

Teachers' Beliefs in Teaching Comprehension of the Malay Language in Primary Schools

Noradinah Jaidi^{1,2}, Mardina Mahadi², Sri Kartika A. Rahman¹

¹Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, ²Faculty of Arts & Social Science, Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Corresponding Author Email: kartika.rahman@ubd.edu.bn

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i1/20884>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i1/20884

Published Online: 17 February 2024

Abstract

This study aims to explore and identify teachers' beliefs towards the teaching of reading and comprehension in Malay language education in primary schools in Brunei Darussalam. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior is used as a theoretical framework to analyse and categorise the data into the types of beliefs that teachers practice in their teaching. This study uses a qualitative approach with a multiple-case research design. A purposive sampling technique was used to select study participants of 3 teachers who received the Teacher's Day Appreciation Award. The findings show that the teacher's reading and comprehension practice in the classroom is related to beliefs based on Azjen's theory, which are behavioural beliefs (belief in the teaching career and belief in the role of Malay teachers), normative beliefs (belief in the influence of the student's background and belief in the influence of the school); and control beliefs (beliefs in teaching practices and beliefs in teachers' challenges).

Keywords: Teachers' Beliefs, Comprehension, Primary School, Brunei Darussalam

Introduction

Teaching is a complex phenomenon and is practised in various ways by teachers. Determining the success or failure of the process rests on the shoulders of the teacher who teaches. Differences among teachers are the most critical factors that will determine the success or failure of a reading and comprehension lesson, student achievement, and the effectiveness of reading teaching and learning. This is due to the difference in each teacher's beliefs and perspectives. Teachers have their own understanding and experience about the concept of reading and comprehension, alongside the teaching and learning patterns that should be carried out. To understand the teaching practices that teachers practice is to explore the teacher's belief in the teaching and learning theory he holds. This is because everything the teacher does in the classroom reflects their belief system (Utami, 2016).

According to research, teachers' beliefs are crucial, as these beliefs will aid teachers in constructing their actions and practices within the classroom (Aksoy, 2015; Donaghue, 2003; Johnson, 1992; Kutáľková, 2017; Spawa & Hassan, 2013). Harste and Burke (1977) and Kuzborska (2011) state that teachers make decisions about teaching in the classroom based on their beliefs about teaching and learning the language they practice. Moreover, teachers are not only required to possess the basic knowledge of reading comprehension strategies

but also recognise that their beliefs in the overall process and the influence of the environment will significantly contribute to the development of reading and comprehension skills, thereby leading to a substantial impact on teaching and learning process as a whole. This is recognised because the teacher's beliefs are the foundation that supports the shaping of teaching practices implemented within the classroom (Pajares, 1992). They also emphasised that teachers' beliefs significantly impact their own goals, procedures, roles, and their students.

Furthermore, the impact of beliefs on instructional planning, decision-making, and classroom practices surpasses the teacher's individual knowledge. This is because teachers' beliefs can identify reactions and behaviours towards students (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). If the teacher can determine the ability level of his students, the teacher will be able to choose and adjust the appropriate behaviour and type of education (Li, 2012; Pajares, 1992).

Belief is a vast field. This field is an area related to the teacher's cognition, encompassing the teacher's knowledge in the subject or teaching domain, strategies to improve student's skills in the subject or the teaching domain, how the teacher's thinking develops to shape their teaching practices in the classroom, and so forth (Skott, 2015). Defining and finding consistency in understanding the concept of trust is a challenge (Fives and Buehl, 2012). This concept of belief is growing in terms of terminology according to the currents of economic, technological, and political change. Harmens, van Braak and Van Keer (2008, p. 128) define belief as " a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge of objects, people and events, and their characteristic relationships". Pajares (1992, p. 136) defines belief as an "individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition". According to Pajares, belief is associated with attitudes, values, considerations, principles, opinions, ideologies, perceptions, and conceptions. Furthermore, Pajares emphasised that belief serves as the foundation in every discipline related to human behaviour and learning. According to Bandura (1997), belief in education is more than implementing and guiding goals, emotions, decisions, actions, and reactions. This is because the teacher in the classroom is responsible for the organisation, structure, pace of learning and social development of students who depend on the teacher's trust to move teaching and learning in the complex classroom. In fact, according to Yusoff (1999), the teacher's beliefs will influence the selection of teaching methods, materials, and tools used, as well as determine the pattern and focus of teaching and learning reading and comprehension. Most teachers have personal theories and beliefs and often relate their teaching practices based on those theories and personal beliefs from existing educational research bases (Hattie & Yates, 2013). Therefore, teachers stick to their beliefs to facilitate or overcome problems in teaching practice and to make decisions and actions.

The importance of teacher trust is proven by decades of research, and the exploration of this concept theoretically and practically continues to this day (Gills & Fives, 2015). Teachers hold various beliefs about learning, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, teaching and learning goals, cultural diversity, teachers' beliefs about subjects and students' abilities (Schraw & Olafson, 2015). Therefore, the focus of studies on trust is diverse. According to Skott (2015), common focuses of belief studies include exploring teacher's beliefs regarding their considerations in fulfilling their professional roles and examining the relationship between teachers' behaviour or teaching practices and student performance.

Moreover, Johnson's (1994) study on teacher beliefs comprises three fundamental assumptions: teacher's beliefs affect perception and judgment, teacher's beliefs play a role in channelling pedagogical knowledge into classroom practices and understanding teacher beliefs is crucial in improving teaching practices and teacher education programmes. Based

on this assumption, it determines that initial conceptions of behaviour and decisions in the classroom directly affect student achievement. According to Horwitz (1999), teachers' beliefs have an impact on teaching behaviour and ultimately affect student development at school. Therefore, it is very important to understand and know the teacher's belief system towards classroom teaching in general and reading and comprehension teaching in particular.

However, in this study, the researcher only focused on understanding the teaching of reading and comprehension from the perspective of the teacher's beliefs in carrying out their teaching. This aligns with the perspectives of Nespor (1987) and Feinman-Nemsar and Floden (1986) that, in understanding teaching, the researcher needs to understand the teacher's stances or beliefs regarding their profession and the wisdom the teachers employ in organising their work practices as a source of insight that needs to be explored to improve teachers' instructional methods. According to Skott (2015), studying teachers' beliefs in teaching will produce suggestions that may help more teachers improve their concept of beliefs that are difficult to change. Acknowledging this fact, this study aims to explore and analyse the pattern of teachers' beliefs regarding learning practices and reading and comprehension teaching at the primary school level.

Ajzen's Belief Model in Teaching Practice

Ajzen's belief model, which was introduced in the 1980s, also known as the theory of planned behaviour, has been applied in various fields, including teaching practice. Ajzen is a social psychologist who designed the theory of planned behaviour to explain and predict human behaviour (Ajzen, 2005). Ajzen categorises belief into three parts, namely behavioural belief, normative belief, and control belief. According to Ajzen (2005), individuals form beliefs in relation to specific qualities or characteristics. Beliefs also act as catalysts and influence change in the teacher's behaviour. This is because the influence on attitudes and personality characteristics can be determined by examining or observing behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). Therefore, the individual's intention or goal to undertake a particular task strongly indicates how the individual will implement it in actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, 1985). Therefore, based on Figure 1 below, the researcher has adapted the model of Sadaf and Johnson (2017, pg. 131) and Fauziah (2020) to discuss the teacher's belief in the teaching practice of reading and comprehension.

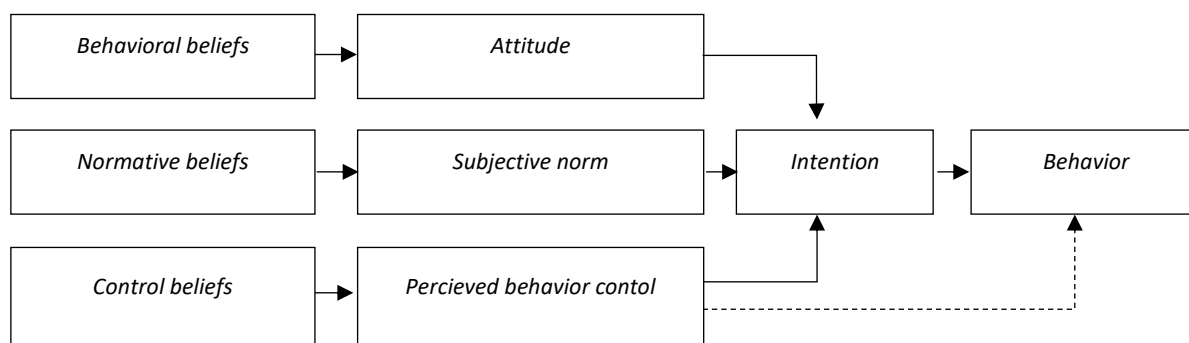


Fig. 1 Ajzen's 1991 Theory of Planned Behavior (Sadaf & Johnson, 2017, p. 131; Fauziah, 2020, p. 6)

In the context of teaching practice, the theory of planned behaviour has been used to study teachers' beliefs and intentions regarding the implementation of education. This is based on a study by Haney et al (1996), who used Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour to

study the influence of three main things, namely behavioural beliefs, normative beliefs, and regulatory beliefs, on the four components of the Ohio Science Model. The study found that teachers' beliefs about the four components of the Ohio Science Model are related to their attitudes (behavioural beliefs), subjective norms (normative beliefs), and behavioural control used (regulatory beliefs). In addition, the study by Stanec (2009) also used Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour to build and validate instruments that assess intentions, attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioural control used by teachers to administer fitness tests effectively. This study found that the instrument can predict teachers' true intentions and behaviour based on Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour. These studies suggest Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour can be a helpful framework for understanding and predicting teachers' beliefs and, intentions or goals in teaching practice.

Methodology

Coinciding with the purpose of the study, which aims to explore, analyse, and interpret teachers' beliefs about the practice of teaching reading and comprehension, the use of a qualitative approach design that utilises the study of various cases is very appropriate as it complies with the guidelines presented by Merriam (2001) and can answer the purpose research. Merriam emphasised that the qualitative approach is descriptive, focusing on the process, meaning, and understanding obtained through real-life situations. In addition, the design of the qualitative approach also focuses on how individuals attribute meaning to understand their lives, experiences, and the structure of their world. Moreover, the design of the qualitative approach was also chosen based on the justification presented by Marshall & Rossman (1999), namely, studies that aim to identify and explain complex processes that cannot be obtained through quantitative research. The selection of this design can also identify the results of unexpected phenomena in advance in addition to being able to detect the weakness or conflict of a phenomenon.

Meanwhile, the data collection technique involves semi-structured interviews conducted with Malay Language teachers in Brunei Darussalam. These teachers specialise in the Malay Language subjects in primary schools. They are presently in active service and have been recipients of the Teacher's Day Special Mention Award from its establishment in 1991 until 2018.

For this study, the researcher has adapted interview question items from previous studies that are similar to the context of the study. The main purpose of the researcher adapting the interview question items is to ensure the validity and reliability of the interview question items used. Since the interview question items from previous studies have been used, the bias can be reduced, and the element of validity and reliability of the item can be increased. Because the interview method is used, the researcher divided the meeting for the interview into two parts, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Summary of interview procedures and themes of interview questions

Interviews	Interview question theme	Interview procedure	Interview questions adapted from
A Teacher profile & teaching practice	1. The teacher's background	Meeting 1; 30-40 minutes	McKay (2012) & Reyna-Barron (2016)
	2. Teaching background and academic qualifications		
	3. Teaching courses		
	4. Professional training and achievements		
	5. The practice of teaching reading and comprehension in class		
B Teacher's beliefs	1. Behavioural belief or teacher's belief in the teaching career	Meeting 2; 30-40 minutes	Richardson et. al. (1991) & Yvonne 2016
	2. Normative beliefs or teachers' beliefs towards schools and students		
	3. Controlling belief or teacher's belief in teaching reading and comprehension		

Meanwhile, based on Table 2 below, the three study participants are female teachers in their 40s and 50s who received the Teacher's Day Appreciation Award for the Malay language subject. All of these teachers started working in the 1990s and 2000s. The highest qualifications of the teachers are Bachelor's and Master's degrees. All the teachers were still teaching Bahasa Melayu when the researcher made the first meeting at their respective schools. These teachers are assigned to schools in Brunei and Muara Districts. Brunei Darussalam Education Statistics 2018 states that the Brunei Muara District has a large number of schools and students compared to other districts. The total number of schools in this district is 158 schools out of 250 schools nationwide. Within this district, there are also 83,890 out of the total of 108,553 students in Brunei and 8,161 out of 10,934 teachers nationwide (Department of Planning, Development and Research, 2018, p. 3). The majority of these teachers are assigned to primary schools in residential areas, better known as Housing Schemes or Transfer Schemes.

Table 2

General background of teachers as study participants

Code	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Age	46 years old	45 years old	55 years old
Year of service	Since 1997	Since 2000	Since 1991
Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Certificate (1994-1997), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Certificate (1997-2000), BA Primary Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Arts Teaching Certificate (1993-1994)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA Education (Specialization in Malay Language) • MA Malay Language Education (2014) 	(Specialization in Malay Language) (2006-2010)	
School	A primary school in Brunei and Muara District	A primary school in Brunei and Muara District	A primary school in Brunei and Muara District
General school information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is built in a residential area • The school accommodates a large number of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is built in a residential area • The school accommodates a large number of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is built in a residential area • The school accommodates a large number of students
Subjects taught	Malay Language	Malay Language	Malay Language

Study Findings and Discussion

In formulating the beliefs of Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 3 regarding the teaching of reading and comprehension, the researcher used Ajzen's (1991) planned behaviour belief model as a guide in categorising the types of beliefs, that is, (1) belief in behaviour which is belief teachers towards teaching careers whether positive or negative, (2) normative beliefs which are teachers' beliefs towards support and pressure from the school and students, and (3) regulatory beliefs which are beliefs about challenges and constraints, teachers' readiness or ability towards teaching reading and comprehension. Based on the model, the individual's intention or goal to undertake a task strongly signals how the individual will implement it in actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, 1985). In the context of teaching practice, the theory of planned behaviour has been used to examine teachers' beliefs and intentions regarding the implementation of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Based on the findings of the study, the teachers involved have a good or positive belief background regarding the field of education. The three main focuses in the Ajzen Model, which are belief in attitudes, belief in subjective norms and belief in the notion of behavioural control, have greatly affected the quality of teachers' teaching. Based on these beliefs, these teachers possess the capability and competence to implement various teaching strategies that can enhance students' reading and comprehension levels.

Behavioural Beliefs

The research findings on beliefs regarding teacher behaviour in this study focused on (1) beliefs regarding the teaching profession and (2) beliefs regarding the role of Malay language teachers. Beliefs regarding both focal points have an impact on teachers' behaviour in schools, whether negative or positive, which affects their teaching practices. This is based on studies by Ajzen (1991); Sadaf and Johnson (2017); Fauziah (2020), which assert that behavioural belief is teachers' positive or negative belief regarding the teaching profession. The summary of the interview findings regarding teachers' beliefs on behaviour is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Summary of teachers behavioural beliefs

TTLT	Focus	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Belief in behaviour (attitude)	Teaching career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural talent • Family background • Interest in career • Knowledge about strategies and learning levels • Teacher career requirements (clear voice, good at interacting and good at planning lessons). • Allocated salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a natural talent • Interest and desire for the teaching profession • Professional training or workshop • Special rehabilitation/guidance for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a natural talent • Have knowledge • Thorough training and mastering the subject • Creative, enthusiastic, and sensitive to students' needs • Be patient and disciplined • Self-quality
	The role of the BM teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in various aspects of pedagogical knowledge and assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a conducive room with teaching and learning materials • Give training repeatedly • Interesting learning activities. • Teaching is different • Remedial program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning all aspects of teaching

Teacher 1 believes that the teaching career is a natural talent with a family background in the teaching field. However, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 disagree with that statement. They stated that the teaching career is not a natural talent but rather comes from an interest in the teaching career and being knowledgeable and trained in the teaching field.

Teacher 2: "Kalau saya passionate. Kadang-kadang ada guru boleh ajar, tapi inda sepenuh hati [...] Bukan semulajadi ... Masih passion. Belajar [memperbaiki] untuk diri sendiri"

Passionate teachers teach with their whole heart, making learning a self-improvement journey.

Teacher 3: "Mengajar ani bukan bakat semulajadi ni. Sebab saya dulu ambil bidang kursus sarjana bukan dalam bidang perguruan. Tetapi setelah diamanahkan menjadi seorang guru, amanah tersebut terpaksa saya pikul dan jadi tanggungjawab saya tu untuk mendidik anak bangsa menjadi seorang yang berguna dan berilmu."

“Yatah untuk jadi guru yang berkesan ani, antaranya pasal kualiti guru atu mesti kreatif ... bersemangat ... peka terhadap keperluan kanak-kanak. Guru jua mesti sabar bah dalam menghadapi ulah murid ani dan pihak-pihak tertentu lagi macam ibu bapa. Yatah kata kunci semua ani adalah disiplin yang baik bah.”

Teaching is a learned responsibility. To be effective, teachers need creativity, enthusiasm, sensitivity to children's needs, patience in managing student behaviour, and maintaining good discipline.

According to Xiang and Wang (2017), a teaching career requires a combination of natural talent and skills and knowledge in the field of teaching. However, Xiang and Wang (2017) describe natural talent as good communication skills or interaction abilities that will contribute to effective teaching that is not related to family background. Fives and Buehl (2014) found that teachers who believe the teaching career is a natural talent will limit their willingness to engage in professional development and improve their teaching skills. Meanwhile, teachers who do not see the teaching career as a natural talent will be more open and receptive and learn new strategies and approaches (Paek & Summers, 2017).

However, the determinants of success in a teaching career do not only involve the teacher's natural talent but also the teacher's role, which involves external factors (being in the environment such as the classroom, district, and national schools) and internal factors (within the teacher such as awareness, knowledge, self-awareness, and self-reflection). This is because these factors can increase or affect students' development, knowledge, and abilities (Buehl & Beck, 2014). This has also been stated by the teachers in this study (table 4). From the aspect of belief in the role of Malay language teachers, these teachers believe that skills in various aspects of knowledge and pedagogy, as well as assessment, play an essential role in teaching reading and comprehension.

Teacher 1: “Seorang guru mesti ada ilmu. Sentiasa mencari ilmu.”

“Pertama... Kan lihat ke mana murid atu, tahap mana.. Screening dulu. Yang mana satu yang boleh. Tier 1, 2, 3... masa ani sekolah ada tahap latihan dorang, tier 1, 2, 3 inda sama, differentiated task. Atu lah... First thing... Tahap kemahiran kanak-kanak atu.”

Assess students' skills first, categorise them into tiers, and tailor tasks accordingly. Prioritise understanding the child's skill level.

Teacher 2: “Selalu saya sediakan macam mekar. Di beli. Ada macam-macam info.”

“Aktiviti sampingan. Ada sudut membaca. Tinggi... lancar...”

Teachers prepare a well-equipped library to encompass a variety of information and engaging activities, alongside creating a designated reading corner.

Teacher 3: "Peranan guru ini banyak contohnya macam menyediakan pengajaran yang ada proses perancangan secara sistematik... ada menggunakan kaedah dan teknik yang sesuai supaya murid mau belajar."

"Selain itu ... guru ini mesti pandai sediakan suasana belajar yang dapat merangsang minat murid ... jadinya guru ini mesti jua pandai membuat pelbagai aktiviti dalam darjah mengikut tahap kemampuan murid."

The teacher excels in systematic lesson planning, employing effective methods to engage students, and creating a stimulating learning atmosphere with tailored activities based on individual abilities.

The teacher's belief in education is strengthened by the results of the teacher's experience (internal factors) through their life, schooling, and the education courses they have followed. According to Kagan (1992), this existing belief is considered firm despite the existence of conflicting evidence against the belief. Kagan also added that trust has two purposes in teaching, namely (1) a purpose related to the teacher's belief in the educational program that shapes and influences students on what and how they learn, and (2) a purpose related to trust as the focus of change in the educational process. Learning is now considered an active and constructive process influenced by the individual's understanding, beliefs, and preconceptions.

Therefore, teachers' beliefs can be formed based on the teacher's experience, education, and cultural background (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). These teachers' beliefs can affect their teaching practices (Klehm, 2014). Most teachers have personal theories and beliefs and often relate their teaching practices based on those theories and personal beliefs from existing educational research bases (Hattie & Yates, 2013). Every action teachers take within the classroom reflects the belief system they uphold (Utami, 2016). Furthermore, teachers' beliefs will help teachers in shaping their actions and practices in the classroom (Aksoy, 2015; Donaghue, 2003; Johnson, 1992; Kutálková, 2017; Spawa & Hassan, 2013).

Normative Beliefs

Normative beliefs in this study focus on teachers' beliefs about (1) the influence of the school, and (2) the influence of the student's background. This is because these two influences have an impact on the teaching of reading and comprehension. The influence of the school and the influence of the student's background is beyond the teacher's control and may or may not provide social pressure to the teacher. This is based on the study of Ajzen (1991); Sadaf and Johnson (2017); Fauziah (2020) stating that normative belief is the teacher's belief in support and pressure from the school and students. A summary of the results of the interviews on normative beliefs is as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Summary of teacher normative beliefs

TTLT	Focus	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Normative Beliefs	<i>Influence of student background</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and social status of parents who are less able to influence learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' economic and social status
	<i>School influences</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School infrastructure influence learning (learning facilities) • Administration affects teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not believe that school infrastructure affects the level of learning • Administration has an impact on teachers-providing reading materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School infrastructure affects learning • The school committee has no effect on teaching • School culture or administrative instructions do not affect the quality of teaching • The classroom environment affects learning

According to Teachers 2 and 3, the background of students who come from low economic and social status can affect their level of learning. This point coincides with the study of Aikens and Barbarin (2008) and the study of Romeo et al. (2022), who found that the socioeconomic status of the family has an impact on students' early reading, and with these deficiencies, students face difficulties in accessing good reading material and language exposure. However, Teacher 1 disagreed with this statement as several students demonstrated high learning enthusiasm and aspired for success. Therefore, their low economic and social status does not have an impact on them.

Teacher 1: "Ada keluarga yang sudah dapat 5A dalam PSR, benda tu.. dorang punya ... Semangat kanak-kanak tu sendiri. Dari... keluarga susah, semangat bantu parents nya, senang pun.. Ina semestinya berjaya. Ada yang gunakan background, ada impaknya. Tapi untuk.. Kajian buktikan yang background nada berkesan."

A 5A PSR achievement embodies resilient spirits, overcoming challenges and prioritising parental support. Background influences may play a role but affirm the effectiveness of one's determination to achieve success.

Teacher 1's statement coincides with the findings of Zamani's (2018) study, which states that the low socio-economic background of the student's family does not affect the student's ability to excel in reading and understanding the text. Zamani thinks that the motivation and support of the people around the students play an important role in their reading ability.

In addition, as stated in Table 4 above, school infrastructure factors with various facilities can affect students' comfort for their interest in learning and at the same time can improve students' academic achievement. This is because external factors (being in the

environment) including classrooms, schools, reflect their beliefs about the challenges and obstacles in enacting their teaching practices. For example, in the classroom, factors such as student ability, student attitude, classroom management and class size are among the challenges and obstacles in teacher teaching. Meanwhile, at the school level, administrative factors, support from parents, colleagues and effective teaching resources or materials are factors that will become challenges and obstacles in teachers' teaching practice.

There are studies that show negative effects on the teaching and learning process caused by inadequate school infrastructure and facilities. For example, the study of Erlina et. al (2020) who found that school facilities in Indonesia cause a decrease in student motivation to learn English. In addition to motivation, the effects of poor infrastructure will also affect the health and well-being of students and teachers (Pakpahan & Hidayat, 2021). Even based on the study of Thaba-Nkadimene and Mmakola (2019); Ngware et. al (2010) found that resources and infrastructure are barriers to conducive learning and quality teacher teaching as well as teacher-pupil interaction also become less effective.

These factors can create stress and affect teachers' teaching beliefs and practices. Understanding teachers' beliefs is important in improving teaching practices and teacher education programs. It is based on this assumption that determines that initial conceptions of behaviour and decisions in the classroom directly affect student achievement. According to Horwitz (1999), teachers' beliefs have an impact on teaching behavior and ultimately affect student development at school. Therefore, it is very important to understand and know the teacher's belief system towards classroom teaching in general and reading and comprehension teaching in particular.

Control Beliefs

Based on the analysis of research findings, teachers believe that they can control any action or teaching behaviour in the classroom. According to the study by Ajzen (1991); Sadaf and Johnson (2017); Fauziah (2020) stated that control beliefs are beliefs about challenges and constraints, teachers' readiness, or ability to teach reading and comprehension. Therefore, in this study, regulatory beliefs focus on (1) teaching practices and (2) challenges. The summary of the results of the interviews regarding the control beliefs is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Summary of teacher control beliefs

TTLT	Focus	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Control Beliefs	Teaching practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of reading material Pupils read and understand the passage material Peer guidance Individual guidance/teaching (weak students) Differentiated teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class supervision can influence students to perform assignments. Knowledge of teaching techniques such as questioning and assessment techniques Knowledge sharing experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge delivery is a joint task and activity. Systematic planning process by using appropriate strategies, methods and techniques Reading skills are the ability of students with certain skills. Sharing teaching ideas and methods strengthens teaching
	Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak students Administrative workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative workload Support from other teachers (remedial program) Experience remedial programs by providing additional classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready to face new things Wisely dealing with two parties (students and parents). Students who are not good at reading

Based on a study by Sadaf and Johnson (2017), teachers who believe that the willingness of teachers to impart knowledge and the ability of teachers to deliver lessons with effective techniques show that teachers control teaching and learning better, and this has a positive effect on teaching. As stated in Table 6 above, the teachers show that they have knowledge in helping students read and understand reading texts by using various reading techniques that are suitable for their students. In addition, teachers also believe that the use of teaching materials can control the teacher's actions in teaching. This means the use of teaching aids in the steps of teaching delivery can help teachers give understanding to students in addition to making teaching more interesting. Moreover, teachers believe that a systematic lesson planning process and self-confidence in their own abilities in pedagogical knowledge aids in the application of various teaching strategies.

Teacher 1: *“Ajar baca.. Rendah lain... More simple. Menggunakan bunyi. Foundation dari pra. Lepas kenal perkataan, bina perkataan, akan kembang, baca jadi budaya, sikit-sikit ada garaknya.”*

Instructs reading with a focus on simplicity and sound, laying a foundation from the pre-stage. As words are mastered, the development of a reading culture gradually takes shape.

Teacher 3: *“Iatah kaedah-kaedah ani mesti cigu-cigu tau macam kaedah pandang sebut, kaedah fonik, kaedah KGBK, dan mesti juga menyediakan pelbagai bahan bacaan untuk murid tu.”*

Most teachers must be familiar with methods such as look and say, phonics, and KGBK, and they must offer diverse reading materials to students.

However, teachers also believe there will be obstacles or challenges in the actions they will take. Among them are the readiness to face change, support from other teachers to make changes, such as teaching remedial classes, and the increased burden of administrative tasks in introducing changes. This shows that a positive belief in an action can turn negative if there are obstacles or challenges in making the action. Therefore, an individual's intention or goal to undertake a task is a strong signal of how the individual will implement it in actual behaviour.

Various challenges faced by teachers will affect their well-being, including their mental and physical health, which will affect their quality of teaching (Geraci et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers need measures to deal with challenges so that they can control teaching more effectively. According to Botha and Nel (2022), a teacher training program based on teaching practice and in line with teaching reality will be able to prepare trainee teachers to face challenges. In addition, the provision of resources and a good school support system can also help reduce challenges in the teaching profession (Balatucan, 2022; Botha & Nel, 2022).

Bandura (1997) has stated that belief in education is more than implementing and guiding goals, emotions, decisions, actions, and reactions. The teacher in the classroom is responsible for the organisation, structure, pace of learning and social development of students who depend on the teacher's beliefs to move teaching and learning in the complex classroom. Therefore, teachers stick to their beliefs to facilitate or overcome problems in teaching practice and to make decisions and actions. In addition, Li Xiu (2012) believes that teachers' beliefs can have a significant impact on teaching strategies, learning environments, motivation, and the achievement of their students. In addition, trust can also be influenced by the teacher's attitude towards the subject and the teacher's self-evaluation (Yueng et al., 2014; Borko, 1992). Therefore, whatever form of teacher's belief will shape and influence the practices, awareness, attitudes, methods, assessments, and teaching and learning policies within the classroom environment.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study is to survey the beliefs of the teachers who participated in the study towards the teaching of reading and comprehension. To understand the teaching practices that teachers practice is to explore the teacher's belief in the teaching and learning

practices that he holds. This is because everything a teacher does in the classroom reflects their belief system. Teachers' beliefs are essential as they will aid teachers in shaping their actions and practices in the classroom. To comprehend teachers' instructions, it is imperative for researchers to understand the teachers' perspectives or beliefs regarding their profession and the teachers' wisdom in organising their work practices to provide valuable insight aimed at enhancing teaching.

In this study, teachers' beliefs about the practice of teaching reading and understanding reading texts involve three types of beliefs, namely behavioural beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs based on the Ajzen 1991 model. The findings show that behavioural beliefs in this study focus on two aspects, which are aspects of the teaching career and aspects of the role of Malay language teachers in teaching. Both these aspects can shape the teacher's belief in the teaching career either positively or negatively. Meanwhile, the findings show that normative beliefs in this study focus on two aspects, namely, the aspect of the influence of the student's background and the aspect of the school's influence that can shape teachers' beliefs about support and pressure from the school and students. In addition, the findings also show that the control belief in this study focuses on the control aspect of teaching practice and the control aspect of challenges in teaching reading and comprehension.

Therefore, based on this study, teachers' beliefs influence their goals and roles as teachers, practices in teaching reading skills and comprehension, and the background of students and schools. This aligns with the study by Kuzborzka (2011), which stated that teachers' beliefs not only affect goals, students, and schools but also have an impact on procedures, teaching materials, and communication patterns within the classroom. Marohaini (1999) also believed that a teacher's beliefs affect the teaching methods, resources and tools used, thereby shaping the patterns and focus of reading and comprehension teaching and learning.

Thus, teachers' beliefs play a vital role in shaping the professional development of teachers by influencing the patterns of their thinking, emotions, and actions in the classroom. Furthermore, the importance of acquiring teaching strategies among teachers should be emphasised within the framework of the nation's education. Proficiency in these elements can be attained through teachers' effective teaching and learning practices. Active teaching and learning strategies that centre around the students may aid in fostering comprehension of the subject contents. The implications of this study can contribute to new insights that may enhance academic achievements, particularly, and in a broader context, in daily life. Moreover, it can provide advantages in determining specific interventions that align with behavioural, normative, and control beliefs to facilitate teacher preparation programmes and professional development.

References

- Aikens, N., and Barbarin, O. (2008). Socioeconomic differences in reading trajectories: the contribution of family, neighborhood, and school contexts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(2), 235-251.
- Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior. In Kuhl, J. & Beckman, J. (Eds.), *Action control: From Cognition To Behavior*. Springer.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211.
- Ajzen, I. (Eds.) (2005). *Attitudes, Personality, And Behavior*. Press/McGraw-Hill.

- Aksoy, K. (2015). What you think is not what you do in the classroom: Investigating Teacher's Beliefs for classroom management in an EFL classroom. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 675-683.
- Balatucan, S. (2022). Lived experience of special education teachers in teaching. *Journal of Humanities and Education Development*, 4(3), 162-171.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. Freeman.
- Borko, H. (1992). Becoming a mathematics teacher. In Grouws, D. A. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Research On Mathematics Teaching And Learning*. Macmillan.
- Botha, C., and Nel, C. (2022). Purposeful collaboration through professional learning communities: teacher educators' challenges. *International Journal of Learning Teaching and Educational Research*, 21(6), 210-225.
- Buehl, M., & Beck, J.S. (2014). *The Relationship Between Teachers; Beliefs And Teachers' Practices*. Education.
- Donaghue, H. (2003). An instrument to elicit teachers's beliefs and assumptions. *ELT Journal*, 57(4) 344-351.
- Erlina, D., Desvitasari, D., Marzulina, L., & Risfina, A. (2020). Students' demotivating factors in english language learning at one state Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Palembang, South Sumatera, Indonesia. *Indonesian Research Journal in Education*, 4 (1), 120-136.
- Fauziah, H., & Cahyono, B. Y. (2022). Prevalent beliefs in learning styles myths: Indonesian research trends on learning styles. *Issues in Educational Research*, 32(4), 1384-1402.
- Fives, H., & Buehl, M. M. (2012). Spring cleaning for the "messy" construct of teachers' beliefs: What are they? Which have been examined? What can they tell us? In Harris, K. R., Graham, S., Urdan, T., Royer, J.M., & Zeidner, M. (Eds.), *APA Educational Psychology Handbook, Vol. 2. Individual differences and cultural and contextual factors*. American Psychological Association.
- Floden, R. (1986). The culture of teaching. In Wittrock, M.C. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Research On Teaching*. Macmillan.
- Gilakjani, A. & Sabouri, N. (2017). Teachers' beliefs in english language teaching and learning: A review of the literature. *ELT*, 4(10), 78-86.
- Geraci, A., Domenico, L., Inguglia, C., & D'Amico, A. (2023). Teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout, work engagement, and self-efficacy during covid-19 lockdown. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(4), 296.
- Gill, M. G., & Fives, H. (2015), *The International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs*. Routledge.
- Haney, J. J., Czerniak, C. M., & Lumpe, A. T. (1996). Teacher beliefs and intentions regarding the implementation of science education reform strands. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 33, 971-993.
- Hattie, J., & Yates, G. (2013). *Visible Learning and The Science Of How We Learn*. Routledge.
- Harmans, R., van Braak, J. and van Keer. (2008). The impact of primary school teachers' educational beliefs on the classroom use of computers. *Computers & Education*, 51, 1499-1509.
- Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. (1977). A new hypothesis for reading teacher research: both the teaching and learning of reading is theoretically based. In Pearson, P. D., (Eds.), *Reading: Theory, Research, and Practice*. National Reading Conference.
- Horwitz, E. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' belief about language learning: *A Review of BALLI Studies System*, 27, 557-576.

- Johnson, K. E. (1992). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices during literacy instruction for non-native speakers of English. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, XXIV, 83-107.
- Johnson, K. E. (1994). Teaching and teacher education: The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of pre-service English as a second language teachers. *English Teaching Forum*, 10(4), 439-452.
- Kagan, D. (1992). Implications of research on teacher belief. *Educational Psychologist*, 27(1), 65-90.
- Kuzborska, I. (2011). Links between teachers' beliefs and practices and research on reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 23(1), 102-128.
- Klehm, M. (2014). The effects of teacher beliefs on teaching practices and achievement of students with disabilities. *The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of Council for Exceptional Children*, 37(3), 216-240.
- Kutalkova, K. (2017). Teachers' beliefs in the Czech Republic: Review study. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 237: 1352 – 1358.
- Li, X. (2012). The role of teachers' beliefs in the language teaching-learning process. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(7), 1397-1402.
- Yusoff, M. (1999). *Strategi Pengajaran Bacaan Dan Kefahaman*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. G (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research*. (3rd Ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Merriam, S. B. (2001). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications In Education*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Nespor, J. (1987) The Role of Beliefs in the Practice of Teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 19, 317-328.
- Ngware, M., Oketch, M., & Ezech, A. (2010). Quality of primary education inputs in urban schools: evidence from nairobi. *Education and Urban Society*, 43(1), 91-116.
- Paek, S. H., & Sumners, S. E. (2017). The indirect effect of teachers' creative mindsets on teaching creativity. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 53(3), 298–311
- Pajares, M.F. (1992). Teachers' belief and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62, 307-332.
- Pakpahan, P. and Hidayati, W. (2021). Implementation of total quality management in facilities to improve institution quality school. *Manageria Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(1), 97-124.
- Reyna-Barron, E. Y. (2016). An Analysis of the Comprehension Instruction and Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies Used by Teachers to Facilitate Students' Ability to Understand Text [Doctoral thesis, Texas A&M University]. <https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969.1/157058/REYNA-BARRON-DISSERTATION-2016.pdf;jsessionid=3BE38421AFA24B0916DD9101807C49BD?sequence=1>
- Richardson, V., Anders, P., Tidwell, D., & Lloyd, C. (1991). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in reading comprehension instruction. *American Educational Research Journal*, 28(3), 559–586.
- Romeo, R., Uchida, L., & Christodoulou, J. (2022). Socioeconomic status and reading outcomes: neurobiological and behavioral correlates. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2022(183-184), 57-70.

- Sadaf, A., and Johson, B. (2017). Teachers' beliefs about integrating digital literacy into classroom practice: An investigation based on the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, 33(2), 1-9.
- Skott, C. L. (2015). *The Futures of Learning: What Kind of Pedagogies for the 21st Century*. Education Research and Foresight Working Papers, UNESDOC Digital Library.
- Spawa, C. M. C., & Hassan, F. (2013). "I doesn't know English": beliefs and practices in the teaching of speaking in ESL classroom. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 21, 449-460.
- Stanec, A. D. S. (2009). The theory of planned behavior: Predicting teachers' intentions and behavior during fitness testing. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 28(3), 255–271.
- Thaba-Nkadimene, K., and Mmakola, S. (2019). Examining the performance of teacher graduates from limpopo rural university. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 33(5), 169-181. h
- Utami (2016). The EFL teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices. *OKARA Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 10(2), 135.
- Yeung, A. S., Craven, R. G., & Kaur, G. (2014). Teachers' self-concept and valuing of learning: Relations with teaching approaches and beliefs about students. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 42(3), 305–320.
- Zamani, N. (2018). High English literacy among students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: exploring the challenges. *Iium Journal of Educational Studies*, 5(2), 4-19.