capture anything useful that was not already included in the COLT, and I have therefore not included it in the thesis.

Here, I would like to indicate that since the COLT measures communicative classroom behavior, not Constructivist, in order to describe the things happened in the classroom that were not part of the COLT, I took field notes. The field notes enabled me to collect data about the roles adopted by the teacher and learners in the teaching and learning process in the class. Besides, they provided data regarding the learning environment created by the

teacher, the nature of the tasks and activities given to the students, in general whether the learning environment created in the class is conducive to learning and learner-centered. In this way, the data gathered with the help of COLT and the field notes helped me to describe the nature of teaching and learning process, in short, whether the teaching and learning process displayed Constructivist and/or Traditional characteristics.

In this investigation, a modified version of the COLT Observation Scheme: Part A (see Appendix IV) is used because it was able to reveal information about the activities, participant organization, content, student modality and materials.

Each teacher was video-recorded teaching a forty minute lesson. During the observation process I adopted the role of a non-participant observer. The observations took two months. In each video-recording, five minutes before the teacher went into the class, I took my seat at the back of the class quietly. Before starting the recording, as I and the teacher had agreed, each teacher introduced me to the class and explained that the recording was for my academic study and that it was not going to influence their lesson in any way. The students were curious about the recording because none of the students had had such an experience in their classroom before but the explanation lessened their curiosity.Video-recording caused stress for some teachers as well as the students although they had agreed to being video-recorded.

3.3.3.1. Analysis of the Observation Data

As stated earlier, I video-recorded all the observations since "audio-visual data collection has the capacity for completeness of analysis and comprehensiveness of material" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.313).

I organized the timetable for observations in such a way that it allowed me space for watching the recordings and compiling records by working from the video for every teacher soon after each observation to reflect on and evaluate them. After each video-recording, I watched the lesson observed and tried to analyze the recordings in the light of the themes

and topics in the COLT Observation Scheme and the fieldnotes I took during the observations. The field-notes and the recordings helped me to detect the lesson episodes that helped me to elicit data regarding the teacher and learner roles, the nature of tasks and activities, the nature of interaction, whether the lesson was done in a Traditional manner or it contained any Constructivist elements, and whether it had any learner-centered characteristics. Regarding the percentages in the COLT categories, I timed the whole lesson and I calculated the time spend for each subcategory (e.g. the percentage of subcategory 'T-C' when calculating percentages regarding the interactions category) that emerged in the lesson in order to divide the total amount of time spent for each subcategory per class into the total amount of class time and multiplying the figure by 100. Then, I combined the data I obtained with the help of the COLT and the field notes to write about the teachers' actual classroom practice by combining the information that the interviews yielded about the teachers' beliefs and their perceived practice in relation to the themes Classroom Activities, Teacher and Learner Roles, and Teacher-centered and Learner-centered teaching.

In chapter 5, I will present the data and the findings to the reader through the participants' subjective perceptions supported by their quotes since "thick, rich description provides the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting" (Patton, 2002, p.437). But first some ethical issues will be considered.

3.4. Ethical Issues

In this study, I provided the participants with information about the study including the benefits, yet I did not tell them that the intention was to investigate whether there were discrepancies between beliefs and practice because this could have changed their behavior and what they said. Therefore, the subjects were told the truth but not all the details without in any way infringing their rights. Additionally, the information outlined the rights of the participants and included the information of how and for what purposes the data would be used. The participants were clearly informed of their roles in the study and the

researcher'scontact details were provided. In asking for their consent, I attempted to use non-technical, jargon-free and clearly comprehensible language.

To seek permission from the gatekeepers to access the participants, first a letter was written to the Ministry of Education of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to conduct the proposed investigation in state secondary schools (see Appendix V). Then, the researcher contacted the head teachers of the schools to ask for permission. After access had been gained, the researcher informed the EFL teachers in schools to ask for voluntary participation in the study. Informed consent was sought both in oral and written form (see Appendix VI). 140 teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire and 81 of them participated. For the interviews and the observations, 14 teachers were selected; however, 10 of them participated. The participants' decisions were respected.

For the purpose of building mutual trust to promote the quality of the data, the researcher assured the head teachers that the focus was not an evaluation of the teachers' weaknesses and strengths. It was emphasized that this study had the potential to raise awareness in teachers about their teaching and their beliefs about teaching and learning. The researcher also underlined that the teachers would benefit from this study because this awareness could lead to critical self-evaluation and self improvement. Besides, it was highlighted that creating more self-aware teachers was likely to have a positive impact on learner achievement and thus enhance the reputation of the institution.

As discussed above, the researcher showed the interview transcripts to the interviewees for the purpose of asking them if there was anything they wanted to add or anything they would like to withdraw. This was done after the observations so that they did not become too self-conscious about their teaching. In order to put the well-being of the participants ahead of research goals, measures to ensure confidentiality have been employed and pseudonyms are being used when reporting the findings to the readers. These precautions were explained to the participants at the beginning of the study when asking for informed consent.

The research process is summarized in Figure 5, below.

Figure 5   *RESEARCH PROCESS*

Research
Participants

> 81 EFL Teachers in Cyprus Turkish
> Secondary State Schools

Method of Data
Collection

> Questionnaire

Stage I

Data

> Quantititive Data

Quantitative
Investigation

Analysis

> Statistical Analysis

> Conclusions

Research
Participants

> 10 Experienced EFL
> Teachers in Cyprus Turkish Secondary
> State Schools

Method of Data
Collection

> Classroom Observation
> Interview

Data

> Classroom Transcripts and Field Notes
> Interview Transcripts

Stage II

Qualitative
Investigation

Analysis

> Analysis of Interview Data and
> Observational Data

> Conclusions

CHAPTER 4

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the statistical analysis of the data in descriptive statistics followed by inferential statistics.

4.1. Descriptive Data

I gathered information about gender, length of experience, qualifications and the participants' perceptions of 'beliefs' and 'practice' about EFL teaching and learning.

4.1.1. Gender

As can be seen from Table 4.1.1, the descriptive analysis of the participants according to variable 'Gender' revealed that 82.7 % female and 17.3 % male participated in the study. Of the 81 teachers who participated, 67 were female and 14 were male. These percentages were very close to the female/male ratio in the overall target population which was 80.71 % female and 19.2 % male. This means, of the total population which was 140 teachers, 113 were female and 27 were male.

Table 4.1.1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	*1*. Male	14	17.3
	2. Female	67	82.7
	Total	81	100.0

4.1.2. Length of Experience

Table 4.1.2. illustrates that the largest group (40.7 %) were those who had 6-11 years

length of experience. 25.9 % of the participants had 0-5 year(s) length of experience.

Participants with 12-17 years length of experience formed 23.5 % and only 9.9 % of the

participants had 18 years experience or more.

Table 4.1.2. Lenght of Experience

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1. 0-5 year(s)	21	25.9
	2. 6-11 years	33	40.7
	3. 12-17 years	19	23.5
	4. 18-above years	8	9.9

4.1.3. Qualifications

All of the participating teachers had at least a BA degree, and most had other qualifications

on top of that. As can be seen from Table 4.1.3., most of the participants (60.5%) had both

a BA and Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas. Following that, 23.5 % of the participants had a

BA degree. 8.6 % of the participants had an MA degree and 7.4 % of the participants had

both an MA degree and Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas.

Table 4.1.3. Qualifications

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1. BA	19	23.5
	2. MA	7	8.6
	3. BA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	49	60.5
	4. MA + Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas	6	7.4
	Total	81	100.0

4.1.4. Beliefs

Replies to questions about beliefs about English language teaching and learning are presented in Table 4.1.4., below. For the purpose of calculations, numerical values were attached to the scale so that 5 was 'strongly agree' and 1 'strongly disagree'. Here, it needs to be acknowledged that the difference between the extreme and the less extreme (e.g. strongly agree and agree) might be greater than between the less extreme and the middle (e.g. agree and not sure) which could cause misleading averages. However, I still believe that the approach I have chosen will be able to reveal any trends in the data which are relevant to my research questions. In the table, the higher the number is the higher the agreement and the lower the number is the higher the disagreement. In the table, the seventeen items have been ranked ordered so that the ones participants agreed with most are at the top. The mean scores in the table indicated that there was a strong agreement about fifteen Belief items (4.58- 4.03), and an agreement about two Belief items (3.92, 3.30). As can be seen, the reported perceptions of the participants with the item *Belief 17 (B17): Learners should <u>not</u> be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge* showed the highest mean score of 4.58 which means that there was a strong agreement with B17. The descriptive analysis of item *B9: A foreign language teacher should create a learning environment in which students can tolerate uncertainty* showed the lowest mean score of 3.30 which means there was an agreement about B9. The findings revealed that the participant teachers strongly agreed that learners should have an active role in foreign language learning and teaching (B17). They also agreed, although it was not a strong agreement, that in language teaching and learning, the learning environment created by the teacher should enable the learners to tolerate uncertainty. Since there was a small standard deviation (SD), ranging from .63 to 1.07 for the stated beliefs, it seemed that the teachers agreed with each other.

Table 4.1.4. Means and Standard Deviations for Replies Concerning Beliefs about English Language Learning and Teaching

ITEM	N	MEAN	SD
B17. Learners should <u>not</u> be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge.	81	4.58	.77
B6. Learners need to be active participants in the learning process.	81	4.55	.74
B3. Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.	81	4.53	.67
B11. A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners.	80	4.47	.69
B8. Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.	81	4.44	.63
B7. Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.	81	4.41	.72
B14. A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.	80	4.41	.68
B4. Students' interests have an important effect on learning.	81	4.39	.66
B12. Teaching a foreign language should include an element of fun.	81	4.39	.70
B1. Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge.	81	4.38	.71
B16.Using games in language teaching is <u>not</u> a waste of time.	81	4.38	.81
B13. Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know.	81	4.37	.69
B15. Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills.	81	4.37	.69
B2. Learning a foreign language is making meaning.	80	4.36	.66
B5. A foreign language teacher should be a facilitator.	79	4.03	.77
B10. Learners need to be encouraged to take risks.	79	3.92	.90
B9. A foreign language teacher should create a learning environment in which students can tolerate uncertainty.	79	3.30	1.07

The analysis of the teachers' perceptions regarding their beliefs showed that all the teachers' agreed with the ideas of the new curriculum which was based on a blend of CLT and Constructivist language teaching and learning. This finding indicated that all the participant foreign language teachers' beliefs seemed to be congruent with the ideas of the

new curriculum. This would be due to the fact that the new curriculum has been introduced recently and the teachers' might have been influenced by these ideas so that they had tendency to pretend they believe in these ideal beliefs, or they stated their genuine beliefs.

4.1.5. Practice

Replies concerning the practice of English language teaching are presented in Table 4.1.5. below. The higher the mean score, the higher the extent of practice and the lower the mean score, the lower the extent of practice. In the table, the items have been ranked ordered so that the ones the most practiced are at the top. The mean scores in the table indicated that six items are claimed to be always practiced (4.65- 4.08), eleven items are claimed to be practiced most of the time (4.00- 3.01). As can be seen, the analysis of the perceptions of the participants regarding item *P34: I encourage my students to participate in the lesson* indicated the highest mean score of 4.65 which means that teachers claimed that they always do this. The reported perceptions of the participants for item *P25: I do not prefer my students to work individually* revealed the lowest mean score of 3.01. In other words, teachers claimed that they do not prefer to give tasks and learning activities to learners that require individual study most of the time. Small standard deviations (SD), ranging from .47 to .96 for the teachers practice indicated that they agreed with each other.

Table 4.1.5. Means and Standard Deviations for Replies Concerning Practice about English Language Learning and Teaching

ITEM	N	MEAN	SD
P34. I encourage my students to participate in the lesson.	81	4.65	.47
P33. I help my students to become autonomous learners.	81	4.35	.61
P31. I encourage my students to learn and use language in context.	81	4.27	.77
P22. I base new knowledge on students' existing knowledge.	81	4.27	.63
P24. I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning.	81	4.08	.80
P29. I consider the individual differences among my students.	80	4.08	.71
P30. I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.	81	4.00	.72

P28. I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.	80	3.90	.78
P21. I use games to teach language.	81	3.82	.77
P19. I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.	80	3.75	.77
P26. I give my students challenging tasks.	80	3.70	.75
P23. I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.	81	3.67	.86
P27. I assign my students tasks in which there are no set solutions to the problems.	81	3.62	.71
P20. I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.	81	3.51	.80
P32. I teach some strategies for my students to check their own learning.	80	3.35	.88
P18. I give my students tasks which encourage risk- taking.	79	3.30	.83
P25. I do not prefer my students to work individually.	81	3.01	.96

The findings indicated that the teachers' reported perceptions about their perceived practice were in line with their stated ideal beliefs since they all agreed on all the practice items which reflected the ideas of the new curriculum based on a blend CLT and Constructivism. This indicated that all the participant teachers claimed that they implemented what they believed in regarding the ideas of the new curriculum in their perceived classroom practice. Another interpretation of this finding might be that since all the teachers were expected to implement the ideas of the new curriculum in their classroom teaching by the authorities, they might have pretended to be implementing the new curriculum in their teaching.

4.2. Analysis of Differences among Group Categories

This section presents the results of the comparison of mean scores among group categories defined as 'gender, 'length of experience' and 'qualification' for the variables 'beliefs' and 'practice'.

4.2.1. Analysis of Gender-related Differences for 'Beliefs'

In order to test for differences between the mean scores of males' and females' perceptions regarding 'beliefs', a t-test was employed. As can be seen from Table 4.2.1., the results of the test showed that the differences were significant at the 0.05 significance level for 2 belief items: B1 and B7.

The significance for item *B1: Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge* was p=.027 < 0.05. The mean score of males' responses was 4.00 while it was 4.46 for females. This showed that males' and females' reported perceptions of Belief 1 were significantly different with female teachers being more in favour.

For item *B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning*, the significance in the reported perceptions was p=.036 < 0.05. the mean score of males' perceptions was 4.76 and it was 4.34 for females. This revealed that the reported perceptions of male and female teachers differed significantly for Belief 7 with male teachers supporting this statement more strongly.

Table 4.2.1 Perceptions of 'Beliefs' by the Variable 'Gender' (Independent Samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEFS	GENDER	N	MEAN	Mean Difference	t- value	df	P
B1	Male	14	4.00	-.46	-2.25	79	.027
	Female	67	4.46				*
B7	Male	14	4.79	.44	2.13	79	.036
	Female	67	4.34				*

*Significance

The analysis showed that the male and female teachers' beliefs were different significantly only in these two belief items.

4.2.2. Analysis of Gender-related Differences for 'Practice'

A t-test was also employed in order to test for differences between males' and females' perceptions regarding 'practice'. As can be seen from Table 4.2.2. below, the mean score difference reported was significant only for item *P26: I give my students challenging tasks* as p= .007 < 0.05 at the 0.05 significance level. Female teachers agreed more with this statement than the males.

Table 4.2.2. 'Practice' by the Variable 'Gender' (Independent Samples "t" Test Table)

PRACTICE	GENDER	N	MEAN	Mean Difference	t-value	Df	P
P26	Male	14	3.21	-.67	-2.46	78	.016
	Female	67	3.80				*

*Significance

The analysis thus indicated that the male and female teachers' were significantly different only in one practice item.

4.2.3. Analysis of Belief and Practice-related Differences for 'Females'

A t-test was employed in order to test whether there were any differences between female participants' reported beliefs and reported practice. For this purpose, all the belief items were paired with the corresponding practice items and every pair was subjected to the t-test. The comparison of the mean scores of the female participants' reported perceptions for 'beliefs and practice' revealed that out of 20 belief-practice pairs in total, the mean scores of 11 pairs showed significance. The 9 pairs that did not reveal any significant results are not discussed below. The findings reporting the significant differences are presented under three headings: EFL Teacher's Role, Learning Environment, and EFL Learning, respectively.

4.2.3.1. Theme 1: EFL Teacher's Role

The t-test results for females' beliefs and perceptions of practice in regard to the EFL teacher's role in foreign language learning and teaching indicated significance for 2 pairs: B1/P30 and B15/P23 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.3. below.

Pair 3:

B1: Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge.

P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.

Teachers who gave importance to providing their students with opportunities to discover learning and construct knowledge, were expected to encourage their students to infer and induce rules of language. However, the findings of the reported perceptions of the female teachers for this pair revealed significant difference (p=.000). The mean score of the females' reported perceptions for B1 was 4.46 and it was 4.02 for their reported perceptions for P30. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 1:

B15: Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills.

P23: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

A discrepancy was calculated for the reported perceptions of B15 and P23 (p = .000) with the mean score of 4.40 for B15 and 3.67 for P23 although the reported perceptions for these two items were expected to correlate since higher order skills are analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.3. Perceptions of Female Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning EFL Teacher's Role (Paired samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN DIFFERENCE	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 3	B1		4.46			
	P30	67	4.02	3.90	66	.000 *
Pair 1	B15		4.40			
	P23	67	3.67	5.53	66	.000 *

*Significance

4.2.3.2. Theme 2: Learning Environment

The t-test results for females' beliefs and perceptions of practice concerning learning environment in foreign language learning and teaching revealed significance for 1 pair: B3/P25 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.4. below.

> **Pair 7:**
>
> B3: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.
>
> P25: I do not prefer my students to work individually.

There was a highly significant difference between the reported perceptions of the female teachers' concerning B3 and P25 (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.52 and 2.99, respectively. This pair showed parallel views of student organization. However, the findings showed that the females' reported perceptions were in conflict regarding this pair. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.4. Perceptions of Female Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning Learning Environment (Paired samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 7	B3		4.52			
	P25	67	2.99	10.62	66	.000 *

*Significance

4.2.3.3. Theme 3: EFL Learning

The t-test results for the females' beliefs and perceptions of practice regarding learning a foreign language revealed significance for 8 pairs: B4/P24, B7/P32, B7/P28, B8/P30, B12/P21, B14/P20, B14/P29and B16/P21 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.5. below.

Pair 8:

B4: Students' interests have an important effect on learning.

P24: I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning.

The results of the test revealed a significant mismatch between the reported perceptions of females for B4 and P24 (p = .022) with the mean scores 4.69 and 4.03, respectively. Both of these items were about the importance of students' interests in language learning and teaching. Therefore, the reported perceptions were expected to correlate; however, the female teachers' replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 13:

B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

P32: I teach some strategies for my students to check their own learning.

The reported perceptions of the female participants for B7 and P32 indicated a significant discrepancy (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.34 and 3.40, respectively. Both of the statements in this pair were about learners taking responsibility in language learning and teaching, yet the participant teachers' reported perceptions for these items were incompatible. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 14:

B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

P31: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.

The female teachers replies to B7 and P28 showed a significant mismatch (p = .013) with the mean scores 4.34 and 3.96, respectively. This pair put emphasis on the students taking responsibility for their own learning, however, the reported perceptions of the female teachers for this pair were inconsistent. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 15:

B8: Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.

P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.

The reported perceptions of the female participants revealed a significant discrepancy between B8 and P30 (p = .005) with the mean scores 4.39 and 4.03, respectively. Both of these items were about helping students to become autonomous learners in the language learning process, yet the female participants reported contradictory perceptions for this pair. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 16:

B12: Teaching a foreign language should include an element of fun.

P21: I use games to teach language.

The test results for the reported perceptions of the female teachers about B12 and P21 revealed a significant discrepancy (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.39 and 3.79, respectively. Both of these items emphasized the importance of using games in the process of foreign language teaching, yet the female participants' perceptions for this pair were contradictory. This could be because using games is not the only way of having fun in a language class. Teachers might use for example, songs, puzzles, etc. to have fun in their lessons. In this pair the replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 17:

B14: A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.

P20: I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.

Although this pair was about the importance of learner differences in language learning and teaching, the reported perceptions of the female teachers for B14 and P20 indicated a significant mismatch (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.40 and 3.51, respectively. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 19:

B14: A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.

P29: I consider the individual differences among my students.

The reported perceptions of the female participants for B14 were significantly inconsistent with their reported perceptions for P29 (p = .047) with the mean scores 4.40 and 4.10, respectively. Similar to Pair 7, these items were about considering learner differences in foreign language teaching, but the reported perceptions of the females for these items were incompatible. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 9:

B16: Using games in teaching a foreign language is <u>not</u> a waste of time.

P21: I use games to teach language.

The test results of the reported perceptions of the female teachers about B16 and P21 revealed a significant mismatch (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.43 and 3.79, respectively. These two items were parallel to each other about using games in foreign

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language teaching, yet the reported perceptions of the female teachers were contradictory for this pair. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.5. Perceptions of Female Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning EFL Learning (Paired samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 8	B4 P24	67	4.69 4.03	2.35	66	.022 *
Pair 13	B7 P32	67	4.34 3.40	2.56	66	.000 *
Pair 14	B7 P28	67	4.34 3.96	3.28	66	.013 *
Pair 15	B8 P30	67	4.39 4.03	2.90	66	.005 *
Pair 16	B12 P21	67	4.39 3.79	4.88	66	.000 *
Pair 17	B14 P20	67	4.40 3.51	6.82	66	.000 *
Pair 19	B14 P29	67	4.40 4.10	3.01	66	.047 *
Pair 9	B16 P21	67	4.43 3.79	4.67	66	.000 *

*Significance

The analysis of the female teachers' responses regarding 'EFL Teacher's Role', "Learning Environment' and ' EFL Learning' showed that their stated beliefs did not match with their claimed practices for more than the half of the pairs (i.e. 11 of 20 items). Indeed, this could be because there are more ways than one to put a particular belief into practice. The female teachers' responses were more positive towards the belief items in all the pairs that revealed a mismatch. This might mean that the teachers experience some problems in putting their beliefs into practice.

4.2.4. Analysis of Belief and Practice-related Differences for 'Males'

In order to test differences between the perceptions of males concerning beliefs and practice in foreign language learning and teaching, a t-test was carried out. The comparison of the mean scores for males' perceptions for beliefs and practice indicated that out of 20 belief-practice pairs in total, the mean scores of 9 pairs showed significant results. The

remaining 11 pairs did not show any significant differences, thus they are not reported here. Findings indicating significance are reported under three headings regarding the paired item themes below: EFL Teacher's Role, Learning Environment, and EFL Learning, respectively.

4.2.4.1. Theme 1: EFL Teacher's Role

The t-test results for the reported perceptions of the male teachers regarding beliefs and practice concerning EFL teacher's role in foreign language learning and teaching revealed significance for 2 pairs: B10/P18and B15/P23 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.6. below.

> *Pair 18:*
>
> *B10: Learners need to be encouraged to take risks.*
>
> *P18: I give my students tasks which encourage risk-taking.*

There was a significant discrepancy between the male teachers' reported perceptions of B10 and P18 (p = .009) with the mean scores 4.36 and 3.21, respectively. Both of these items were about encouraging students' risk-taking in foreign language learning and teaching, yet the male teachers' reported perceptions were contradictory. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

> *Pair 1:*
>
> *B15: Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills.*
>
> *P23: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.*

The reported perceptions of the male teachers for B15 and P23 showed a significant mismatch (p = .014) with the mean scores 4.29 and 4.71, respectively. Both of these items

were about higher-order skills which were analysis, synthesis and evaluation, however, the reported perceptions of male teachers for these items were different. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.6. Perceptions of Male Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning EFL Teacher's Role (Paired Samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 18	B10 P18	14	4.36 3.21	2.93	13	.012 *
Pair 1	B15 P23	14	4.29 3.71	2.83	13	.014 *

*Significance

4.2.4.2. Theme 2: Learning Environment

The t-test results for the reported perceptions of the male participants for beliefs and practice regarding learning environment in foreign language learning and teaching revealed significance for 3 pairs: B3/P19, B3/P25 and B11/P19 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.7. below.

> *Pair 6:*
>
> *B3: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.*
>
> *P19: I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.*

There was a significant mismatch between B3 and P19in the reported perceptions of the male participants (p = .003) with the mean scores 4.57 and 3.86, respectively. Both of these items emphasized learning a foreign language in a collaborative and cooperative environment, yet the reported perceptions of the male participants differed for these items. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

> *Pair 7:*
>
> *B3: Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.*

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P25: I do <u>not</u> prefer my students to work individually.

A significant discrepancy existed in the reported perceptions of male teachers for B3 and P25 (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.57 and 3.14, respectively. These items were parallel to each other yet the reported perceptions of the male participants showed difference for these two items. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 20:

B11: A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners.

P19: I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.

In the reported perceptions of the male participants, a significant mismatch between B11 and P19 was found (p = .006) with the mean scores 4.43 and 3.86, respectively. Both of these items were about working collaboratively and cooperatively in learning a foreign language; however, the reported perceptions of the males were different for each. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.7. Perceptions of Male Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning Learning Environment (Paired Samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 6	B3		4.57			
	P19	14	3.86	3.68	13	.003 *
Pair 7	B3		4.57			
	P25	14	3.14	6.28	13	.000 *
Pair 20	B11		4.43			
	P19	14	3.86	3.31	13	.006 *

*Significance

4.2.4.3 .Theme 3: EFL Learning

The t-test results for the male teachers' reported beliefs and perceptions of practice regarding EFL learning indicated significance for 4 pairs: B7/P32, B7/P28, B8/P30 and B14/P20 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in table 4.2.8 below.

Pair 13:

B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

P32: I teach some strategies for my students to check their own learning.

There was a significant discrepancy between male teachers' reported perception for B7 and P32 (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.79 and 3.50, respectively. These items were about helping students to become autonomous learners in EFL learning, yet the reported perceptions of the participant males indicated a mismatch. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 14:

B7: Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.

The test results indicated a significant mismatch between the males' reported perceptions of B7 and P28 (p = .000) with the mean scores 4.79 and 4.00, respectively. Similar to Pair 1, these two items put emphasis on helping learners to be autonomous learners in learning a foreign language; however, the responses of the participant males differed for these items. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 15:

B8: Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.

P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.

There was a significant discrepancy between B8 and P30 in the reported perceptions of male teachers (p = .001) with the mean scores 4.71 and 3.86, respectively. These items put emphasis on learners taking responsibility of their learning, yet the reported perceptions of the male participants were in conflict for each of these items. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Pair 17:

B14: A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.

P20: I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.

The test results revealed a significant discrepancy between B14 and P20 in the reported perceptions of the male teachers (p = .013) with the mean scores 4.79 and 3.57, respectively. This pair put emphasis on learner differences, yet the perceptions reported by the male participants showed a mismatch for these items. The replies were more positive towards the belief item.

Table 4.2.8. Perceptions of Male Teachers Regarding the Variables 'Belief' and 'Practice' Concerning EFL Learning   (Paired Samples "t" Test Table)

BELIEF & PRACTICE		N	MEAN	T-VALUE	DF	P
Pair 13	B7		4.79			
	P32	14	3.50	5.83	13	.000 *
Pair 14	B7		4.79			
	P28	14	4.00	4.20	13	.001 *
Pair 15	B8		4.71			
	P30	14	3.86	4.16	13	.001 *
Pair 17	B14		4.79			
	P20	14	3.57	3.81	13	.013 *

*Significance

The analysis of the male teachers' responses regarding 'EFL Teacher's Role', 'Learning Environment' and 'EFL Learning' indicated that their stated beliefs did not match with their claimed practices for less than half of the pairs (i.e. 9 of 20). This could be because a particular belief can be put into practice in more ways than one. Similar to the female teachers, male teachers' responses were more positive towards the belief items in all the

pairs that showed a mismatch. This might mean that the teachers experienced some problems in putting their beliefs into practice.

4.2.5. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) for 'Beliefs' and 'Length of Experience'

An ANOVA test was employed in order to test whether the participants' beliefs differed according to length of experience. The test results did not show a significant correlation for beliefs and length of experience. In other words, it can be said that length of experience was an insignificant factor which did not influence the participants' beliefs. Therefore, the results are not presented here.

4.2.6. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) for 'Beliefs' and 'Qualifications'

An ANOVA test employed to test differences between beliefs and qualifications revealed significant results for 1 item: B2 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.9. below.

The ANOVA test indicated that for *B2: Learning a foreign language is making meaning* (p = .004) 'qualifications' was an important factor that influenced the perceptions of the participants.

Table 4.2.9. ANOVA for 'Beliefs' and 'Qualifications'

	DESCRIPTIVES				Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	ANOVA F	Sig.
	Variable Qualifications	**N**			**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
B2	**BA**	18	**Between Groups**		5.42	3	1.80	4.73	.004 *
	MA	7	**Within Groups**		29.06	76	.38		
	BA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	49	**Total**		34.49	79			
	MA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	6							
	Total	80							

*Significance

This result will be interpreted below.

4.2.7. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Belief Items Regarding Qualifications

In order to test whether the significance was meaningful for B2 and to compare the means of the qualifications for this item, a Scheffe Test was administered after the ANOVA. The significance for *B2: Learning a foreign language is making meaning* (p= .027) was between the qualifications BA and MA, as illustrated in Table 4.2.10. below. This means that the teachers who had an MA qualification were more positive in their responses to Belief item 2 than the teachers who held a BA degree. It is possible that I may have tapped into the teachers' knowledge and awareness from their MA courses rather than their true beliefs.

Table 4.2.10. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Belief Items Regarding Qualifications

Dependent Variable	(I) Qualifications	(J) Qualifications	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
B2	BA	MA	-.86*	.28	.027

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The analysis of the teachers' beliefs and qualifications revealed that more qualified teachers were more positive towards only one belief item than the less qualified teachers.

4.2.8. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) for 'Practice' and 'Length of Experience'

An ANOVA test carried out to test differences between practice and length of experience showed significant results for 2 items: P28 and P30 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.11. below.

The ANOVA test showed that for *P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress* (p = .009) and for *P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language* (p = .017) 'length of experience' was an important factor that influenced the perceptions of the participants.

Table. 4.2.11. ANOVA for 'Practice' and 'Length of Experience'

	DESCRIPTIVES			ANOVA				
	Variable Length of Experience	N		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P28	0-5 year(s)	21	Between Groups	6.94	3	2.31	4.16	.009 *
	6-11 years	32	Within Groups	42.26	76	.56		
	12-17 years	19	Total	49.20	79			
	18-above years	8						
	Total	80						
P30	0-5 year(s)	21	Between Groups	5.18	3	1.73	3.61	.017 *
	6-11 years	33	Within Groups	36.83	77	.48		
	12-17 years	19	Total	42.00	80			
	18-above years	8						
	Total	81						

*Significance

This result will be interpreted below.

4.2.9. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Practice Items Regarding Length of Experience

The Scheffe Test indicated that for *P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress* there was a significant difference between the responses of the teachers who had 18 years experience and above and the teachers who had 6-11 (p= .022) and 0-5 year(s) experience (p= .013), as illustrated in Table 4.2.13. below. The more experienced teachers were more positive in their responses to P28 than the less experienced teachers.

The Sheffe test for *P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language*, there was a significant difference between the responses of the teachers who had 18 years experience and above and the teachers who had experience 0-5 year(s) (p= .041) and 6-11 year(s) experience (p= .022), as illustrated in Table 4.2.12. below. The more experienced teachers were more positive in their responses to P30 than the less experienced teachers.

Table 4.2.12. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Practice Items Regarding Length of Experience

Dependent Variable	(I)Length of Experience	(J) Length of Experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
P28	18-above years	0-5 year(s)	.99*	.31	.022
	18- above years	6-11 years	1.00*	.29	.013
P30	18-above years	0-5 year(s)	.85*	.29	.041
	18-above years	6-11 years	.87*	.27	.022

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The analysis of the teachers' perceptions of their practice and length of experience revealed that lenght of experienced was an important factor that influenced the teachers' perceptions only for two practice items.

4.2.10. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) for 'Practice' and 'Qualifications'

An ANOVA test employed to test differences between practice and qualifications revealed significant results for 6 items: P22, P23, P24, P25, P28 and P30 at the 0.05 significance level, as illustrated in Table 4.2.13. below.

The results of the ANOVA test were that for *P22: I base new knowledge on students' existing knowledge* (p = .04), for *P23: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation* (p = .015), for *P24: I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning* (p = .044), for *P25: I do not prefer my students to work individually* (p = .040), for *P28: I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress* (p = .013) and for item *P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language* (p = .001) 'qualifications' was an important factor that influenced the perceptions of the participants.

Table 4.2.13. ANOVA for 'Practice' and 'Qualifications'

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
			ANOVA			
P22	Between Groups	5.10	3	1.70	4.87	.004 *
	Within Groups	26.92	77	.35		
	Total	32.05	80			
P23	Between Groups	7.55	3	2.52	3.72	.015 *
	Within Groups	52.11	77	.68		
	Total	59.65	80			
P24	Between Groups	5.21	3	1.74	2.84	.044 *
	Within Groups	47.18	77	.61		
	Total	52,40	80			
P25	Between Groups	7.63	3	2.54	2.91	.040 *
	Within Groups	67.36	77	.88		
	Total	74.99	80			
P28**	Between Groups	6.46	3	2.15	3.83	.013 *
	Within Groups	42.74	76	.56		
	Total	49.20	79			
P30	Between Groups	7.67	3	2.56	5.74	.001 *
	Within Groups	34.33	77	.45		
	Total	42.00	80			

*Significance

** Note: For item P28, ANOVA test was administered with 79 participants of which 48 had the qualification 'BA + Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas'.

4.2.11. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Practice Items Regarding Qualifications

The Scheffe test showed that the significance found in ANOVA was not meaningful for P24 and P28, therefore the findings of these items are not presented here. The significance was reported for P22, P23, P25 and P28 in the Scheffe Test, as illustrated in Table 4.2.14. below.

The result of the Schefe test was that for *P22: I base new knowledge on students' existing knowledge*, there was a significant difference between those who had BA only and those who had MA only (p= .024) and between those who had BA only and those who had BA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas (p= .035). The teachers who had a BA qualification only were more positive in their responses to P22 than the teachers who had an MA qualification only and the teachers who had BA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas.

It was clear from the Scheffe test that for *P23: I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation*, there was a significant difference between the teachers who had only a BA qualification and the teachers who had BA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas (p=.035). The teachers who had only a BA degree were more positive in their responses to P23 than the ones who had BA plus Teaching Certificate/Diplomas.

The Scheffe test indicated that for item *P25: I do not prefer my students to work individually*, there was a significant difference between the participant teachers who had only a BA degree and those who had MA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas (p=.047). The teachers who had only a BA degree were more positive in their responses than the teachers who had MA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas.

The result of the Scheffe test showed that for *P30: I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language*, there was a significant difference between the teachers who had BA only and the teachers who had BA plus Teaching Certificates /Diplomas (p= .041). The teachers who held only a BA degree were more positive in their responses than the teachers who had BA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas. There was also a significant difference reported between the teachers who had only an MA degree and those who had MA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas (p= .047). The teachers who had only an MA degree were more positive in their reponses to P30 than the teachers who had MA plus Teaching Certificates/Diplomas.

Table 4.2.14. Scheffe Test: Multiple Comparisons for Significant Practice Items Regarding Qualifications

Dependent Variable	(I)Qualifications	(J) Qualifications	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
P22	BA	MA	.83*	.26	.024
		BA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	.48*	.16	.035
P23	BA	BA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	.67*	.22	.035
P25	MA + Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas	BA	-1. 26*	.44	.047
P30	BA	BA + Teaching Certificates/Diplomas	.53*	.18	.041
	MA	MA + Teaching Certificates/ Diplomas	1.07*	.37	.047

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The analysis of the perceptions of the teachers' practice and qualifications showed that teachers' qualifications was an important factor that influenced their perceptions particularly for four items.

To sum up, the findings indicated that the teachers' reported perceptions of their beliefs and claimed practice were based on the ideas of the new curriculum which was a blend of CLT and Constructivist teaching. It seemed that the male teachers were slightly more consistent in their stated beliefs and claimed practice than the female teachers. Besides, male and female teachers seemed to be more similar in their claimed practices than in their stated beliefs. When there were apparent discrepancies between stated beliefs and claimed practice, the teachers' responses were consistently more positive in regard to beliefs. Moreover, length of experience and qualification seemed to have more impact on teachers' claimed practice than on their stated beliefs.

The next chapter will discuss the qualitative analysis based on the interview and the observation data.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

5.1. Findings of Observations and Interviews

In this section, the findings of the observations and the interviews will be presented. First, some overall information about the participants and of the classes observed will be given. Then, the information gained with the help of the COLT Observation Schedule will be presented per class in percentages for each category and subcategory. Following that, qualitative findings based on the interviews, the COLT and the field notes I took during the observations of the teacher's lessons regarding the participant's beliefs, perceived practice, and their actual classroom practice will be presented in relation to 'the clasroom activities', 'the teacher and learner roles', and 'teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching'. Since I believed that interview question 3 did not generate the data of the quality I had expected, I decided to exclude it from my analysis. In order to preserve anonymity, the names used for the observed teachers will be pseudonyms chosen by the participant teachers.

Table 5.1. below, demonstrates overall information under the categories gender, length of experience, qualifications of the participants, the classes observed (i.e. the grade of the students), the class sizes (i.e. the number of the students in the class), the observation times and the duration of the observations.

Table 5.1. Information about the Teachers and the Classes Observed

Teacher Cases	Experience in EFL Teaching	Qual.	Class (Grade)	Class Size	Obser. Time	Duration
1. John	14 years (1 year in a prep school + 13 years in state schools)	BA + COTE	8th	26 ss	8:00 am	25 mins.
2.James	18 years (in state schools)	BA + a certificate	7th	22 ss	10:10 am	36 mins.
3.Richard	25 years (in state schools)	BA	6th	32 ss	11:45 am	26 mins.
4.Tom	13 years (in state schools)	BA + MA	7th	24 ss	10:50 am	27 mins.

5.Simon	11 years (in state schools)	BA + MA	8th	30 ss	10:55 am	35 mins.
6.Carol	7 years (I year in a prep school + 6 years in state schools)	BA	7th	23 ss	9:35 am	37 mins.
7.Sue	10 years (in state schools)	BA	8th	24 ss	9:15 am	25 mins.
8.Jessica	11 years (1 year in a prep school + 10 years in state schools)	BA + a certificate	8th	31 ss	11:50 am	26 mins.
9.Janette	10 years (3 months in a prep school + the rest in state schools)	BA	6th	37 ss	11:50 am	35 mins.
10.Eleanor	10 years (in state schools)	BA + a certificate	7th	19 ss	12:30 am	22 mins.

NOTE: Qual.: Qualifications   Ss: Students   Observ.: Observation   Mins.: Minutes
COTE: Certificate for Oversees Teachers of English   Cert.: Other teaching certificate

As illustrated in Table 5.1. ten EFL teachers and their classes participated in this part of the study. There were 5 male and 5 female teachers. Their experience in EFL teaching varied from 7 to 25 years. The majority of the teachers' teaching experience had been only in state schools, yet 4 of them had also worked in prep schools. 3 teachers had a post-graduate qualification (Master, COTE) and 3 teachers had certificates from attending in-service professional development programs. The rest of the teachers held only a BA degree.

The classes observed were 6th (2 classes), 7th (4 classes) and 8th (4 classes) grades. The number of students in each class ranged from 19 to 37. The most crowded classroom had 37 students and in the least crowded classroom there were 19 students. Although each lesson was supposed to be observed for 40 minutes, due to teachers' coming late to class, none of them were observed as long as planned. This might indicate that there were problems, perhaps in the school culture, perhaps with staff motivation. The actual duration of observations ranged from 22 minutes to 37 minutes and each class was observed once. The observation time schedule varied depending on the arrangements made by the participant teacher and the researcher.

All the percentages for Simon's lesson were calculated for 29 minutes teaching instead of 35 because his lesson was interrupted for 6 minutes by an unplanned announcement made by a school administrator in class. Similarly, there was an interruption for 5 minutes by an school administrator in Sue's lesson, thus all the percentages for her lesson were calculated for 20 minutes teaching instead of 25.

The percentages in Tables 2, 3 and 5 below, were obtained by dividing the total amount of time spent for each subcategory per class into the total amount of class time and multiplying the figure obtained by 100. For Tables 4 and 6 below, about material type and material source, the percentages were obtained by calculating the percentages of each category according to their frequency of usage during the lesson.

Table 5.2. below, presents information about how participants in the class were organized, in other words the structure of interaction in the class activities (i.e. T-C, S-T, S-S, Pair, Individual, T-S/G and T-C/S-C). As illustrated in the table, teachers spent most of their time on teacher to class interaction in the activies (35.2 %) followed by learners' individual study (25.4 %). *In Sue's and Janette's cases the percentages do not add up to 100 because 36 % and 85.7 % were spent on classroom management in their classes, respectively.

Table 5.2. Participant Organization: Total Percentage of Time Spent on Each Participant Organization Per Teacher.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGES FOR EACH TEACHER										MEAN %
Participant Organization	John	James	Richard	Tom	Simon	Carol	Sue *	Jessica	Janette *	Eleanor	
T- C	32	33.3	23.1	55.6	45.7	10.8	60	80.8	5.7	4.6	35.2
S-T	4	2.8	3.8	3.7	5.7	2.7	4	-	-		2.7
S-S	-	2.8	-	-	5.7	-	-	-	-	-	0.9
Pair	40	27.8	-	-	-	32.4	-	-	-	36.4	13.7
Individual	24	33.3	73.1	37.0	42.9	24.3	-	19.2	-	-	25.4
T- S/G	-	-	-	3.7	-	29.7	-	-	-	59.1	9.3
T-C/ S-C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.6	-	0.9

NOTE: T-C: Teacher to class   S-T: Student to teacher   S-S: One student to another   T-S/G: Teacher to student/group   T-C/S-C:Teacher to class and student to class combined interaction

Table 5.3. below, contains information about the category 'Language' (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) showing the degree of emphasis on particular language areas in the activities. Most of the class time was spent on grammar (63 %) followed by vocabulary (21.6 %). *In Richard's lesson, 19.2 % was spent on singing a song to motivate the students at the beginning of the lesson. In Sue's and in Janette's lessons, as stated earlier, 36 % and 85.7 % of the time were spent on classroom management, respectively.

Table 5.3. Language: Total Percentage of Time Spent on Each Language Area Per Teacher.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGES FOR EACH TEACHER										MEAN %
Language	John	James	Richard *	Tom	Simon	Carol	Sue *	Jessica	Janette *	Eleanor	
Vocabulary	36	-	7.7	3.7	91.4	-	64	-	8.6	4.6	21.6
Grammar	64	100	73.1	96.3	5.7	100	-	100	-	90.9	63.0
Pronunciation	-	-	-	-	2.9	-	-	-	5.7	4.6	1.3

Table 5.4. below, gives information about the type of material (i.e. written, audio, visual) the teacher used in the lesson. Teachers mostly used materials in written form (85 %) followed by audio materials (15 %). No materials in visual form were used in the observed lessons.

Table 5.4. Material Type: Total Percentage of Each Material Type Per Teacher.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGES FOR EACH TEACHER										MEAN %
Material Type	John	James	Richard	Tom	Simon	Carol	Sue	Jessica	Janette	Eleanor	
Written	100	100	100	66.7	33.3	100	50	100	100	100	85
Audio	-	-	-	33.3	66.7	-	50	-	-	-	15

Table 5.5. below, shows 'student modality', in other words, skills taught or practiced during the activities. Most of the teaching time was spent on the students' practicing writing (22.6 %) followed by listening/speaking as combined skills (16.8 %). The least time was spent on reading aloud/speaking as combined skills (0.9 %).

Table 5.5. Student Modality: Total Percentage of Time Spent on Each Modality Per Teacher.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGES FOR EACH TEACHER										MEAN %
Student Modality	John	James	Richard	Tom	Simon	Carol	Sue	Jessica	Janette	Eleanor	
Listening	36	33.3	-	23.6	27.6	-	-	-	5.7	9.1	13.5
Speaking	-	-	-	-	-	32.4	-	-	-	27.3	6.0
Reading	-	30.6	-	11.1	13.8	-	-	-	-	4.6	6.0
Writing	64	36.1	-	18.5	-	24.3	-	46.2	-	36.4	22.6
L/S	-	-	-	40.7	58.6	32.4	36	-	-	-	16.8
L/W	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	2.8
S/W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46.2	-	-	4.6
RA/S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.57	-	0.9
L/R/W	-	-	80.8	-	-	10.8	-	7.7	-	22.7	12.2

NOTE: S: Speaking   W: Writing   L: Listening   R: Reading   RA: Reading aloud

Table 5.6. below, depicts the information about the 'material sources' (i.e. student's textbook, supplementary handout) used in the lesson. As illustrated in the table, teachers used the textbook as the main source in their teaching (67.5 %). The remaining teaching sources were handouts, i.e. supplementary materials (32.5 %).

Table 5.6. Material Source: Total Percentage of Material Source Used Per Teacher.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGES FOR EACH TEACHER										MEAN %
Material Source	John	James	Richard	Tom	Simon	Carol	Sue	Jessica	Janette	Eleanor	
Student's Book (Textbook)	75	100	0	0	100	0	100	100	100	100	67.5
Handout	25	0	100	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	32.5

The findings of the COLT Observation Scheme indicated that the teachers seemed to be more in favour of Traditional practice in which grammar teaching was given priority rather than communication. The instruction was mostly teacher-fronted and based mostly on written materials. The textbook was followed as the main source of teaching and the most practiced skill was writing.

5.2. FINDINGS

The qualitative findings based on the analysis of the interview data and the observational data (derived from the COLT and the field notes) regarding the teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and their actual classroom practice in relation to 'classroom activities', 'the teachers' and learners' roles' and 'teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching' will be presented below.

The interviews were carried out in the participants' native language, i.e. Turkish and then translated into English.

The numbers in the parantheses after the extracts show the participant number first and then the line numbers of the extracts taken from the interview transcripts. "…" in the extracts means that there was backchannelling or irrelevant information in those lines. Here, it needs to be acknowledged that given that I only observed each teacher once, and only for a very limited time, the conclusions have to be treated with caution but I hoped a pattern would emerge.

5.2.1. Teachers' Beliefs, Perceived Practice and Actual Classroom Practice in Relation to Classroom Activities

5.2.1.1. Teachers' Beliefs

5.2.1.1.1. Constructivist

Regarding classroom activities some teachers believed in the value of interaction, motivation and learning language through communication. These teachers seemed to be open to a more Communicative and potentially Constructivist way of teaching. For example, in the interview **John** stated that

> [Activities] should motivate the students and should direct them to speak because communication is important. Language is taught through communication…and the activities should be interesting for the students. (1: 3-8)

Most of the teachers believed in the importance of pair work, group work, games, role-plays, conversations and activities that promote speaking and communication.

For example, **Jessica** said "When we think about the activities, I can say that the most important thing is interaction. Enabling students to speak the language directly, plus giving pair work". (8: 3-5)... "using games is beneficial for the students" (8: 8).

Similarly**, James** believed that "a variety of activities should be given to the students" (2: 5) and he believed that using games motivates the students to learn. He added:

> I think sometimes individual work, sometimes pair work and sometimes group work should be used… Using games are useful. Games become interesting for them, motivate them and the things they learn become more permanent. (2: 7-15)

Simon was also in favor of pair work and group work. He said "I believe that learning how to communicate is more important than grammar". (5: 3-4)

Similarly, **Janette** believed in pair work, group work and role- play since they encourage active involvement of students. She said that she prefered

> activities that enable the students to be active. I give role-plays. In some activities, students work together. One of them asks questions, the other one answers or I give pictures to one of them and questions to the other... I give pair work, group work and we have got different projects in our book. (9: 3-15)

Eleanor also said that she prefered "role play, conversations. Or games. I prefer them and the students also like them" ((10: 3).

Similarly, **Sue** said "I have always been for group work" (7: 5).

Carol expressed her favour in teaching "with games" and having group work in the following words: "Indeed, group work is good" (6: 16). She added that "I try to have them work in pairs. It's more effective because they help each other" (6: 21).

She emphasized the importance of listening activities. In the interview she said that

I believe that rather than grammar, listening activities should be given because learning a language by hearing is influential. We are not giving grammar communicatively; that's why they cannot learn. (6: 5-7)

She said that she gave importance to listening and speaking as language skills. She added that "Grammar is not enough to learn how to communicate. Listening activities should be emphasized. Speaking opportunities should be created" (6: 9-10).

For **Tom**, activities should be suitable to the students' levels. In the interview, he said that he gave activities to his students that "the students can do, suitable to their level" (4: 3).

Regarding activities **Richard** believed in following the activities given in the books because he believed that the contents of the many course books are similar. For example, he stated that 'They do not differ. Alphabet, colors, numbers, can, have got, has got. They all follow the same order" (3: 173-177). It seemed that the way these topics are presented in different books did not really matter for Richard, rather he seemed to be more concerned with the topics.

5.2.1.2. Teachers' Perceived Practice

5.2.1.2.1. Traditional

In the interviews, all the teachers stated that they cannot do what they believe in because of various contextual constraints such as learner characteristics (i.e. Traditional role expectations of learners, their immaturity, language level differences, ability differences) curricular restrictions and practical classroom realities (i.e. crowded classes, not having the needed language learning facilities and teaching aids). This, therefore, resulted in dissatisfaction in their perceived practice. Although all of the teachers seemed to be more open to Constructivist activities, they indicated that in their perceived classroom activities they were not Communicative and potentially not Constructivist.

For example, **John** said: "I try to do my best but unfortunately I cannot. I'm not satisfied with what I do" (1: 12). He expressed the reason as follows:

> These students are not aware of many things. They are not mature enough. They are different from university students. They wait for the lesson to finish and go home. It is difficult for the teacher to get their attention and motivate them. Plus, the number of hard- working, motivated students is decreasing in our classrooms. (1: 16-19)

Simon also believed that learning how to communicate is important, yet he said "But in our classroom we do grammar teaching". (5: 3-4)

Although **Jessica** expressed her belief in interaction in learning she said "But I can not do it in my class" (8: 3-5).

Similarly, **Eleanor** said she cannot do what she believed in as follows:

> Because of the curriculum I cannot do what I intend to do very often. I need to limit certain things. I cannot do enough speaking activities with my students to finish the topics in the curriculum. I cannot give practice to my students. Curriculum prevents us. (10: 3-24)

Carol also stated that "[group work] is useful as well but since our classes are too crowded we cannot do it very often" (6: 16-19). Although she believed in pair work she added that "I try to do it as much as I can...but I cannot do it as often as I want" (6: 21-25).

Tom said that

> We skip some of the activities because we do not have a homogenous class level and they are crowded. If the activities in the book are above the students' level, difficult for them to understand them, they cannot do them, I simplify them to bring them suitable to their level... I do the topic of the day but with different, simplified activities. (4: 10-21)

Janette expressed the role of the learners' level in deciding about the activities and said that

> Levels of my students are very different in every class. I teach in three different classes and all of them have different levels. I give activities to my students suitable to their level. In one of my classes, who has good students, I can bring extra materials. But in the others, I cannot bring extra materials... Our book is very intense and we follow the book. (9: 23-37)

Some teachers also expressed their sensitivity to classroom management and stated that level differences and classroom size caused problems for them.

For example, although **James** believed in providing learners with variety of activities such as, individual work, pair work, group work and games, he indicated that "I can do these activities in my classes to some extent but if it takes time classroom management problems start" (2: 18, 19).

Similarly, although **Sue** was in favour of group work she stated that "it's really hard to do it here under these conditions. Because in our classes we have 30- 35 students. Levels are so different. There is a huge gap between the levels. Therefore, the learning environment can easily turn into chaos". (7: 5-25)

Richard also stated that "We cannot have the students do group work because the classrooms are crowded. Chaos starts so we cannot listen to the students" (3: 12).

5.2.1.3. Teachers' Actual Classroom Practice

5.2.1.3.1. Traditional

When the teachers' lesson observations and field noted were considered it was found that most of the teachers' actual classroom practice exhibited Traditional teaching characteristics. The tasks were very controlled and the learners were not given

opportunities to build on their own knowledge. The teachers were not conducting a genuine conversation with the learners seeking their views rather they were just doing an exercise.

For example, **Simon** followed Traditional IRF (initiation- response- feedback) pattern of information exchange which did not allow for real communication during the lesson. The following classroom dialogue can show us the nature of the information exchange between the teacher and the students.

T (Teacher): (He writes the following sentence on the board)

   "I would go to the concert if it was my favourite band." and asks

T: Can we change the place of the sentences?

C (Class): Yes.

T: Change, then.

C: If it was my favourite band, I would go to the concert.

T: Good.

His lesson focused mostly on vocabulary (91.43 %) followed by grammar (5.71 %) and pronunciation (2.86 %), as illustrated in Table 5.3. above. Simon was the teacher who spent the most time on vocabulary teaching. In the observed lesson, there were grammar exercises on 'if clauses'. When the teacher found opportunity, he checked the Turkish translation of vocabulary, and he supplied the students with the correct pronunciation when needed. Then, the lesson continued with two detailed listening exercises with true/false questions from the textbook. Simon gave high importance to translation which is a characteristic of Traditional practice. Even in the last part of the lesson, which was listening, he told his students to listen and underline the words they would like to know. The following extract from his teaching exemplifies how translation was used in his lesson.

T: If I say Pervin is a book worm, what does it mean?

C: She reads a lot.

T: Very good.

(Students asks the meaning of some words that they underlined from the listening.)

S: Loud?

T: Yüksek ses. (Turkish)

S: Deliver?

T: Teslim almak. (Turkish)

S: Gossip?

T: Dedikodu.

(This continues for 15 minutes).

Most of the interaction was from the teacher to class (45.71 %) followed by individual study (42.86 %), student to teacher interaction (5.71 %) and student to student interaction (5.71) as illustrated in Table 5.2. above. All the vocabulary was translated through teacher to student interaction. Of all the teachers, Simon was the one who spent the most time on individual study.

Similarly, **Sue** followed IRF pattern in a very Traditional manner in which she asked the question, the students responded and she gave feedback. Her lesson was a listening lesson and the students listened to a passage from a tape recorder. It was an activity from the textbook which also had some listening comprehension questions. Students listened to it twice and when the listening finished the teacher translated what happened in the story. While doing the translation either the teacher asked the students the Turkish meaning of some vocabulary or the students asked the teacher.

The following classroom exchange between Sue and the students exemplifies the Traditional nature of the process.

S: 'Swap' ne demek? (What does 'swap' mean?

T: 'Swap' değişiklik yapmak demek. (Turkish)

Teacher explained what happened in the listenning story in Turkish and after asking every comprehension question in English she translated it into Turkish. Then, the kind of exchange shown above continued for 29 mins.

Her observed lesson showed that her teaching was based on teacher to class interaction (60 %) and student to teacher interaction (4 %), as illustrated in table 5.2. above. The lesson focused on vocabulary (64 %), as illustrated in Table, 5.3. above. The remaining 36 % were spent on classroom management. The lesson was a listening lesson. The students were asked to listen to a text and answer the comprehension questions about it.

Similarly, **Jessica**'s lesson showed Traditional teaching characteristics. Her lesson was a typical Traditional grammar lesson in which the teacher explains the grammar rule and gives the students sentences to be transformed from one form to another. The grammatical topic was 'reported commands and requests' and the avtivities were very mechanical in which the students used 'asked' and 'told' when converting statements. The teacher reminded the students of the rules such as when they see 'please' and words such as 'can', 'could', 'would' they should use 'ask' because these are polite requests but in the absence of such words, when it's an order, they should use 'told' when reporting. The pattern of information exchange was IRF in the lesson. The following classroom dialogue tells us the nature of the information exchange during the lesson.

T: Open your boks, page 87, exercise 9, Reported Commands and Requests.

(She reads the sentences given in the book one by one, elicits the answers from the students and writes them on the board).

T: "Say hello to my girlfriend" said John.

S: John asked him to say hello to his girlfriend.

T: Why 'my' changes to 'his'?

S: (She gives the reason of it in Turkish).

T: Very good.

(After doing three of the exercises the teacher reminds the students in which situations they are supposed to use 'ask' and 'told' and the classroom exchange continues in the same manner).

The teacher did not create an environment in which learners can discuss and share knowledge to construct their own understanding through interactions. They merely, copied the rule and apply it to the given sentences as a controlled task. Her observed lesson indicated that most of the interaction was from the teacher to the class (80.77 %) followed by individual study (19.23 %), as illustrated in Table 5.2. above. Of all the teachers, Jessica was the one who spent the most time on teacher to class interaction. The analysis of the observed lesson revealed that the lesson was totally based on grammar (100 %), as illustrated in Table 5.3. above.

Eleanor's lesson was also an example of a Traditional language teaching. It was a listenning lesson in which the students listened to a text and answered the comprehension questions. She asked the meaning of vocabulary. She also asked the students to read the text aloud. Basically, in lesson the teacher asked, learners responded and she gave feedback about the learners' responses (IRF pattern). The tasks did not allow learners for constructing meaning through communication. Besides, one of the Traditional techniques which was reading aloud was used.

The following extract from her observed lesson can show us the nature of her lesson.

T: Open page 90 please. Listening. We are going to listen and answer the questions. We are going to listen once.

(They listen from the cassette.)

T: (When the listening finished) What's unusual about this man? Unusual?

C: Acayip. (Turkish)

T: Yes (She nods).

After a few more similar information exchange, the teacher asks the students to read aloud a few lines each. Then, she continues translating the words asked by the students into Turkish

T: Are there any unknown words. Simulator, what does it mean?

S: Pilot kabini. (Turkish)

T: What does safely mean?

S: Güvenli. (Turkish)

(This continues for 9 minutes).

Her lesson was mostly grammar focused (90.90 %). 4.55 % of the time was spent on vocabulary and 4.55 % was spent on pronunciation, as illustrated in Table 5.3. above. There was 36.36 % pair work, 4.55 % teacher to class interaction and 59.09 % teacher to student or group interaction in her teaching, as illustrated in Table 5.2. above.

James also followed Traditional teaching practice. The topic of the day was yet/already with the exercises in the course book. There was no collaborative and cooperative learning environment which could help learners to develop their own understandings through information exchange. He followed Traditional IRF pattern in his lesson.

T: OK, open your books, page 98. Yet/ Already. In which tense do we use these?

S: Present Perfect.

T: Where do we use yet?

S: In questions and negatives.

T: Ask questions with yet.

(The teacher writes a few example sentences that he elicited from the students on the board and underlines yet.)

T: Give me examples to negative.

(He writes the elicited negative statements on the board and underlines yet.)

T: What about already?

(The same procedure is repeated, then the students are asked to copy the sentences into their note-books. When they finished copying, the teacher tells them to do the activity in the book which is gap- filling by using yet and already.)

His observed classroom teaching indicated interaction during a third of the time was between the teacher and the class (33.33 %), as illustrated in Table 5.2.. A third of the time was spent on individual study (33.33 %) followed by pair work (27.78 %), student to teacher interaction (2.78 %) while there was hardly any student to student interaction (2.78 %). His entire teaching was focused on grammar and of all the teachers James was one of three teachers who spent all the teaching time on grammar (100 %), as illustrated in Table 5.3. above.

Similar to the other teachers, **Richard** displayed Traditional teaching in his observed lesson. The lesson was based on mainly two activities. One activity required the students to fill in the gaps with simple past form of the given verbs and the other was changing the simple present tense verbs into past simple verbs. Students worked individually in both of the activities to write the answers to the exercises. The teacher used the handouts he brought to the class for these activities. He checked the students' understanding of the vocabulary by asking them to translate the words into Turkish. The following lesson extract exemplifies the nature of his teaching.

T: (After distributing a handout to the students) You have past simple. Fill in the sentences with the words from the box.

(He walks around the class).

T: (While the students are on the task) What's the meaning of 'win' in Turkish?

C: Kazanmak. (Turkish)

T: Sometimes you have to use the second form of the verb, Past Simple.

His observed lesson revealed that his class activities focused on grammar and vocabulary, 73.07 % and 7.69 % respectively, as illustrated in Table 5.3. above. In none of the tasks the students were encouraged to solve a problem, make a decision or exhange opinion which help knowledge construction through communication. In his lesson, most of the time was spent on individual study (73.08 %) followed by teacher to class interaction (23.08 %) and 3.84 % student to teacher interaction, as illustrated in Table 5.2. above. Of all the teachers Richard was the one who spent the most time on individual study.

Although **Janette**'s lesson was mostly taken up with classroom management problems, I observed that her lesson exhibited Traditional characteristics. Translation was the basic characteristic of the lesson. Translation was carried out by following IRF pattern, in which the teacher asked the meaning of a word or a phrase, the students responded and the teacher gave feedback. In the lesson, Janette called on individual students to read aloud a paragraph about colours and personality from the textbook and supplied the students with correct pronunciation when needed. When the reading finished, the teacher read the paragraphs aloud for the class. There was no task given to the students for the purpose of promoting communication and helping learners create their own understandings.

The following lesson extract can exemplify the nature of her lesson.

T: We are going to read five paragraphs about colours. Green, brown, red, blue and yellow. Who would like to read the first paragraph? (She asks in Turkish as well).

S: 1A?

T: We are talking about 1A. (The teacher says this in Turkish).

S: (He reads the paragraph aloud).

T: Tell us what you have understood in general.

(No response from the student).

T: If you haven't understood tell me Salahi. (To another student) where is your book? (To another student) Harun listen!

(She passes to the other paragraphs in the same manner).

……….

T: (In another paragraph) Yes…What is cooking? (She asks in Turkish)

S: Yemek pişirmek. (Turkish)

T: Yes. (Shouting to anothet student) If you are not listening Atakan, get Yusuf and go out! (Turkish)

Having observed 14.29 % of a lesson (since the remaining 85.71 % of the time was spent on classroom management), 8.57 % of class time was spent on teacher to class and student to class combined interaction and 5.71 % spent for teacher to class interaction, as illustrated in Table 5.2. above. Vocabulary (8.57 %) and pronunciation (5.71 %) were emphasized in the lesson, as illustrated in Table 5.3. above.

5.2.1.3.2. Both Traditional and Constructivist

Three teachers' observed lessons exhibited both Traditional and Constructivist characteristics. These non-Traditional teachers were not exactly Constructivist but they seemed to be moving away from the Traditional mould towards a more communicative and potentially Constructivist way of teaching.

For example, **John** was neither totally Traditional nor totally Constructivist in his teaching. At the beginning of his lesson he explained the meaning of the prepositions (e.g. along, around, through, over, under, across) with the help of example sentences and his drawings on the board. Then, he gave the students two tasks which were about practicing those prepositions for giving directions to do in pairs. One was a gap-filling exercise and the other was matching pictures with the given prepositions. In doing these tasks he walked around and checked the students to see whether they needed help in order to support them. The students also supported and helped each other and exchanged information while doing the tasks in pairs. Learners focused on meaning and form in the tasks.

The last activity of his lesson was an information- gap activity in their book and the students were asked to work in pairs to do it. In the activity one of the pairs was supposed to give directions to his/her partner to draw the right route.

Most of his teaching time was spent on pair work and he was the teacher who gave the most time to it (40 %) among all the teachers, as illustrated in Table 5.2.. In this lesson, roughly a third was teacher to class interaction (32 %), about a quarter was individual study (24 %) and then was some student to teacher interaction (4 %). His lesson included both grammar exercises and vocabulary practice. As illustrated in Table 5.3., he spent most of his teaching time (64 %) on grammar exercises. 36 % of the time was spent on vocabulary practice.

Similarly, **Carol**'s observed lesson was a grammar lesson (100 %), as illustrated in Table 5.3. above, yet grammar was not taught in a Traditional way. The activities she used in the lesson enabled students to focus on both meaning and form. During the information exchange between the teacher and the learners, although sometimes the teacher followed IRF pattern, it generated geniune communication. For example, when they responded to a question she asked for a justification of it by asking them 'How did you understand it?''. One of the tasks she gave to the students was to write about what they have understood from the pictures in the handout by sharing information with their partner. When they were on the task she walked around, checked and helped them when needed. She spent most of

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the time on pair work. Grammar was practiced through different types of interactions such as in pairs (32.43%), through teacher to student/group interaction (29.73 %), through teacher to class interaction (10.82 %), individual study (24.32 %) and student to teacher interaction (2.70 %), as illustrated in Table 5.2. above. Carol was the teacher who spent the most time on teacher to student and group interaction among all the teachers.

Tom was another teacher who showed similar characteristics with John and Carol. His observed lesson was a listening lesson. He distributed a handout of pictures describing the events of the song they were going to listen. Before they listened, they talked about the pictures to create meaning and understanding as a class with the teacher. Then, they listened to the song to choose the four pictures describing the events in the song. While the students were on the task, the teacher walked around the class and helped them when needed. The activities seemed suitable to the students' level. Although most of the interaction was from the teacher to the students, it was used most of the time to confirm the students' understanding of what they heard in the listening activity and for the students to express their understanding through that interaction. In that respect, it could be claimed that although the teacher and the students were in Traditional roles, understanding the meaning was the focus of the interactions. Besides, it should be noted that Tom was the only teacher who used an authentic material (i.e. a song) as the main material of his lesson. 96.30 % of the time was spent on grammar and 3.70 % of the teaching time was spent on vocabulary practice, as illustrated in Table 5.3. above. In his lesson, most of the interaction was from teacher to class (55.56 %) followed by individual study (37.04 %), teacher to student or group interaction (3.70 %) and student to teacher interaction (3.70 %), as illustrated in Table 5.2. above.

5.2.2. Teachers' Beliefs, Perceived Practice and Actual Classroom Practice in Relation to the Teacher's and Learner's Roles

5.2.2.1. Teachers' Beliefs

Regarding the ideal role of the language teacher, the interviewed language teachers in this study believed in adopting multiple roles. They used different terms to express their beliefs in relation to the role of the teacher such as controller, helper, director, guide, orchestra conductor, observer, friend, motivator, coordinator and encourager. Here, the teacher as a controller, a director and an orchestra conductor will be considered as adopting Traditional roles while the teacher as a helper, a guide, an observer, a friend, a motivator, a coordinator and an encourager will be considered as adopting Communicative and potentially Constructivist roles.

5.2.2.1.1. Both Traditional and Constructivist

These teachers believed in adopting both Constructivist and Traditional teacher roles and they believed in Communicative and potentially Constructivist learner role in foreign language teaching and learning. These teachers seemed to be moving away from Traditional mould and moving towards a more Communicative and potentially Constructivist way of teaching.

For example, **John** believed that "a teacher should be a guide and a controller" (1: 105).

According to him, students should be made independent. He said:

"They should learn and study themselves… Certainly, the students should be more active than the teacher. Instead of the teacher, students should be active. Our education should be learner centered." (1: 104-106)

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Similarly, **Simon** stated that "Teacher should be a controller. S/he should control the students' understanding and their behavior ... When they have a question s/he should help them". (5: 53-57)

For the learner's role he said "Students should be active and listen to the teacher" (5: 62).

Sue believed that

> Teacher should be a kind of guide. Teacher should guide the students and then monitor, observe them to see whether they can do what you have taught them to do or not. Teacher should be like a[n] [orchestra] conductor. Students know something. What you need to do as a teacher, is to help them to complete their weaknesses by encouraging and directing them. You need to enable the students to perform that knowledge correctly… But of course, controlling is needed. Because if everyone says something at the same time it doesn't become music, it just creates noise. (7: 129-154)

According to Sue's ideal student role she said: "Students should get prepared for the lesson before coming to the class. At least they should study the unknown words. Students have to be active." (7: 217-219).

In the interview, **Tom** said that "Teacher should be a director, coordinating students". (4: 39)

Tom believed that a teacher should be like a coordinator, directing students' behavior.

He believed that students "need to be active participants." (4: 51)

James believed in being a director and a helper. He said:

> Teacher should be like a director. I try to direct my students by telling them what they are supposed to do or by giving them 1 or 2 examples. If as a teacher you ask and you give the answer, it does not work. Letting most of the things be done by the students and assisting them sounds logical to me. (2: 204-211)

About the student's role, James stated that they "should be active, participant, listener and questioning" (2: 236).

Jessica believed in the role of a teacher as a director and a guide. She stated that

> I think the teacher should be a director. S/he should use games or a speaking activity or a dialogue to fill their empty brains. A teacher should be a guide… For example, when teaching vocabulary s/he should use his/her body language effectively…(8: 67-73)

Regarding the learner's role Jessica said:

> Students should be open to learning and behave comfortably in the classroom. I think if the classroom size gets smaller, students will be able to question, talk and will not mock/ tease each other. The classroom should be a place for the students in which they can freely behave without hesitation and feel comfortable. A student, like a teacher should be an actor. Students should be very active but not as active as the teacher. (8: 70-79)

For **Eleanor**, teacher "should direct the students. Rather than being an authority, teacher should be like a friend, director, guide and the one who encourages". (10: 64-66)

She believed that a student should be a "Participant…somebody that can direct the teacher,…that can question whenever needed… motivated, eager to learn." (10: 78-85)

5.2.2.1.2. Constructivist

Some teachers believed in adopted a more Communicative role and potentially Constructivist rather than Traditional role in teaching and learning.

For example, **Carol** believed that the tacher should be a director but not in a Traditional sense. She believed that the teacher should direct the students to search and learn. She said:

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"Teacher should be a director. Should direct the students to search and learn". (6: 61)

Regarding the learner's role she believed that "Students should be active and researchers" (6: 74)

According to **Richard** adopting a motivator role is important in the teaching and learning process. He said:

> Teacher's role is very important. Teacher is the motivator. If you are not active, if your voice projection is not good, you don't have intonation in your voice, you lose students' motivation and you lose your students… Motivating the students is very important and it's the teacher who will do it. (3: 305-313)

Richard believed in the importance of motivation for learning. Regarding student's role, he believed that "If a student is motivated s/he adopts her/his role. Getting involved, participating, of course active participation". (3: 357-358) It seemed that for Richard learners being motivated and physically active meant active participation.

Janette stated that "an ideal language teacher should be a guide for the students". (9: 53)

She believed that "learners should be active participants" (9: 54)

5.2.2.2. Teachers' Perceived Practice

All the partticipant teachers claimed that their perceived practice was traditional. In the interviews, they all expressed their awareness regarding the mismatch between their ideal teacher role and their perceived role in their current teaching contexts. They also expressed the reasons of the incongruity between their ideal beliefs and their perceived practice. They expressed their dissatisfaction for the current learner roles as well.

5.2.2.2.1. Traditional

In **John's** ideal teaching, learners needed to be active and independent and the teacher should be a guide to them. Yet, he was aware of the practical classroom realities that prevented him from implementing his beliefs. He thought that the learners were immature and classes were too large for a learner-centered classroom and autonomous learners. He also blamed the pressure of the curriculum. He believed that changing this situation would take time.

He said:

> But I can openly say that we are not successful in adopting these roles at the moment... Classrooms are very crowded. Students are not mature enough. Plus, there are limitations imposed on us by the curriculum… Time is needed… I believe that teachers have a lot to do. Teacher is the key person to shape the students because in these grades students are not mature enough to understand it. (1: 106-136)

Simon complained that the current generation liked spoon-feeding. Therefore, what he thought should happen (having active students in class) was in contradiction with what was possible in terms of learner role.

He said "This generation expects everything ready to be given to them. Therefore, it's difficult to have the ideal, expected student profile in our classes". (5: 65-67)

Janette described her actual teacher role as "an authority" (9: 70). For her, "Students don't behave like ideal students… They are spoilt and when you say 'stop talking', their parents come to school to complain. It's because of the parents". (9: 72-76)

Janette believed that neither the students nor the teachers could adopt their ideal roles in language learning and teaching because of the system that caused classroom management problems. Learners caused classroom management problems thinking that they could learn through private lessons. Therefore, the teacher adopted the authority role in class. She also

blamed the parents for complaining from the teachers and spoiling their children. It seemed that English classes in school were seen as less important and useful than private lessons. In other words, it seemed that school teaching lost credibility and status.

She said that

> Since we teach crowded classes, we are not like ideal language teachers. Most of the time in the class goes on warning the students to sit down and stop talking. It's because of the system… Students don't take teachers seriously… Another problem is the private lessons. Private lessons are widespread so students think that they learn in the private lessons. (9: 53-68)

Regarding her present role **Sue** said: "I have always preferred to guide my students but unfortunately when I look at my teaching, I see myself in an authority position in order to maintain the classroom order" (7: 250-254)

Sue believed that the students should take the responsibilities of being a student such as getting prepared before coming to class and become active in the lesson. However, she said that her students lack motivation to study and learn. They have got used to spoon feeding. She blamed the new generation for being indifferent.

The present role of her students was very different from her ideal. She said:

> But in our classrooms students don't do even the homework. They don't bring books. Therefore the problems get worse… in my classrooms students don't want to learn what you give them, let alone being active… I can say that this generation is indifferent. They don't care to learn even if you give them ready things… They are not motivated because they don't have a reason to be motivated. (7: 218-242)

James believed in being a director and a supporter for the students to foster learner autonomy yet he was not sure to what extent he was adopting these roles because of the practical situation.

He said "I don't know how much in practice it can be done but I can say that I generally try to do it. I try to direct my students by telling them what they are supposed to do or by giving them 1 or 2 examples… I try to adopt that role but I don't know how much I'm doing. (2: 204-212)

James seemed very aware of one fundamental difference between language classrooms and other subject classrooms that in other subjects the students already had the language in which to express themselves. This made learner-centeredness particularly challenging in EFL classrooms. He also raised important socio-cultural issues that might cause students to be passive in class.

He said:

Students, who have self confidence and who question, are more comfortable in this learning environment. But many students, although we encourage them to ask, by telling them that they can learn from their mistakes, are still passive. They are shy or maybe it's because they are brought up in an environment in which adults ideas are dominant and their ideas are not listened to. In my classrooms, I don't have many students in this situation. I have got more in 6th grades but 7th grades are more comfortable… In foreign language classes, students are more dependent on the teacher because in English you always give something new. Therefore, when you give something new, they have to listen to you first. Maybe, in other lessons, they are more independent and participating. But when you pass to the exercises or reinforce their learning, you see them more active. (2: 242-268)

Tom drew attention to that the Traditional teacher and learner roles of the settled old education system had an influence on the current roles in class. He believed that the teacher should be a director, yet the students expected to see the teacher in a Traditional role, in other words, as the transmitter of knowledge. He also emphasized that the contextual constraints such as the curriculum, too large classes and level differences were impediments to adopting desired student roles in class.

He said:

> But I believe it's because of the faults in our education system, students expect everything from the teacher. For the students, teacher is not a director but a person who knows everything and should teach what's needed. [The students] expect everything from us. Therefore, that ideal teacher's role as a director does not work in this context. (4: 39-44)

He added that "Hardworking students are the ones who are active participants. We encourage the others but we are not really successful" (4: 52-54). He also mentioned the reasons of not having the desired student profile in the classrooms as follows:

> There are three problems: 1. The curriculum, 2. Crowded classrooms, 3. Level differences. It's difficult to teach because there is a huge gap between the students' levels… There are very high level students and very low level students. (4: 57-60)

Jessica was dissatisfied with her current role in which she felt herself to be a nanny rather than a teacher. She said that she was in a Traditional teacher role, a transmitter of her knowledge but she thought she taught nothing to her students.

She said:

> At the moment, I'm like a nanny to my students. I just try to transfer my knowledge to them although they have no background to it. I just lecture, they look blank. I feel I teach to empty walls. I do not think that I'm teaching. (8: 88-91)

Eleanor stated that the students in the current classes expected to see the teachers in their Traditional roles as the transmitter of knowledge. Eleanor thought that it would be better to implement the new system according to the level differences of learners in classes.

Although she expressed her belief in teacher's adopting multiple roles such a director, a friend, a guide and the one who encourages rather than being an authority in class, she said that "Our students are not used to this role. They expect the teacher to transmit knowledge

and they do what the teacher tells them to do… It will be better if we can set that system but according to the students' levels". (10: 69-74)

Eleanor believed that students should be participating, directing the teacher, questioning and motivated to learn, yet the current learners were too teacher dependent. She said "everything is expected from the teacher" (10: 86).

According to **Carol**, teacher should direct, coordinate the students to become active researchers to learn. She also stated that in reality she could not adopt her ideal role because the students were in favor of Traditional teacher and learner roles.

She said;

> In the current classrooms, I try that role but I don't think I'm successful. Students got used to the Traditional roles in which teacher gives, learners take… Students like spoon feeding… I try to transfer my knowledge and the students get as much as they can. We try to make the students become productive through portfolio creation. Some students do it themselves but most of them have it done by other people… Students should be active and researchers… My 6th grade students are very active, they are eager to learn. Of course, we have very passive students too. (6: 63-76)

Janette believed that neither the students nor the teachers could adopt their ideal roles in language learning and teaching because of the system that caused classroom management problems. Learners caused classroom management problems thinking that they could learn through private lessons. Therefore, the teacher adopted the authority role in class. She also blamed the parents for complaining from the teachers and spoiling their children. It seemed that English classes in school were seen as less important and useful than private lessons. In other words, it seemed that school teaching lost credibility and status.

She said that

> Since we teach crowded classes, we are not like ideal language teachers. Most of the time in the class goes on warning the students to sit down and stop talking. It's

because of the system… Students don't take teachers seriously… Another problem is the private lessons. Private lessons are widespread so students think that they learn in the private lessons. (9: 53-68)

She described her actual teacher role as "an authority" (9: 70). For her, "Students don't behave like ideal students… They are spoilt and when you say 'stop talking', their parents come to school to complain. It's because of the parents". (9: 72-76)

Richard described his perceived practice as a motivator. He indicated that he motivated his students to do the tasks by awarding them or by taking their attention to the topics that could come in the exam. He said "I tell my students that if you use these expressions [certain expressions that he wants them to use] I will give you a chocolate". (3: 337-338) He also said "When I say that this topic will come in the exam they pay more attention, study and get motivated". (3: 214-215)

Although Richard expressed his belief in adopting a Constuctivist role, that means being a motivator for the students, in his perceived practice he seemed to be motivating the students in a Traditional manner. He motivated his students extrinsically rather than helping them get motivated to do the tasks by seeing the value of the tasks for themselves.

5.2.2.3. Teachers' Actual Classroom Practice

5.2.2.3.1. Traditional

The observed lessons of 7 teachers indicated that in these classes the teachers and learners seemed to adopt Traditional roles. In none of these lessons the learners were not given opportunities to construct their own knowledge. The teacher was the dominant controlling figure in the class. Learners were not encouraged to become autonomous nor the teacher conducted genuine conversation with them to express their views.

Janette's observed lesson indicated that classroom management was a problem in this class. Students were walking around the class talking and shouting. The problems were

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present during the whole lesson and the teacher kept warning the students. Since there was a very little time spent on teaching, only 5.71 % of the time was spent on listening and 8.57 % on reading aloud and speaking as combined skills, as illustrated in Table 5.5. above.

In **Simon'**s actual teaching, I observed that he was a controller and sometimes a helper to the students, confirming what he said in the interview and in the survey. For example, when the students had pronunciation problems the teacher supplied the correct prounciation.

In the observed lesson, he was in control of everything in the class and the lesson was mostly teacher dominated. The teacher and the students were in their Traditional roles. For most of the time, the students listened to the teacher and answered his questions (58.62 %). 27.59 % of the class time the students merely listened to the teacher and for 13.79 %, they read, as illustrated in Table 5.5. above.

The data analysis of **Sue's** observed lesson revealed that Sue had a lot of classroom management problems. At the beginning of the lesson it took about 9 minutes to get the students to sit at their desks. Then, during the lesson the disturbances created by the students never ended. These problems prevented some of the students (who were very few actually) from listening and learning. In the teacher's presence, the students kept shouting, laughing, eating crisps and even throwing things to each other (e.g. note books and pencil cases) and jumping on the chairs. It seemed that Sue did not have effective classroom management strategies because despite her emphasis on classroom management issues in the survey and in the interview, in the observed lesson, 36 % of her class time was spent on classroom management problems. Another 36 % was spent on students' listening and answering the questions and 28 % on listening and writing the answers, as illustrated in Table 5.5. above.

In **James's** observed lesson, however, he was the dominant figure of the lesson and the students did what the teacher told them to do in the activities. A third of the time the students listened to the teacher (33.33 %) and the rest of the time they read (30.56 %) and wrote (36.11 %), as illustrated in in Table 5.5. above.

During **Jessica's** lesson, she paid a lot of attention to quieting the students by shouting at them. The entire lesson the teacher warned the students by saying 'shh!' and 'be quiet'. On the contrary to what she said in the survey, yet in line with her statements in the interview, the students and the teacher were in Traditional roles. For most of the time, the students wrote (46.15 %), and spoke and wrote as combined skills (46.15 %). 7.69 % of the time was spent on students' listening, reading and writing as combined skills, as illustrated in Table 5.5. above. There was no evidence in the observed lesson of the teacher's helping learners towards autonomy.

In line with what **Eleanor** said about her practice in the interview, yet contrasting with her stated practice in the survey, the observed lesson indicated that her lesson was teacher controlled. The teacher and the students were in their Traditional roles. The students spent most the time on writing (36.36 %) followed by listening and reading and writing as combined skills (22.73 %), speaking (27.27 %), listening (9.09 %) and reading (4.55 %), as illustrated in Table 5.5. above.

In **Richard's** actual classroom teaching, in line with what he said in the interview, he paid attention to motivating his students. For example, his lesson started by singing a song with the students to motivate them for the lesson. He also praised his students by using words such as, "Very good!", "Fantastic" and his voice projection was good. Besides, he used his body language effectively and when a student made a mistake he helped him/her to self correct. In his lesson, students spent most of the time (80.77 %) on listening, reading and writing as combined skills, as illustrated in Table 5.5. above. However, there was no evidence of promoting learner autonomy in the observed lesson.

5.2.2.3.2. Both Traditional and Constructivist

The observed lessons of three teachers showed that in their classes the teacher and the learners adopted both Traditional and Constructivist roles. These teachers seemed to be

moving away from Traditional mould and getting more Communicative and potentially Constructivist in their teaching.

John's observed lesson indicated both Constructivist and Traditional roles for the teacher and the students. In John's lesson, the students listened to him and did the exercises. John was the dominant figure in the lesson. In his lesson, as illustrated in Table 5.5 above, students wrote during 64 % of the class and 36 % of the time they listened.

In **Tom's** lesson, confirming what he said in the interview, he tried to direct the students, coordinate them but he was more of a controller and while the students were on the task he walked around the class and directed the students when needed. In short, both the learners and the teacher were in Traditional roles. During the lesson, the students listened and spoke as combined skills (40.74 %) , listened to the casette (23.63 %), read (11.11 %) and wrote (18.52 %). The teacher was the dominant, controlling figure of the class which could also be understood from teacher to class interaction as the main type of interaction of the lesson (55.56 %), as stated earlier.

In the lesson observed, in line with what **Carol** said in the interview and in the survey, she directed her students. Although teacher directed the students in the activities the students were actively answering the questions. The lesson was neither completely teacher dominated nor completely learner dominated. Carol was one of the teachers who gave opportunities for her students to practice speaking (32.43 %), as illustrated in Table 5.5. above. In her teaching, there was 32.43 % time spent on listening and speaking as combined skills, 24.32 % on writing and 10.82 % on listening, reading and writing as combined skills.

5.2.3. Teachers' Beliefs, Perceived Practice and Actual Classroom Practice in Relation to Teacher-centered and Learner-centered Teaching

Here, the teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and their actual classroom practice will be discussed altogether.

The analysis of the interview data, observation data and the field notes revealed that all of the teachers in the study expressed their favour in learner-centered teaching. When the teachers' ideal beliefs, perceived practice and actual classroom practice were considered some variations were noted. As a result of the analysis, I decided to group the teachers under three categories. The first category included the 5 teachers (Simon, Eleanor, Janette, Sue, James) who believed in learner-centered teaching and whose perceived practice and actual classroom practice were teacher-centered. In the second category, there were 3 teachers (Carol, Tom, John) who expressed their belief in learner-centered teaching and perceived their practice is not learner-centered. Their actual classroom teaching exhibited a mixture of learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching. The third category included 2 teachers (Richard and Jessica) who expressed their belief in both learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching. Richard perceived himself to be doing both in his lessons depending on the topic and his actual classroom practice was teacher-centered. Jessica perceived her practice as teacher-centered and her actual practice was also teacher-centered.

The teachers' reasons for these descrepancies were stated as: learner characteristics, practical classroom realities, lack of facilities and teaching aids, management problems, lack of training of the learners and the teachers, curricular restrictions, lack of support for the teachers to connect theory into practice, and lack of collaboration between the teachers and the authorities.

5.2.3.1. Category 1

The teachers in this category believed in learner-centered teaching and their perceived and actual classroom practice were teacher-centered.

Simon stated that

> Learner-centered is the ideal and with this new system learner-centered teaching is the target. Yet, I can say that in our classrooms we are teaching teacher-centered

because the classes are crowded... Students come from the old system... It's difficult to do it. (5: 78-84)

Simon believed in learner-centered teaching, and he said that because of too large classes and students' old learning habits, it was difficult to teach in a learner-centered manner. The information captured by the observation showed that the lesson was mostly teacher-centered. The teacher decided and told the students what to do and the students did what the teacher told them to do. There was no genuine conversation with the teacher to give learners opportunities to express their veiews nor the learners were encouraged to take control of their own learning. The tasks were strictly teacher controlled.

Eleanor said

I believe that learner-centered teaching is better but students should get used to that system before coming to the secondary school. It should start from primary school. When we suddenly move to the new system, students cannot do it. Plus, we don't have infrastructure… The current system is teacher- centered. How much we try, we cannot do it. It's difficult because we don't have facilities, equipments; teaching aids either…For example, when I go to English class I need to have relevant CDs and books for the topic of the lesson. For speaking, I need to have a suitable setting, classroom. How can I do a speaking lesson with 30 students? and How can we improve speaking that way? We need infrastructure beforehand… It's difficult for the teacher as well to adapt to this new system. Time is needed. (10: 94-123)

Eleanor raised the issue of lack of training both in teachers and learners for learner-centered teaching and learning. She believed that learners should get accustomed to it in their early school years. She also emphasized the lack of infrastructure, in other words, lack of needed facilities, equipments and teaching aids for language learning and teaching in schools. She said that overly large classes were a handicap for speaking lessons. She thought that time was needed to be able to implement learner-centered teaching in schools. Her observed lesson was an example of a teacher-centered lesson.

According to **Janette:**

> Language teaching needs to be learner-centered. I expect it to be learner-centered but most of the time our classes are crowded, so to keep the control in my hand, I have to teach in a teacher-centered way. When we have pair work, we need to go to the language lab. However, we can go there twice a week because there is only one lab for 24 classes…In our classrooms we cannot have pair work or group work because the class next to us cannot have a lesson due to the noise. The headmaster comes, questions and warns us. He says when you have games or pair work you shouldn't make noise. (9: 79-92)

Janette believed in learner-centered teaching, yet she was well aware of the contextual constraints such as crowded classes, lack of facilities for learning and teaching and the administrator's attitude toward the contemporary learning and teaching activities (pair work, group work, games) that caused her to teach in a teacher-centered manner. Her observed lesson was an example of a teacher-centered lesson.

Although **Sue** was in favor of learner-centered teaching, she was aware that her teaching was not learner-centered due to the classroom realities that prevented her from teaching in her desired way. She expressed her ideas with the following words:

> The Ministry of Education is working on learner- centered teaching but how much it is learner- centered, is questionable. I have always liked my students to be active. I prefer to direct my students but when I look at myself I see myself in an authority position all the time to manage the class and maintain classroom management. So I don't have a learner- centered classes, I cannot have. While I try to speak with one student, I lose control in the class… At the moment, I cannot put into practice learner-centered teaching. I'm like a marathon runner to finish the curriculum and a guard to keep the classroom management under control. (7: 246-272)

Sue likened her role in the class to 'a marathon runner' and 'a guard' because of the current classroom situation and the imposed curriculum, in her view, contextual constraints. Her lesson was teacher-centered.

James stated that

> Ideal is learner centered but what the role of the teacher should be in learner-centered teaching is important. Teacher should be a helper and supporter to the students when they are doing the activities. Supporting, directing the students. I believe that teacher has an important role in learner-centered teaching because I don't believe that it's a good idea to leave everything to the students to do. You need to check the students at least when they are having a pair work. Checking every pair should be in control of the teacher. S/he should monitor the students, should control the class but at the same time students should be given chances to do the tasks themselves. (2: 275-294)

James added that

> Learner-centered teaching is the trend nowadays. It's good but we cannot implement it efficiently because both the students and the teachers lag behind, they are not ready. It's a difficult job… Even if you implement it, you can do it for a short time in the class because of subject changes and the students make noise so it doesn't reach at its purpose. (2: 347-360)

It appeared that James saw learner-centered teaching as a trend that might change in time. He seemed to be sceptical, or even synical about change. He emphasized that the lack of training of both students and teachers and classroom management issues were impediments to learner-centered teaching.

James believed in learner-centered teaching, yet in his actual teaching, the lesson was strictly teacher- centered. The analysis of the information captured by the category 'activities' indicated that all the activities in the lesson observed represented grammar

based teaching. As stated earlier and illustarted in Table 5.3., the emphasis was 100 % on grammar. Everything was in the control of the teacher.

5.2.3.2. Category 2

These teachers believed in learner-centered teaching and perceived their practice as not learner- centered and their actual practice revealed that they exhibited a mixture of learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching characteristics. These teachers seemed to be moving away from Traditional mould and developing more Communicative and potentially Constructivist way of teaching.

In the interview **Carol** said that

> Learner centered is the best. It should be that way for the students to be eager to learn, to have high motivation, not to expect everything from the teacher, to be a researcher and not to expect to be spoon fed by the teacher… But we need to train our students at the very beginning to get used to it starting from the primary school because our students like memorizing. In fact they don't produce anything. They just memorize what we give them… It's not possible to do it suddenly when the student is in the 7th or 8th grade… Besides, infrastructure is not ready. Classrooms are very crowded. Teachers come from the old system so it's difficult to adapt to the new system… Plus, the atmosphere in the classes doesn't help the teachers to adapt to it… You teach the same curriculum for English to the repeat classes, average classes and the college classes. (6: 81-96)

Carol raised the issue of training the students in their early school years (primary school) to adopt roles of contemporary language teaching where they were researchers, motivated and productive rather than being spoon-fed and tended to memorize information. She also emphasized that the lack of infrastructure and having too large classes were impediments to the implementation of learner-centered teaching. Her observed lesson was neither completely teacher-centered nor learner-centered.

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Tom said that

> Teaching and learning should be learner-centered but the problems cause education
> to be teacher-centered. It's difficult to be learner-centered at least for our school and
> the education system. Students expect everything from the teacher. We can say that
> the system made the students expect everything from the teacher. As I have said
> before the problems such as having crowded classes and having different level of
> students in the same class cause education to be teacher- centered. (4: 65-70)

He added that

> Absolutely I cannot [implement what I believe]. It's very difficult to put into
> practice how I believe it should be… I attended a seminar organized by the Ministry
> of Education. They have shown, taught us nice things but they are very difficult to
> implement in the class. Realities are not as they are given in the books. (4: 72-76)

In the interview, Tom stated clearly that he was in favor of learner-centered teaching but
learner-centered teaching could not be implemented in their school context because of
contextual constraints such as too large classes, level differences and learners' role
expectations. Tom raised the issue of the mismatch between the classroom realities and the
training he received from the Ministry of Education. It appeared that the in-service training
programs did not respond to the teachers' needs and did not take into account the
contextual constraints the teachers faced. His lesson was an example of a combination of a
teacher-centered and a learner-centered lesson.

In the interview **John** expressed the need for learner-centered teaching and he was
conscious of the practical realities, in other words, contextual constraints such as
curiculum, crowded classes and immature learners that put limitation on learner-centered
teaching as he mentioned while talking about the activities. He believed that collaboration
between the teachers and the Ministry of education is needed to obtain learner-centered
teaching in the schools. He said: "Our education system should be learner-centered. We
can solve this problem by working together as a team, Ministry of Education and the

teachers, aiming for he same objectives, helping each other and supporting each other". (1: 142-145)

His observed lesson was an example of a mixture of a teacher-centered and teacher-centered lesson.

5.2.3.3. Category 3

Different from the other teachers in the study, Richard and Jessica believed that in teaching English both learner-centered and teacher-centered ways of teaching should be followed depending on the activities and depending on the teacher's decision on how best the topic can be taught. Regarding their perceived classroom practice Richard claimed that he taught both in learner-centered and teacher-centered ways. Jessica claimed that her perceived practice was teacher-centered. Regarding their actual classroom practice both of these teachers exhibited Traditional characteristics. Their lessons were strictly teacher controlled and the students were not provided with opportunities to develop autonomy. They were not encouraged to take control of their own learning nor they were given opportunities to build their own knowledge.

In the interview, **Richard** said:

> If you ask me to explain it theoretically, I cannot explain it but the student teachers who come to my class to observe my lesson they tell me that I do some activities teacher-centered and some learner-centered. I use both. When I start teaching I think about how my students can understand, can learn it first. If what I plan to teach that day can be taught learner-centered, I do it that way. Definitely, it shouldn't be just one… When the teacher enters the class s/he should know her/his class' level very well. S/he should know her/his students really well and behave according to it. It may sound nice theoretically but it's important when you put it into practice… When you know your students, you draw your road map according to it. Their interests are also very important or their personality, culture. These are very important. (3: 364-453)

According to Richard, learners' understanding and learning were important points in teaching. He seemed to lack knowledge about concepts of learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching. He said that he used both learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching depending on how the topic could be taught best. He also drew attention to the importance of knowing the students, their level, their interest, their personality and their culture in teaching.

> Sometimes it should be teacher-centered. New information should be given teacher-centered then students should show their understanding actively… This could be for grammar or vocabulary teaching. In this new system they said it's going to be learner-centered but we are not doing it that way. We just lecture. Teacher goes into the class, opens his/her book; s/he starts reading and writing words on the board. Absolutely, it is not learner-centered. (8: 103-114)

According to Richard, learners' understanding and learning were important points in teaching. He said that he used both learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching depending on how the topic could be taught best. He also drew attention to the importance of knowing the students, their level, their interest, their personality and their culture in teaching. However, the lesson observed was teacher-centered. The teacher controlled all the activities and the students' behavior through the entire lesson. In the observed lesson, there was no evidence of the teacher's giving learners some choices or opportunities (e.g. expressing their own opinions or preferences, talking about their own experiences).

According to **Jessica**

> It shouldn't be as it is now. In the present teaching, under the name of learner-centered teaching, I go to the class, open my book, without completing the students' incomplete knowledge, I pass to the next topic, and I give it without involving the students. Then I tell the students to study and come to the exam. This is not learner-centered teaching. (8: 120-125)

Besides, she added that there was no difference between the old system and the new system in practice at present. She said that "It's worse, very bad… Still teacher centered but this time much more accelerated". (8: 129-130)

She also said that she had not seen any difference in her current classroom practice compared to her teaching in the old system. Indeed, she believed that her current classroom practice was worse because it was still teacher-centered and accelerated.

Jessica believed that both learner-centered and teacher-centered instruction should be used. She believed that grammar and vocabulary should be taught in a teacher-centered way. She also said that although they were required to follow learner-centered teaching, they were in fact teacher-centered, lecture based. She emphasized that their teaching was exam focused.

Her lesson represented Traditional teacher-centered teaching in which the teacher taught the grammar rule and gave the students mechanical exercises to do to demonstrate their understanding. Constructing meaning or understanding the function of language in different situations was not the focus of any of the activities used in the lesson.

In this chapter a comparison of the findings obtained from the survey, the interview and the observation for each participant teacher's beliefs and practice have been compared in order to gain an in–depth understanding of the EFL teachers' beliefs and actual classroom practice.

To sum up, although the teachers were in favour of Constructivist views of teaching, their practice exhibited Traditional characteristics.

Next chapter will present the analysis, synthesis and discussion of the quantitative (Chapter 4) and qualitative (Chapter 5) findings as a whole in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS and DISCUSSION

In this chapter the research questions will guide the discussion of the findings. The findings of the first two research questions will be discussed together below.

The first two research questions are as:

1. *What are the beliefs held by the EFL teachers and how do they perceive their practice regarding learning and teaching?*
2. *How do their beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice relate to Traditional and Constructivist frameworks?*

The quantitative findings obtained from the questionnaire about teacher beliefs and practice gave the impression that the EFL teachers' beliefs and practice about English language learning and teaching, in general, were in line with the new curriculum which was a blend of CLT and Constructivist framework. In other words, regarding the teacher and learner roles in language learning and teaching, learning environment and EFL learning, all the teachers stated agreement with Communicative and potentially Constructivist teaching and learning. Regarding the beliefs their agreement was strong yet in relation to perceived practice it was usually cautious rather than strong. Here it needs to be acknowledged that when I analyzed the data, I realized that all the items were worded so that they favoured Constructivist principles and that it would have been better to have a balance by having items perpesenting Traditional view although I assumed that the teachers who disagree with the Constructivist statements hold more Traditional views.

The teachers indicated strong agreement on fifteen belief items and agreement on two belief items. *B17: Learners should not be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge* received the highest mean score (4.58). This could be interpreted as the teachers believing in the importance of their students' constructing their own knowledge, in line with a Constructivist learner role illustrated in Figure 1, though other interpretations are possible.

In regard to the teachers' perceived classroom practice, the teachers claimed always practice for six items and most of the time practice for eleven items. The highest mean score was for replies to *P34: I always encourage my students to participate in the lesson* (4.65), which would seem to be in line with a Constructivist learner role, as illustrated in Figure 1. The questionnaire results indicated that all the teachers gave the most importance to the learner's role in language learning and teaching since the items reflecting learner's active involvement received the highest mean scores in relation to the teachers' beliefs and their perceived practice.

The qualitative findings revealed that regarding Classroom Activities, Teachers' Role and Teacher-centered and Learner-centered teaching, teachers showed some variations in their stated beliefs. Therefore, these findings will be discussed under three headings as: Teachers' Beliefs, Teachers' Perceived Practice and Teachers' Actual Classroom Practice regarding the three themes of the qualitative investigation (Classroom Activities, Teacher's and Learner's Roles, and Teacher-centered and Learner-centered Teaching), below.

Teachers' Beliefs

All the teachers (i.e. 10) stated that they believed in Constructivist 'Classroom Activities'. Regarding 'Teacher's and Learner's Role', the teachers differed in their stated beliefs as that 3 teachers believed in adopting a Constructivist role and 7 teachers stated their beliefs in adopting both Traditional and Constructivist roles which indicated that it is possible for teachers to hold Traditional and Constructivist beliefs at the same time. In a similar way, there were differences among the teachers' beliefs regarding 'Teacher-centered and Learner-centered Teaching'. Most of the teachers (8) believed in learner-centered teaching and 2 teachers stated that they believed in both teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching which showed that teachers can possess learner-centered and teacher-centered beliefs at the same time. These differences among the teachers' beliefs might be attributed to the individual differences among the teachers such as experiential backgrounds,

qualifications, experience, personality, etc.. Further research is needed to uncover the reasons underlying the differences.

Some earlier studies showed that teachers can hold Traditional and Constructivist beliefs at the same time (e.g. Tondeur et al., 2008; Sang et al., 2009). Therefore, the bipolar distinction between Traditional and learner-centered has been challenged (Kerlinger & Kaya, 1959). This study gives support to this challenge. For example, most of the teachers (7) held both Traditional and Constructivist beliefs regarding teacher's and learner's role. In relation to teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, 2 teachers held both teacher-centered and learner-centered beliefs. This suggests that teachers are able to hold opposing beliefs.

Teachers' Perceived Practice

The analysis of the qualitative data indicated that all the teachers' perceived practice was different than their stated beliefs in general, except one teacher (Richard who claimed to be following both teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching). While the teachers expressed their beliefs in Constructivist classroom activities, they claimed that their perceived classroom practice was Traditional. Regarding teacher and learner Roles, although 3 teachers stated adopting merely Constructivist roles while 7 teachers stated adopting both Contructivist and Traditional roles, all of them claimed their perceived practice as being Traditional. Regarding teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, 5 of the teachers who expressed their beliefs in learner-centered teaching claimed teacher-centeredness in their perceived practice and 3 of the teachers who also believed in learner-centered teaching claimed that their classroom practice was not learner-centered. 2 teachers who expressed their beliefs in following both teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, differed in their perceived practice as such that 1 of them claimed her practice as teacher-centered and the other one claimed that he was both teacher-centered and learner-centered in his perceived classroom teaching.

The research findings revealed that quantitative and qualitative findings showed differences. The questionnaire findings indicated that all the teachers believed in Consructivist beliefs and their claimed practice was also Constructivist. However, the interview data indicated that although the teachers expressed their beliefs in Constructivist earning and teaching, and both Constuctivist and Traditional, their perceived practice was Traditional (except one teacher for whom it was both).

Teachers' Actual Practice

The analysis of the observational data indicated that 7 teachers' lessons exhibited Traditional characteristics while 3 teachers seemed to be following both Traditional and Constructivist teaching regarding classroom activities. Similarly, regarding teacher's and learner's role, 7 teachers seemed to be Traditional while 3 teachers seemed to be both Traditional and Constructivist. Regarding teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, 7 teachers exhibited teacher-centered teaching characteristics while 3 teachers exhibited a mixture of teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching characteristics.

Regarding teachers' actual classroom practice, it seemed that 3 teachers' teaching exhibited both Traditional and Constructivist characteristics in relation to classroom activities, teacher's and learner's role, and their lessons seemed to exhibit both learner- centered and teacher-centered characteristics. This showed that teachers are able to exhibit opposing practice. The findings of this study give support to Karavas-Doukas's (1996) study conducted in Greek public secondary schools which revealed that teachers may sometimes exhibit teaching behaviors that are in line with both learner-centered and teacher-centered teaching.

The findings of this study showed that Traditional practice was more frequent than communicative potentially Constructivist practice. These findings confirmed Karavas-Doukas's (1996) study who also found that although teachers tended to be eclectic in their teaching, Traditional practice was more frequent than communicative practice and most of

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the lessons were teacher-fronted with explicit forms focused instruction in which the language syllabus and the coursebook are structured around language forms and one of the principles of the course is learning these forms (Harmer, 2007).

3) *Are there any differences in beliefs and practice according to gender, length of experience and qualifications?*

Beliefs and Claimed Practice Regarding Gender

The analysis of the influence of gender on teachers' beliefs and practice showed that the male teachers were more consistent in their beliefs as compared to their confessed classroom practice than the female teachers. This will be discussed in the fourth research question on page 148.

The earlier studies indicated gender differences in teachers' adopting specific educational beliefs (e.g. Kalaian & Freeman, 1994, Li, 1999, Sang et al., 2009). The quantitative findings of this study are in line with these earlier findings yet in this study statistical analysis of the data showed that the difference in beliefs according to gender was small. The t-test results have indicated that the female and male teachers' reported beliefs were very similar to each other, (Table 4.2.1., Chapter 4). Among 20 belief statements only in 2 were there significant differences. The female teachers agreed more strongly than the male teachers on *B1: Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge* ($p=.027 < 0.05$) representing a Constructivist view of learning as illustrated in Figure 1, while the male teachers favoured *B7* more than the female teachers: *Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning* ($p=.036 < 0.05$) that puts emphasis on self-directed learning illustrated in Figure 1. It seems that the female teachers favoured a more active, facilitating role for the teacher than the male teachers since 'providing opportunities' for learners requires more organized effort (e.g. particular tasks) than simply 'encouraging' learners to take responsibility for their learning.

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Similarly, the reported perceptions regarding practice were also found to be very similar for the females and males, (Table 4.2.2., Chapter 4). There was a significant difference between the females' and males' perceptions only for 1 item *P26: I give my students challenging tasks*, (p= .007 < 0.05). The female teachers agreed more with this than the male teachers. From a Constructivist point of view, 'challenging tasks' are an important way of helping learners develop beyond what they already know. This finding could indicate that the female teachers had a greater tendency to put their Constructivist beliefs into practice.

The difference between male and female teachers confirmed the findings of Singer (1996) who investigated 443 colleage faculty members in Mathematics, English, Biology and Psychology in 163 institutions found that female teachers showed more tendency to promote learning environments that are more student-oriented, facilitative and effective driven. In addition, they tended to use class discussion more often, encourage collaboration and affective learning strategies. The differences in males' and females' beliefs and practice regarding the above mentioned items might have been related to the roles males and females are expected to adopt in Traditional Turkish culture in which males are expected to take the responsibility of the family and females are expected to be obedient and supporting. Another possibility might be that, since the difference is small, there are some other factors, such as personality differences and experiential differences influencing the teachers' beliefs and practice. Therefore, the relationship among the teachers' beliefs, practice and gender needs further investigation.

Beliefs and Claimed Practice Regarding Length of Experience

Although earlier studies indicated that length of experience was an influential factor on teachers' educational beliefs (Xie & Ma, 2007) the findings of the present study indicated that teachers' length of experience did not have any effect on their reported beliefs. This might be because that the work culture did not significantly influence the teachers' professional growth regarding their beliefs. The findings of the present study were in line

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with Sang et al.'s study (2009) in which the teachers did not differ in the adoption of their Traditional or Constructivist beliefs regarding their length of experience.

Unlike beliefs, practice seemed to be influenced by length of experience. More experienced teachers claimed that they encouraged the students to evaluate their own progress (P28) and make inferences and induce rules about the language (P30) which put emphasis on self-directed learning representing a Constructivist view as illustrated in Figure 1, more than less experienced teachers. This could be because more experienced teachers have more confidence in the learners' ability to take charge of their own learning. This finding confirmed Tercanlioglu's (2005) study findings which indicated that relationship between EFL teaching experience and their practice was significantly significant. The possible reason of the influence of length of experience on teachers' practice might be that the teachers theories-in action are gained in time and their experience in teaching helped them develop that practical knowledge.

Beliefs and Claimed Practice Regarding Qualifications

On the other hand, the teachers' qualifications did have an impact on beliefs, (Table 4.2.211., Chapter 4). More qualified teachers were more likely than less qualified teachers to consider that EFL learning "is meaning making" (B2: Learning a foreign language is meaning making).

An interesting finding was that the teachers' qualifications seemed to have had more influence on their professed practice than on their beliefs. More qualified teachers claimed to be more likely to base new knowledge on students' existing knowledge (P22) ($p = .04 < 0.05$) representing a Constructivist view. In this way learners might feel secure about language learning and could learn how to learn. They also were more likely to provide their students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation (P23) ($p = .015 < 0.05$). It is possible that the more qualified teachers favoured promoting learners' higher-order thinking skills more because the development of such skills can help learners

grow intellectually and express creative thought while constructing knowledge. These teachers did not prefer their students to work individually (P25) (p = .040 < 0.05), representing a Constructivist view illustrated in Figure 1. It might be that they were more in favour of students' learning from each other and scaffolding each other that could help them construct their own knowledge. The more qualified teachers claimed to encourage their students to make inferences and induce rules about the language (P30) (p = .001 < 0.05) more than less qualified teachers. They claimed be encouraging in fostering learner autonomy.

The findings seem to indicate that gaining qualifications can have impact on beliefs and practice but it seems that the more qualified a teacher gets the more differences in practice may ocur. This might have been because of the development in teachers' theories-in-action due to training.

4) *What relationship is there between the EFL teachers' beliefs, their perceived practice, and their actual practice?*

The findings of this study confirmed the findings of earlier studies that showed inconsistencies between beliefs and practice (e.g. Calderhead, 1996; Ertmer, Gopalakrishnan & Ross, 2001; Fang, 1996; Kane et al., 2002; Hativa et al., 2001). Regarding the quantitative findings, although the teachers' beliefs and perceptions of their practice seemed to be in line with each other, when the items were paired some descrepancies were observed. On the other hand, the qualitative findings showed that there were descrepancies among teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and actual classroom practice in most cases. Therefore, first, the quantitative findings will be discussed below which will be followed by the qualitative findings.

The quantitative analysis of the belief-practice relationship indicated a mismatch in the reported perceptions of female teachers for 55 % of the paired items (belief and practice statements), i.e. 11 of 20 pairs. The discrepancies were found for all three themes: EFL Teacher's Role, Learning Environment, and EFL Learning. The female teachers were

inconsistent in their stated beliefs and practice for more than half of the items which were expected to match.

Similar findings were reported for the males, yet compared to the female teachers' perceptions the male teachers responses were more consistent. The male teachers' perceptions revealed a mismatch for 45 % of the paired items, i.e. 9 of 20 pairs, concerning the same three themes mentioned above. The male teachers were thus less inconsistent in their stated beliefs and perceived practice than the female teachers.

This mismatch between the teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classroom practice might mean that the teachers actually hold Traditional beliefs but they might think that what they ought to express is Constructivist beliefs since the new curriculum is based on Constructivist and learner-centered language learning and teaching principles. Another interpretation might be that the teachers are in favour of Constructivist beliefs but since they have not developed the needed craft knowledge for Constructivist practices they exhibit Traditional teaching.

The qualitative findings indicated that in general, there was a mismatch in teachers' expressed beliefs, their perceived practice and actual classroom practice. Regarding classroom activities, although all the teachers stated that they favoured Constructivist beliefs, most of the teachers' perceived practice was Traditional (7) and some of them exhibited both Traditional and Constructivist characteristics in their actual classroom practice. The findings of this study support Ertmer et al.'s (2001) study results in which the teachers said they followed Constructivist approach in their teaching, in the implementation they followed a mixed approach.

In relation to teacher and learner roles, although most of the teachers stated their belief in adopting both Traditional and Constructivist roles while the others favoured merely Constructivist roles, they all claimed to be adopting Traditional roles in their perceived classroom practice. However, their actual classroom data revealed that most of the teachers exhibited Traditional roles while some seemed to be adopting both Traditional and Constructivist roles.

It is surprising to find that none of the teachers perceived their practice as Constructivist. This shows that the teachers were aware that their perceived practice was not

Constructivist. This might be because the teachers did not possess Constructivist practical knowledge or another interpretation might be that they have not developed the necessary skills to cope with the challenges of hot-spots (e.g. conflicts) (Woods, 1996).

Regarding teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, half of the teachers stated that they believed in learner-centered teaching and claimed their perceived classroom practice as teacher-centered. In line with their perceived practice, in their actual classroom practice they also exhibited teacher-centered characteristics. Some teachers stated that they believed in learner-centered teaching and they claimed that their perceived practice was not learner-centered. The observational data for these teachers revealed that their lessons were examples to a mixture of both teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching. Some teachers, on the other hand, believed in both teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching. In their perceived practice one of them claimed that in his perceived classroom practice he uses both and the observational data revealed Traditional characteristics. The other teacher was congruent in her perceived practice and actual classroom practice as both being Traditional.

Regarding the themes of the studies, some teachers seemed to be consistent while some others seemed to be inconsistent regarding their teachers' perceived practice and actual classroom practice. A possible interpretation of the inconsistency in teachers' perceived practice and actual practice might be that when teachers stated their perceived practice they drew on technical knowledge rather than practical knowledge (Eraut, 1994; Ellis, 1997). On the other hand, when the teachers confronted with classroom context they drew on their practical knowledge. Basturkmen et al. (2004) suggested that "over time teachers will be able to proceduralize their technical knowledge, thus making it more accessible. In such cases, the inconsistencies may disappear with experience" (p. 267). However, Eraut stated that such proceduralization does not often occur.

The findings of this study support both views that the inconsistencies between perceived practice and actual practice may disappear and that the proceduralization does not often occur. When only the teachers' perceived practice and actual practice compared, most of the teachers (7) seemed to be consistent regarding classroom activities because their perceived practice and actual practice were Traditional. Similarly, most of the teachers (7) seemed to be consistent in their perceived practice and actual practice regarding tecaher's and learner's role as being Traditional. In relation to the third theme, teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching, 6 teachers seemed to be consistent in their perceived practice and actual practice as both being teacher-centered.

The teachers who showed inconsistencies probably drew on their technical knowledge rather than on their practical knowledge. It is also possible that these teachers could not integrate technical knowledge and practical knowledge. Another possibility might be that these teachers were not aware of the inconsistencies.

I believe that these inconsistencies between perceived and actual practice would be considered as the hot-spots (Woods, 1996) that are challenges for teachers. For example, these teachers will need to find out how to make their lessons more learner-centered and Constructivist.

Regarding the themes of the studies, discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and actual classroom practice were found in most of the teachers. Mismatches are usually attributed to situational constraints (Oskamp, 1991; Vaughan & Hogg, 1998).

This mismatch might be because of the discourse-oriented determinants of action such as the duties, norms and opportunities in their school context (see Figure 2) and the practical classroom realities which may prevent teachers from implementing their actual beliefs.

However, as stated earlier, the teachers were well aware of the inconsistency between their beliefs and actual classroom practice which was due to the contextual constraints in their view. According to the teachers, the main impediments to the implementation of their

beliefs in their classroom teaching were overly large classes, mixed ability classes, classroom culture, work culture and the curriculum.

The findings of this study give support to the earlier studies discussing the influence of context on teachers' practice (e.g. Borg, 1998, 1999; Golombek, 1998; Mangubhai, Marland & Dashwood, 2005; Kleinsasser, 2004; Fang, 1996; Feryok, 2007; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Ertmer et al., 2001).

In a study by Özgün-Koca & Şen's (2006) 51 senior secondary pre-service mathematics and physics teachers in Turkey also indicated that contextual constraints prevented them from implementing learner-centered classroom practice. In that respect, it was reported that "Some of the pre-service teachers who advocated a student-centered environment in theory mentioned that they could not bring the theory into life in their student teaching and full-time teaching" (p. 956) because of "crowded classrooms, the differences in students levels of readiness and previous knowledge, insufficient time for applications, and students who are not accustomed to these kinds of environments (pp. 956, 957).

In the present study, confirming Özgün-Koca & Şen's (2006) findings, all the teachers stated that overly large classes was an impediment to learner-centered teaching. In the observed classes, as stated earlier, the number of students ranged from 22 to 37. In learner-centered language classes interaction is a requirement for the development of communication skills obtained through pair work and group work activities because, as Leung (2005) argues:

> interaction offers learners an opportunity to use and work out meaning even when the actual language forms encountered maybe beyond their current level of linguistic competence. In general, then, the idea of communicating with others is often seen as a pedagogic device and 'communication' as a bounded phenomenon of language-learning activity (p.136).

Teachers can face with classroom management problems when teaching a language communicatively in very large classes. In the observed lessons, two female teachers (Sue

and Janette) experienced classroom management problems which prevented them from teaching. The problems that Janette experienced in her class could be due to her having the most crowded class of all the teachers. In Sue's class, classroom management problems could be attributed to the learner characteristics, as she expressed it herself, because it included repeat students. It seemed that whatever the challenges, the teachers did not have the necessary skills to overcome them. This situation made them feel disempowered and possibly deskilled.

In that respect, it could be argued that classroom realities shape teachers' classroom practice. Learners' actions and the feedback received from the students regarding the activities and the tasks the teacher uses in class can have impact on the teachers' further actions and teaching in class (see Figure 3). This could be well understood from Johnson's (1994) study with four ESL teachers which showed that although the teachers wanted to implement learner-centered teaching, classroom constraints and issues related to classroom management resulted in more teacher-centered teaching. Similarly, Freeman's (1991) study with four EFL teachers revealed that issues related to classroom management with class sizes of 20-30 adolescents resulted in discipline problems and required teachers to provide more control and discipline. Gorsuch's (1998) study which was based on the observation of two high school English classes in Japan also revealed supporting evidence for the influence of contextual constraints on teachers' practice. In Gorsuch's (1998) study, it was reported that the participant teachers maintained strong control over the activities because of the large class size and the necessity of keeping pace with the other classes.

In this study, another impediment to the implementation of the teachers' beliefs was claimed to be the level of the students, as stated earlier. In the interviews, all of the teachers said that the students' levels were not homogeneous in their classes and this caused difficulties and problems in their teaching. Some teachers said that due to the level differences, low level students could not learn in their lessons. Heterogeneity of students' levels combined with time constraint due the intense curriculum caused the teachers to concentrate on the pace of the teaching rather than the students' learning and to exhibit Traditional teaching practices in their lessons as the participant teachers claimed. However,

mixed ability classes is the rule rather than the exception in language teaching. It seemed that the teachers need training in how to deal with mixed ability classes.

How influential the contextual constraints could be on teachers' classroom practice has been emphasized by Raymond (1997) who claims that "although beginning elementary school teachers often enter the teaching profession with nontraditional beliefs about how they should teach, when faced with constraints of actual classroom teaching, they tend to implement more Traditional classroom practices" (p. 573). In that respect, Levin (2001) asks "Is everything learned during a teacher education program lost or changed when beginning teachers face the reality of classroom life and become socialized into the profession and to school culture?" (p.29).

Teachers practice might change not only because of objective constraints, but also due to the influence of socialization in the profession and school culture. Teachers might not be able to put into practice what they believe because of the school culture. As Calderhaed (1996) pointed out, research has shown that:

> student teachers start with control oriented belief systems that emphasize the importance of maintaining order and good discipline and guiding the activities of the children. These attitudes change slightly during training, becoming more liberal and child centered, but when teachers enter full-time teaching they revert to a control-oriented belief system again. Such findings have often been interpreted in terms of a powerful control-oriented ideology that exists within schools and reinforces the beliefs that student teachers have acquired from being students themselves (Lacey, 1977) (p.720).

School culture, which is shaped by the culture of the society teachers and learners live in, was another important impediment to the implementation of the teachers' beliefs in their actual teaching. Applying CLT principles such as "calling for learner involvement, allowing learners choice, changing teachers' and students' roles, and breaking down hierarchic barriers in the classroom" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.66) is a challenging task for English language teachers in Cyprus Turkish schools. Such an application is a challenge to

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cultural and educational values as well. Similar problems have been faced in other cultures. For example, according to Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) in Vietnamese culture teachers' practices are based on Traditional teaching principles. Teachers are guides for learners and they are the masters of knowledge in the class. Therefore, as Pham (2005) pointed out, pedagogical practices of CLT "would challenge the basic Vietnamese cultural and educational values" (p.336). Pham indicated that in his study (Pham, 2004 cited in Pham 2005) he found that there were conflicts between what the Vietnamese teachers want to do and what they actually do in class. He explained that

> Many Vietnamese teachers are conflicted, feeling that their circumstances oppose, or at least, militate against attempts to use communicative practices. For example, they have to prepare students for a grammar-based examination, and have to finish a certain content in the textbook in a certain amount of time. They may have classes of 60 students, many of whom are concerned about the immediate goals - to pass exams, to get a degree, rather than the long term goal - to develop communicative competence. It is thus uncommon for teachers to take a binary approach to teaching: be teaching grammar or teaching communication; one thing has to be done at the expense of the other (p.337).

Similarly, Hu (2002) reported that the expected impact of CLT in ELT failed in China because its underlying assumptions conflict with Chinese culture of learning.

In Cyprus Turkish culture, there are certain behaviours expected of the students in class such as listening to the teacher, being quiet during teaching, answering the teacher's questions, participating when required and doing the activities the teacher gives them to do. The teaching profession is one of the most respected professions in the Cyprus Turkish culture and these expected student behaviourss are the indicators of respect to the teacher and his/her knowledge. However, students seemed to have lost faith in English teaching in schools, preferring private lessons and behaving with very little respect towards the teacher (classroom management issues). Sticking to a Traditional way of teaching does not seem to guarantee either harmony in class, or learning.

Teacher and learner roles adopted in Constructivist learning settings where independent thought, interaction between/among the students and student initiation is valued, differ greatly from the Traditional roles. The impact of cultural values on teaching and learning has also been emphasized in Özgün-Koca & Şen's (2006) study:

> They [pre-service teachers] wanted students to answer teachers' questions and participate when the teacher thought it appropriate, but quiet at other times. Pre-service teachers could have assigned this role to the students due to influences of their culture. That is, silence represents respect in Turkish culture. This is a specific cultural trait, and different traits will come into play at different parts of teaching and learning processes...However, after the student teaching, even this ill-structured student-centered environment idea gave way to a teacher-centered environment notion. Because of the crowded classrooms and heavy curriculum, the student-centered concept was abandoned. They resorted to a Traditional view where they wanted to present their good subject area knowledge to their quiet and well-behaved students through a good quality of communication with different teaching methods (p. 957).

As well as the ideology of the school, classroom culture was also an impediment for the implementation of the teachers' beliefs. Since all the students had a Traditional, teacher-centered learning background, their expectations for learning were a teacher-centered way of learning. As expressed by the teachers in the interviews, the role expectations of the students were in line with teacher-centered learning and teaching, which was very difficult to alter when they were in secondary school. Although the teachers said that they believe in learner-centered teaching, it should also be noted that they also come from Traditional teaching and learning experiences, so adopting learner-centered principles and roles of learning and teaching is not an easy undertaking for either the learners or the teachers. The teachers' teaching is also shaped by the feedback received from the learners regarding the classroom tasks and the activities as illustrated in Figure 3. It was suggested by some of the participant teachers that the teacher-centered classroom culture could be altered if learners were exposed to learner-centered teaching and learning practices starting from their early

schooling. Beliefs are formed early and beliefs about teaching are well established by the time a student gets to the college (Wilson 1990). Thus, Chan (2001) suggested that "there may be more influential elements in shaping personal theories about teaching and learning. These are probably deeply rooted in personal experiences, especially in-school ones, and based on interpretations of those experiences" (p.3). Yero (2001) further claimed that beliefs about learning and teaching are shaped in childhood and gave the following example:

> The young child "playing teacher" lines up her dolls in neat rows and stands at the front of her "class" lecturing and admonishing her students to "pay attention". At this early age, she already has a strong sense of what school is "s'posed to be". Is it any wonder that when she grows up and becomes a teacher, it would not occur to her to teach in any other way? It is in this way that the beliefs of education pass from generation to generation, even when research has demonstrated the flaws in those beliefs! (p.2).

Therefore, although the teachers expressed their awareness of the mismatch between their beliefs and their practice due to contextual constraints, an alternative interpretation is possible. It could be that these teachers did not really believe in learner-centered classroom practice but pretended to do so since it is a requirement of the Ministry and the administrators in the school. Perhaps, since the teachers also were educated through Traditional practice they were in favour of teacher-centered teaching. It could be difficult for the teacher who is used to a Traditional way of learning and teaching to readily accept a Constructivist view and relevant practice. As a result, as stated earlier in Chapter 2 by Argyris and Schön (1980), the teachers' espoused theories (theories of what they say) were inconsistent with their theories-in-use (theories of what they do). These two theories may or may not be consistent and a teacher may or may not be aware of any inconsistency between them. However, how to resolve this problem is unclear yet. It is possible that the mismatch between espoused theories and theories-in-use can be resolved through gaining experience in teaching.

Another interpretation would be that the teachers believed what they said they believed but did not have the skills to put it into practice. While they 'blamed' the students, the infrastructure, and the curriculum, it was possible that well- trained and well- supported teachers could find creative ways of implementing the curriculum as it was intended, at least to some degree.

However, if they believed what they said, this could have increased their self-confidence and job satisfaction. It might have also restored the students' faith in the English lessons/teachers.

The participant teachers' adherence to Traditional classroom practice could also be attributed to the prescribed curriculum which leads the teachers to test focused teaching. When this happens, it is likely that "For both teachers and pupils, the test result is the object, and learning becomes secondary" (Johnson and Hallgarten, 2002, p. 12).

In the interviews, most of the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with their teaching due to time constraint placed on them to complete the intense curriculum which caused the teachers to ignore students' learning. Form focused instruction which puts emphasis on grammar and vocabulary were highly valued in the observed teachers' teaching which was the inevitable result of highly prescribed curriculum focusing on centralized tests. Grammar and vocabulary were studied in a manner which did not allow practice for communication purposes, including mechanical exercises and drills and vocabulary practiced through translation. It is not surprising that this kind of teaching neither can help students to grow intellectually and nor can foster creative thought in learners. This view has also been expressed by Tiangco (2005) for Taiwanese classrooms in which there is little room for "intellectual flexibility that allows Taiwanese students to exercise creativity to test their capacity for intellectual reasoning using the English language" (p.3). This results in disappointing general English language proficiency (Yiu, 2003 cited in Tiangco, 2005).

The test focused learning setting in Turkish Cypriot language classes fosters competition among learners, a cultural trait that parents pass on to their children, rather than cooperation. This is my subjective view as an insider in the community.

Based on the analysis of the observational data the field notes yielded, it was found that translation was a commonly used technique in those classes where vocabulary was emphasized. Translation was mostly at a word level but in some teachers' lessons it was at sentence level as well as word level. The procedure followed for translations was very mechanical in which the teacher asked for the translation of words or sentences and students responded individually or as a class. Practicing vocabulary in this manner promotes rote learning where learners memorize words in an isolated way without using them in context for communication, as it would be used in real life situations outside the class. Tiangco (2005) emphasized that:

> Such an approach makes the study of vocabulary words isolated from the production of genuine comprehension and understanding since it only develops lower levels of mental processing…It is pertinent to develop higher-order cognitive processes that cannot be achieved through rote memorization (p.9).

In that respect, it could be claimed that teaching vocabulary through translation was another example of the Traditional teaching practices which held back the promotion of learners' skills in language learning for genuine communication and comprehension.

Both the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study revealed that although the participant teachers professed Constructivist beliefs and practices, they maintained Traditional teaching in their actual classroom practice regarding EFL learning and teaching. This finding seemed to indicate that beliefs do not necessarily translate into practice. The mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practice might be due to both discourse-oriented determinants of action and competence oriented determinants of action (Figure 2, Chapter 2). Teachers might not have been able to put their beliefs into practice because of the social discourse, i.e. their duties, the existing norms and opportunities in their work context and cultural context or the teachers have not been well-trained and well-supported to possess the necessary skills to be able to put their beliefs into practice.

It needs to be acknowledged that although there has been a Constructivist reform movement in Cyprus Turkish Education System which started in 2004, its influence does

not seem to be reflected in classroom practice. It could be inferred from the present findings that a Constructivist view of teaching and learning has been accepted or accepted in theory, unfortunately, has not been turned into practice. When the teachers expressed their ideas about the new education reform in the interview, they complained about class sizes, level differences, classroom culture, work culture, the curriculum, lack of infrastructure and lack of help, support from the authorities in the Ministry which caused them to maintain Traditional teaching practice in their classes (Chapter 5). Similar findings were reported by Chiang (2003) who investigated the influence of context and Taiwanese EFL teachers' beliefs on their practice at elementary school level. Chiang (2003) reported that

> The teachers' practices were not affected by either the municipal guidelines for English teaching or school-level curriculum. Feeling themselves and English programs to be loosely coupled to the entire school organization, the teachers offered highly similar classroom practices because the constraints of current elementary English teaching did not allow them to put their beliefs into practice (p. vii).

Therefore, before the reform, priority should have been given to create the necessary conditions in schools for learners to learn and for teachers to teach in a Constructivist manner. In the current situation it is not realistic to expect the teachers to exhibit Constructivist practice. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education should have prepared the teachers for Constructivist teaching by providing opportunities for them to construct their own knowledge about Constructivist learning and teaching and believe in it. The authorities should have striven to create school cultures in which collegiality is favored rather than individualism.

It should be born in mind that teachers' beliefs and thinking act as filters or lenses through which they see educational change and to be able to adopt educational innovations, teachers need to "think in new ways about students, subject matter, and the teaching-learning process" (Borko & Putnam, 1995, p. 38). In this respect Yero (2001) asserted that

Until the unconscious beliefs, values, and presuppositions of individual teachers are acknowledged for their influence and exposed to examination, reform efforts are unlikely to succeed. Teachers undermine many of those reform efforts, not consciously, but unconsciously. Although their conscious minds see the logic in the reform, there are underlying beliefs that force them back into Traditional patterns of behavior (p.7).

To sum up, this study indicated that although the teachers' stated beliefs and professed practices seemed to be in line with a Constructivist view of teaching and learning (see Figure 1), they seemed to exhibit Traditional classroom practices (see Figure 1) in their actual teaching. This discrepacy between the teachers' beliefs and practices might have been because of the discourse-oriented determinants of action (see Figure 2) and the practical classroom realities in their school context which might have prevented the teachers from implementing their beliefs. It might also be because that the teachers are not well-supported and well-trained to have the necessary skills to put their beliefs into practice (see Figure 2, competence-oriented determinants of action). Besides, it seemed that the learners' expectations about English language learning and teaching might have influenced the teachers' classroom practices since the feedback received from learners and their actions regarding the classroom tasks and activities can have an impact on teachers actions (see Figure 3). Although the quantitative findings indicated that the male and female teachers seemed to be more similar in their practices than in their beliefs and the male teachers seemed to be more consistent in their beliefs and practice than females, the case studies did not reveal enough data confirming the quantitative findings regarding gender differences. Therefore, it needs to be further explored. Besides, the quantitative findings revealed that length of experience and qualification seemed to have more impact on the teachers' theory-in-action than on their espoused theorys. However, the case studies did not reveal any confirmatory data for the influence of length of experience and qualifications regarding the teachers' beliefs and practice. Thus, a further investigation is needed.

To sum up, to understand teachers it is essential to understand their beliefs and experiences as well as the professional context in which they socialize, teach and learn.

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Next chapter will discusss the conclusions, limitations and educational implications of the study.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS and EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, conclusions drawn from the quantitative and qualitative findings will be presented followed by the limitations of the study and the educational implications. I will voice some of my own subjective insider views on reasons for the present situation, and possible solutions.

7.1. Conclusions

The findings of this study provide insights into the nature of EFL teachers' beliefs and perceived practice and actual classroom practice in the Cyprus Turkish state secondary schools context. The qualitative findings showed congruity between the teachers' beliefs and perceived practice; however, qualitative findings revealed that teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and their actual practice were not always compatible. Methodologically, the comparison of the quantitative and qualitative findings in this study suggest that qualitative means (i.e. interviews and observations) of investigating teachers' beliefs and practice seemed to be more productive than quantitative means (i.e. questionnaire) for understanding the complex relationship between teachers' beliefs and actual practice.

The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of teacher cognition in EFL teaching and learning. It also has impacts on theoretical and methodological assumptions about teacher education and teacher development (i.e. teacher training). It showed the importance of understanding teachers' beliefs and their practical knowledge in teacher education and has the potential to help educators develop an understanding of teacher behaviors, classroom decisions and actions for the purpose of furnishing EFL classrooms with effective teachers in the Cyprus Turkish EFL context.

This study also yielded evidence in advancing our understanding of how compatible the teachers' beliefs and practice were with Communicative Language Teaching and thus

potentially with Constructivist view of learning and teaching in Cyprus Turkish secondary state schools context. It has also provided evidence to increase our understanding of how and to what extent teachers' practical frameworks for EFL learning and teaching are influential in the implementation of the educational practices within the new Cyprus Turkish Education System. Although generalizations cannot be made for the whole EFL teachers working in Cyprus Turkish secondary schools contexts, to a certain extent it helped me to draw a picture of English langauge teaching in the state schools and understand at least some of the reasons for the problems in foreign language education in Cyprus Turkish EFL context.

This findings of this study showed that beliefs do not always translate into practice, and teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and actual classroom practice might differ. The discrepacy between the beliefs and practice was attributed to contextual constraints by most of the teachers in this study. For this reason, there is a need for further investigation to explore the underlying reasons of any discrepancies between beliefs and practice.

This study has also provided empirical evidence to clarify craft knowledge-belief relationship. However, further investigations are needed to explore how teachers can be helped to construct and/or develop the needed craft knowledge for their contexts of instruction and how they be supported to integrate their beliefs into their craft knowledge in their existing teaching contexts since the participant teachers in this study seemed to be in such a need.

7.2. Limitations of the Study

It should be noted that the findings of the study must be regarded with caution due to the following reasons. Firstly, the respondent rate to the questionnaire was not as high as expected. Therefore, there is a need to replicate the study before one can have full confidence in the generalizability of the quantitative findings.

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Secondly, the interviews and the observations were carried out with a relatively small number of EFL teachers and thus the results of the study must be interpreted with caution. In particular, a larger sample of EFL teachers could better represent the diversity of EFL teachers' beliefs and practice which would be desirable.

Thirdly, in this study, the teachers were interviewed and observed only once. Therefore, further studies focusing gathering data on more than one observation and interview are needed to be conducted.

Another limitation is the difficulty in interpreting the survey responses. An even split in the survey statements so that half were compatible with Constructivist views and half with Traditional views might have produced more reliable responses. Also, the attempt to match belief and practice items was hampered by the fact that a belief can be implemented in many different ways. Finally, it is difficult to know how the participants interpreted the survey items, e.g. in regard to learners being 'active' or 'taking responsibility for their learning'. In this study, the interviews and observations threw light on some of these uncertainties and future studies could try to find other ways.

The comparison of the qualitative and quantitative findings in this study revealed differences, as stated earlier. The qualitative findings helped me draw the picture of the teachers' beliefs, perceived practice and actual practice in a more meaningful way since it gave me a chance of exporing the teachers' ideas and what they experinced in their teaching contexts individually. Therefore, I believe that investigating teachers' beliefs and practice through quantitative means would only provide superficial data yet, qualitative means have the potential to engage the researcher into a deeper understanding of the phenomenon as it was the case in this study.

7.3. Educational Implications

The findings of this study have important educational implications for the policy makers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, school administrators and EFL teachers in North Cyprus as listed below:

- There is a need to explore the underlying reasons behind the mismatch between beliefs and practice.
- Constructivist/learner-centered teaching needs to be implemented from Primary School, in order to change the culture of education.
- Teachers need to be trained about Constructivist/learner-centered teaching.
- Learners need to be trained about Constructivist/learner-centered learning.
- There is a need for involving teachers in the reform policies and the decision-making.
- Existing conditions in schools for learning and teaching should not be overlooked.

Regarding teacher cognition studies, it is not enough to identify the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practice but explore the underlying reasons behind the mismatch.

The seeds of Constructivist/learner-centered teaching need to be sowed starting from the early age. It needs to be implemented from Primary School, in order to change the culture of education.

It is essential to train the teachers about Constructivist/Learner-centered teaching. Since they have not experienced Constructivist teaching/learning themselves, it seemes very unlikely that they actually have the skills they are expected to have, and they desperately need the skills. For example, regarding time pressure, it is essential for the teachers to understand that the construction of the knowledge process takes time. Teachers could see some task types such as learners' analyzing and talking about language in groups as wasting time. Thus, teachers need to have a greater understanding of the learning process in order to appreciate the usefulness of learning through social interaction.

Training can help teachers understand in a social-Constructivist framework, large classes and mixed ability classes are not the problem because learners can be put into pairs and groups to work collaboratively, help each other and learn from each other. In this way, more expert peers can help less expert peers. Also, in the learner-centered curriculum the teacher does not need to keep track of the learning styles, needs and interests of every single student. The teacher should help the learners to become aware of their own learning styles and needs with the help of the tasks and the activities they are provided with. This awareness would also help the teacher in managing large and mixed ability classes.

In regard to teacher development and training, what teachers know about Constructivism, how it can be applied to language teaching and learning, what teachers understand by 'learner-centered' and if there are any misapprehensions about what they mean in language classrooms need to be explored. Then, they need to be trained in accordance to what they need to know in order to implement a Constructivist, learner-centered curriculum.

Furthermore, it is of paramount importance to support teachers through in-service training and help them develop beliefs that are in line with contemporary language teaching and learning. In that respect, in-service training programs should focus on providing teachers with practical ideas rather than theories and providing opportunities for the teachers to experience the ideas in practice and realize the effectiveness of them. It is also needed to create a learning environment for the teachers in which both the teachers and the educators adopt contemporary roles to construct their own knowledge. There is a need to create awareness in teachers that teaching requires lifelong learning and change. In these programs it is also essential to raise awareness in teachers about different perspectives of teaching and look at their own beliefs as well since in-service training will have a lasting influence on teachers' practice when it addresses the teachers' existing beliefs (Briscoe, 1991; Crawley & Salger, 1995).

Moreover, teacher training courses need to create awareness in the EFL teachers of their existing beliefs regarding EFL teaching and learning and how influential their beliefs are in shaping their classroom practice. However, they should also be open to learning by being

aware of the requirements of contemporary language learning and teaching and thus making modifications when needed in their existing beliefs and practice. In that respect, there is a need to help EFL teachers to scrutinize their beliefs and practice regarding EFL learning and teaching and at the same time realize how it is to work as a contemporary teacher in contemporary contexts. In these courses teachers' existing beliefs should be challenged to gradually replace or enrich them relevant to the instructional context (Nespor, 1987). It is also believed that beliefs can be influenced through concrete experiences in a supportive environment (Nespor, 1987). This necessitates designing practice-orientated, experiential professional development programs.

In this study, 10 teachers seemed to display Craft knowledge representing a Traditional view. It seemed that their Craft knowledge was not being respected, supported and expanded. Therefore, they were not able to use it and develop it. This might indicate that the teachers need to be provided with opportunities that would help them develop new/other Craft knowledge to implement the curriculum. Since teachers are 'key elements' in any change, their views and knowledge (BAK) also need to be respected, otherwise they are not likely to want to cooperate- and then there is no hope of change.

For training the teachers and help them develop, there is also a need for an expert or a group of experts who will train at least one person who could be trained centrally, and then disseminate theoretical and practical knowledge to their colleagues. For this purpose foreign expertise can be hired.

As well as teachers, learners need to be trained about learning how to learn and particularly they should be equipped with effective strategies to employ when learning a language on their own and in the class. Moreover, it is not reasonable to expect them immediately accept and conform to a new teaching style, and possibly new teacher and learner roles. It might be useful to openly discuss with students the changes the Ministry, the School and the teachers want to bring in. This could be a joined effort by teachers and their students. It would also make sense to involve the students actively in this process since the intention is to make the students more autonomous and responsible for their own learning. They need

to be informed about the reform, what is expected from them and what benefits they will get from it.

Since the curriculum is learner-centered, parts of the syllabus can be negotiated with the students. Students' ideas and suggestions can be asked such as telling them what to be covered in the exam and asking the students what should be focused on. This might give the students the incentive to become more autonomous as they try and build sufficient knowledge for final exams in the time available.

In an attempt of any educational novelty or educational reform teachers should be considered as the key elements by the policy makers. Teachers need to be involved in the reform policies and their views need to be taken into account in making decisions. In short, there should be a genuine collaboration and cooperation between the policy makers and the teachers instead of imposing ideas and methodologies on teachers by employing a top-down model of reform. As well as policy makers, curriculum developers should work in a collaborative and cooperative environment with the teachers while constructing a new curriculum or developing it since teachers are the ones who will implement the curriculum. In this way, a contemporary curriculum that focuses on teaching and learning English rather than content teaching and learning can be constructed and thus it can answer the needs of both the teachers and learners.

In addition, before taking any decisions regarding education, the existing conditions should not be overlooked. Contextual constraints that can create impediments to the implementation of any novelty in education should be taken into account by the policy makers and curiculum developers and creating the needed conditions should be given priority before the implementation.

Besides, there is a need for a work context in which collegiality instead of individualism is favored for EFL teachers to operate in. In such an environment teachers can observe each other, reflect on each others' practice as well as their own practice and can learn from each. Here, school administrators should adopt the role of a provider for such an environment in

school contexts and encourage teachers for being reflective and open to criticisms and thus for being lifelong learners in teaching.

The new aspects of the reform needs to be rolled out in one or a few schools to start with, evaluate the different components (the curriculum, the training, the implementation, student response, learning outcomes), make changes and then implement across the NC.

Teaching is a complex undertaking. Muchmore (2001) asserts that

> being a teacher involves much more than simply mastering of a set of skills. It also involves the development of an inner awareness- a sense of how one's life experiences have helped to shape the beliefs and underlying assumptions that ultimately guide one's practices. All teachers seek coherence between their personal theories of teaching and the practical demands of their jobs, but there is no single way to achieve this goal. There is no universal formula for success. Instead, all teachers must ultimately develop their own personal pedagogies which are consistent with their inner selves. In this way, teaching can be understood as an artistic form of self-expression (p. 107).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

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School Name: **Date:**

I should be very glad if you could complete the following questionnaire. The information that you give will be invaluable for my research study. Since the questionnaire is about learning and teaching English language in Northern Cyprus, it is hoped that the results, when published, will be of interest to your school and your professional practice. I assure you that your name will not be mentioned and your answers will be kept confidential. Thank you very much for your participation and cooperation. If there is any need, my contact details are as follows:

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ELT Department   *Mobile Phone: 0533 862 66 04*

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European University of Lefke

For each of the statements below please indicate the extent of your agreement

or disagreement by putting a tick in the appropriate box.

	BELIEFS	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Learners need to be provided with opportunities to discover and construct their concepts and knowledge.					
2.	Learning a foreign language is making meaning.					

3. Learners need to learn in a cooperative and collaborative environment.					
4. Students' interests have an important effect on learning.					
5. A foreign language teacher should be a facilitator.					
6. Learners need to be active participants in the learning process.					
7. Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.					
8. Learning how to learn needs to be promoted.					
9. A foreign language teacher should create a learning environment in which students can tolerate uncertainty.					
10. Learners need to be encouraged to take risks.					
11. A foreign language teacher should strive for maximum interaction among the learners.					
12. Teaching a foreign language should include an element of fun.					
13. Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know.					
14. A language teacher should consider the diversity of learning styles and learner needs.					
15. Learners need to be encouraged to use higher-order thinking skills.					
16. Using games in teaching a foreign language is not a waste of time.					
17. Learners should not be mainly passive recipients of teacher's knowledge.					

For each of the statements below please indicate the extent of your practice

by putting a tick in the appropriate box.

PRACTICE	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
18. I give my students tasks which encourage risk-taking.					
19. I put my students in small groups or pairs to come up with a joint solution or approach to a problem or task.					
20. I consider the differing needs of individual students when planning activities.					
21. I use games to teach language.					
22. I base new knowledge on students' existing knowledge.					
23. I provide my students with tasks in which they can practice analysis, synthesis and evaluation.					
24. I consider my students' interests when I design activities for language learning.					
25. I do not prefer my students to work individually.					
26. I give my students challenging tasks.					
27. I assign my students tasks in which there are no set solutions to the problems.					
28. I encourage my students to evaluate their own progress.					
29. I consider the individual differences among my students.					
30. I encourage my students to make inferences and induce rules about the language.					
31. I encourage my students to learn and use language in context.					
32. I teach some strategies to my students to check their learning.					
33. I help my students to become autonomous learners.					
34. I encourage my students to participate in the lesson.					

Please, choose the option(s) that suit(s) you best. The answers you will give will be kept confidential. They will be used for the statistical analysis of the research data. Thank you for your cooperation.

1) *Which of the following qualifications do you possess? If you have more than one please indicate.*

   a) BA   *b) MA*   *c) PhD/ EdD*   *d) Teaching Certificates/*

   Diplomas

2) *Which of the following options indicate your length of teaching experience?*

   a) 0-5 years   *b) 6-1 1 years*   *c) 12-17 years*   *d) 18- above years*

3) *What is your sex?*

   a) Male   *b) Female*

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Teacher: *Date:*   *Time:*

1. What kind of tasks and activitiesdo you give to your students in class?
2. What are your main considerations when designing tasks and activities?
3. What is the importance of curriculum for you?
4. What should be the role(s) of the teacher and learners in class? How far can you and your learners adopt these roles in your teaching? Why?
5. What do you think about teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching? What do you think about the reform in education? Why do you think so?
6. Any other issues you would like to talk about?

1 **APPENDIX III**

2 **SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

3 I: What kind of tasks and activities do you think should be given to the students when

4 teaching a foreign language?

5 P: *I believe that rather than grammar, listening activities should be given*

listening

6 *because learning a language by hearing is influential. We are not giving*

7 *grammar communicatively that's why they cannot learn.*

8 I: Hm, hm.

9 P: *Grammar is not enough to learn how to communicate. Listening*

Listening and speaking

10 *activities should be emphasized. Speaking opportunities should be*

11 *created.*

12 I: I see.

13 P: *With games.*

14 I: Hm, hm.

Games group work large classes pair work

15 P: Language can be taught.

16 I: What about group work and individual study?

17 P: *Indeed, group work is good.*

18 I: Hm, hm.

19 P: *It's useful as well but since our classes are too large we cannot do it very*

20 *often.*

21 I: Hm, hm.

22 P: *I try to have them work in pairs. It's more effective because they help each other.*

23 I: You can do this kind of activities.

24 P: *I try to do it as much as I can.*

25 I: I see.

26 P: *But I cannot do it as often as I want.*

27 I: Do you use supplemetary materials in class?

28 P: I cannot always use them because I need to finish the curriculum but whenever I find

29 opportunity I try to bring extra materials.

30   I: Hm, hm. What are your main considerations when designing extra tasks and activities?

31   P: I try to bring games. Interesting things for them.

32   I: Activities.

33   P: It attracts them, it's more effective, they participate more.

34   I: I see.

35   P: Their interests. I try to find interesting, daily things from daily life.

36   I: Hm, hm.

37   P: Level needs to be low. Even if i find something difficult, I try to simplify it in order to

38   be understandable for them.

39   I: Hm, hm. You justify the level suitable to the students.

40   P:Yes.

41   I: Ok. What is the importance of curriculum for you?

42   P: *The curriculum is based on learner-centered teaching but in practice we*

43   *cannot implement it because of crowded classrooms.*

44   I: Hm, Hm.

45   P: *It is not possible to teach a language to 30-35 students in a learner-centered*

46   *way.*

47   I: Yes.

48   P: Not possible. *To be communicative, we go listening and speaking focused but*

49   *actually we are deceiving ourselves and the people who prepared the*

50   *curriculum.*

51   I: I see. What grades do you teach?

52   P: 7th and 8th grades.

53   I: Hm, hm.

54   P: *Since 7th grades are less crowded than my other group (28 students), I can do it*

55   *easier than the other group. I cannot save time for everybody in a 40 minute lesson but*

56   *I try to do my best.*

57   I: I see.

58   P: *But with 8th grades unfortunately, there are 36 students. Their level is lower. It is*

59   *really difficult to teach. We teach grammar based in those classes.*

60   I: Hm, hm.

Learner-centered curriculum yet large class size problem

61 P: *Another thing is that the curiculum is very intense. We have to finish the*

62 *given grammar points in the curriculum so in order to finish them we teach*

63 *grammar based.*

64 I: OK. Then, what should be the role(s) of the teacher in class?

65 P: *Teacher should be a director. Should direct the students to search and learn.*

66 I: How far can you adopt this role in your classrooms?

67 P: *In the current classrooms, I try to adopt that role but I don't think I'm*

68 *successful. Students got used to the traditional roles in which teacher gives,*

69 *learners take.*

70 I: Hm, hm.

71 P: *Students like spoon feeding.*

72 I: Hm, hm.

73 P: *I try to transfer my knowledge and the students get as much as they can. We*

74 *try to make the students become productive through portfolio creation. Some students*

75 *do it themselves but most of them have it done by other people.*

76 I: So what should be the role(s) of the teacher in class?

77 P: *Students should be active and researchers.*

78 I: How far can your learners adopt these roles in your teaching?

79 P: *My 7th grade students are very active, they are eager to learn. Of course, we have*

80 *very passive students too.*

81 I: Hm, hm.

82 P: I try to involve them. I try to to attract them by using various activities and by giving

83 tasks.

84 I: What do you think about teacher-cxentered and learner-centered teaching?

85 P: *Learner-centered is the best. It should be that way for the students to be eager to*

86 *learn, to have high motivation, not to expect everything from the teacher, to be a*

87 *researcher and not to expect to be spoon fed by the teacher.*

88 I: Hm, hm.

89 P: *But we need to train our students at the very beginning to get used to it starting*

90 *from the primary school because our students like memorizing. They just memorize*

91 *what we give them.*

Intense curriculum

Teacher as a director

Students like traditional roles

in favour of learner-centered teaching

Learner training

92   I: I see.

93   P: *It's not possible to do it suddenly when the student is in the 7th or 8th*

94   *grade.*

95   I: Hm, hm.

96   P: *Besides, infrastructure is not ready. Classrooms are very crowded.*

97   *Teachers come from the old system so it is difficult to adopt to the new*

98   *system. Plus, the atmosphere in the class doesn't help the teachers to adopt to*

99   *it.*

100   I: I see.

101   P: *You teach the same curriculum for English to the repeat classes, average classes*

102   *and the college classes.*

103   I: Hm, hm.

104   P: There is no point in giving the continuity of a lesson if the student did not get the

105   previous one. There is a system that even if a student fails from, let's say 7th grade's

106   English he passes to the next grade and starts taking 8th grade's English. If he passes

107   from it, he is considered as successful for 7th grade's English as well.

108   I: I see.

109   P: When you think logically, if a student failed in understanding present tense how can he

110   become successful in past tense?

111   I: I see.

112   P: There is an imbalance and a gap.

113   I: So what do you think about the reform in education?

114   P: They wanted us to emphasize all four skills in English. It's good but *classroom*

115   *sizes need to be reduced.*

116   I: Hm, hm.

117   P: *The physical aspects of the classes need to be considered. I think, a listening a lab is*

118   *very important for listening lessons and listening exams. We don't have such a place.*

119   *Facilities are limited.*

120   I: I see.

121   P: *The idea is good. What is wanted to be implemented is good but infrastructure is not*

122   *ready.*

Problems teachers and class atmosphere

The same curriculum for all

Preparing the classes

facilities

179

123   I: I see.

124   P: *Plus, weak students are in the same classes with the selected students, doing*

125   *the same curriculum.*

126   I: Any other issues you would like to talk about?

127   P: Thank you.

128   I: Thank you very much.

Level
differences

APPENDIX IV

COLT OBSERVATION SCHEME

Appendix : Modified Version of the COLT Scheme: Part A

SCHOOL: GRADE: DATE: VISIT NO:

TEACHER: LESSON (Min): OBSERVER:

SUBJECT:

TIME	ACTIVITES & EPISODES	PARTIC.ORGAN							CONTENT									STUDENT MODALITY									MATERIALS				
		Class		Group							Language				Other Topics											Type				Identifica-tion of Materials
																										Writ.		Audio		
		T-C	S-C	G-C	Pair	3+	Individual	T- S/G	Management	Procedure	Vocab.	Grammar	Phonology	Function	Familiar/Core	Novel/Elab.	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Reading aloud	Writing	Repetition	Recitation	Paralanguage	Other	Minimal	Extended	Minimal	Extended	Visual	

Source: Lightbrown and Spada (1987) cited in Richards & Nunan, 1997.

APPENDIX V

ACCESS LETTER

<div align="right">02/03/2007</div>

Ministry of Education

Nicosia

To whom it may concern;

Dear sir/madam,

I would like to get permission to implement the questionnaire about "EFL teachers' beliefs and practice in all the secondary schools in Northern Cyprus" in April 2007. This stduy will be conducted for the purpose of getting a Doctorate of Education Degree from the School of Education at the University of Leicester by Sibel Kaymakamoğlu from the Department of ELT at the European University of Lefke.

The questionnaire can be found attached.

Yours Sincerely,

Sibel Kaymakamoğlu

APPENDIX VI

CONSENT LETTER

You are invited to participate in a research study about EFL teachers' beliefs and practice in Cyprus Turkish state secondary schools. This research is carried out by Sibel Kaymakamoğlu from the Department of ELT at the European University of Lefke.

There are no risks if you decide to participate in this study. The information that you give will be invaluable for my research study. Since the questionnaire is about learning and teaching English language in Northern Cyprus, it is hoped that the results, when published, will be of interest to your school and your professional practice. I assure you that your name will not be mentioned and your answers will be kept confidential.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your choice to participate or not will not influence your job or status at school. You will receive a copy of the results after the study is completed.

If there is any need, my contact details are as follows:

Sibel Kaymakamoğlu   *Office Phone: 660 2000/ 2252*

ELT Department   *Mobile Phone: 0533 862 66 04*

Faculty of Arts & Sciences   *E- mail: skaymakam@yahoo.com*

European University of Lefke

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