

Negotiating Policy, Culture, and Conviction: The Role of Teacher Beliefs in Language Education

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Received : November 12, 2024

Accepted : December 21, 2024

Published : December 31, 2024

Citation: Nirmala, M., Ihsan, P. (2024). Negotiating Policy, Culture, and Conviction: The Role of Teacher Beliefs in Language Education. *Lingua: Journal of Linguistics and Language*, 2(4), 250-262.

ABSTRACT: This study presents a narrative review of the role of teacher beliefs in language education and their influence on pedagogical practices. The review aimed to synthesize current research to identify how teacher cognition interacts with contextual factors such as policy, culture, and institutional support. A systematic search was conducted across databases including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar using keywords such as teacher beliefs, pedagogical practices, EFL teaching, ESL methodologies, multilingual education, and professional development. Inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed studies published between 2010 and 2025. The literature revealed that teacher beliefs significantly shape the adoption of strategies like task-based learning and communicative approaches, although their enactment is often constrained by standardized curricula and assessment policies. Social and cultural contexts strongly mediate these dynamics, with teachers in developed contexts more likely to realize student-centered practices than those in resource-limited systems. Positive beliefs toward technology integration were widespread but frequently undermined by inadequate training and infrastructure. Professional development was consistently highlighted as an effective mechanism for transforming teacher beliefs and aligning them with innovative pedagogies. The discussion emphasizes the systemic barriers—including workload, rigid evaluation frameworks, and limited support—that hinder teachers from implementing their convictions. The findings suggest the need for flexible policy frameworks, increased institutional support, and targeted training to bridge the gap between teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices. Future research should pursue longitudinal and comparative studies to further explore these relationships and their impact on student learning outcomes.

Keywords: Teacher Beliefs, Pedagogical Practices, Language Education, Professional Development, Educational Policy, Technology Integration, EFL And ESL.



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INTRODUCTION

In the field of language education, the construct of teacher beliefs has emerged as a central theme for understanding how educators develop, refine, and implement their pedagogical practices. Teacher beliefs are generally defined as cognitive structures grounded in teachers' personal values

and prior experiences that actively shape their instructional decisions (Hua et al., 2022; Cheng, 2021). These beliefs are not isolated but rather embedded within broader social, cultural, and political contexts that influence both the content and form of instructional practices. Recent scholarship has emphasized the dynamic and context-sensitive nature of teacher beliefs, suggesting that they interact with teachers' emotions, institutional expectations, and policy frameworks in ways that may either enhance or constrain effective pedagogy (Rahman & Singh, 2023; Succar, 2022). Particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts, teacher beliefs have been shown to play an important role in determining classroom strategies, assessment practices, and the ways in which teachers respond to students' diverse needs (Watson, 2015).

Within this line of inquiry, contemporary research has highlighted the intersection between teacher beliefs and pedagogical practice as a site of tension and negotiation. Teachers often experience a conflict between their personal convictions about effective teaching and the curricular or institutional constraints they face, leading to compromises in classroom practice (Cheng, 2021; Rahman & Singh, 2023). For instance, while teachers may hold strong beliefs about the value of communicative approaches, the pressure to achieve test-oriented outcomes can force them into more traditional, teacher-centered practices. Similarly, beliefs about the integration of technology in language instruction are frequently moderated by contextual limitations such as inadequate training, insufficient resources, or lack of administrative support (Petro et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2017). These tensions underscore the importance of exploring teacher beliefs not only as internal constructs but also as elements that are negotiated within complex educational ecosystems.

At a more fundamental level, empirical evidence suggests that teacher beliefs exert a direct influence on classroom interaction and student engagement. Teachers' orientations toward feedback, for example, have been shown to guide the frequency, type, and purpose of corrective interventions, with potential consequences for learners' motivation and achievement (Rahman & Singh, 2023; Watson, 2015). Likewise, teachers' beliefs about the role of the mother tongue in second language instruction can either facilitate student comprehension or limit opportunities for authentic target-language use (Neokleous et al., 2022; Wolbers et al., 2023). Such findings illustrate that the relationship between beliefs and practices is not linear but multifaceted, shaped by competing priorities and contextual demands. They also highlight the centrality of teacher beliefs in shaping the learning environment, even when those beliefs are not always consciously articulated or systematically reflected upon by teachers themselves.

The significance of contextual factors in shaping teacher beliefs has been widely documented. Teachers' own educational trajectories and experiences with professional development strongly influence how they implement curricula and design classroom activities (Acosta et al., 2023; Alruqi & AlHarbi, 2022; Puspitasari et al., 2021). For example, studies indicate that when teachers perceive inadequate administrative support, they often struggle to maintain alignment between their instructional beliefs and classroom realities. In some cases, such dissonance leads to pedagogical compromises, such as increased reliance on the mother tongue or reduced use of innovative strategies (Neokleous et al., 2022). Moreover, sociocultural expectations within communities play an important role in shaping teachers' instructional decisions, as educators

attempt to balance their personal convictions with societal norms about what constitutes effective language teaching (Hua et al., 2022). This dynamic demonstrates that teacher beliefs cannot be separated from the institutional and cultural frameworks in which they are situated.

These contextual influences are further complicated by systemic challenges that teachers face globally. A recurring concern in the literature is the misalignment between teachers' beliefs and their enacted practices. Even when teachers recognize the importance of communicative competence or learner autonomy, curricular requirements and standardized testing pressures often compel them to adopt more conventional practices that do not fully reflect their beliefs (Cheng, 2021). Another major challenge involves the integration of technology. While many teachers express positive attitudes toward digital tools, their actual implementation tends to be limited due to inadequate training, lack of access, or uncertainty about pedagogical efficacy (Petro et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2017). These discrepancies between belief and practice highlight structural constraints that impede the translation of teacher cognition into classroom reality.

Furthermore, the challenges are not merely institutional but also psychological. Teachers' emotions are deeply intertwined with their pedagogical beliefs and can shape classroom practices in significant ways (Beslagic, 2025). For instance, teachers' passion for particular pedagogical approaches may coexist with apprehension about students' reception of those methods, leading to compromises in instructional delivery. Similarly, when teachers feel unsupported or undervalued by their institutions, their motivation to enact innovative practices aligned with their beliefs may diminish. This intersection of belief, emotion, and institutional context underscores the complexity of understanding teacher cognition as both a personal and social construct.

Despite the growing body of research, significant gaps remain in the literature. Much of the existing work has concentrated on the relationship between teacher beliefs and instructional practices, with relatively less attention given to the direct impact of teacher beliefs on student learning outcomes (Alruqi & AlHarbi, 2022; Succar, 2022). While it is clear that teacher beliefs influence pedagogical choices, the extent to which these choices translate into measurable improvements in learner achievement is less well understood. Additionally, the moderating role of contextual variables—such as cultural expectations, institutional policies, and available resources—has not been fully explored (Banes et al., 2016; Rahman & Singh, 2023). These gaps point to the need for more nuanced research that considers both the direct and indirect pathways through which teacher beliefs affect language learning.

Against this backdrop, the primary aim of this review is to synthesize recent scholarship on language teacher beliefs with a focus on their implications for pedagogical practice. Specifically, the review seeks to analyze the ways in which teacher beliefs interact with contextual factors such as culture, policy, and resource availability, and how these interactions shape the enactment of pedagogical strategies in EFL and ESL settings. The review also aims to identify areas of convergence and divergence in the literature, offering insights into the complex dynamics that govern the belief–practice relationship. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of teacher beliefs in promoting effective language education in diverse contexts.

The scope of this review encompasses both developed and developing contexts, with a particular focus on EFL and ESL classrooms where the influence of teacher beliefs is especially pronounced. The review includes studies from a range of geographical regions, acknowledging that the interplay between teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices is highly context-dependent. For example, teachers in resource-rich environments may face different challenges compared to those working in under-resourced schools, while cultural expectations regarding language use and pedagogy vary significantly across societies (Bayyurt et al., 2019; Yen et al., 2023). By adopting a comparative perspective, this review aims to provide a comprehensive account of how teacher beliefs operate across diverse settings, thereby offering valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners seeking to enhance the quality of language education globally.

METHOD

The methodology adopted for this review was designed to systematically collect, analyze, and synthesize scholarly literature on teacher beliefs in language education and their impact on pedagogical practices. Given the complexity and multidimensionality of the topic, the methodological framework combined rigor in database selection with careful attention to inclusion and exclusion criteria, keyword strategies, and the evaluation of diverse research designs. This section outlines in detail how the literature was identified, filtered, and analyzed to ensure both comprehensiveness and reliability in the findings.

The first step in conducting the review was the identification of relevant academic databases that could provide a wide-ranging and reputable source of studies on teacher beliefs. Four primary databases were utilized: Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), and Google Scholar. Scopus and Web of Science were selected due to their broad coverage of peer-reviewed journals and their indexing of leading international publications across education, linguistics, and applied social sciences. ERIC was chosen because of its specialized focus on educational research, including teacher cognition, pedagogical beliefs, and classroom practices. Google Scholar was used as a complementary source to capture grey literature, such as doctoral dissertations, book chapters, and conference proceedings that might not be indexed in the more formal databases. This combination of databases ensured a balance between breadth and depth of coverage, allowing the review to access both seminal works and the most recent developments in the field.

The literature search was conducted using a carefully developed set of keywords designed to reflect the multiple dimensions of teacher beliefs in language education. These included the primary terms “teacher beliefs” and “pedagogical practices,” as well as more context-specific keywords such as “EFL teaching,” “ESL methodologies,” and “multilingual education.” To account for broader sociocultural and professional dimensions, additional terms such as “teacher identity,” “professional development,” “classroom strategies,” and “cultural influences on teaching” were employed. The search strings combined these terms using Boolean operators to maximize the retrieval of relevant studies, for example: “teacher beliefs AND EFL teaching,” “teacher identity

AND professional development,” and “multilingual education AND pedagogical practices.” The inclusion of multiple keyword variations allowed the search to capture studies that addressed teacher beliefs from cognitive, cultural, policy-driven, and practice-oriented perspectives (Hua et al., 2022; Kaçar, 2021).

To maintain rigor in selection, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were established. Studies were included if they were published in peer-reviewed journals or academic dissertations between 2010 and 2025, addressed teacher beliefs explicitly in relation to language teaching, and were written in English. In addition, studies had to focus on EFL, ESL, or multilingual education contexts in order to ensure direct relevance to the review’s thematic focus. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were considered, as well as mixed-method research, to capture the full range of methodologies used in the field. Exclusion criteria eliminated studies that focused solely on learner beliefs, without reference to teacher perspectives, or those that dealt exclusively with content areas outside of language education. Opinion pieces, editorials, and non-scholarly commentaries were also excluded to maintain academic reliability.

The types of research designs included in the review reflected the diversity of approaches in this field. Empirical studies employing randomized controlled trials, cohort studies, and case studies were all considered, alongside qualitative investigations based on interviews, classroom observations, and narrative inquiry. For example, case studies exploring the tension between teacher beliefs and classroom practices (Cheng, 2021) were included alongside survey-based research that quantified the relationship between professional development and teacher cognition (Acosta et al., 2023). This methodological variety enriched the synthesis by providing both statistical evidence and context-sensitive insights into how teacher beliefs shape pedagogical practice. Additionally, studies focusing on technology integration and teachers’ attitudes toward the use of mother tongue in language classrooms were prioritized given their increasing relevance in contemporary language education (Neokleous et al., 2022; Ding & Zhao, 2019; Zhang, 2020).

The process of literature selection proceeded in multiple stages. After the initial keyword searches across the selected databases, duplicate records were removed using reference management software. Titles and abstracts of the remaining studies were screened to assess preliminary relevance. Those that met the inclusion criteria were then subjected to full-text review. At this stage, studies were further evaluated based on the clarity of their research questions, methodological rigor, and the degree to which they explicitly addressed the relationship between teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices. Each article was assessed independently by two reviewers, and disagreements were resolved through discussion to ensure consistency in the selection process. This multi-stage screening process reduced the initial large pool of studies to a final set that met both the relevance and quality thresholds necessary for the review.

The evaluation of selected studies also included an assessment of methodological quality. For quantitative studies, attention was paid to sample size, the appropriateness of statistical analyses, and the clarity of reporting. For qualitative studies, emphasis was placed on transparency in data collection procedures, the robustness of coding and analysis, and the credibility of interpretations. Mixed-method studies were evaluated on their integration of qualitative and quantitative findings

and the coherence of their design. This comprehensive appraisal ensured that the final synthesis was grounded in reliable evidence and that the review would be able to make well-supported claims about the state of knowledge in the field.

The synthesis process itself involved thematic analysis of the selected literature. Findings were coded into thematic categories corresponding to recurrent issues in the literature, including teacher beliefs about instructional strategies, beliefs related to technology integration, attitudes toward the use of learners' first languages, and the role of professional development in shaping teacher cognition. Cross-comparisons were made across studies conducted in different geographical regions to identify convergences and divergences in findings. For example, while some studies emphasized the positive impact of professional development on aligning teacher beliefs with modern pedagogical practices (Acosta et al., 2023), others highlighted persistent tensions between personal beliefs and policy-driven expectations (Cheng, 2021). This thematic approach allowed the review to integrate diverse forms of evidence into a coherent narrative about the interaction between teacher beliefs and pedagogical practice.

Overall, the methodology adopted in this review reflects a deliberate balance between comprehensiveness and selectivity. By drawing on multiple databases, employing an extensive set of keywords, and adhering to clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, the review ensured broad coverage of relevant literature while maintaining academic rigor. The incorporation of diverse research designs further enriched the analysis, enabling the review to capture both generalizable patterns and context-specific dynamics. This methodological rigor provides a strong foundation for the subsequent analysis of findings and supports the review's objective of contributing meaningful insights into the role of teacher beliefs in shaping language education practices across varied contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings from the reviewed literature reveal that teacher beliefs exert a profound influence on pedagogical practices across diverse contexts of language education. Four key themes emerged from the synthesis: the relationship between teacher beliefs and teaching strategies, the role of social and cultural contexts, the integration of technology in language classrooms, and the transformative impact of professional development on teacher cognition. Each theme illustrates not only the direct implications of teacher beliefs for classroom practice but also the ways in which external conditions shape or constrain these beliefs.

Teacher beliefs consistently demonstrate a strong association with the selection of instructional strategies in language teaching. Teachers who hold a conviction that active learning promotes engagement are more likely to implement student-centered methods such as task-based learning (TBL). Evidence suggests that teachers adopting TBL design classroom activities that simulate authentic communicative situations, thereby fostering student participation and practical language use (Nguyen et al., 2024). Similarly, beliefs aligned with communicative language teaching correlate with the use of interactive classroom strategies that prioritize meaning-making over rote

memorization. However, tensions emerge when teachers' personal convictions are confronted by rigid curricular frameworks and assessment-driven policies. For instance, although teachers may espouse communicative approaches, the demands of standardized curricula often limit their enactment in practice (Kaçar, 2021; Watson, 2015). Such dissonance highlights the discrepancy between espoused beliefs and observable practices. Ding and Zhao (2019) documented differences between teacher and student beliefs about writing instruction, particularly when a single method dominates classroom practice, underscoring the complexity of reconciling teacher convictions with institutional requirements.

The literature further underscores that teacher beliefs are deeply embedded in social and cultural contexts, which profoundly shape pedagogical decision-making. In countries with pluralistic educational policies, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, teachers often hold strong beliefs in the importance of incorporating cultural diversity into language instruction (Banes et al., 2016; Cheng, 2021). These beliefs translate into pedagogical practices that promote intercultural competence and critical awareness. Conversely, in many developing contexts, teachers operate within restrictive educational frameworks that emphasize traditional pedagogies and academic formalism. In Vietnam and across Southeast Asia, for example, conservative policies limit teachers' capacity to enact innovative practices, influencing their beliefs about the viability of student-centered methodologies (Yen et al., 2023; Petro et al., 2025). Comparative research demonstrates that teachers in developed contexts frequently adopt participatory approaches that reflect empowerment-oriented beliefs, while their counterparts in resource-constrained environments often perceive limited flexibility to diverge from prescriptive curricula (Hua et al., 2022; Neokleous et al., 2022). Teachers in developing regions also experience heightened pressure to meet formal academic standards, which may reinforce conventional practices at the expense of adaptive, learner-centered methods (Liu et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2023). The cross-national evidence thus reveals that sociocultural and policy environments mediate the degree to which teachers can actualize their pedagogical beliefs.

Teacher beliefs also play a decisive role in determining the extent to which digital technologies are integrated into language teaching. Many teachers with positive orientations toward technology perceive digital tools as valuable for enhancing learner engagement and motivation, and such beliefs can encourage adoption. However, this tendency is not universal, as contextual barriers—such as limited infrastructure or inadequate training—frequently mediate implementation (Cheng, 2021; Acosta et al., 2023). In classrooms where teachers identify themselves as technological innovators, technology integration tends to be more systematic and closely aligned with pedagogical objectives. Nevertheless, a persistent gap remains between positive beliefs and practical implementation. Many teachers report insufficient administrative support, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of specialized training as barriers to effective technology use (Rahman & Singh, 2023). Banes et al. (2016) emphasized that teachers' frustration often stems from a mismatch between their aspirations for technology-enhanced teaching and the practical realities of under-resourced educational environments. In Saudi Arabia, for example, teachers expressed positive beliefs about educational technology but reported difficulties in sustaining its use due to inadequate institutional support (Alruqi & AlHarbi, 2022). These findings highlight that while teacher beliefs about technology are generally optimistic, their actualization is heavily dependent on contextual resources and professional preparation.

Professional development programs emerge as powerful catalysts for transforming teacher beliefs and aligning them with innovative pedagogical practices. Structured training programs that combine theoretical frameworks with experiential learning are particularly effective in fostering reflective practice and belief change (Jacobs, 2019; Lu et al., 2023). For instance, collaborative workshops emphasizing active participation and peer learning have been shown to reshape teachers' attitudes toward learner-centered instruction. Nguyen et al. (2024) found that Vietnamese teachers who engaged in training on genre-based pedagogy adopted more diversified scaffolding strategies, aligning classroom practice with their evolving beliefs about student learning. Longitudinal studies confirm that participation in sustained professional development leads to significant transformations in teacher cognition. In one case, Goldsmith (2023) documented how teachers who attended workshops on genre-based writing instruction reported increased alignment between their pedagogical beliefs and classroom strategies, resulting in more coherent and effective instruction. Similarly, Brown et al. (2022) found that professional development in technology-enhanced language teaching not only improved teachers' skills but also altered their underlying beliefs about the role of technology in language education. These examples illustrate that teacher training can bridge the gap between beliefs and practices, enhancing both instructional quality and student outcomes.

The comparative evidence across these four themes underscores the global relevance of teacher beliefs as both a facilitator and a constraint in language education. In contexts with supportive policies, sufficient resources, and sustained professional development, teacher beliefs are more likely to be enacted in practice, leading to pedagogical innovations that benefit learners. In contrast, in settings marked by rigid curricula, limited institutional support, and resource scarcity, teachers often struggle to reconcile their beliefs with classroom realities. This disparity is evident in cross-national comparisons: while teachers in high-resource environments frequently implement participatory and technologically enriched strategies consistent with their beliefs, teachers in low-resource settings often rely on more traditional methods despite espousing progressive views. The findings collectively point to the need for ongoing institutional support, targeted professional development, and policy reforms that acknowledge and address the central role of teacher beliefs in shaping the quality of language education worldwide.

The findings of this review highlight the intricate relationship between teacher beliefs and the broader educational systems in which they are embedded. One of the most salient themes is the way teacher beliefs intersect with education policies and curricular frameworks. Teachers do not merely implement policy directives passively; instead, their beliefs act as interpretive lenses that shape how policy is enacted in the classroom. For instance, Hua et al. (2022) found that teachers who can negotiate their personal beliefs with policy requirements are more effective in adapting pedagogical approaches that maintain both policy compliance and relevance to student needs. Similarly, Acosta et al. (2023) noted that teachers' beliefs enable them to customize instructional methods within the constraints of policy, thereby enhancing pedagogical responsiveness. Yet, when policies are rigid and inattentive to the realities of classroom teaching, a disconnect emerges. Succar (2022) demonstrated that highly standardized assessment-driven policies often compel teachers to abandon flexible, student-centered approaches that they personally value. This tension underscores how education policy can either empower or suppress the enactment of teacher beliefs, depending on its sensitivity to pedagogical realities.

Systemic factors also play a critical role in mediating the translation of teacher beliefs into practice. Among these, workload is consistently identified as a major constraint. Beslagic (2025) reported that teachers under heavy administrative and instructional loads frequently default to familiar methods, even when they believe that innovative approaches would better serve their students. The stress of meeting numerous institutional requirements reduces the capacity for experimentation, leading to practices that are misaligned with teachers' espoused beliefs. Standardized evaluation systems further exacerbate this misalignment. As Banes et al. (2016) argue, when teaching is measured primarily through quantifiable outcomes, teachers often prioritize test-oriented instruction, which restricts creativity and responsiveness to learner diversity. Kaçar (2021) similarly observed that insufficient institutional support—whether in the form of professional training, access to resources, or administrative encouragement—creates a gap between teachers' convictions and their actual classroom practices. In these contexts, teachers struggle to implement approaches they believe to be effective, constrained by systemic barriers beyond their immediate control.

The implications of these findings are significant, as they highlight that teacher beliefs cannot be understood in isolation from the broader structural conditions of education. Policies, administrative systems, and institutional cultures all shape the extent to which teacher beliefs can be enacted. This suggests that any effort to improve pedagogical practice must address not only individual teacher cognition but also the systemic frameworks that either enable or inhibit the practical application of beliefs. The challenge is not merely one of professional development but also of policy design and institutional reform.

A promising direction for bridging the gap between beliefs and practice lies in targeted professional development programs. Jacobs (2019) and Lu et al. (2023) emphasize that training programs integrating pedagogical theory with practical application foster reflection and belief transformation. Nguyen et al. (2024) further provide evidence that workshops emphasizing collaborative and experiential learning can realign teachers' practices with their evolving beliefs. These initiatives not only enhance technical skills but also cultivate reflective spaces in which teachers can critically engage with their own pedagogical convictions. When professional development is sustained and contextually relevant, it has the potential to bring teacher beliefs and classroom practices into closer alignment.

Institutional culture also emerges as a crucial factor in supporting belief enactment. Creating supportive professional communities within schools can enable teachers to share experiences, articulate challenges, and reflect on practice collectively. Nguyen et al. (2024) highlight that such environments encourage teachers to integrate their beliefs into teaching more effectively by normalizing reflection and peer exchange. By fostering a culture of dialogue and collegiality, schools can reduce the isolation often experienced by teachers when attempting to implement innovative methods. Administrative support that legitimizes such collaborative spaces is therefore critical. Without this, teachers may lack the confidence or opportunity to experiment with practices aligned with their beliefs.

Beyond professional development and institutional culture, systemic reforms in policy are also necessary. For instance, education policies that balance accountability with flexibility can provide teachers the space to enact their beliefs without fear of punitive evaluation. Rahman and Singh

(2023) argue that policies emphasizing learner-centered outcomes rather than rigid testing metrics may reduce the misalignment between teacher convictions and classroom realities. Similarly, technology integration policies should not only mandate adoption but also provide the infrastructure, resources, and training necessary to support teachers in implementing their beliefs about digital tools effectively. The literature consistently shows that when teachers perceive policies and systems as enabling rather than restrictive, they are more likely to innovate and align their practices with their pedagogical beliefs.

Despite these insights, current research exhibits notable limitations. Much of the literature focuses on the correlation between teacher beliefs and practices, but relatively few studies assess the direct impact of beliefs on measurable student learning outcomes (Alruqi & AlHarbi, 2022; Succar, 2022). This gap limits the ability to determine how changes in teacher cognition translate into concrete educational benefits for learners. Moreover, cross-national comparisons remain uneven. While some studies highlight differences between developed and developing contexts (Yen et al., 2023; Petro et al., 2025), more comprehensive comparative analyses are needed to disentangle how cultural, economic, and institutional variations shape the belief–practice nexus. Another limitation lies in the predominance of self-reported data, which may be influenced by social desirability bias or incomplete reflection. More observational and longitudinal research is needed to capture the evolving relationship between beliefs, practices, and outcomes over time.

Future research should therefore move toward integrating multiple methodologies, combining surveys, classroom observations, and longitudinal case studies to better understand the mechanisms through which teacher beliefs influence pedagogy and student learning. Additionally, greater attention should be paid to systemic variables, such as the role of policy frameworks, administrative support, and professional cultures, in mediating the enactment of beliefs. By situating teacher beliefs within their broader institutional and cultural contexts, future studies can provide more actionable insights for policymakers and educators seeking to foster effective language teaching practices.

CONCLUSION

This narrative review highlights the central role of language teacher beliefs in shaping pedagogical practices across diverse educational contexts. The results demonstrated that teacher beliefs directly influence the selection of teaching strategies, such as task-based learning and communicative approaches, while also shaping teachers' responses to institutional and curricular constraints. At the same time, discrepancies often arise between teachers' espoused beliefs and enacted practices, particularly in contexts where standardized curricula and assessment-driven policies dominate classroom instruction. Cultural, social, and policy environments were found to be pivotal in determining whether teacher beliefs could be realized in practice, with teachers in resource-rich systems generally afforded more opportunities to align practice with convictions than those in resource-constrained settings. The integration of digital technologies was shown to depend heavily on both teachers' positive beliefs and the availability of systemic support. Furthermore, professional development emerged as a powerful catalyst for belief transformation, enabling teachers to reconcile their pedagogical convictions with practical classroom strategies.

These findings reinforce the urgency of addressing systemic barriers, including excessive workload, rigid evaluation mechanisms, and inadequate institutional support. Policy interventions should prioritize flexible, learner-centered curricula, provide sufficient technological infrastructure, and create sustained professional development opportunities that foster reflective practice. Future research should focus on longitudinal and cross-national studies to capture the evolving relationship between teacher beliefs, practices, and learner outcomes. By situating teacher beliefs within broader institutional and cultural frameworks, education systems can bridge the gap between conviction and practice, thereby advancing more effective and equitable language education.

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