

TEACHER NARRATIVES AS THEORIZATION OF TEACHING: A CHINESE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

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Abstract

Teaching as a profession is unique in that all the people who enter the profession have had extensive experience of it, which was built up over many years in classrooms as students. However, the pre-existing set of beliefs about teaching and learning, which were based on, and reinforced by, their own experiences, might cause perplexity for teachers who work in different cultural contexts. How to balance pedagogical principles becomes one of the important considerations for these teachers when faced with the perplexity. This study, therefore, was taken to explore the beliefs of a Chinese language teacher, who was educated in a traditional teaching system (three-centeredness) in Mainland China and was teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL) in New Zealand. It was aimed to unveil how a TCSOL teacher coped with such challenges. Narrative inquiry and thematic analysis were adopted in examining this teacher's experience. Results show that composite factors impacted this teacher's beliefs about teaching and learning. The research process and findings are expected to offer some implications for fostering effective TCSOL teachers' professional development.

Key words: TCSOL; teachers' beliefs; pedagogical principles; narrative inquiry; thematic analysis

Introduction

Teaching as a profession is unique in that all the people who enter the profession have had extensive prior learning experience, which was built up over many years in classrooms as students. Hence, they already have a pre-existing set of beliefs about teaching and learning, which is based on, and reinforced by, their own experiences. In the field of language teaching, our understanding of language teaching methods is usually based on the assumption that communicative competence takes the mastery of linguistic form as its prerequisite (Littlewood, 1981) and that traditional language teaching methods stress teaching language structures by means of "three-centeredness" (teacher-centeredness, textbook-centeredness and grammar-centeredness) (Tian, 2014, p. 1) for developing language learners' basic linguistic

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knowledge and language skills (H. Ross, 1992; Tian, 2014). In Mainland China, such language teaching methods have been utilized in English classrooms for the past thirty years (1980–2010) (Tian, 2014) and remain entrenched in language teachers' and learners' approaches. These methods have been criticized for not taking into account the purpose and goal of language learning and teaching – namely, to use it in a target-language context. Therefore these methods are considered insufficient to cultivate fluent second/foreign-language (L2) speakers. However, in classrooms of teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL), these methods still dominate. Teachers mainly focus on learning language codes, such as Chinese characters, words, pronunciation, tones and grammar (Lü, 1990, 1993; Lu, 2005; Xu, 2010). As stressed by Li (2010), in New Zealand, many Chinese teachers dispatched from Mainland China do not adapt well to New Zealand learner-centered classrooms, although communicative language teaching (CLT) has already been adopted in TCSOL classrooms (Liu, 2000). The reason for such difficulty is that traditional teaching methods are deep-rooted in these TCSOL teachers' minds, influencing their beliefs about language teaching and classroom practices.

In recent years, the popularity of TCSOL has been on the increase, and the number of students who study Chinese as a foreign/second language (CSL) has also significantly increased. Such trends may shape or reshape TCSOL teachers' beliefs about how to teach Chinese to non-native speakers, especially the beliefs of teachers who have learnt an L2 through traditional language teaching methods and are working in different first-language contexts. To discover the beliefs of this type of teachers, the present study focuses on a front-line TCSOL teacher in New Zealand by analyzing her life history narratives and classroom practices.

Literature Review

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Unlike traditional language teaching methods, which tend to over-emphasize “single aspects as the central issue of teaching and learning” (Yu, 2001, p. 196), CLT aims to develop language learners' communicative competence (Littlewood, 2011) and has been broadly accepted since it first appeared in the late 1970s (Savignon, 1987, 1991, 2007; Zhang, 2010). However, CLT still faces dilemmas (Ben Said & Zhang, 2014; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1997; Spada, 1987, 2007; Whong, 2013), especially in countries where traditional teaching methods are deeply ingrained, such as Mainland China. These dilemmas range from the disagreement of the importance of grammar teaching and language accuracy to the issues of language teachers' roles (see e.g., Zhang, 2015). In response to these dilemmas, Zhang (2010) once offered a suggestion as a possible solution:

CLT classroom activities can be organized to develop students' communicative competence by learning grammar in context, due to a need arising in a

particular communicative task. Activities can also focus on the creation of the need for communication, interaction and negotiation of meaning. (p. 39)

Zhang's (2010) solution provides L2 teachers with three essential suggestions: 1) cultivating students' communicative competence is not contradictory to teaching grammar; 2) teaching grammar can be embedded in communicative tasks; and 3) L2 teachers should design classroom activities according to their own as well as their students' particular needs in the language classroom and beyond.

Teachers' beliefs

Rather than an individual belief, teachers' beliefs, in this research, refer to a belief system involving teachers' content-specific beliefs (i.e., epistemological and pedagogical beliefs) and self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., efficacy expectation and outcome expectation). These two are further explained below.

Content-specific beliefs

Teachers' content-specific beliefs are their beliefs about the subject matter (content) (Levin, 2015), including their epistemological and pedagogical beliefs. Their epistemological beliefs concern the nature and process of knowledge acquisition of the field in which they teach (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997), which includes the source of knowledge to be taught, and the control and speed of their teaching (Hoffman & Seidel, 2015). Such pedagogical beliefs involve teachers' judgments about setting appropriate teaching goals, implementing instructional activities, choosing the forms of evaluation, and understanding the nature of student learning (Grossman, Wilson, & Shulman, 1989; Kagan, 1992; Levin, 2015). Usually, these epistemological beliefs have an impact on teachers' pedagogical beliefs. As such, in traditional language teaching contexts (e.g., English teaching in Mainland China), those non-native English teachers with low-level English proficiency may avoid teaching in English, the target language; those teachers with limited knowledge of the field they teach might prefer to control their classroom with certainty; those teachers, who believe students' learning abilities are fixed at birth, might not try diverse paths to help students make progress; and those teachers, who believe language should be acquired in a target-language context, might be more dependent on context and more passive when teaching in non-target-language countries than those who believe language can be learnt in classrooms.

Such teachers' content-specific beliefs filter and evolve with their actual teaching practices, which might be a reflection of their own mastery/performance experience (Bandura, 1995) or of other fellow teachers' vicarious experience (Bandura, 1995; Kagan, 1992; Zahorik, 1987), especially when teachers face classrooms beyond their control (Kagan, 1992; Lieberman, 1982). Although such evolution of beliefs is inherently self-defined, self-directed, and private in teachers' professional development (Kagan, 1992), it is recommended that it should conform to some

external professional standards when necessary (Kagan, 1992; Liston & Zeichner, 1989). For example, Yung (2001, 2002) once depicted the causality between teachers' content-specific beliefs about what it meant to be a teacher and how their approaches to learning and assessment from four aspects: 1) teachers' beliefs about their roles in helping students' learning; 2) students' roles in and responsibility for learning; 3) the nature of the teacher-student relationship; and 4) how the teacher-student relationship should be manifest in classroom interactions. Also, He, Levin, and Li (2011) highlighted the impact of cultural contexts (e.g., collectivism in MC, individualism in the USA, etc.) on teachers' pedagogical beliefs by comparing the content and sources of pedagogical beliefs of 106 pre-service teachers from Mainland China and the USA. In their research, He et al. (2011) emphasized that cultural contexts affected social expectations of teachers' roles. For example, in Mainland China teachers were viewed as role models who deserved "absolute authority", while teachers in the USA sometimes developed friendship with students; and such different teachers' roles could influence teachers' pedagogical judgments.

Teachers' content-specific beliefs are influenced by nine factors (see Table 1).

Table 1. Nine Factors Influencing Teachers' Content-specific Beliefs

(1) family values (Levin, 2015; Levin, He, & Allen, 2013)
(2) personal learning experiences during schooling (K-12) (Levin, 2015; Levin et al., 2013)
(3) teacher education program (Levin, 2015; Levin & He, 2008; Levin et al., 2013)
(4) teaching experiences (Kagan, 1992; Levin, 2015; Levin et al., 2013)
(5) observations of other teachers (Levin, 2015; Levin & He, 2008; Levin et al., 2013)
(6) exposure to readings, theories, videos, or professors' ideas (Levin, 2015; Levin et al., 2013)
(7) the particular class of students they face (Kagan, 1992; Leinhardt, 1988)
(8) the academic materials to be taught (Kagan, 1992; Leinhardt, 1988)
(9) pre-existing beliefs about models of good or poor teaching, shaped by years in classrooms as students (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Kagan, 1992; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984)

These nine factors potentially contribute to teachers' specific beliefs (pedagogical beliefs) about pedagogy (e.g., CLT in this research); and such specific beliefs of teachers' significantly shape their classroom processes (Fives & Buehl, 2012) and matter in varied ways in particular contexts (Gill & Fives, 2015; Pajares, 1992) (e.g., Mainland China and New Zealand in this research). Teachers' content-specific beliefs, in this sense, act as an explanatory principle for teachers' classroom practices (Skott, 2009), which has undergone both refutation and confirmation (Skott, 2015).

Self-efficacy beliefs

Within the context of teaching, self-efficacy refers to the generalized expectancy a teacher has in regard to his/her ability to influence students as well as beliefs about his/her ability to perform the professional tasks that constitute teaching (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy consists of an efficacy expectation and an outcome expectation. An efficacy expectation is a person's belief that he/she

has the knowledge and skill to attain a particular goal (Bandura, 1977); and an outcome expectation is the person's belief that the goal to be achieved is one worth achieving (Bandura, 1977) – that it will be beneficial to either teachers themselves or, in the case of teachers, to students. In addition, self-efficacy beliefs usually come from four sources: Mastery/performance experiences (personal authentic experience); vicarious experiences (other people's authentic experience); social persuasion; and an individual's physiological and emotional state (Bandura, 1995). Of the four, mastery/performance is considered as the most influential one (Bandura, 1995).

Indeed, the strength of a teacher's efficacy beliefs will affect the magnitude of the goals set and the amount of effort expended to reach those goals. Additionally, efficacy beliefs will influence degrees of persistence and resiliency and whether or not coping behaviours are initiated in the face of setbacks (Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002; Poulou, 2007; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more open to new ideas and more willing to experiment with new practices (Dixon, 2011). Furthermore, teachers with stronger outcome expectations are more likely to believe that a change in their behaviours will have beneficial effects for their students (Evers et al., 2002; J. A. Ross, 1998; Wheatley, 2005).

Currently, while there have been general calls to investigate internal factors, such as the impact of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs on curriculum and instruction, research evidence about such factors is mostly absent in relation to CLT and TCSOL teachers. To fill in this gap, this research was set up to explore one front-line TCSOL teacher's beliefs about CLT through her narrative experiences and observed classroom activities, aiming to unveil the potential factors that shape or reshape this teacher's beliefs about language teaching. Three research questions are addressed:

What are the participant's content-specific beliefs about CLT?

What are the participant's self-efficacy beliefs about CLT?

What are the factors shaping or reshaping these beliefs?

Research Methodology

Narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry, as both a phenomenon and a methodology, was adopted in this case study, following an interpretive paradigm (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2013). First, this paradigm focuses on and analyzes phenomena occurring in small cases, which is fit for this research, as our study is one such case. Second, this paradigm adopts Dewey's (1938) principles of experience – continuity and interaction, which emphasizes that experience “does not occur in a vacuum; instead there are sources outside an individual which give rise to experience” (p. 40). Accordingly, a person's beliefs or actions at a specific point must connect a past experiential base with an experiential future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Similar to Dewey's (1938) principle of experience, Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) "three-dimensional narrative inquiry space" (p. 54), the essence of narrative inquiry, is constituted of a spatial dimension, a temporal dimension and a sociopersonal dimension (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2013). These three dimensions require that the researchers travel with participants "inward, outward, backward, forward, and situated within place" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 49).

Participant: the first author

The participant in this study was the first author. Our decision to conduct this study also related directly to the first author's two roles – language learner and teacher, and her rich and diverse first-hand experiences in the perplexity of traditional and modern language learning and teaching methods in different cultural contexts.

As a long-term English learner, she was once constrained by and lost in the conflict between what she had learnt, what she expected to learn, and what she should learn in a (non)English-speaking context, especially when she confronted the perplexity in the changes of contexts – from Mainland China (a non-native English-speaking context) to New Zealand (a native English-speaking context).

As a TCSOL teacher in New Zealand, she once came to grips with the differences of teaching methods in Mainland China and New Zealand, the complexity of students' cultural backgrounds within one classroom, and the conflict between her expected teaching methods and educational mandates. Such a challenging situation forced her to rethink what should be the proper methods for TCSOL teachers' engagement with their students, including language teaching methods, teaching contents and teachers' roles. It concurrently confirmed and reconstructed her beliefs about teaching. In these experiences, she also developed her interest in using narratives as a tool to explore TCSOL teachers' beliefs in various contexts.

As Chen (2004) said, in qualitative research, researchers are also research tools; and researchers' interpretation of data also reflects their own worldviews. Therefore, the interpretation of the data in this study was also the process of making the inner voice of the first author and research participant visible to the largest extent.

Data collection and sources

This study drew on the first author's life history narratives (e.g., diaries), teaching plans, memos, field notes, and classroom tape-recordings (Sakui & Gaies, 2003). The life history narratives focused on the period from the year 2011 when she arrived in New Zealand until the study was conducted, whereas the teaching plans, memos, field notes, and classroom tape-recordings were from a six-week Chinese course (2 hours a day, 5 days a week) with 23 elementary-level CSL students offered in 2015.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted both deductively and inductively. With deductive analysis, four topics were established according to the existing concepts regarding CLT: 1) the participant's perceptions of creating a teaching environment, 2) selecting the teaching content, 3) teaching grammar, and 4) playing different roles in the classroom (see Beliefs One to Five). These four topics were also a guideline to compare with the traditional "three-centeredness". With inductive analysis, themes arose from the data with constant contrast and comparison (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). For example, drawing on Zhong's (2012) five forms of identifying language learners' beliefs, the participant's statements in these forms could also be identified as her beliefs (see Table 2); and the identified beliefs were summarized into one of the four topics. Later, these themes were discussed with the supportive evidence from the data and relevant theories (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012).

Table 2. Five Statement Forms of Identifying Teacher's Beliefs

Forms	Examples
General statements relating to language learning that expressed opinions	I believe/think...; In my opinion...; to my view...; it is important to...
Statements that contained modal verbs	You/I need...; you/I must/have to...; Students should...
Definitions about language learning and teaching	Learning English is mainly about learning the grammar rules.
Hypothetical statement	If I were younger, I would learn English faster.
Statements that included superlatives or comparatives	The best way to learn/teach is...

Note: Adapted from Zhong (2012, p. 114)

Findings and Discussion

The participant's content-specific beliefs about CLT

Belief One: Teachers should create authentic scenarios and speak at a normal speed. The participant firmly believed that teachers should provide authentic target language, especially for students in non-target-language contexts (such as New Zealand in this research). Rather than focus on "standard" texts, the participant believed that TCSOL teachers could create authentic scenarios by three means. First, teachers should speak authentic language at a normal speed both in and out the class, so that students could have more opportunities to practice what they had learnt. Second, teachers should relate the knowledge in textbooks to diverse topics in daily life, so as to enhance students' ability in free expression. Third, teachers should bring diverse resources into classrooms, such as Chinese songs, magazines, movies, and dramas, so as to stimulate students' interest in and enthusiasm for language learning.

This belief and the three suggestions were initiated by her first experience in a New Zealand library as well as her reflection on her past learning and teaching experience, which was recorded in her diaries (see Appendix 1). This shocking experience reminded her that overemphasizing “standard” might lose the essential goals of language teaching – to use the language in target-language contexts for real communication. Therefore, in her own language classes, she endeavored to create authentic scenarios for her students, for which Story One was an example.

Story One

Before the first class, I said “Nǐ hǎo” (“hello” in Mandarin Chinese (MC)) to each student coming into the classroom, and all of them could reply correctly. Following “Nǐ hǎo”, I asked a second question “Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?” (“What’s your name?” in MC), few of them could answer it. I repeated and explained that questions word by word, and then taught that expression formally. During the break, I played a song named “Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?” without any explanation. The next day I acted as a stranger and asked “Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?”, everyone could reply correctly but not fluently. After this question was asked in every class, the students were capable of replying like a native Chinese speaker. (Excerpt from the first author’s field notes: Feb, 2015)

Belief Two: Attention to the influence of the students’ native languages is essential. This belief puzzled the first author for many years, and developed over three main periods (see Appendix 2). In her mind, the interference of learners’ native languages was like the phenomenon that Mishler (1986) described, that any verbal account is mediated by language, so different people may not share the same meaning of the same communicative event. Therefore, any account of an interaction is a mediated reality. Although Mishler’s description depicts the potential differences between interviewers and interviewees, it may also extend to the differences between people from different cultures, such as between L2 learners and native-speaker target-language teachers.

Therefore, to reduce misunderstandings to the minimum, when the first author taught her students, she tried to study her students’ native languages. For example, she learnt Korean with her South Korean students (see Story Two), and the content she learnt was the same as the Chinese taught that day. In her view, on the one hand, this process forced the students to master what they had learnt; and on the other hand, the teacher could find out the difficulties Korean students might encounter, such as their pronunciation of “l” and “r”.

Story Two

I studied Korean with my students after class, because most of the students were from South Korea. At least I should learn how to read their names and know their potential problems in studying...They helped me with the limited Chinese they had learnt. For example, one day, they taught me how to pronounce “ㄹ”, it was “r”, not “l”. In spite of many times they repeated, I still could not sense the difference, but I realized they had already mastered the differences between the two consonants and the reason why they could not pronounce Pinyin “l” and “r” clearly. (Excerpt from the first author’s diary: Jan, 2015)

Belief Three: Grammar should not be neglected, but how to teach grammar is of great importance. Grammar teaching was the one emphasized in traditional teaching methods, and was also the one the participant supported. Grammar-translation and CLT were assumed not to be opposite ends of a continuum that might meet or overlap in the middle. Grammar was just a container, and what it contained was much more important. Teaching grammar was not a simple presentation of a grammatical point, nor a bare sentence structure. Regardless of methods of teaching grammar, it was the content that could make grammar teaching more informative. As some researchers said, grammar teaching should not be neglected; rather, communicative ability should be developed without the loss of accuracy (Savignon, 1991; Zhang, 2004, 2010; Zhang & Ben Said, 2014). Actually, the participant's teaching process in Story Three was consistent with the suggestions in Zhang (2010) exactly.

Story Three

When I taught the grammar "Tag questions", I asked one South Korean student two questions in English as below to indicate that tag questions are used to confirm that a certain fact or urge someone to accept certain suggestions.

"You can speak Korean, can you?" (To confirm a fact)

"Let me study Korean with you, OK?" (To urge someone to accept the suggestion)

Confirming the students understood the meanings of "tag questions", I asked the two questions again in Chinese, using "duì bu duì?" ("right?") and "hǎo bu hǎo?" ("OK?"). Following this way, the students mastered it immediately.

After that, a scenario was created:

A girl tries to persuade her boyfriend to buy a gift for her, which might be very expensive.

The boyfriend could choose to buy or not to buy, but must state a reason.

Consequently, all the students were able to use the tag questions properly.

(Excerpt from the first author's field notes: Jan, 2015)

Belief Four: Language teachers should have multilingual awareness and knowledge, especially in multicultural teaching contexts. The participant advocated that it would be better if a teacher had some basic knowledge of more languages, because language learning and teaching was, in fact, a negotiation of the cultures teachers and students bring into the classroom. In addition to the official working language (English in New Zealand), teachers and students should have one or more common languages, especially in the context where the working language was an L2 for both teachers and students (e.g., TCSOL classroom in New Zealand). This belief was manifested in Story Four. Through the participant's practice, she successfully helped an Indian student with another language, Japanese. Although both the teacher and the student were not fluent in Japanese, their limited knowledge of Japanese did play a facilitating role at that moment.

Story Four

"An Indian student told me he found Chinese so hard for him. But I remembered a fact that he could speak Japanese according to the questionnaires of the first class. I asked him to recollect how to pronounce 'telephone' in Japanese, he told me 'denwa' (電話), which was

correct. I used the Japanese ‘denwa’ to help him pronounce Chinese Pinyin ‘diànhuà’ (电话) and then explained the difference between the Chinese character and Japanese Kanzi, it is just like something coming to him in a flash...”
 (Excerpt from the first author’s diary: Feb, 2015)

This belief was summarized from the data inductively. In order to test this belief, in the first class, the first author investigated her students’ language backgrounds with a questionnaire, which was used for collecting information about where students came from and the languages they had learnt. The investigated results in Table 3 indicated that: 1) All of the 23 students were able to speak English, but only two of them were native English speakers (New Zealanders of a non-Chinese heritage background). That is to say English was the L2 of 91.3% (21/23) of the students, also of the participant, the teacher in this class. 2) The number of languages (56 in total) these students had learnt indicated that each student could speak 2.4 languages on average and Mandarin Chinese was the third or the fourth language for most students. 3) Next to English, Korean and Japanese were the two most popular languages; therefore it could be hypothesized that if the teacher had some knowledge of Korean and Japanese, she could get through to about 78.3% (18/23) of the class when necessary.

This hypothesis was tested in the participant’s practice introduced in Story Four. In effect, the participant had learnt Japanese for five years but had never used it before. Never had she thought that one day she could successfully help an Indian student to pronounce Chinese with her limited knowledge of Japanese. This successful experience told her that it is not necessary for teachers to attain high levels of proficiency in different languages, as it is difficult; instead, they should have some basic knowledge of those languages, especially the languages in different language families, so that they could have a better understanding of the potential learning difficulties students might encounter.

Table 3. Information on the 23 Students in the 6-week Course

Countries Students Came from						
Countries	South Korea	Vietnam	Japan	Indonesia	India	Malaysia
No.	10	3	3	1	1	1
Countries	NZ (with Chinese heritage)			NZ (without Chinese heritage)		
No.	2			2		
Languages the Students Reported Speaking						
Languages	English	Korean	Japanese	Vietnam	Cantonese	French
No.	23 (100%)	12 (52.2%)	6 (26.1%)	3 (13.0%)	3 (13.0%)	2 (8.7%)
Languages	Spanish	Malay	Indonesian	Hindi	Italian	Afrikaans
No.	2 (8.7%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.3%)

Belief Five: Teachers can act as different roles that are common in daily life. The stories in the first four beliefs, in effect, unveiled the participant's attitude towards teachers' roles. In addition to being a serious knowledge transmitter or a teacher with "absolute authority", which are typical of the traditional teacher image, teachers could act in different roles that are common in daily life. For example, in Story One she acted as a stranger; in Story Two she was the students' student; and in Story Three she was an activity organizer. There were many other potential roles teachers could play, such as customers, taxi drivers, doctors, and bosses, so that they could create more authentic scenarios for students to use the newly learnt language.

The participant's self-efficacy beliefs about CLT

The five identified content-specific beliefs and their supportive stories also revealed the participant's positive and robust self-efficacy beliefs. For example, in Belief One, she firmly believed that students could learn Chinese well in New Zealand, a non-target-language context (outcome expectation); therefore, she made endeavors to create authentic language environment for her students, because of her disagreement with her previous learning and teaching methods (efficacy expectation). In Belief Four, she tried diverse paths to understand students and help students to make progress (efficacy expectation).

In the process of her experiencing changes in the teaching and learning context (see Appendix 1 and 2), her positive and robust self-efficacy beliefs influenced her persistence and resiliency when setbacks occurred, despite her being trapped in confusion and sadness sometimes. As she said,

In the past, when I encountered with setbacks, my family, friends and teachers always positively provided me with support. With these supports, I successfully overcame difficulties one after another. Having these successful experiences, I know what I can do and have enough confidence to face the coming setbacks.
(Excerpt from the first author's diary, October, 2012)

The participant's words were unconsciously consistent with two of the four sources of self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1995): social persuasion (support from family, friends and teachers) and mastery/performance experience (personal successful experiences).

The influential factors shaping or reshaping these beliefs

Table 4 summarized the participant's beliefs and influential factors/sources. As is clear, personal experience (of learning and teaching), personal confusion, personal knowledge, and contexts (including context changes and multilingual teaching context) were perceived as crucial factors in shaping or reshaping all of the participant's beliefs; and the first three were the participant's internal factors. From the supportive evidence (stories in texts and appendices), it could be summarized

that, usually, it was the participant’s traumatic experience or context changes that forced her to self-reflect, and then she confirmed or differentiated her perceived beliefs in her future practices. This summary also resonates with Bandura’s (1995) conclusion that mastery/performance experience is the more important than social persuasion. However, a person’s determination and behavior on the traumatic occasion can be influenced by his/her habitus formed in his/her living environment (e.g., family, friends, teachers, etc.) in his/her early age (Bourdieu, 1990).

Table 4. Summary of the Participant’s Beliefs about CLT

		The Participant’s Beliefs about CLT	Influential Factors/Sources
Content-specific beliefs		Teachers should create authentic scenarios and speak at an authentic speed.	Personal learning/teaching experiences Context changes Personal confusion Self-reflection
		Attention to the influence of the students’ native languages is essential.	Personal learning/teaching experiences Personal confusion Self-reflection Friend’s reminding Supervisor’s instructions Interactions with students
		Grammar should not be neglected, but how to teach grammar is of great importance.	Personal teaching/learning experiences Personal knowledge of L2 learning and teaching
		Language teachers should have multilingual awareness and knowledge, especially in multicultural teaching contexts.	Multilingual teaching context Personal learning/teaching experiences Students’ support
		Teachers can act in different roles that are common in daily life.	Personal teaching/learning experiences Imaginary images of “ideal teachers”
Self-efficacy beliefs	Efficacy expectation	She had confidence in her teaching methods and applied these methods into practices. She firmly believed that she could help students with various languages.	Personal learning/teaching experiences Self-reflection Personality Family’s support Students’ satisfaction; Multilingual teaching context
	Outcome expectation	If teachers adopted proper teaching methods and resources, students could learn the target language in and for use, even if they were in non-native-target-language contexts.	Personal learning experiences Self-reflection Personal knowledge about L2 learning and teaching

Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has suggested that participant’s content-specific beliefs and self-efficacy beliefs were mainly shaped or reshaped by her mastery/performance experiences, especially traumatic experiences (e.g., confusion in language teaching and learning). According to this case, a person’s traumatic occasion might become a turning point,

on which positive social persuasion (e.g., support from family, friends, teachers, and students) acted as a crucial factor to cultivate his/her robust self-efficacy beliefs, which might bring him/her a new mastery/performance experience. With a successful mastery/performance experience, he/she can have confidence in coping with future setbacks positively.

As a single case study, this study cannot be generalized. However, the findings have implications for language teacher education and language teachers' practices, and the research process also provides a model of teacher reflection. Our next step is to analyze the data in order to uncover the influence of the participant's identities and habitus on her beliefs about CLT when she encountered the change in contexts.

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Appendix 1

The Story of the Development of Belief One

...When I said “thank you” to a staff, her “no worries” surprised me. “Why she did not say ‘you are welcome’?” I wondered. The standard answers, like the roots of a big tree, grew deep into my mind, even making me believe that it was the truth, never doubted about them. Having been an English teacher in a China’s senior high school, I ‘helped’ the students to memorize “‘you are welcome’ is used to answer ‘thank you’; ‘not to worry’ is used for ‘sorry’”. That moment I could not help being sad that if National College Entrance Examination were a competition, how many students had suffered such undeserved lost? In the process of overemphasizing standard language, standard accent, standard grammar, standard answers, but where is the authentic language?
(Excerpt from the first author’s diary: July, 2011)

Appendix 2

Stories of the Development of Belief Two

Period 1 *... I could not get satisfactory grade for my papers because of language...sometimes, for example, when I read academic papers, I thought I had understood, but it was not the authentic meaning; sometimes, I thought I had expressed well, but the listener made a different sense...*
(Excerpt from the first author’s diary: Nov, 2011)

Period 2 *One of my Kiwi (local New Zealand) friends told me: “if you are my language teacher, you should tell me how I am thinking, and then the differences between the two languages...”*
(Excerpt from the first author’s diary: Aug, 2012)

Period 3 *When my supervisor read my papers, he told me, “I can understand what you want to say, but you should speak in another way...” That moment, I felt the world not grey any more... I realized how important for a teacher to understand both English and the students’ native language” (Because my supervisor knows both English and Chinese well).*
(Excerpt from the first author’s diary: March, 2014)