The impact of Saudi Arabian Teachers' Beliefs on their use of L1 or L2 in the Classroom in the Context of Communicative Language Teaching: A Literature Review

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Abstract
Different pedagogies employed in English language teaching (ELT) show varying degrees of use of first language (L1) and second language (L2). The choice is between teaching L2 through L2, teaching L2 through L1, or teaching using a mix of the two. Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a second language teaching approach that aims to create opportunities for the productive use of L2 in the classroom. CLT has been officially implemented in the Saudi Arabian context since 2004, where the use of L2 in the classroom is now encouraged. However, it is important to consider how well teachers' beliefs align with the specified use of L2 or L1 in the classroom. Importantly, this alignment is not generally taken into account, and so there is potential for resistance to this official pedagogy among teachers. This paper aims to explore the impact of Saudi teachers' reported beliefs on the use of L2 in CLT in observed practice. The methodology this paper employs is a systematic review of the related studies from 2014 to 2019 that examine teachers' beliefs and their alignment with their actual practice in the Saudi Arabian education setting. The results of this review of the studies show that SA teachers believe Arabic is still useful in the typical Saudi Arabian classroom where CLT has been officially adopted.

Keywords: communicative language teaching, English, grammar translation method, pedagogies, Saudi Arabia, second language teaching, teachers' beliefs

Introduction

There is variation in pedagogic practice in second language teaching with regard to the use of the first language (L1) and the language being taught (L2) in terms of amount and function in the classroom. Language teachers all make different decisions about this aspect of language use in their classroom practice. Such use can be classified into three decisions: the use of L1 to explain L2; the use of L2 to explain and practice L2; and the mixed-use of L1 and L2 (Richards, 2017). The use of L1 can help learners to understand what is being discussed as L1 is generally the language shared by teachers and students (if the teacher is from, or integrated into, the same language community).

The use of L1 as the primary medium of instruction is related to traditional methods, such as the grammar-translation method (GTM) (Celce-Murcia & McIntosh, 1979). GTM is a method whereby the teacher uses L1 intensively, using L1 to translate and explain L2. GTM, therefore, leads to L1 being used to describe the form and structure of the target language (L2) as well as to translate it. It is argued that using L2 to explain L2, however, increases the chance of meaningfully practicing the target language in the real context of classroom interaction. Such meaningful practice is encouraged in the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach (Nunan, 1999). This use of L2 as a medium of communication is not exclusively for high-level language learners, and indeed it can also be used with low-level learners. It is possible to use L2 in primary languages, such as commands and L2, which can also be used to manage the classroom. Finally, a mix of L1 and L2 can be used, which requires teachers to decide how much of each language to use and for what purpose in the classroom.

Communicative language teaching (CLT), on the other hand, encourages the use of L2 to provide opportunities for meaningful communication and to explain the target language based on the level of the learners (Brown, 2014). CLT is based on the idea of "communicative competence" first proposed by (Hymes, 1972), who defined "communicative competence" as "the most general term for the capabilities of a person" (p. 64). He argues that the ability to communicate meaningfully in a specific context to produce a language can be used appropriately and accordingly. This appropriateness to the context emerged as a response to the ideal speaker-listener proposed in Chomsky's theory. Chomsky (1965) argued that language is created through "universal grammar". Universal grammar is a device that exits in every mind and people use it to create language. Chomsky's theory emphasizes that language is ideally acquired through this innate device regardless of the context. He argues:

> Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors random or characteristic in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3)

He divided this innate ability into two aspects: competence and performance. Competence in Chomsky's theory is the innate ability that is a response to producing language. Performance is the production of this innate ability to use the ideal language.

However, "communicative competence", which began with Hymes (1972), goes against the above as "appropriateness" is missing from Chomsky's theory. Language does not work ideally; instead, language works appropriately depending on who is speaking, how they are doing so, when they need to talk and when they need to not talk (Hymes, 1972). This appropriateness is the basis of the CLT principle. CLT applies this philosophy of appropriateness, suggesting that it is also the way language can be learned in the classroom (Brown, 2014). CLT is thus a broad approach that highlights specific principles and philosophies. The first principle is that the language has to be authentic: such authenticity refers to the real text that the users can apply. Authenticity must be provided in the classroom so the students can see meaning in the language. The second is that the language being taught has to be meaningful: the language has to be used within a context that can make meaning for the student, thereby illustrating the purpose, and what and how to speak in the context. The third is that the language to be used by the students has to be productive. The fourth principle is that accuracy and fluency are essential. Finally, all skills related to communicative competence are important (Brown, 2014).

Saudi Arabia (SA) has faced challenges with regard to the quality of English teaching being provided in the country; many studies show that the outcomes of students are below what is expected (Abahussain, 2016; Al-Nasser, 2015; Alsalmi, 2014; Batawi, 2007). Therefore, there has been a reform in the curriculum with a view to improving the quality of English teaching. The reform aims to implement the principles of CLT as a way to teach English in the classroom. This came into effect in 2004 (Ministry of Education, 2002) with the aim of improving the outcome of teaching English at all stages of school (Abahussain, 2016). CLT is now being rigorously enforced as an approach in SA. The reform of the curriculum asked the teachers to change their teaching methodologies to fit with the principles of CLT. The teachers' own practice is therefore vital to meeting the Ministry of Education's goals. One of the goals that the ministry has explicitly outlined is encouraging the use of L2 by teachers; teachers have been asked to use L2 more communicatively and meaningfully (Ministry of Education, 2002). The enforcement of CLT as the approach to teaching English has been applied strictly, along with a centralized textbook to teach students based on the CLT principles and guidelines that explain how the teachers should behave at every step.

For the implementation of CLT to be successful, however, the teachers have to believe in it; indeed, a teacher's beliefs is a crucial factor that affects whether the teacher practices this approach (Borg, 2017). The teachers' beliefs theory proposed by Borg (2017) notes that many elements of the teachers' beliefs impact what they teach and how they do so. These beliefs are influenced by many factors, such as their own experiences as learners, their best practices assumptions and their personalities. Their personal experience as learners is crucial to the beliefs that the teachers hold towards any pedagogy practice. In the Saudi setting, the CLT approach was implemented in 2004, so it does not match with the learning experience of many of the teachers currently in the system. Learners in the Saudi setting has thus been strongly influenced by traditional methods, such as the grammar-translation method (GTM) (Abahussain, 2016). It is also important to consider that the best practice assumption is different from one teacher to another, based on different personalities and lived experiences. The characters of the teachers also vary one to the next, impacting what skills the teachers have and how they approach and interact with other people.

Pedagogy practice is filtered through the teachers' beliefs, thereby impacting the outcomes of classroom practice. While the SA Ministry of Education has pushed for a pedagogy practice that is more communicative and meaningful if this push is not aligned with what the teachers actually believe in it will not be successful. The officials implementing any pedagogy need to ensure that the teachers believe in what they want them to implement. Otherwise, the chosen pedagogy for classroom practice will not be successful. As Borg noted, teachers' actual practice is not always aligned with their stated beliefs. There may, therefore, be a gap between these stated beliefs and actual practice that affects the pedagogy implemented in the Saudi Arabian context. This gap may exist because the teachers' privately held beliefs are strong enough to act as a filter to block some aspects of the official pedagogy. SA encourages using L2 at an appropriate level to explain the target language. However, some teachers quickly switch back to L1 for comprehension purposes because, even at a low level, the target language cannot be understood.

This paper reviews studies conducted in the SA context that focus on teachers' beliefs about using L1 and L2 in the classroom as a pedagogic tool to teach English in the Saudi setting. This review investigates how the typical CLT pedagogy of using L2 in the classroom to teach English matches with the actual pedagogy practice in SA. The paper begins by clarifying the methodology used in this paper and how the papers were chosen; it then considers how these empirical studies are related and the studies are presented. The results and the concept of teachers' beliefs is then discussed in relation to the findings, and, finally, the paper provides a conclusion and recommendations.

Methodology
This paper reviews seven relevant studies regarding the use of L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) in the classroom. The literature review approach used in this work involved a systematic selection of the relevant studies. The systematic review is an effective technique to help the researcher clarify what data is relevant and what should be rejected, based on specific explicit criteria (Mulrow, 1994). It is, therefore, a useful tool to use to filter through a vast amount of data. The systematic review technique used in this paper entailed several phases. The first phase involved searching using keywords – "L1", "L2", "teachers' beliefs", "Saudi Arabia", "classroom", "communicative language teaching", "Arabic", and "English"; this produced 138 studies. Next, all the studies not conducted in Saudi Arabia were rejected; this amounted to 66 studies. Then, the search was limited to those published between 2014 and 2019, leaving 25 studies. Finally, all non-empirical studies were excluded and only the articles that use both classroom observation (for actual beliefs) and interviews and questionnaires (for reported beliefs) were accepted. Based on this, the final number of selected studies was seven.

This paper uses Borg's concept of teachers' beliefs (2017) to analyze these studies. This concept considers how teachers' beliefs impact the use of L1 and L2 to explain English in the SA setting. The concept of teachers' beliefs is used to explore how the teachers expressed their beliefs with regard to using L2 to explain English and the suitability of L1 and L2 as a medium of instruction when teaching English. It explores what beliefs the teachers have towards the use of L2 and what impacts the Saudi teachers in their beliefs with regard to whether L1 or L2 is the most suitable for teaching English in Saudi schools. The "suitability" of the use of L1 and L2 is this paper is limited to what the teachers reported believing to be the most suitable for teaching English

when using the official syllabus. The approach also focuses on the role of L2 and L1 and how they are used in relation to student assessments, and whether L1 and L2 are suitable in ensuring students' proficiency. This concept is used to distinguish between the stated beliefs, which are found from interviews, and the actually practiced beliefs, which are drawn from classroom observations. The concept of teachers' beliefs will be used to see how these two are aligned. The teachers' beliefs may or may not be aligned with each other.

The studies investigated are limited to those that use interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations. The interviews and questionnaires link the teacher's expressions of "I believe in" to the teachers' stated beliefs. The classroom observations use assumptions made by the researchers to assess the teachers (observed practice) regarding the use of L1 and L2 to make English accessible in the classroom. This paper will thereby explore empirical studies.

Results

Table 1 presents the empirical results from the studies investigated in this paper.

Table 1. Teachers' Beliefs about the Saudi Arabian Setting

	Title	Methodology	Results
Alghanmi and Shukri (2016)	The Relationship Between Teachers' Beliefs of Grammar Instruction and Classroom Practices in the Saudi Context	Questionnaires and classroom observations	Stated beliefs: teachers believe in using L2 to teach grammar naturally, but they do not apply it in their actual practice. Implicit beliefs: teachers practice L1 to explain grammar.
Alrabai (2014)	Motivational Practices in English as a Foreign Language Classes in Saudi Arabia: Teachers' Beliefs and Learners' Perceptions.	Questionnaires	Stated beliefs: the teachers believe in using L1 because they are afraid that using L2 means there will not be enough time to cover the entire syllabus.
Abu-ghararah (2014)	Salient Key Features of Actual English Instructional Practices in Saudi Arabia	Classroom observations	Observed practice: the teachers do not use L1 much in classroom time.
Bamanger and Gashan (2014)	In-service EFL Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Reading Strategies	Questionnaires	Stated beliefs: teachers believe in using English as one of the strategies that can help in the classroom.
Alshehri and Etherington (2017)	Motivational Strategies: the Perceptions of EFL Teachers and Students in the Saudi Higher Education Context	Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires	The teachers believe that the students' exam outcomes are more important than the students' learning of English, and Arabic is better for explaining the lessons for the exams.
Baeshin (2016)	Impact of Workshops on Seven EFL Teachers' Beliefs and Practices Concerning L1 use in a Saudi Arabian University	Questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations	Teachers believe that using L2 is important, but they are forced to use Arabic because of the students' low level of English, to let the students understand more easily and faster. Teachers feel guilty because they feel that they should use L2 more. Teachers' beliefs are not always matched with their actual practice.

| Bukhari (2017) | Investigation of Students' Responses to Arabic and English used by EFL Teachers Depending on their L1 Background in a Saudi Arabian University | Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and questionnaires | The use of Arabic depends on the teacher's background. Teachers believe the use of Arabic is necessary for low English student proficiency. They believe in using English more, but they are forced to use Arabic because of the student's proficiency. Their actual practice shows that there is no difference in the amount of Arabic used in different classrooms with a different degree of English proficiency. The teacher's beliefs do not match with their actual practice. |

Analysis of these studies shows that the impact of Saudi teachers' beliefs with regard to the use of L2 in the classroom means that L2 is generally not used and L1 continues to be used as the language of instruction. Most of the studies show that teachers do not have a positive attitude towards using English (L2) in the classroom; they believe that L2 is not suitable for teaching English. Most of the teachers expressed beliefs in the interviews to this effect. They believe that using L2 to teach English is unhelpful for various different reasons, including the following: the use of L2 is time-consuming; L1 is better for student understanding; and exam orientation. The use of L1 is considered a helpful and suitable way to explain the lesson as both the teacher and the students have the same shared language. From this perspective, using L2 may not be as effective as using L1 because it takes too much time. The time pressure is made explicit in the studies of Alrabai (2014), Al-Seghayer (2015); Baeshin (2016), which find from the interviews that teachers believe that the use of L2 does not satisfy the need to finish the syllabus in the time allotted by the SA Ministry of Education. Completion of the syllabus on time is one of the criteria used by the school administrators to assess teachers and the participating teachers express concern in these studies that use of L2 (English) is not suited to this purpose.

By contrast, in Alshehri and Etherington (2017) and Alshehri and Etherington (2017), the teachers state beliefs that L1 (Arabic) is an effective language in which to teach L2. The teachers express a belief that an Arabic language is a tool that can be used to meet the requirements of the planned syllabus, rather than those of the student language learners, and they present examples of ways in which L2 can inhibit teachers from reaching this target. Arabic is the language most commonly used in their classrooms therefore. These teachers use Arabic to explain grammar, to translate, to check the students' understanding and to transition to the next activity. These studies explore the preference for using L1 in the classroom as a way to ensure that the syllabus is covered within the time available. These teachers believe that the use of L1 allows them to manage the pressure from the school administration to complete the syllabus. This belief is aligned with their actual practice, which suggests that these reported beliefs are representative.

Another stated belief of teachers on the effectiveness of L1 is outlined in the study of Bukhari 2017: the participant teachers note that L1 can be suitable for students with a low level of English proficiency. They state that the use of L2 can limit such students' ability to understand the lesson. From this perspective, the use of L1 makes the lesson go more smoothly compared to using L2, which requires more time and effort for both the teachers to use and for the students to understand

the lesson. Al-Seghayer (2015) study provides some examples explaining this reported belief that L1 is more suitable in terms of pacing for low-level students. Examples include that it is faster to explain grammar and vocabulary that the students are not familiar with, and it is easier to check the students' understanding of the lesson. These benefits are not found with L2. As the teachers and students have the same first language, the teachers note that using Arabic allows them to match the students' level of proficiency as well as to keep pace with the required syllabus to finish within the allotted time. Baeshin (2016) and Bukhari (2017) also note the teachers' belief that using Arabic as the language of instruction is necessary because of the students' low level of English proficiency, which may stop them from understanding what the lesson is about.

Many of these studies blame the extensive L1 use on the students' proficiency. These teachers suggest the students are not willing to use L2 with them. The low level of the students is therefore believed to be one of the main reasons why the teachers choose to use L2. It is argued that these low-level students are not ready to be exposed to L2 in any of the three uses of L2 mentioned above in this paper. It is also noted that L1 is used to meet the students' needs due to the time-consuming nature of using L2. The use of L2 can impede the progress of these students as it slows the class down. In these studies, however, there is a tension between what is being practiced and what is expressed, as Phipps and Borg (2009) explain. The two studies note teachers' preference for the use of L1 when working with students at a low level as a way to finish the syllabus within the required time. However, the use of L1 is not only found with low-level students, as the teachers in the above studies express a belief that L1 is also suitable for high-level students. These high-level students, such as university students, are able to understand higher-level English, but still, the teachers state that they prefer to use L1 and not L2. This may lead us to question the real reason underpinning the preference for L1 in relation to the students' low level in L2. The commonality in all these studies is that there is pressure to finish the syllabus within the allotted time.

Not all the studies reflect this belief in L1, however. One study notes a positive attitude towards using English as the language of instruction. Alghanmi and Shukri (2016) illustrate that the teachers in their study believe that using L2 is essential to acquiring the language naturally. The study concludes that English has to be learned through communication in the classroom. The teachers in the study believe grammar has to be taught inductively rather than deductively: grammar has to be learned naturally. The students can, therefore, learn grammar by using the language. However, the actual practice in this study is similar to that found in studies that outline that teachers believe in L1 as an essential tool. This study is the only one to explicitly state teachers' beliefs towards the use of L2 in the classroom. The preference for the use of L2 also does not match with these teachers' practice. These teachers practice L1 heavily in their classrooms. I interpret this finding as there is potential to use L2 in the classrooms, but unlike the other studies the teachers' beliefs do not filter their beliefs and they in fact practice what they do not believe in. I would suggest that this can be linked to the actual factors reported in other studies that stop them from using L2 grammar naturally. "Naturally" here refers to the use of L2 to communicate grammar implicitly through communication, which is the method advocated by the CLT principles and therefore the SA policy.

SA policy encourages the use of L2. However, different levels of use of L2 in the classroom were found and the teachers used L2 in different ways. Such usage can involve using L2 to explain

the concept and the lessons, for example, to explain grammar or vocabulary. Another approach is to use L2 to communicate with the students about the lessons or to let the students communicate with the teacher through the use of L2 to engage in discussions about classroom management; this can be done by using L2 commands and communicating with the students in L2. These commands can be used to control behavior during the lesson. Commands are therefore what the teachers use to manage the classroom. This type of language can be used for classroom management in general, as well as being exercised through activities, such as group discussion or role-play, but in many cases, this is done in a controlled way. The last option is to let students communicate more freely. When it comes to SA policy, CLT encourages the usage of L2 and teachers explaining the lesson using L2, but through very controlled activities.

In summary, most of the studies researched classified stated beliefs and observed practice as advocating the use of L1 in the classroom. These studies note that, in the interviews, teachers expressed a strong belief in the need to use L1. They believe that L1 can explain L2 lessons, it can explain the structure of L2, it can be used to translate L2 and it is appropriate for low-level students. Only the study of Alghanmi and Shukri (2016) reports teachers believing that L2 is preferred, although it is not practiced; these studies show that most of the observed practice is aligned with the stated beliefs.

Discussion

In the above, I discuss Borg (2017) concept of teachers' beliefs. Teachers' beliefs, however, can only refer to what the teachers said they believed in these studies. This paper can therefore only explore what the teachers expressed as a way to access their beliefs. Borg further argues that there are always pedagogies and practices that teachers believe in and those that they consider being the most suited to practice in the classroom. In theory, what these teachers believe is best practice should be reflected in their actual practice. However, the practice may not reflect what the teachers actually believe because not all teachers practice what they believe in (Phipps & Borg, 2009). The studies reveal a clash between what the teachers practice and what the teachers believe, on the one hand, and CLT in the SA requirements, on the other hand. The teachers' practice and their beliefs do not fit with the SA requirements. The teachers in most of the studies express a strong belief in the use of L1 as the most suitable language for the classroom.

SA provides teachers with a centralized syllabus. This syllabus requires extensive use of L2 to promote communicative practice in Saudi classrooms. However, these studies show that teachers disagree with the official requirements. These teachers stated that they believe the use of L1 to be most suited to their actual setting. They further detailed the reasons for its suitability, such as students' low proficiency, teachers' background, L1 as an effective way to teach grammar and the syllabus requiring the teacher to finish within the time planned. The teachers' beliefs, therefore, impact the extent to which CLT, which asks them to use L2 more communicatively and meaningfully, is implemented, and ultimately their practice is heavily dependent on the use of L1 and ignores the strong push towards CLT in SA. The mismatch between practice and stated beliefs and the SA requirements can be interpreted as a disconnection between the teachers' own education and the syllabus. These teachers' education was mostly based on traditional methods (Abahussain, 2016) and many even learned to teach the traditional method. These teachers work for the Ministry of Education. The universities have a different ministry, called the Ministry of

Higher Education. Only recently have the two been combined into one (Taylor, Fleisch, & Shindler, 2019). Therefore, the teachers' experience, according to Borg, doesn't fit with the new requirements. In this paper, the teachers' experience is linked heavily with teaching traditional methods and so the new methods are not aligned with the teachers' beliefs because they have limited knowledge of them.

When unpacking these factors, teachers often begin with students' low level. However, the studies did not clarify the type of L2 that was being used by teachers; L2 can be used in the form of three types, as noted above. It is also important to note that the level of language used to communicate with the students can vary significantly. The teacher can use basic English words and vocabulary in the classroom for all three types of L2 use. Nonetheless, Arabic is seen as a way to explain and make the lesson more understandable. This preference for L1 may not reflect the teachers' actual beliefs, however; instead, it may reflect the teachers favoring what they consider to be the best way to produce practical results rather than considering the theoretical aspects of pedagogy.

With regard to the teachers' background, this refers to what teachers themselves experienced as learners. They have learned GTM, which is very different from CLT in terms of how and what to highlight. As Richards (2017) noted, "The students' native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the students' native language"(p. 7). GTM values translations from L1 to L2 and vice versa. It highlights the use of L1 to explain L2. L1 is used as a fundamental principle and basis of teaching. When it comes to using CLT, however, L2 has to be more communicative. CLT highlights the use of L2 to learn the language by showing the students how, when and what to speak as the foundation of communicative competence. CLT outlines that the use of L1 should be kept to a minimum and L2 should be used to communicate and increase the chance of conveying the language more meaningfully. This is because when the students communicate using L2 they can experience the context of L2 through the communication. This means that the teachers' experience of teaching before the implementation of the curriculum based on CLT in 2004, as well as since that time, may have continued to impact the teachers' beliefs. The teachers' backgrounds and experience of GTM, with its principals and focus, can clash with what CLT is highlighting. In these studies, teacher education may have relied heavily on traditional methods and GTM in the teacher centers. The teachers, therefore, tend to remain loyal to what they experienced as learners in school, as well as their own early experiences of teaching.

The last factor relates to the pressure to finish the syllabus within the allotted time, which may affect the teachers' beliefs or pragmatic attitudes towards the use of L1 and L2. In this regard, the findings are problematic as they do not clearly distinguish between the teachers' actual and their stated beliefs. This distinction is missing in all the reviewed studies. Here the problem relates to their expressed belief that L1 is used because it is the most suitable, yet there is no clear distinction made between reasoning based on completing the syllabus and that based on the best way to teach English. Their expressed beliefs may, therefore, be heavily impacted by the need to adhere to the syllabus schedule. All of the studies use L1 as the syllabus is centralized in the SA setting. The Ministry of Education provides the textbook, which includes the students' textbook, workbook and the teachers' book as a guide that outlines the criteria by which to assess the progress of the

teachers in achieving the syllabus. Further, whilst the official syllabus encourages the use of L2 in the classroom, according to these studies the textbook syllabus is heavily dependent on the teacher using L1 to explain the lesson. This creates a clash between the teachers' beliefs and practice and official requirements.

Despite the clash between the official guidelines and teachers' beliefs and practices, these studies did not clarify whether their actual practice influenced the teachers' beliefs or vice versa and it is difficult to distinguish teachers' stated beliefs from their actual beliefs, and what aligned from what was not aligned with their actual practice. Since the actual teacher practice develops the teachers' experiences, these experiences may influence the teachers to believe in or even to change their beliefs. Even if they are set in their beliefs this may not be distinguishable because their beliefs may be unobservable. Therefore, what are the actual beliefs underpinning this extensive use of L1? Is what the teachers say they believe in the interviews and questionnaires reflective, or is this what makes them feel secure? This feeling of insecurity can be related to the pressure to finish the syllabus in the time given, which can be interpreted as an expectation of what the teacher has to achieve, the expectation of what the teachers teach and not how they do so.

We would argue that it is not enough for language teacher cognition research to identify differences, or tensions, between teachers' beliefs and practices; rather attempts need to be made to explore, acknowledge and understand the underlying reasons behind such tensions.

(Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 388)

The above points illustrate that the Ministry of Education has not achieved its goal of successfully implementing CLT. The studies illustrate strong teacher beliefs that go against the core goals of the general CLT approach.

Conclusion

This paper reviewed recent studies on teachers' beliefs about the language of instruction in Saudi Arabia. The studies show that there is a mismatch between the recommended pedagogy and teachers' stated beliefs and actual pedagogic practice of using L1 or L2. CLT encourages the use of English by letting the students interact and communicate in L2 with authentic text and meaningful language. The teachers' pragmatic decisions, as opposed to their stated beliefs, play a role in their resistance to using L2 in the classroom. They use what they consider to be the most practical way to teach the lesson. These studies show teachers' reasoning based on different factors that stopped them from using English to teach; however, importantly, all of them believe that using L1 is essential and an effective tool for teaching English. These factors have led them to believe that L1 is better for explaining grammar, introducing new vocabulary and checking students' language proficiency. The teachers' beliefs have a significant impact on what and how pedagogy is practiced in the Saudi Arabian classroom context. Based on the reported teachers' beliefs, it is clear that L1 is being used and L2 is not seen as matching the students' needs because their level of L2 is too low. Teachers consider that they need L1 to explain L2 despite the reality that basic L2 can be used, such as basic verbs or alternating between L1 and L2 depending on the students' needs and responses to the teachers.

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