



Exploring the Change of Chinese EFL Teacher Beliefs in Listening Teaching: A Metaphor Analysis

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Metaphor offers a lens through which language teachers present their thinking about teaching and learning English as a second/foreign language. This study examined the changes of 25 middle school Chinese EFL teachers' belief in listening teaching through the use of metaphor analysis. Multiple sources of data were collected, including elicited metaphors, questionnaires, reflection journals and workshop observations. Fifteen metaphors before and 21 after the workshop were identified. By comparing these conceptual metaphors before and after the workshop, this study found that the teachers' negative attitude toward listening teaching was vanished and their view of listening teaching was broadened in terms of enhancing teacher-students ties and raising awareness of teaching design with holistic-multi-dimension understanding.

Keywords: teacher belief, elicited metaphor, listening teaching, change

Introduction

Teacher belief is a well-established research area with a wide recognition of its importance in understanding teachers' mind and their classroom teaching (Zheng, 2015). Over the past three decades, a substantial amount of research has studied teacher belief and confirmed the reciprocal relationship between beliefs and practices (e.g., Borg, 2011; Pajares, 1992) and the influence of prior learning experience on them (e.g., Borg, 2003; Moodie, 2016). Most of the existing studies placed the focus on teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning either in general (e.g., Barcelos, 2003; Borg, 2013), or specifically on grammar teaching, vocabulary teaching, writing, and reading comprehension (e.g., Borg, 1999; Crusan, Plakans, & Gebril, 2016; Konopak, 1994; Johnson, 1992; Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 2001; Pajares, 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Yang, 2010). There is a marked lack of research into teacher belief in the second language (L2) listening teaching due to its complex and challenging nature (Goh, 2010; Graham, 2006; Graham, Santos, & Francis-Brophy, 2014).

Only a very small number of studies have investigated systematically teacher beliefs about L2 listening. Among those existing studies, the focus was placed on listening instruction (Emerick, 2019; Field, 2008; Goh, 2008; Goh & Taib, 2006; Siegel, 2013), the importance of listening teaching and the relationship between beliefs and practices (Gao & Liu, 2013; Kuzborska, 2011; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). In particular, Emerick (2019) investigated university language instructors' beliefs about and understanding of explicit listening instruction and their conceptualizations of authenticity in listening tasks and found

that university language teachers believed explicit listening instruction was essential for learners to develop competence in L2 listening. Gao and Liu (2013) investigated teacher beliefs in listening teaching and the relationships between teaching beliefs and practices. They found that college English teachers were fully aware of the importance of listening teaching, and there were multiple factors influencing the translation of their beliefs into practices, such as external environmental factors (e.g., educational reform, teaching time restriction, class size, students' interest) and personal factors (e.g., teachers' emotion, professional knowledge, classroom management skills) (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Gao & Liu, 2013).

In a word, these studies provided us insights of teacher belief about second language listening teaching, especially on the importance of listening teaching in second language education and the relationship between belief and practice. However, other aspects of teachers' belief about listening teaching needs further exploration, especially its dynamic change while participating in continuing professional development programs, such as a workshop. Besides, these studies mainly adopted traditional research methods such as using questionnaires, interviews, or classroom observations, which might not reveal teacher belief comprehensively due to the implicitness of the construct of belief, as many teachers might not be consciously aware of what their beliefs are or how they impact their teaching practices. One method of making teachers aware of their beliefs of teaching is to encourage them to examine the metaphors they use to present their understanding of teaching and learning.

Metaphor analysis has recently been used as a powerful reflective tool for language teachers to express their thought about teaching and learning as well as a research tool to uncover language teachers' implicit thinking about teaching and learning and to examine the relationship between belief and practice (Farrell, 2006; Guerrero & Villamil, 2002, 2015; Saban, Koçbeker, & Saban, 2006; Wan & Low, 2015; Wan, Low, & Li, 2011; Seun et al., 2011). For example, Saban, Kockeber, and Saban (2006) used elicited metaphors to examine pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and identified 10 main conceptual metaphors. Similarly, Seung, Park, and Narayan (2011) discussed the nature or tendency of the changes in teacher beliefs using metaphors and found that most participants came to the course with traditional views and developed more constructivist views during the course. However, these teachers tended to keep their traditional views on the one hand and added new constructivist perspectives to their original belief systems on the other hand. Williams (2015) examined the relationship between the metaphorical conceptualization of academic literacy and the classroom practices of instructors and found that classroom practices were in alignment with instructors' beliefs in their role of facilitating students' development of their academic literacy. However, limited attention has been given to teacher beliefs in L2 listening teaching with either tradition research methods or metaphor analysis. Besides, some analysis still stayed at the linguistic level, such as the ones by Su (2015) and Littlewood (2012). They classified the linguistic metaphorical meaning to show students' belief of English learning without referring to the underlying conceptual metaphorical meaning which could actually best illustrates belief.

With this in mind, to bridge the gap and further explore the dynamic changes of teacher beliefs, this study aimed to examine Chinese EFL teachers' beliefs in teaching English listening at high school through metaphor analysis. In particular, this study examined the changes of teacher beliefs in teaching English listening after attending a workshop with two research questions:

- (1) What are teachers' beliefs in teaching English listening before and after the workshop?
- (2) What are the changes in their beliefs in teaching English listening after the workshop?

Methods

Context and Participants

This study was conducted in one of the most developed districts in a city from northwest China. A three-day (April 5, 12 and 19, 2017) workshop on English listening teaching and learning was designed with the aim to further professional development of backbone EFL teachers and improve their listening teaching practices. Table 1 showed specifically the information of the workshop.

This workshop started with an introduction of a lesson study on listening teaching, followed by a listening teaching demo which contained contents such as teaching strategies and methods, design of listening activities and listening teaching evaluation. Finally, the workshop ends with a recollection of the theory and practice of listening teaching, including paper writing instructions.

TABLE 1
Workshop Information

Time	Theme	Content	Form
Day 1 Listening teaching: theory and practice (April 5th)			
Morning	Listening teaching: Lesson study	1. Lesson study: what's it about	Question lead in & concept building
		2. Lesson study: case analysis	Cases analysis & group discussion
Afternoon		1. Listening teaching: strategy and methods	Workshop
		2. Listening teaching: identifying key teaching problems	Self-reflection & group discussion
Assignment	1. Based on the identified problems, come up with your own research questions; 2. Prepare a listening teaching lesson plan		
Day 2 Listening teaching demo (April 12th)			
Morning	Listening activities: design and implementation	1. Listening teaching demo	Demo
		2. Polishing lesson plan	Group discussion
Afternoon	Listening teaching: Evaluation	1. Listening teaching evaluation	Workshop
		2. Polishing lesson plan	Mind-map, group discussion
Assignment	Polish your own lesson plan and practice in the following week.		
Day 3 Listening teaching: Theory and practice recollection (April 19th)			
Morning	Further polishing	1. Recollection	Mind-map, group discussion
		2. Theory and practice: polish lesson plan	Group discussion
Afternoon	Paper writing on lesson study	1. Paper structure	Mind-map
		2. Writing outline	Individual instruction
		3. Sharing	Discussion
Assignment	1. Write paper based on the lesson study 2. Deadline: July 1 st		

Twenty-five backbone teachers participated in this workshop and volunteered to be the participants upon knowing the purpose of this study. Table 2 presents the profiles of these participants in terms of their education background, years of teaching and the type of university they graduated from. Seven of these teachers (28%) held a master's degree and had 11 to 15 years of teaching experience. Most of them (56%) were considered as experienced teachers with over 15 years of teaching experience. Thirteen (52%) teachers graduated from normal universities where they had a chance to do teaching practicum. Only two teachers (8%) graduated from foreign studies universities.

TABLE 2
Basic Information of Teachers (N=25)

Degree of education		Teaching experience			Graduated from		
MA	BA	<10	11-15	>15	Normal	Foreign studies	Other
7(28%)	18 (72%)	4 (16%)	7 (28%)	14 (56%)	13(52%)	2 (8%)	10(40%)

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through multiple sources including elicited metaphor, questionnaire, reflection journal and observation of teaching demo over a month. Elicited metaphor means that “the respondent is prompted (linguistically or visually) by a researcher to produce a metaphorical expression or proposition” (Low, 2015, p. 17). In the present study, elicited metaphors were used to elicit language teachers’ beliefs about English listening teaching, while other sources of data were used to compensate with the elicited metaphors. This study basically followed the seven-step validation model of using elicited metaphor proposed by Low (2015), as shown in Figure 1.

There were two cycles of metaphor collection: one was at the beginning of the workshop, and the other was at the end. We provided teachers with a written prompt: “English listening teaching is/like...; I mean...”. After the workshop, the participants were asked to create metaphors again taking into consideration what had been discussed in the workshop, the extended readings, or their personal reflections. Excluding simple description and diffuse metaphors, we finally got 15 metaphors before and 21 after the workshop.

Questionnaire was used to elicit teachers’ present practices at school, which provided information on their beliefs about teaching listening before the workshop. The questionnaire also provided important information for workshop instructors to make decisions on the training contents. The questionnaire consists of 17 items in English all concerning about the teachers’ present EFL teaching practice. The results of questionnaire compensated other sources of data. Workshop observation provides evidence for understanding teachers’ listening teaching practice.

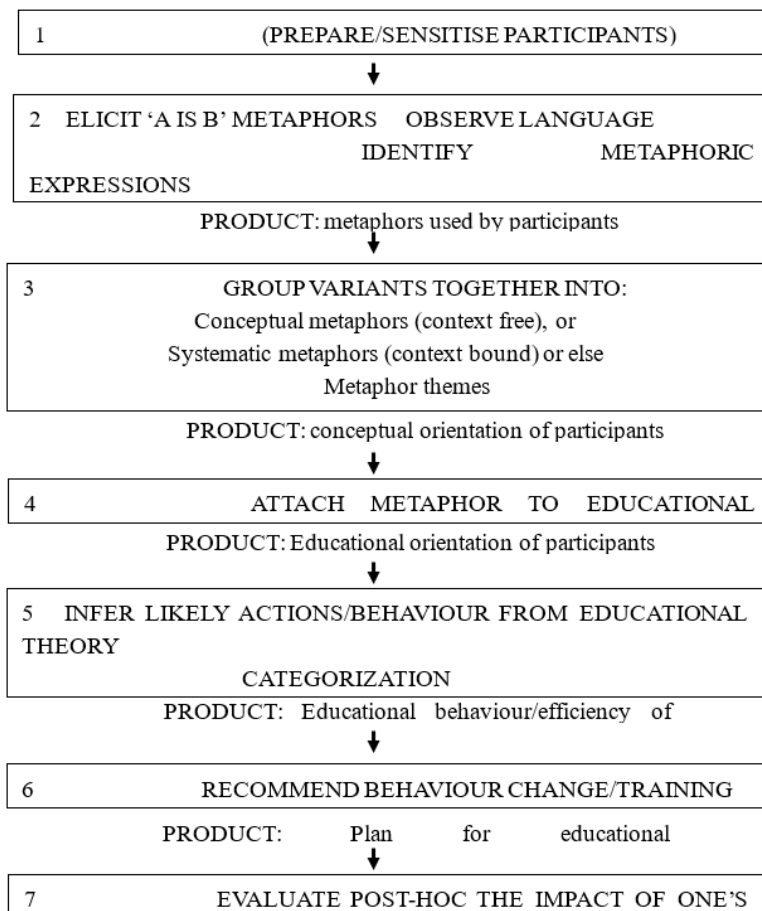


Figure 1. The model: A seven-step decision chain (Low, 2015, p. 18).

The data analysis process underwent recursively emphasizing the identification of themes through conceptual metaphors. An expert in cognitive linguistics was invited to co-analyze the data. To generate valid general conceptual categories from specific metaphors, we first broke down the exemplars into analyzable parts looking for salient features, and common elements; second, we analyzed participants' explanations via "I mean..." statements, their reflection journals and workshop observations; then, we compared these conceptual metaphors elicited before and after the workshop and eventually established four main themes concerning the changes of teachers' beliefs in listening teaching by taking into consideration of social environment and the participants' prior experiences. It was a recursive process involving tentatively formulating and finally settling category labels, through which we were able to detect 7 conceptual metaphors forming three themes (teachers' guidance; status and features of listening teaching, and students' agentive role) before the workshop, and 13 conceptual metaphors forming four themes (understanding of listening, design, teacher-students relationship and guidance) after the workshop.

Findings and Discussions

Metaphor Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs Before the Workshop

In general, teachers produced 15 valid metaphors before the workshop, which were classified into 7 conceptual metaphors. Based on the underlying conceptual metaphorical meanings, they were further identified and grouped into three themes (1) teachers' guidance, (2) status and features, and (3) students' agentive role, as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Elicited Metaphors Before Workshop (Repeated Metaphor in Parentheses)

Themes	Conceptual metaphor	Exemplars
Teacher's guidance	LISTENING TEACHING IS NURTURING.	Teaching English listening is/like teaching baby to walk; teaching baby to speak; planting trees
	LISTENING TEACHING IS DIRECTING.	(directed) performance (2) performing English living show filming playing games
Status and Features	LISTENING TEACHING IS A CONTAINER.	a reservoir
	LISTENING TEACHING IS BUILDING.	laying foundation (2)
	LISTENING IS IMITATING.	art performance
	LISTENING TEACHING IS A THING.	a grocery store a heap of loose sand
Students' agentive role	LEARNING LISTENING IS LEARNING	swimming
	SWIMMING.	

Teacher's guidance

Eight (53.3%) metaphors were grouped under the theme of teachers' guidance, which were further identified as two conceptual metaphors. The first was "LISTENING TEACHING IS NURTURING", which was generated from metaphors such as "English listening teaching is like 'teaching baby to walk', 'teaching baby to speak' and 'planting trees'". This conceptual metaphor revealed teachers' belief on their role as provider or caretaker. As they explain, for most of the time, English listening was new for students. Thus, teachers might have to hold students' hands as they grappled with the skills at the beginning. Hence, teachers' main responsibilities were accordingly to take care of students and nourish their potential abilities. This was consistent with Chinese long-standing notion of teachers' position as parents with the responsibility to guide and care students' learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999), which also accord well with the findings of Wan et al. (2011) on teachers' belief about their role as provider and nurturer. These metaphors

showed teachers' professional authority with a dominant role such as guiding or facilitating in the process of the cultivation of the students' inherent abilities and potential.

The second identified conceptual metaphor was "LISTENING TEACHING IS DIRECTING", as extracted from metaphors such as "teaching English listening is *directed performance*", "teaching English listening is *performance*", "teaching English listening is *performing English living show*", "teaching English listening is *filming*" and "teaching English listening is *playing games*". With this conceptual metaphor, these teachers considered themselves to be responsible for guiding and helping students finish the work as what a director does in performance, or a guide in playing a game. The perception of their dominant role in class might be largely shaped by their ideology of authority under the Chinese context where the Confucius doctrine of "respecting teacher" has been a long and dominant tradition. As a teacher reflected, "*we seemed to feel comfortable when dominating the whole class. It gives us a kind of authority and safety in that I am the teacher and you are students. Though we are supposed not to behave so, we actually unconsciously show our authority all the time*" (Reflection, Zhang-2017/4/18).

To conclude, the over-emphasized guiding role of teachers can be explained by drawing on their previous experience and ideology. "We teach as what we were taught" was like an incantation influencing their practice implicitly, as supported by Borg (2003) who asserted that "there is ample evidence" (p. 81) that their prior L2 learning experience can influence their L2 teaching practices throughout their careers. Reflection data also provided evidence for this, as a teacher mentioned, "*my learning experience on listening influence my teaching unconsciously. Sometimes I noticed I should not do as what my teacher did, for example, listen to the tape and then check answers. But it's hard to break through*" (Reflection, Wang-2017/4/18). Their "negative" school experiences seemed to strongly influence their beliefs about and approaches to listening teaching. This finding supported what Moodie (2016) found "teachers' prior learning experience served as an anti-apprenticeship of observation" (p. 38). In a word, teacher's belief of their role in teaching listening before the workshop was that of a caretaker and provider with authority, which was shaped by their learning and teaching experience and the overall social context, such as the educational setting at their time of learning.

The status and features of listening teaching

Four conceptual metaphors were elicited from six metaphors illustrating teachers' understanding of the status and features of listening teaching (see Table 3). The first three conceptual metaphors indicate teachers' belief on the status of listening in language teaching and learning. The linguistic metaphor "English listening is *a reservoir*" generates the conceptual metaphor "LISTENING TEACHING IS CONTAINER", by which teachers meant that listening as input is accumulating as a reservoir could store water. "LISTENING TEACHING IS BUILDING" shows teachers' belief on the foundation status of listening in language learning. And "LISTENING IS IMITATING" was identified from metaphor "English listening teaching is *art performance*", by which these teachers meant that listening is important in language learning just as imitating in a performance which served as a prerequisite for performance. These conceptual metaphors reflected teachers' belief about the importance of listening as language input in language learning. As they explained that without this input, students' language production could be impossible. This finding echoed Gao and Liu's (2013) finding that teachers were aware of the importance of listening teaching.

However, we diagnosed discrepancy between teachers' belief about the importance of listening and their practice as indicated by the results of questionnaires. For example, although listening was considered as an important skill, only 9.38% teachers reported that they would place it as the most important skill in their actual teaching while the percentage is 71.88% on reading and 21.88% on writing. Moreover, 59.38% teachers reported a very low frequency dealing with listening, for example twice or three times a week, as compared to that of other skills which occurred once or twice every day. This result was in line with Atai and Taherkhani (2018) who found that language teachers emphasize reading more than the other skills.

The reason for this may be partially influenced by social and institutional environment. The exam-oriented phenomenon is still pervasive, and the washback effect of exam (especially entrance exams for senior high school and university) definitely influenced teachers' teaching practice. As some teachers mentioned in their reflections that due to the tension of examine-oriented reality and the tight schedule, they had to give up what they believe in practices. The overall environment shaped teachers' behavior and changed their beliefs, which echoes Nghia's (2017) finding that institutional factors, such as time shortages and insufficient resources discouraged and hindered teachers from translating their beliefs into practices.

Besides, the conceptual metaphor "LISTENING TEACHING IS A THING" that were generated from "grocery store" and "a heap of loose sand" illustrated the miscellaneous feature of listening teaching. By these metaphors, teachers meant that the teaching content was too much to select just like the goods in a grocery store. It indicated teachers' perplexed situation in deciding what to teach. While "a heap of loose sand" shows that the teaching procedure was loose and lack of logic, which indicated a lack of experience in organizing listening teaching. These findings could be possibly due to teachers' underprepared status to effectively and explicitly teach listening skills and lack of listening experience, because at their time, listening was largely ignored. The paucity of experience meant that it is necessary for these teachers to be flexible and well prepared.

In short, the overall picture of teachers' understanding of listening teaching was not satisfying: the theory-practice transfer problem was still pervasive; teachers were negative towards the materials and procedures. Teachers' unpreparedness further instantiated the inefficacy of teacher preparation programs to some extent.

Students' agentive role

The conceptual metaphor "LEARNING LISTENING IS LEARNING SWIMMING" elicited from metaphor "English listening teaching is/like *learning to swim*". This conceptual metaphor conveyed an emphasis on the agentive role that students should play in learning listening. However, the least notice (only one metaphor) of students' agentive role might because of the overemphasis on teachers' dominant role as identified earlier. The observation of the demo teaching also compensated this finding. We found that teachers were afraid of the silent period in classroom, and that they could not help "breaking the ice" by more instructions or further explanation, thus leaving no time for students to digest and think, not to mention questioning. We also noticed that teachers took the dominant role most of the time, though they claimed to place students to the center (workshop observation -2017/4/12). This further showed the contradiction between their belief and practice.

To conclude, before the workshop, the elicited metaphors unveiled teachers' narrow and biased understanding of teaching English listening by overly focusing on their authority role, and perceiving the content and features of English listening as miscellaneous. Consistent with the literature (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999; Gao & Liu, 2013; Wan et al., 2011), the conceptual metaphorical meaning analysis revealed teachers' belief about their guiding role, the importance of listening in language learning, and mismatch between their beliefs and practices. As the analysis showed, teachers' personal factors such as learning and teaching experience, and the social and institutional contexts were the main factors shaping and reshaping teachers' belief on the one hand, and discouraging or hindering the translation of their belief into practice on the other.

Metaphor Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs After the Workshop

Based on the results of questionnaire and elicited metaphor data, the teacher educator designed a workshop aiming to help teachers better understand listening teaching and to further improve their practices. This section presented teachers' belief after the workshop. Twenty-one valid metaphors were produced, and based on the underlying conceptual metaphorical meaning, they were grouped into four

themes, namely, (1) understanding of listening teaching, (2) listening teaching design, (3) teacher-student relationship, and (4) teacher's role as shown in Table 4.

Understanding of listening teaching

Teachers' understanding of the diversity of teaching methods was conveyed via conceptual metaphor "LISTENING TEACHING METHOD IS A THING" which was elicited from metaphor "English listening teaching is *kaleidoscope*". It showed teachers' awareness of adopting different teaching methods to achieve their teaching goals. The section in the workshop on listening teaching strategies and methods raised teachers' awareness of different listening teaching methods. The teacher educator adopted a lesson study model addressing specifically how different strategies and methods could be adopted according to different situations. This finding confirmed that through lesson study the participants developed their understanding of subject content such as knowledge of teaching methods and their pedagogic skills such as how to use certain methods respectively in real classroom settings (Kamina & Tinto, 2011).

TABLE 4
Elicited Metaphors After the Workshop

Themes	Conceptual metaphor	Exemplar Teaching English listening is/like
Understanding of Listening	LISTENING TEACHING IS A THING	kaleidoscope (2) eating buffet grocery store
	LISTENING TEACHING IS A JOURNEY.	a trip
	LISTENING TEACHING IS BUILDING.	laying foundation
	LISTENING TEACHING IS GROWTH.	blooming flower
Design	LISTENING TEACHING IS DESIGNING.	talk-show theme amusement park
	LISTENING TEACHING IS FLYING KITE.	intelligence games
	LISTENING TEACHING IS SHOPPING.	kite-flying shopping in supermarket
	LISTENING TEACHING IS A JOURNEY.	a trip (2)
Teacher-student Relationship	LISTENING TEACHING IS PERFORMING.	Performance (2)
	LISTENING TEACHING IS FILMING.	filming
	LISTENING TEACHING IS LIVING A MONASTIC LIFE.	teacher and students' living a monastic life
	TEACHER TO STUDENTS IS WATER TO FISH.	fish and water
Guidance	LISTENING TEACHING IS GARDENING.	planting tress gardening

Teachers' understanding of the diversity of listening teaching contents was identified via metaphors "eating buffet" and "grocery store" which generated conceptual metaphors "LISTENING TEACHING CONTENT IS A THING". They addressed a positive attitude toward teaching content by using "buffet" and "goods" which projected the rich contents that are available for teachers to use in terms of teaching materials.

However, "LISTENING TEACHING IS A JOURNEY" was elicited from the "trip" metaphor demonstrated teachers' belief about the uncertainty but fruitful processes involved in teaching listening. As one teacher explained, "there will be both beautiful scenery and joy on the one hand, and difficulty and fatigue on the other. You never foresee what will really happen. But the beautiful scenery should be the treat we get" (elicited metaphor from Wang). These words reveal that the teacher hold positive attitude to listening teaching, though she believed that she would encounter difficulties in the teaching process.

The importance of listening and its prospect was emphasized via conceptual metaphor "LISTENING TEACHING IS BUILDING" and "LISTENING TEACHING IS GROWTH" by metaphors "laying foundation" and "blooming flower". These conceptual metaphors showed teachers' positive attitude

toward listening teaching as its development is full of energy and brighter prospect. This can be partially explained by the local policies on English teaching reform and examination reform at secondary schools which put more emphasis on the importance of listening in language teaching.

Design of listening teaching

Teachers' focus on the overall design of teaching listening was conveyed via "LISTENING TEACHING IS DESIGNING" when they use metaphors "talk show", "intelligence games" and "trip" indicating that they began to take a holistic view over listening when planning a lesson. At the same time, they also focused on the concrete parts in planning. For examples with "theme amusement park", and "shopping" metaphors, teachers emphasized specific parts such as the design of classroom environment and the design of teaching content. Teachers further explained their understanding of designing a proper and meaningful activity for students, as one teacher said, "in designing a listening activity, we should provide students with the authentic situation" (workshop observation-2017/4/12). Similarly, with the conceptual metaphor "LISTENING TEACHING IS FLYING KITE", "the height of the flying kite" was projected to "the quality of design of listening teaching", reflecting teachers' emphasis on the importance of design.

Like the blueprint in designing a talk show, intelligence games or theme amusement park, a design helps teachers bridge their belief and practice. This change could be due to the focus of Day-2 workshop. Adopting a lesson study model, the instructor together with the participants analyzed what a good lesson was like, how to design a good lesson to raise teacher participants' awareness of lesson/course design. The workshop lesson study model facilitated teachers' understanding of how to design a lesson/course with a proper rationale.

Relationship between teacher and student

Instead of emphasizing the dominant role of teachers, more weight was put on the cooperative, inseparable and harmonious relationship between teacher and students after the workshop. With conceptual metaphors "LISTENING TEACHING IS PERFORMING" and "LISTENING TEACHING IS FILMING" teachers conveyed their understanding of the cooperative relationship with students as that between a director and actors in performance or filming. What's more, "LISTENING TEACHING IS LIVING A MONASTIC LIFE" and "TEACHER TO STUDENTS IS WATER TO FISH" further illustrated the inseparable and harmonious teacher-student relationship. This cooperative-orientation relationship of teacher-student compared with the one before the workshop further supported the findings of Karpouza and Emvalotis (2019) that the teacher-student relationship in higher education is a dynamic process. And the findings suggested that teacher-student relationship is an important issue in teaching, and it depends on how teachers view it on the one hand, and how they are going to practice on the other.

Teacher's guidance

The conceptual metaphor underlying metaphors of "planting tress" and "gardening" was identified as "LISTENING TEACHING IS GARDENING", which delivered the belief about teacher's role in taking care of students as that of providing necessities and care for trees and flowers. Such less (only 2 metaphors after the workshop) emphasis on teacher's guiding role was probably related to what the teachers experienced during the three-day workshop. Teachers had a deeper and multi-dimensional understanding of English listening teaching, especially about the essence of listening teaching at the end of the workshop.

Changes of Teachers' Beliefs After the Workshop

Based on the findings on teachers' belief about English listening teaching before and after the

workshop, in this section, we mainly focused on the changes of teachers' belief about listening teaching after the workshop. By comparing the two tables (Table 3 and Table 4), the elicited metaphors demonstrated the obvious change that teachers underwent, including 1) vanished negative attitude, 2) enhanced teacher-student ties, 3) raised awareness of teaching design and 4) holistic view of listening teaching.

Vanished negative attitude

Before the workshop, teachers had negative attitude towards listening teaching. For example, the *"goods in grocery store"* metaphor indicates teachers' belief of the miscellaneous content to select as teaching materials and content for listening teaching. They felt perplexed when facing such materials. And the questionnaire results also evidenced teachers' confusion as what to select as teaching materials. For example, one teacher said, *"I wonder if there are any standards for us to follow. There are just too many for us to select with limited time"* (Reflection, Zhao-2017/4/25). Besides, teachers also showed negative impression of the organization of listening activities as illustrated through the *"a heap of loose sand"* metaphor. But these negative attitudes towards listening teaching vanished after the workshop. As shown in Table 4, we did not find any evidence with negative attitude. The same metaphor was used to convey a different attitude before and after the workshop. For example, the *"goods in grocery store"* metaphor, instead of conveying the miscellaneous feature of teaching content, it emphasized rich content available for teachers, as a teacher explained, *"it's amazing that there must be something we can find useful for our students"* (Reflection, Xiao- 2017/4/25).

Enhanced teacher-student ties

Teachers' belief about their relation to students changed from being dominant with authority to being equal with empathy. Before the workshop, teachers played a dominant role with authority in teaching as unveiled by metaphors such as *"teaching baby to walk/speak"*, *"planting trees"*, *"(directed) performance"*, while after the workshop, teachers perceived a positive relationship with students. For example, using the same metaphors *"(art) performance"* and *"filming"*, teachers emphasized the cooperative role instead of the dominant role in the process, which was further illustrated via metaphors such as *"fish and water"*, and *"living a monastic life"*. This cooperative and inseparable teacher-students tie indicated a positive relationship, which as shown in literature, can bring out productive educational environment both for students' learning and for teachers' well-being (Roorda et al., 2011; Veldman et al., 2013). While getting *"over-involved"* may constitute a problem for teachers' working capacity (Aultman, et al., 2009) and make students a-motivated, as a teacher reported, *"I really enjoyed the reading time this afternoon. With empathy, I noticed that our students need this kind of 'free time'. Teacher's continuous feeding may lead to students' mechanical reaction and their active thinking and creativity will definitely be negatively influenced"* (Reflection, Zhang-2017/4/25).

However, we need to be cautious that teacher-student relationship, like any other relationships, developed in real-time interactions. Although the present metaphor analysis showed the changes in teacher-students relationship, it only nested in belief. Further observation in real classroom should be conducted to provide further evidence of change of belief on teacher-student relationship, that is, whether teachers translate their changed belief into practice.

Raised awareness of teaching design

There is raised awareness of teaching design, while before the workshop this was not even mentioned. Design implies making a plan of activities, formulating general provisions, determining the goals, and so on (Korotchenko et al., 2015). It exposed teachers' beliefs and understandings about the elements related to a curriculum. As for EFL teaching, in designing a lesson, teachers *"synthesize their understanding of*

second language acquisition and language teaching pedagogy with their knowledge of the learners, the curriculum, and the teaching context” (Ashcraft, 2014, p. 1). Teachers’ elicited metaphors after the workshop showed their understanding of how to design a lesson on listening. The unveiled elements related to teaching design include planning for the whole process as illustrated via metaphors “*planning a talk-show*” and “*designing intelligence games*”, the teaching context via “*theme amusement park*” metaphor, the teaching goal via metaphors “*shopping in supermarket*” and “*trip*” and the result through “*kite-flying*” metaphor.

Holistic view of listening teaching

By comparing to the conceptual metaphorical meanings underpinning the elicited metaphors, we noticed that before the workshop, the teachers took partial view of listening teaching. For example, they may equate listening teaching to content selection, or language input practice, or organization of listening activities as illustrated through metaphors “*a water container*”, “*laying foundation*”, “*grocery store*” and “*a heap of loose sand*”. Differently, after the workshop, teachers have cultivated a holistic view. Although they also mentioned course content, teaching method and course environment, they were talking about them on the basis of their understanding of listening teaching as a whole. What’s more, after the workshop, teachers provided more other aspects of listening teaching such as teaching methods, quality/results, teacher-student ties and environment which denoted their multi-perspective understanding. Besides the metaphor data, teachers’ reflections also indicated their holistic and multi-dimensional understanding of listening teaching. For instance, a teacher listed ten gains through the workshop ranging from the use of multi-media, sufficient input, well- designed lesson plan, choice of materials, considering students’ status quo, and paying attention to the teaching process to being persistent (Refection, Ge-2017/4/25).

In conclusion, after the workshop, teachers were more positive to listening teaching, more confident in students and they had deeper and comprehensive understanding of English listening teaching. These findings echoed with literature that teacher beliefs are not fixed but may adapt to or change with new situations they encounter (e.g., Mihaela & Alina-Oana, 2015). All the four above mentioned changes provided preliminary evidence for the efficacy of the workshop in improving teachers’ understanding of English listening teaching. Teachers’ beliefs changed because of the meaning-making that took place during the workshop. These participating teachers were challenged to articulate their own views about English listening teaching and draw explicit relationships between different dimensions and contextualize these understandings within classroom activities. During this process, views were made explicit and consistent as well as connected to their practice. Integrating with reflection, the workshop offered a way in which teachers themselves could engage in their own community of practice with their own colleagues to explore their own teaching in a specific context with certain problems. The workshop “empowers these in-service language teachers to become conscious decision makers about what to teach, how to teach and why it should be taught in that way” (Nicholas, Starks, & Macdonald, 2011, p. 34), thus setting a stage for teachers to refine and update their beliefs and further their professional development.

Conclusion

This study adopted elicited metaphor as a methodological tool to explore the changes of Chinese EFL secondary school teachers’ beliefs about listening teaching. It found that teachers were aware of the importance of listening teaching but hold a narrow and biased view before the workshop. Teachers focused too much on their dominant role and held negative attitude toward the miscellaneous listening content and classroom organization. What’s more, these teachers did not translate their beliefs about the importance of listening teaching into their practices. However, after the workshop, these teacher’s beliefs changed a lot. Their negative attitude toward listening teaching was vanished; their view of listening

teaching was broadened in terms of enhancing teacher-students ties and raising awareness of teaching design with holistic-multi-dimension understanding.

The elicited metaphors in this study “constitute promising catalysts of change in teaching and teaching education and in life itself” (Craig, 2018, p. 310). Based on the findings, this study confirmed that elicited metaphor is a useful tool to investigate teacher beliefs about teaching listening; and its significance serving as a methodological tool exploring teachers’ beliefs emerged during the process of participating in the workshop. It also further instantiated that workshop could be adopted with efficacy in teacher professional development. However, it is recommended that when applying workshop in teacher professional development, teacher educators need to motivate participants to translate their beliefs into concrete teaching practices, thus merging the gap between belief and practice.

This study has some limitations. First, the multi-source data tried to guarantee the validity of elicited metaphor, but the potential problem of the prompt itself still needed caution. To solve this problem, narrative inquiry could be applied to elicit naturally occurring metaphors from the participants in the future research. Second, the findings of the present study did provide insights about the change of teachers’ beliefs after short-term workshop training, however, “the long-standing disconnection between teacher preparation programs and what subsequently transpires in flesh-and-blood” real classroom practice (Craig, 2018, p. 304) needs to be addressed seriously. That is, though this study focused on the belief before and after the workshop, there should be real classroom practice observation of these teachers and interviews to provide further evidence of the translation of changed or enhanced belief into practice. This would allow for a more thoroughly and accurate observation and exploration of the practice and its relationship with belief. Thus, a promising direction for future study would be expanding insight into teacher belief of language teaching and their behaviors as well as the influencing factors using elicited metaphor through narrative inquiry.

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