EFL Teachers' Beliefs and Motivational Strategies

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Abstract
This study explores the relationship and interconnections between EFL teachers' beliefs and their motivational practices in the classroom. The present study combined qualitative and quantitative methods of research. First, the motivational practices of 30 teachers in two private language schools in Tehran were explored with a classroom observation instrument, the Motivation Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) which was used to estimate the time that teachers spent for each motivational strategy. Then, teachers' beliefs were examined through the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) and an open-ended questionnaire aimed to assess beliefs about motivational strategies. The quantitative results indicated that the higher the teachers' scores on the BALLI, the less frequently their use of motivational strategies in the classroom. The findings based on qualitative data, drawing largely on data from observations and the open-ended questionnaire, showed that although teachers were observed to generally follow their beliefs, there existed several points of difference between their beliefs and practices. Also, there was evidence that what teachers practice in the classrooms does not always impact their beliefs.

Keywords: motivation, motivational strategies, teachers' beliefs, teacher variables, ELT

Introduction

Motivation is one of the most important psychological factors that can lead to effective foreign language learning. "Motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today" (Scheidecker & Freeman, 1999, p. 116) and "is often seen as the key learner variable because without it, nothing much happens" (Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002, p. 172).

It is a well-established belief among most researchers and teachers that motivation is crucial in students' learning (e.g., Dörnyei, 2001b; Liando, Moni, & Baldauf, 2005; Oxford, 1994). "Motivation represents one of the most appealing, yet complex, variables used to explain individual differences in language learning" (MacIntyre, MacMaster, & Baker, 2001, p. 462). This is true since "Motivation is a multifaceted construct, and the exact nature of the constituent components activated in a particular situation depends greatly on contextual factors" (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 1).

Alongside motivation which bears a sizeable impact on ELT, teachers' practice in the classroom can also be affected by their beliefs. Much research into EFL/ESL teachers' beliefs has addressed the relationship between these teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices reporting significant interaction between the two variables (Attardo & Brown, 2005; Johnson, 1994; Jones & Fong, 2007; Poynor, 2005; Richardson, 1996).

The study of teacher belief is concerned with understanding what teachers, think, know, and believe. Its major focus lies thus with the unobservable dimension of teachers' mental lives (Borg, 2009). In Borg's (2001) definition, teachers' beliefs refer to "teachers' pedagogical beliefs or those beliefs of relevance to an individual's teaching" (p. 187). He further notes that, "Belief is

a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior" (p. 186).

An overwhelming majority of the studies conducted on teachers' beliefs have examined these beliefs vis-à-vis teaching grammar or literacy instruction with a few focusing on reading (Borg, 2009). Hence, there seems to a gap of research on whether teachers' belief is correlated with their motivational practices or not. To this end, the purpose of this study was to investigate into the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and the amount of the motivational strategies that they use in the classroom. To this end, the following research hypotheses were raised:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between teachers' beliefs and the amount of motivational strategies that they use in the classroom.
H_{02}: Teachers' beliefs do not significantly predict the amount of motivational strategies that they use in the classroom.

Review of Literature
Motivation
Theories concerning motivation have endeavored to explain why humans behave and think as they do. Language education is no exception in this regard and, hence, both teachers and students commonly use the term to explain what causes success or failure in learning (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Accordingly, many studies have been conducted demonstrating that there is an important relationship between motivation and language learning achievement (e.g., Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Sprinthall, Sprinthall, & Oja, 1994).

An important feature of motivation is its dynamicity showing continuous fluctuation (Dörnyei, 2005). Indeed, "Classroom L2 learning motivation is not a static construct as often measured in a quantitative manner, but a compound and relative phenomenon situated in various resources and tools in a dynamic classroom context" (Kimura, 2003, p. 78).

Motivation and its significance in second language teaching is by no means a recent conceptualization; some six decades ago, Gardner and Lambert (1959) pioneered the social-psychological approach to the study of L2 learning motivation. Since then, research has growingly demonstrated the importance of context in L2 learning motivation. From the 1990s onwards, motivation research in the L2 field has been conducted in more teacher-friendly environments with a more momentous focus on the micro-context in which L2 learning takes place and what teachers practice in the classrooms (e.g. Dörnyei, 2001a; Dörnyei & Malderez, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1997).

Motivational Strategies
Although it is important to know what motivation is, how one can use this knowledge to motivate learners is the main concern. To this end, motivational strategies which are instructional interventions used by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation, or self-regulating strategies come into focus (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008).

To make motivational strategies in L2 more practical to investigate and assess, Dörnyei (2001a) set up an L2 motivational strategies framework which suggests creating the basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation to be the four dimensions.

Teachers' Beliefs

Teachers' beliefs constitute an important concept in understanding teachers' thoughts, perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes (Richardson, 1996). Pajares (1992) acknowledges that, "All teachers hold beliefs, however defined and labeled, about their work, their students, their subject matter, and their roles and responsibilities" (p. 314). In other words, teachers' beliefs act like a filter through which teachers interpret new information and experience (Phipps & Borg, 2007).

Defining teachers' beliefs of course is far from being a simple endeavor. Pajares (1992) acknowledges 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). The controversies underlying this crucial construct – teachers' beliefs – hence continue to prevail in the literature of education in general.

Numerous studies in educational research have shown that teacher belief and classroom practice exist in symbiotic relationships (Foss & Kleinsasser, as cited in Borg, 2009) and a multitude of studies have also examined these relationships in the field of language teaching (e.g. Bartels, 1999; Gatbonton, 1999; Golombek, 1998; Lam, 2000; Nunan, 1992; Richards, Li, & Tang, 1998; Smith, 1996; Ulichny, 1996).

Method

Participants

The participants of the present study were 30 male and female teachers. The researchers selected a number of language schools in the north, south, east, and west of Tehran to include participants from various social classes. Also, the teacher participants represented a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, qualification, experience, and level of English proficiency (gathered through a biographical questionnaire). Yet, as the researchers did not have the luxury of randomly choosing the teachers, they resorted to all those EFL teachers who would agree to participate in the study; hence, one limitation of this study was that random selection of participants was not possible.

Instrumentation

The following instruments were used in this study for the purpose of gathering both quantitative and qualitative data.

Motivational Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) Classroom Observation Scheme

The MOLT classroom observation scheme was designed by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008). This apparatus combines two established schemes or frameworks: Dörnyei's (2001) system of motivational teaching practice and Spada and Fröhlich's (1995) classroom observation scheme, the Communication Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT).

The teacher's motivational teaching practice included in the MOLT is based on Dörnyei's (2001) model of motivational teaching practice that is clearly definable and observable using a real-time observation scheme. These variables were grouped in the observation sheet into four categories comprising a total of 38 items: teacher discourse, participation structure, encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, and activity design.

As classroom observation permits researchers to study teachers in the context of an authentic educational environment and understand issues and events from their perspective (Adler & Adler, 1998; Baker, 2006), such observations were conducted by the researchers not to evaluate the teaching. Rather, observing the teachers in action allowed a means of assessing the

extent to which the teachers' beliefs and reported practices corresponded to what actually happened in the classroom.

Furthermore, the underpinning philosophy of the MOLT is not to claim that all the particular motivational strategies observed in one class are typical of that particular teacher's general practice. Instead, the assumption is that the motivational techniques andqualities a teacher is observed to display in his/her class would offer a representative index of the overall motivational awareness and skills s/he tends to use when teaching that particular group.

To process the observational data, for each variable on the observation sheet, the tally marks indicating the number of minutes during which a specific behavior or activity had taken place had to be added up. Also, because late starts or early finishes produced a slight variation in the actual length of the classes observed, the variable scores were divided by the actual lesson length in minutes and multiplied by 100 to obtain proportionate rates that could be compared (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991).

Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

One frequently used instrument for examining beliefs about language learning is an inventory developed by Horwitz (1985) called the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Horwitz suggested BALLI as a survey instrument which assesses the beliefs of L2 teachers and students in four areas: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, and language learning strategies. This self-report questionnaire filled by each teacher observed in this study includes 27 questions (the student version) in the Likert scale format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The time allotted for filling this questionnaire was 15 minutes.

Open-Ended Questionnaire on Teachers' Belief about Their Motivational Orientation

An open-ended questionnaire was developed by the researchers to gather qualitative data in this study since it provided an appropriate means of exploring the beliefs teachers had about the amount and type of motivational strategies in language learning and teaching. The 30-item questionnaire which required 45 minutes to be filled elicited information about teaching approaches, sources of influence, and views of teaching, thus attempting to capture their underlying beliefs.

In the process of developing the questionnaire, the researchers referred to Dörnyei's (2007) guidelines for questionnaire construction, administration, and analysis. They also drew on questionnaires used in previous studies in the investigations of EFL teachers' beliefs about (or attitudes toward or perceptions of) English language education (Khonamri & Salami, 2010).

Since the native language of all of the participants was Farsi, in order to ensure their comfort and ease of communication, this questionnaire was developed in Farsi and the participants were naturally asked to respond in Farsi. The personal information of the respondents including their age, gender, qualification, experience, level of English proficiency, and language learning experiences was also elicited through this questionnaire.

As the responses to this questionnaire were not intended to be subject to any inferential statistics or hypothesis testing, no attempts were made to validate its construct; the questionnaire served merely the purpose of gathering insightful qualitative information on the teachers participating in this study.

Procedure

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. Qualitative data was used to obtain in-depth information that could be difficult to generate through quantitative means (Pajares, 1992) and quantitative data was gathered to test the hypotheses of the study. All the steps taken are described in detail below.

Teachers' Observation

To begin with, all the 30 teacher-participants who were observed (one session each lasting one hour and 45 minutes) were briefed adequately about the aims of the study and that the results would not affect their records at the language school they were teaching. They were also informed that the researchers would:

(a) observe them when they were teaching the regular textbook;
(b) record the levels of the learners' attention and participation; and
(c) take note of their teaching techniques.

The teachers were asked to work as usual and follow their regular syllabus and textbooks. In order to minimize the possibility of teachers trying to stage a special performance during the observation, the researchers (who would observe the teachers) arranged with each teacher to observe the class only one day in advance.

Before entering the classroom for each observation, the researchers reviewed the aspects of instructional events to be recorded on the observation schedule and a taxonomy of numbered teaching activities, which is based on Brown (2001) appearing in the Appendix. Hence, the researchers were able to locate the activity codes quickly during the actual observation. The purpose of the taxonomy was to reduce the length of handwritten field notes needed to describe the nature of the activities taking place in the classroom.

The researchers also asked for the number of students who would be present in order to work out how many students would constitute 1/3, 1/2, and 2/3 of the class; this helped to assess the proportion of student engagement more accurately.

During each observation, the researchers selected unobtrusive positions within the classroom that allowed clear visual access to the students and the teacher (standing at the back) carried the observation schedule, the taxonomy of activities, and a timer.

The researchers always remained uninvolved and were present in the classes as a non-participant observer, which involved observing classroom interaction and taking notes but not contributing to the interaction itself – very much in line with van Lier's (1997) guidelines.

Questionnaires Filled by the Teachers

Following the observations, the researchers asked each of the 30 teachers to fill the BALLI and the open-ended questionnaire. The two of them took a total of an hour to be filled.

Analysis of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data analysis in this study comprised two series of calculations: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics of both the MOLT and BALLI were gathered. Subsequently, the researchers used Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis to test each of the two hypotheses of this study.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The responses to open-ended questions were read several times to gain some sense of the main ideas being expressed. The data was then coded and analyzed manually, as described below.

A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used which consisted of several stages of multiple readings of the qualitative data, coding, and categorizing emerging patterns or themes. Braun and Clarke provide a guideline for thematic analysis which comprises six phases: a) familiarizing with data, b) generating initial codes, c) searching for themes, d) reviewing themes, e) defining and naming themes, and f) producing the report.

To begin with, the researchers recursively read through the data and coded it manually with the aid of a start list of codes that they developed through following the Borg (1998) procedure. This list drew on the theoretical discussion of teachers' beliefs in the initial analysis of the responses to the open-ended items on the questionnaire where the researchers highlighted in color the parts that appeared to be relevant. They then cut the highlighted parts out and pasted them on index cards and consulted the start list of codes and put a relevant "code" on the upper right hand corner of each index card. In presenting and discussing themes, the researchers quoted from the parts pasted on index cards and translated the quoted parts into English. The summarized and narrative results of these responses together with the detailed descriptive and inferential statistics conducted in this study appear below.

Results
Descriptive Statistics
BALLI

As discussed in full detail earlier, the BALLI questionnaire was administered among the 30 teachers; the descriptive statistics of this administration appears below in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of the Obtained Scores on the BALLI*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistic	Std. error
BALLI	30	55.00	89.00	71.233	8.90441	.328	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

Furthermore, the reliability of this administration stood at an acceptable 0.82.

MOLT
Next, the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on the MOLT was computed (Table 2).

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics of the Obtained Scores on the MOLT*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistic	Std. error
MOLT	30	21.70	92.00	50.087	19.27073	.643	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

Furthermore, the reliability of this administration also stood at 0.86.

Testing the Hypotheses
First Hypothesis

To test the first hypothesis, i.e. to see whether a significant relationship existed between teachers' beliefs and the amount of motivational strategies that they use in the classroom, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient had to be run. The assumptions for running this parametric test – i.e. linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity of the two distributions of scores – were checked and established a priori and the researchers could run the correlation to test the first hypothesis of the study (Table 3).

Table 3. *Correlation of the Obtained Scores on the MOLT and BALLI*

	MOLT	BALLI
Pearson Correlation	1	-.278**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
N	30	205
Pearson Correlation	-.278**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
N	30	30

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

As demonstrated in Table 3 above, the correlation came out to be significant at 0.01 level (r = -0.278, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

Table 4. *Correlation Report*

No of cases	R	Sig (2-tailed)	R^2
30	.278	.000	.08

According to Table 4 above, R^2 (or common variance) which is the effect size for correlation came out to be 0.08. This is an almost medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). As a result, the researchers were able to reject the first null hypothesis. In other words, *there is a significantly negative relationship between teachers' beliefs and the amount of motivational strategies they use in the classroom.*

Second Hypothesis

To test the second hypothesis, i.e. to see whether teachers' beliefs was a significant predictor of the amount of motivational strategies they use in the classroom or not, a linear regression was run. Table 5 below represents R and R square for this regression analysis.

Table 5. *Model summary – R and R Square*

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	-.278[a]	.080	.073	1.43363

a.Predictors: (constant), BALLI
b.Dependent variable: MOLT

As reported in Table 5, the R came out to be -0.278 and R square 0.080. Table 6 reports the results of the ANOVA ($F_{1,203} = 16.988$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) which proved significant.

Table 6. *Regression Output: ANOVA Table*

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	34.916	1	34.916	16.988	.000[a]
1	Residual	417.223	203	2.055		
	Total	452.139	204			

a.Predictors: (constant), BALLI
b.Dependent variable: MOLT

Table 7 demonstrates the standardized beta coefficient (B = 0.278, $t = 4.122$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) which reveals that the model was significant meaning that teachers' beliefs could predict significantly the motivational strategies they used in the classroom.

Table 7. *Regression Output: Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Beta			
1	(Constant)	3.024	.775		3.901	.000
	BALLI	.035	.008	.278	4.122	.000

a. Dependent Variable: MOLT

Although normality of the distributions were checked for correlation in the previous sections, the residuals table (as demonstrated in Table 8 below) also verified the absence of outstanding outliers as the Cook's distance values did not exceed 1 and Mahalanobis distance values did not exceed 15.

Table 8. *Regression Output: Residuals Statistics*

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	5.0978	7.5172	6.1927	.41371	205
Std. Predicted Value	-2.646	3.202	.000	1.000	205
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.100	.337	.135	.044	205
Adjusted Predicted Value	4.9794	7.4890	6.1938	.41557	205
Residual	-3.37662	3.22706	.00000	1.43011	205
Std. Residual	-2.355	2.251	.000	.998	205
Stud. Residual	-2.362	2.257	.000	1.003	205
Deleted Residual	-3.39648	3.24348	-.00112	1.44712	205
Stud. Deleted Residual	-2.389	2.280	.000	1.007	205
Mahalanobis Distance	.001	10.250	.995	1.570	205

Cook's Distance	.000	.099	.006	.013	205
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.050	.005	.008	205

a. Dependent Variable: MOLT

Hence, the second null hypothesis of the study – just as the first hypothesis – was rejected. In other words, teachers' beliefs could predict significantly the motivational strategies they use in the classroom.

Discussion

Analysis of Quantitative Data

As described above, there came about a significantly negative correlation between EFL teachers' beliefs and the amount of motivational strategies they use in the classroom. That is to say that the higher the teachers' scores on the BALLI, the less frequently their use of motivational strategies in the classroom.

At first sight, this result might sound somewhat outlandish but going through the items on the BALLI, one would probably realize the occurrence of these results. The scoring procedure of BALLI is such that the teacher who, for instance, believes strongly that some are born with an innate predisposition to learn a foreign language better than others would actually score higher than one who disagrees with this. Or those who believe that repetition and practice results in better achievement would gain a higher score.

The results of this study, perhaps not surprisingly, delineate that such teachers on the whole resort to fewer motivational strategies in the classroom. After all, if a teacher robustly believes that a student's ability to learn a language is a predetermined issue and that learning is mostly about repetition and practice, chances are that the teacher would have less inclination towards using more motivational strategies in the classroom as s/he would not be all that optimistic about the impact of motivational strategies on students' learning.

Another example would be that if a teacher believes that learners should not say anything at all until they can say it exactly, they would use fewer motivational strategies. This again probably makes clear sense as such teachers would expect the learners to assume full responsibility of their learning rather than continuously use motivational strategies thereby empowering them to learn to correct their mistakes. Therefore, with such paradigms and beliefs, it would probably seem not surprising that the two constructs, i.e. teachers' beliefs about language learning and the motivational strategies they use in the classroom, are negatively correlated.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

As stated earlier, an open-ended questionnaire was also administered to the teachers eliciting their opinions about learning and motivation. The following section provides a description of the responses given by the teachers.

Early Learning Experiences

One of the questions in the questionnaire aimed to capture what teachers' own language learning experiences were like. Specifically, they noted the influence of reading stories, watching movies, using educational CDs, and reading newspapers. What was also notable is that none of them mentioned that they learned English at school although they all had at least seven years of English classes in junior high and high school.

Influence of Their Teachers on Motivational Strategies

In response to the question, *Does the way your teachers motivate you affected the way you motivate your students?*, almost half of the teachers stated yes while around one-sixth of the teachers rejected this notion. Some teachers mentioned different techniques that they had learned from their teachers in order to increase students' motivation such as using movies in the class, giving gifts, providing students with interesting activities, having free discussion during the class, being energetic, having fun in the class, and considering students' self-esteem.

Importance of Motivating the Students

A huge majority of the teachers acknowledged the importance of motivating the learners with some of the them, however, claiming that motivation is only important at the early stages of learning or when the learners are adolescents.

Teachers' Motivational Strategies

The teachers were asked to explain the motivational strategies that they use and around a fourth of them noted that they highlight the role English plays in the modern world, the potential usefulness of knowing English for both themselves and their community, and the incentive benefits associated with the knowledge of English.

Around a fifth of the teachers held that class applause and praise was another strategy while others highlighted creating a friendly atmosphere and having free discussions in the class as two other strategies. A few suggested adding extra credit, encouraging group work, and creating competition and some argues that the teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm could improve learners' motivation.

Promoting autonomy, reading short stories in the class, talking about trendy topics, emphases on learners' strength rather than their weakness, providing them gifts, assigning them presentations, and even reminding them of the fact that they should study not to waste their parents' money were among the other strategies that the teachers mentioned.

One of teachers wrote that, "I do not have special strategies to motivate my students but I show them my passion and my love. I help them to understand me in a language that they are not familiar with and encourage them to talk" and another teacher wrote that, "Teacher knowledge, fluency, and excitement are the most important things that can motivate students.

Motivational Strategies during a Task

While almost all the teachers said that they use motivational strategies during a task, very few actually described these strategies: presenting appropriate explanations, promoting autonomy, providing feedback, and scaffolding.

Strategies of Praising Learners in the Class

Around half of the teachers mentioned that they praise their learners verbally while the other most frequent such strategies were extra credit, class applaud, gifts, facial expressions, and encouraging notes.

Teachers' Belief about Their Motivational Orientation

This part of the open-ended questionnaire aimed at exploring teachers' beliefs about the MOLT which the researchers already had observed in their classrooms in order to find if their beliefs were in accordance with what they practice or not.

In response to the question *Is it required in the English class to engage in chat unrelated to the lesson with the students?*, only one teacher thought it not necessary but interestingly, even she also took some time in class to talk about subjects unrelated to the lesson nearly as much as the average time stated by the teachers for this category.

The teachers' responses to whether they needed to state the lesson objectives explicitly were somehow inconsistent with their practice. There were 20% of teachers who thought it was not appropriate to mention lesson objectives but some of them allocated part of their time in the class to this MOLT variable. Also, 10% of the teachers strongly believed it was important to talk about lesson objectives but none of them took any time of the class for this matter. All the other teachers thought talking about the lesson objectives was required.

Interestingly, a significant number of the teachers did not think it was appropriate to mention either the communicative purpose or usefulness of an activity outside the classroom when presenting that activity in class. And although all the teachers acknowledged the importance of promoting integrative and instrumental values, most of them did not allocate any time for these variables in their practice.

Another inconsistency was the use of neutral feedback as a motivational strategy which had been applied largely by 31% of the teachers although they mentioned this not to be a proper strategy. In contrast, 97% of teachers were in favor of process feedback which was not employed as much as neutral feedback.

Arousing curiosity or attention, scaffolding, promoting cooperation, pair work / presentation, and group work / presentation were the strategies that all teachers recognized their importance in being applied in the classroom.

Conclusion

The results of this study may have several implications. First of all, the complex relationship between beliefs and practice has been alluded to extensively in the literature on teacher cognition and quite a few writers (e.g. Freeman & Graves, 2007; Pajares, 1992) call for the need to make explicit teachers' beliefs, so that those beliefs that are detrimental to learning can be challenged and modified during the course of development. Teacher development is aimed at altering those beliefs, with the expectation that a change in beliefs will lead to a change in practice.

Teachers are more likely to change when they are shown that a discrepancy exists between what they would ideally like to do and what they actually do. Teachers who are not provided with feedback on their motivational practice to help them improve their teaching would perhaps remain unaware of their own inadequacies and strengths. It is only after teachers become aware of their skills and weaknesses that they may begin to address how to improve their practices. Therefore, regular observations of teaching followed by constructive feedback seem important in improving motivational practice and maintaining quality instruction.

To establish a climate that values the continuous professional development of teachers, it may be necessary to foster positive attitudes towards teacher learning and change. As Crookes and Schmidt (1991) assert, in most countries, school cultures are not conducive to the concept of teacher learning. This lack of support for teacher learning was evident in this study as many teachers were not familiar with all the motivational strategies that they could use in the classroom.

Teachers' beliefs about the sufficiency of their knowledge seemed to contribute to their lack of motivational practice. It thus appears important to change some of their beliefs and to encourage them to take responsibility for their own development through reflection and learning.

As shown in this study, if teachers are open to change and willing to try new practices, successful change can occur.

High quality professional development must be provided to teachers if they are to become better teachers. Teachers need access to professional development if they are to rethink their ideas about teaching. Professional development can provide teachers with an opportunity to articulate their existing beliefs and examine those beliefs against the current research (McCarty, Abbott-Shim, & Lambert, 2001). Teachers ought to have access to diverse opportunities of professional development to have their beliefs refined, renewed, confirmed, and replaced.

Raising teachers' awareness of their motivating practices and training them in using skills through instructions (e.g. pair work) or educational notes may help them to motivate learners and this should be a prominent methodological concern. Teachers' beliefs are of considerable value to education, and could thus be taken into account when a new educational program is considered.

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