




信念因素
与
职业阶段

严明 著

本土外语教师探究

On Belief Determinants and Professional Stages:
The Study of Local Foreign Language Teachers

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前 言

自 20 世纪后期以来,人才的国际化竞争和教育的人本化理念将教师因素推向了国家教育发展的实践与研究前沿。在国内教育改革与发展中,“教育大计,教师为本”的教育理念凸显了外语教育研究领域中的两个趋势:一是教育语言学的兴起,二是教育叙事研究的发展,这就使得一线外语教师作为这两大趋势的主体日益成为体现外语教育现状与特征的话语人和风向标。教育改革的深化、前沿理论的推广无不通过这一真正的实践群体产生效应。

事实上,我国本土外语教师作为非本族语教师只是努力平衡于母语与外语、东方文化与西方文化、传统角色与现代角色、西方理论与本土语境的职业人,其信念因素和职业阶段显著影响着他们在这些艰难平衡中的教学行为。在提升教师素质的探索中,教师信念研究在外语教育界逐步受到重视。当教师信念被作为教师课堂行为的主要杠杆时,教师信念与教学风格的错位现象亦受到了普遍关注。大量国内外研究表明,教师职能的体现并非从理论到实践、从提倡到实施的直线过渡,而是随教师主体对教育环境的认知适应而变化的。本研究认同的前提是:教师信念体系包含着隐性与显性、动态与静态以及对外部环境与职业阶段的同化、适应、平衡的多元因素。因此,中国本土外语教师发展研究亟待超越基于本族语环境的西方二语教学理论束缚,倾听本土一线教师的叙事心声,从教师的真实信念体系入手来寻找符合本土教育文化特征和适应当前社会现状的教师职业发展模式与对策。

语言教师与教育实践就如同语言与文化一般互相交融。外语

教师在我国本土教育机制中形成了特有的政学相通、群体道德、身份意识等文化取向，并会在各职业阶段呈现出不同的信念因素特征，直接影响到教学状态与效果。随着外语教育研究的范式从课程转向教师、从重法转向重人、从被动式培训走向主动式发展，教师职业角色自主权也在增长，这真正体现在一线教师的信念体系而非权威学者的理论著述上，印证于反映环境的教学风格而非千人一面的教学原理中。著者作为生长于中国外语教师之家、成长于本土校园文化、研修于二语理论发达国家、工作于一线教师群体的普通研究者，期待以此研究融入当前外语教育研究本土化人本化的时代潮流，力图揭开教师角色的表面理论程式去探究教师群体作为普通人在一线语境中心灵深处的主体意识，着重剖析教育文化、职业周期和自我意识对本土外语教师群体的作用与影响。

由于水平所限，本书的疏漏与局限在所难免，恳祈广大同行与读者不吝指正。

严 明

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摘 要

在应用语言学乃至教育学的相关领域中,由于一线外语教师日益成为理论与实践相结合的最直接执行者,外语教师理念及其发展过程在教师研究中逐渐成为热门课题。尽管近十年来对国内外外语教师尤其是基础教育阶段的外语教师的关注与培训正不断加强,并有所成效,然而对职前教师知识认知的关注远多于在职教师的信念构建;研究静态的信条原理仍然多于动态的信念决定因素。目前,从职业阶段视角探索在职外语教师信念决定因素的研究尚少有前人之成果可见。本书以社会建构主义为主要理论框架,循如下前提进行:1. 非本族语的本土学校外语教师在英语作为外语的中国仍然是校本教学领域的主要资源。2. 本土外语教师作为非本族语者是具有反思能力的特殊学习者群体。3. 表层的教师信念格局在不同程度上取决于受社会文化和职业现实影响的深层决定因素。4. 外语教师的总体心理随不同的职业阶段和教学环境呈现不同的特征,一些西方教师发展理论在国内的普遍性也是如此。

为聚焦当前本土外语教师的信念决定因素,本研究提出了以下几个研究问题:第一,现有外语教师信念体系诸方面在本土外语教师群体中的布局以及对他们的教学风格影响如何?第二,出信念体系外,影响教师教学风格的还有哪些方面?第三,Huberman 职业周期模式在这些中国教师群体信念中所反映的普遍性如何?第四,在不同职业阶段,教师的主要信念决定因素是什么?第五,本土高中的社会教学环境在教师教学风格中起着什么

作用？第六，非本族语者的外语教师能力在其信念理据中起什么作用？

本研究采用了问卷调查、定性访谈与个案研究相结合的方法。问卷调查目的在于发现不同职业阶段高中教师信念方面的总体分布情况，以便进一步比较。为此，本研究设计和分发的教师信念问卷由背景简况、业务现状、理论观念及教学实践四部分组成。来自上海不同区域的 282 名高中教师参与了这次问卷调查。教师访谈与个案定性研究是为了进一步研究国内高中教师在不同职业期的信念决定因素。39 名高中教师配合参与了半开放式问卷与访谈，81 名教师参与了信念决定因素专项问卷调查，4 名来自不同学校不同职业阶段的骨干教师参加了由课堂观察、问卷、访谈和自述形式组成的个案研究。本研究的主要发现和启示可如下所述：

首先，外语教师群体的职业阶段确实影响他们的信念构成，这种相关性是较明显的正值，但不如职业阶段理论模式所述之显著和规律，其五阶段的普遍性在本土教师群体中并不具有明显代表性，因为这些中国的高中外语教师在第二职业阶段起就趋向当地普遍信念体系和教学风格。除第一阶段的教师受信念体系影响程度较明显外，各职业阶段的高中外语教师的总体信念体系呈趋同性倾向。这种现象可以诠释为：通常在进入第二职业阶段后，外语教师们对这些信念决定因素的理解开始变得趋同。Huberman 五阶段模式中各职业阶段典型特征如教学实验、自发、引退等特征在这个群体中并不显著。相反，该高中教师群体呈现出一个带着信念体系去发现、跟着决定因素来适应和随着反思而回归的三阶段特征。

其次，被试外语教师的教学行为与口述信念之间的落差在统计意义上较为明显，现有外语教师信念体系的效性不能认为很高。来自个案研究和访谈的教师信息似乎更支持如下两方面的解释：第一，表层的外语教师信念体系不足以解释这一群体的教学风格，

信念体系不只是一个层面,应分为表现为理论认知的外显信念和决策实践的內隐信念。第二,信念体系在本质上是动态的,受制于教学环境和认知发展。国内高中英语教学是高度受教育环境机制影响的活动,一线教师的一般信念体系并不能顺利塑造其教学风格。根据教师访谈的信息及相关专家归纳,真正将普遍的概念性信念体系通过适应教学环境乃至社会教育机制重构成具体信念的,是教师自身的能力推断和决策力量。

此外,本研究还揭示了一个现象的本质:即信念决定因素差异很大,外语教师信念决定因素的影响力相当程度上取决于与教学环境的关联性和教师的自我认知。通过 SPSS 软件对整合外语教师信念体系的因子分析,有两个主要因子十分突显:即教师概念的理论信念(语言观,教学观和职业观)和教学环境的实践信念(评价机制,课程信念,自我能力,学生情况)。群体访谈和个案研究所反应的主要决定因素按权重排列如下:课程信念;评价机制;自我能力;教学环境;自尊信念;个人风格;有效方法;教室情境;学生情况;教学计划;学习信念;教学信念;优秀教师信念;英语语言观;职业信念;教学理论原则。该教师群体信念决定因素的影响力总体取决于教学可行性,而不是理论正确性。

由于研究对象范围与研究者水平所限,本书存在的局限性是显而易见的,但它的发现可为非本族语外语教师发展领域带来一定的理论与实践启迪。本研究首次力图尝试在非本族语群体中通过信念决定因素探究本土外语教师认知现状,将视线从体系转向决定性,从概念转向情境,从构成转向适应,为揭示国内外语教学生涯中教师信念的本质和影响力提供了更多的社会建构主义依据。教师信念与职业阶段研究通过比较知识与学习的本质,教学方法和教师意识、教师态度与教师能力的区别及不同职业阶段的影响力,拓展了外语教育个体差异研究外延,因其在外语教师教育发展中的新视角而受到国内外研究者的认同。总之,本书的立场在于强调将基于西方理论的现代外语教学理论引进国内在职教师

教育项目的同时,应当在详尽了解一线教师的真实信念及教学实践的社会环境的基础上,深入解析学习中的教师心理和教师能力,同时,还应将特定教学体制中教师的动态适应过程充分考虑在内。最后,本书作者在探讨了外语教育研究的发展趋势、本土外语教师的困境之后提出:后现代主义教育理念的本土化与教育语言学的方法论可能成为当前外语教师发展的可行路径。

Abstract

Since classroom teachers are increasingly regarded as the most direct implementers of the combination of foreign language (FL) teaching theories and practice in the fields of applied linguistics, education, and other related disciplines, FL teachers' mentality and its development has been a hot topic in the field of teacher research. However, though the last decade has witnessed the increasing importance and efficiency attached to the FL teacher education, especially the elementary and secondary FL teacher development in China, the relevant studies obviously continue to focus more on pre-service teachers' knowledge cognition than on in-service teachers' belief construction, more on static aspects of beliefs than on dynamic belief determinants(BD). There has been little research so far that is devoted to the investigation of the in-service high school none-native-speaker (NNS) FL teachers' belief determinants from the perspective of professional stages. Based on theories of social constructivism (SC), the book takes the following presuppositions into consideration: 1. NNS foreign language teachers in local schools are still the main important resource of school-linked learning service in China where English is taught as a foreign language; 2. Local foreign language teachers as NNS are groups of special learners with reflective ability;

3. The superficial teacher belief construction is determined by deeper factors with different validity influenced by the social cultural career reality; 4. The general psychological features of foreign language teachers change with different professional stages and teaching contexts, so does the universality of some western theories about teacher development.

To investigate the belief determinants of the current local FL Teachers, the researcher formulated the following questions: 1. What is the general map of the local teacher belief system and its impact on their FL teaching styles? 2. What are the other aspects apart from the system that also affect their teaching styles? 3. What is the universality of Huberman's model reflected in local teacher beliefs? 4. What are the main teachers' belief determinants in different professional stages (PS)? 5. What role is the local school teaching context playing in their teaching styles? 6. What role is the NNS FL teacher competence playing in their belief reasoning?

The present study is composed of a quantitative survey and a few qualitative interviews and case studies. The quantitative survey aims at discovering the general map of high school teacher beliefs in various aspects at different professional stages for further comparison. To this end, a four-part questionnaire which consists of the background information, professional conditions, theoretical beliefs and teaching styles has been designed and two hundred and eighty two high school teachers from different districts in Shanghai have responded to the questionnaire. The qualitative interviews and case studies are designed to further investigate the determinants of Chinese FL teacher beliefs in different professional stages through

observation and communication. Thirty-nine in-service high school teachers have participated in the semi-opened interviews with the questionnaires; eighty-one teachers have answered the belief determinant-oriented questionnaires and four master teachers from different schools have been selected in the case studies which involved classroom observations, questionnaires, interviews and self reports. The present study has yielded some findings and implications as presented below:

Professional stages of the FL teachers do affect their belief constructions, and the variables are positively correlated, but not that regularly and obviously as described in Huberman's model. It appears that the five phase model is not representative when applied to the groups of local school teachers who tend to assimilate into the general system and style in the context ever since the second professional stage. Except for being affected by their belief system to a bit greater extent in the first professional stage, these local FL teachers in different professional stages share so much in their general belief systems that the western PS features are not apparent in terms of universality. The possible explanation could be that: the understandings of the weight of belief determinants and aspects usually become comparatively alike among the school teachers after the second professional stage. Some typical PS characteristics in Huberman's five-stage model such as: experimentation, spontaneous and disengagement stages are not pronounced in the due period among these groups. A three-stage property emerged from the participating high school teachers: discovery with beliefs; adaptation with determinants and recurrence with reflection.

The gap between practice behaviors and reported beliefs of the participating FL teachers is statistically obvious, and the validity of the present FL teacher belief system (TBS) can not be considered high. The possible explanation supported more by case studies and interviews with these teachers is two folded so far: First, the superficial set of FL teachers' belief system is not sufficient to explain the general teaching styles of this group, there might be more than one level of belief system, which consists of two parts: the overt beliefs from theoretical cognition and covert beliefs from practical decisions. Second, the belief system is by nature dynamic and always mediated by teaching context and cognition development. While high school teaching in China is a highly situated activity influenced by educational mechanism, the general belief system of the forefront teachers does not lead smoothly to the teaching style. The robustness of teachers' competence reasoning and decision that reshaped the general conceptual belief system into the concrete one is itself formed through a process of adaptation by their situational context and even, in a wider range: the social educational mechanism, according to the subject teachers and experts in interviews.

The present study also reveals the nature of a phenomenon that the belief determinants differ greatly; the influence of the FL teachers' belief determinants is relatively determined by its increasing closeness to the teaching context and self knowledge. Two main factors appear to be significant through the SPSS factor analysis about the modified FL teacher belief system: theoretical beliefs about teacher concepts (beliefs about English, teaching and profession) and practical beliefs about

teaching contexts (beliefs about educational system, curriculum, selves, and students). The main belief determinants reflected in the group interviews and case studies have emerged in weight order with the following elements containing: beliefs about curriculum; beliefs about the evaluation system; beliefs about self ability; beliefs about teaching context; beliefs about the self esteem; beliefs about the personal styles; beliefs about effective method; beliefs about the classroom situation; beliefs about students; beliefs about teaching plans; beliefs about learning; beliefs about teaching; beliefs about good teachers; beliefs about English; beliefs about profession; and beliefs about the teaching principles. The influence of the belief determinants of the participant teachers are better based on and affected by the teaching feasibility rather than theoretical accuracy.

Though there are limitations to the book due to the limit of ability, the findings of the present study may bring some theoretical and practical implications in the field of NNS FL teacher development. This study strives to make an initial attempt to explore the NNS FL teacher cognition through local school teacher belief determinants. By shifting the attention from system to determinants, from concept to context, from organization to adaptation, it provides more insight of social constructivism into the nature and impact of FL teacher beliefs in FL teachers' professional path in China. By contrasting the nature of knowledge and learning, the influence of teaching methods and teacher mentality, teacher attitude and teacher ability and different professional stages, this study of FL beliefs and professional development widens the extension of individual

difference study in foreign language education and it has been warmly approved by domestic and foreign researchers for shedding some light on the FL teacher education and development. To sum up, the implications of the research findings have hammered home that while introducing the modern ideology of western theories of language teaching to forefront FL teachers, in-service teacher training and education programs should particularly make in-depth analysis about both teacher psychology and teacher capacity in learning based on authentic teacher voices and social context of teaching practice and take teachers' dynamic adaptation of particular teaching mechanism into consideration. Finally, after the reflections on the developmental trends and dilemmas confronted by FL teachers in China, the author presents the statement that the localization of postmodernism and the approaches of educational linguistics might be the feasible ways out for the local FL teacher development.

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