THE EFFECTIVE TEACHER OF ENGLISH: AN EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY OF INDIAN ENGLISH TEACHERS' BELIEFS

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Introduction

Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are known to be important influences, both on their classroom practice and on the likelihood of their being receptive to innovation and change (Borg 2018; Richardson 1996). There is evidence that these beliefs vary between countries and cultures (Alexander 2000; Schweisfurth 2013), one of the factors that has caused a number of authors, including within foreign and second language teaching, to argue for the need for context-appropriate pedagogy (e.g. Holliday 1994). Despite India today being the largest education system in the world (Anderson & Lightfoot 2019), it is notable that very little research has been conducted into Indian teachers' beliefs (Brinkmann 2015), a clear gap in the research literature that this study aims to fill. Particularly in the field of English language teaching, which has a deep-rooted history in India's colonial period (Kumar 2005) and frequently involves the combined teaching of language and literature, such research is likely to inform the steady stream of educational initiatives currently taking place in India (e.g. British Council 2016; Mody 2013; TEJAS 2019), the success of which will depend, in part, on the extent of their compatibility with teachers' prior beliefs (Lamb 1995). The study will also inform understandings of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and (socio)cultural contexts (Alexander 2000; Hu 2002).

In order to achieve these aims, this study investigates the beliefs of English language teachers and teacher educators in India regarding the classroom practices, personal attributes and beliefs of an imagined effective Indian teacher of English through a specific community of practice (CoP; Lave & Wenger 1991). It uses an original, qualitative survey instrument to produce an effective teacher 'prototype' (Sternberg & Horvath 1995), comparing this to prior studies, both in India and other countries, and discussing implications for teacher education and development.

Terms Used

Following Argyris and Schön (1974) and Borg (2001), I make a distinction between 'espoused beliefs' and 'theories-in-use'; the former being conscious, accessible theories that a person typically identifies with, and the latter being the beliefs and theories that govern action, recognising that these may be different. This study investigates teachers' espoused beliefs only. Following Richardson (1996), the terms 'beliefs' and 'perceptions' are here considered synonymous.

Given that the aim of this paper is to explore beliefs regarding the effective teacher, 'effective' is defined loosely at this point as the construct underpinning all teachers' perceptions of 'quality', consistent with Fenstermacher and Richardson's (2005: 186) assertion that 'perhaps we cannot define quality teaching, but we know it when we see it'. As such, the study allows respondents' understandings of effectiveness to define the construct, rather than attempting to shape it in a way that may be incompatible with their beliefs.

Prior Studies on Teachers' Beliefs about Effective Teachers and Teaching

A thorough literature search identified 22 studies investigating in-service teachers' beliefs concerning effective teaching and/or effective teachers (ETs), 11 from the language teaching literature and 11 from the general literature. A number of beliefs seem to be fairly universal among both groups, such as beliefs that ETs consider learners' needs carefully, engage learners well, and plan comprehensively (e.g. Meng et al. 2016; Park and Lee 2006; Shishavan & Sadeghi 2009). However, subject-specific beliefs are also evident. In language teaching these largely reflect dominant discourses in the field (Richards & Rodgers 2014), including beliefs that communicative language teaching (CLT) is central to the ET's practices, or that the ET prioritises both meaningful communication and collaborative learning in classroom activities and makes regular use of authentic materials (e.g. Bell 2005; Brown 2006; Clark-Gareca & Gui 2019). Other beliefs appear to be more common in the general literature, most noticeably, beliefs in the importance of caring for one's learners, showing them respect and/or equality, and dedication to one's work (e.g. Alqahtani et al. 2016; Liu & Meng 2009).

Of the 22 prior studies reviewed, 10 used only a quantitative questionnaire, and 12 combined such a questionnaire with qualitative data in a mixed-

method design. It was noted that the findings of a number of these studies appear to be influenced strongly by the survey instrument used. For example, four of the five studies that identified the importance of a physically and emotionally safe learning environment used instruments derived from Stronge's (2007) review. Similarly, three language teaching studies that identify four traits to the ET's practices in common used adapted versions of Bell's (2005) instrument. As Richardson (1996: 107) notes, closed survey items, which often derive from researchers' priorities, may often be 'too constraining' and may map poorly onto the beliefs of survey respondents. This strongly suggests that surveys seeking to explore teachers' beliefs without influencing them or overlooking important areas should, as much as possible, involve open, qualitative items.

Studies among Indian teachers

While no prior studies were found that focused primarily on Indian teachers' beliefs about effective teaching, several were found which, as part of larger studies, investigated teachers' beliefs about appropriate or 'good' teaching. These included Brinkmann's (2015) study involving 60 Indian primary school teachers. She noted that teachers whose classroom teaching was classified as 'high-LCE' (learner-centred education) believed in democratic relationships with their learners that included love, respect and engagement. They often held beliefs in the teacher's role as facilitator of learning and in the importance of the overall development of the child to transform him/her into 'a good human being'. In contrast to this, teachers whose practices were classified as 'low-LCE' believed in more transmissive practices, and in controlling learners through fear and discipline.

As part of a larger study in Karnataka, Sriprakash (2012) explored 22 primary teachers' beliefs concerning 'The 'Good' Teacher' (2012: 72). She categorised perceptions into four areas: Personable, including beliefs that good teachers should have patience, creativity and should engage learners; Democratic, including respecting children's opinions and treating them equally; Maternal, including looking after and loving children; and Reflexive, including understanding oneself, and learning continuously.

Two British Council studies were found that included a partial focus on aspects of Indian English teachers' beliefs. As part of a larger project in Bihar (British Council 2016), the perceptions of 35 secondary English teachers regarding 'good'/'excellent' teaching were elicited using a quantitative questionnaire. Findings indicated that respondents believed in the importance of interaction in English, learner enjoyment, collaboration, effective lesson planning and the use of visual aids. In Madhya Pradesh, Hayes and Raman (2015) analysed similar questionnaires from 65 primary teachers, finding that they believed in using group/pairwork, having fun, increasing student participation, planning effectively and giving students responsibility.

This literature review indicates that no prior detailed studies have been conducted into teacher beliefs in India, including in the field of language teaching, where only brief reports of quantitative surveys within larger projects were found. It also validates Borg's (2018: 81) assertion that 'issues of research methodology ... impinge significantly on the results that any particular study will produce' by demonstrating that the findings of studies involving quantitative survey instruments can be strongly influenced by the biases of the instrument used. Taken together, this review supports the need for a detailed exploratory qualitative approach to investigating teachers' beliefs in India.

Method
Aims and Research Questions

As part of a larger study investigating effective teaching of English in Indian secondary classrooms, this study reports on a sub-set of preliminary data. It aims to examine beliefs within an English teacher CoP concerning two research questions:

1. What are the espoused beliefs of teachers and teacher educators within the community concerning the practices, personal attributes and values of an imagined effective teacher of English working in a government secondary school in India?

2. What composite 'effective teacher prototype' emerges from an aggregation of the most commonly described features of the teacher among responses?

The features of this prototype will be compared with prior research findings, both in India and internationally to identify similarities and differences of note. Given the above literature review findings, a parallel, methodological aim of this study was to avoid, as much as possible, imposing *a priori* exogenous constructs of best practice upon either the survey instrument or data analysis, something evident in prior studies (e.g. Brinkmann 2015). As such, an exploratory inductive approach was deemed most appropriate.

The choice to focus on the secondary teacher was made through consultation of local experts: I felt it was important to specify a clear context to ensure responses would be comparable, and secondary is the level at which the largest number of specialist English teachers work in India (and is also the focus of my wider study for this reason). As such, the findings would have relevance for the largest number of Indian teachers and other stakeholders of relevance.

The AINET teacher network (http://theainet.net/), as one of India's two main English language teacher associations, was identified as an appropriate CoP for this study, and access to network participants was made available by gatekeepers after full disclosure of my intentions. Together, we agreed that I would share the findings with the AINET community in due course (e.g. through a subsequent conference presentation) in order to stimulate further reflection and discussion on the topic of 'effective teaching' within the community.

Data Collection Instrument and Procedure
In order to elicit respondents' beliefs about the ET without influencing them unduly, an original, entirely qualitative survey instrument (except for items eliciting respondent demographics) was developed, asking respondents to imagine and describe aspects of an ET's practice, personality and cognition. This enabled the collection of data from a larger and more widely distributed sample than would have been possible through interviews (Beckett & Clegg 2007), albeit in less detail than interviews would have allowed. A further advantage of the written format chosen is that it allowed respondents time and convenience to consider responses carefully before submitting, particularly useful given the limited spoken English proficiency documented among potential respondents (British Council 2016; Mody 2013).

Section A of the instrument asked them to 'imagine' the lesson of an effective secondary teacher 'working in a government school in India', and to describe the context, the procedure and activities in the lesson, the learning of the students and what these students value about their teacher. Section B focused on the imagined ET her/himself, including personality, sense of purpose and beliefs about teaching and learning English, as well as differences between ETs and 'normal' teachers. The final section collected data on respondents' demographic profiles. See Appendix A for the instrument itself.

The survey was pre-piloted with seven informed experts to hone content validity, and piloted with 10 purposively sampled members of the CoP. Small changes were made as a result of these two stages (e.g. choice of the wording; 'effective' over 'expert' or 'good' teacher). Word-processor and mobile-friendly online versions of the instrument were distributed to members of the AINET community through both social media and closed communication platforms. Informed consent was provided by all respondents.

Respondents
75 valid responses were received, averaging 218 words in length. The majority of respondents had extensive teaching experience (74% over 10 years; 19% 4–10 years). The majority (77%) identified as secondary teachers, and the vast majority (83%) worked in either government or government-aided schools (17% selected 'private'), with a fairly even distribution between urban (36%), semi-urban (24%) and rural (40%) contexts. 63% of respondents worked in non-English medium contexts (e.g. vernacular-medium schools).

Data Analysis
Data was coded inductively using CAQDAS software, following Thomas's (2006) general inductive approach to qualitative data coding. It included multiple readings and several inductive coding iterations, with general topic areas initially identified, followed by subtopics, then both descriptive and in vivo sub-coding of data segments according to the belief expressed. Quotes representative of both typical and polarised responses were tagged for use in findings. Finally, a contingent summary prototype of the ET was produced based on this analysis, drawing on the most prevalent themes discussed and expressions used.

Findings
First, in order to answer research question 1, responses in each area of the questionnaire are reported on in detail, including uncorrected verbatim quotes. This is followed by the aggregate 'effective teacher prototype' to answer research question 2. Research question 3 is answered in the discussion section of the paper.

Figure 1 displays the frequencies of code assignments from the thematic analysis, providing an overview of most commonly mentioned beliefs about the attributes, cognition and practices of the ET.
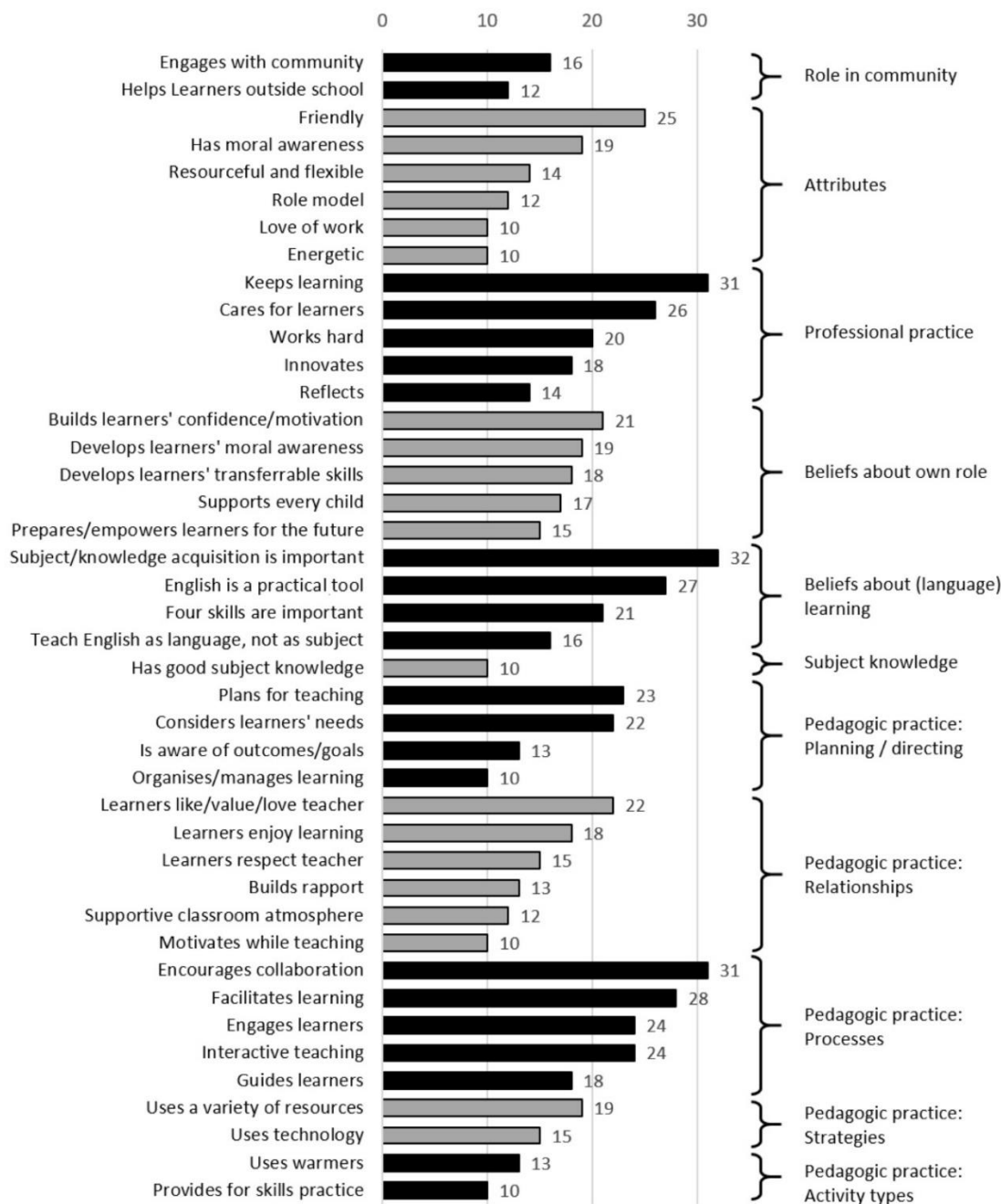
Figure 1. Frequencies of coded beliefs (on left) and topic areas (on right) among responses.

Contexts Imagined

Respondents most commonly imagined teachers working with learners aged 13–16 and class sizes from 40–60, with an approximately equal number of respondents describing urban and rural classrooms.

The Effective Teacher's Lesson

When asked to describe what happens during the imagined lesson, 25 respondents included reference to collaborative learning (e.g. 'pairwork' or 'groupwork'), 14 noted that their teaching would be 'interactive', 9 that learners would be engaged, and a further 6 made reference to the teacher 'facilitating' learning. Commonly mentioned activity types included warmers (11)[1], debates or

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[1] Numbers in brackets indicate number of respondents who mentioned a belief, rather than

total number of mentions (which may be more; cf. Figure 1).

discussions (6) and skills practice of some sort (5). Thus, descriptions of the pedagogic practices of the imagined ET tended towards constructivist and 'learner-centred' approaches (Schweisfurth 2013). The following responses were typical:

> The teacher plans the lesson as per the need and level of the learners. There is a good combination of group, pair and individual work. In the Indian context, where classes are mostly mixed ability classes, the teacher plans his/her activities, bearing this in mind. S/He uses L1 also to facilitate learning.

> TTT [teacher talking time] less, LTT [learner talking time] high. Group activities, whole class engaged in activities, teachers roles - facilitator, supporter, motivator, guide, diagnostician, planner, organizer etc. Learners are active and engaged in the group discussion, obey the teachers instructions promptly. Democratic way is followed.

References to planning learning were fewer, but included noting that the teacher would assign importance to both planning (9) and evaluating learning (7), considering learners' needs (5) and building on prior knowledge (5). Longer lesson descriptions generally indicated either 5-stage (e.g. Naegle 2002: 86) or occasionally 3-stage (e.g. PPP) lesson plans involving a warmer, a presentation of some sort (especially language or literature), followed by an activity and a conclusion:

> In effective lesson plan, a teacher begins her class by connecting known to new and introduces the topic. Then he makes presentation of his topic mostly making the learners activated. Next doing practice or comprehension check to be done. Finally recapitulating the main idea and completing the class but never forgetting to add at least one energiser.

Student Learning in the Lesson
When asked to consider student learning in the lesson, respondents made reference to both content learning (37) and non-content learning (32). Among 25 references to explicit knowledge, 'learning'/'understanding' the lesson vocabulary (i.e. lexical learning) was most commonly mentioned. Learning of the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) was mentioned by 12 respondents only. Most commonly mentioned aspects of non-content learning were cognitive/thinking skills (11), soft/social skills (8) and confidence-/motivation-building (7). The emphasis among responses tended to range between two polarities, with learning of content at one end, conceptualised in rather transmissive terms, and learner-centred facilitation of skills development at the other, although some respondents balanced awareness of both areas of learning:

> They learn to collaborate with each other, help each other. They learn the target language, structures of the grammar or composition through which they learn to decode the language, generalise it and create their own. They learn to express their views, listen to other's views etc.

Students' Appreciation of the Teacher
When asked what students value about the teacher, many respondents made reference to love of (22), or respect for (14), the teacher. Some discussed lesson processes, with 12 indicating that learners enjoy the lessons, and several mentioned the teacher's motivation (5) and engagement of the learners (4):

> Students appreciate such teacher who can make process of learning enjoyable one. Students can derive pleasure from such learning. They would definitely love such a teacher who through activities can make the class a lively one.

The Effective Teacher's Personal Attributes
The most commonly mentioned personal attribute was friendliness (20), although discussion of both moral awareness (10) and teacher as role model (9) were prominent, often linked to engagement with the community (13) and helping learners outside school (11). The ET's 'good' subject knowledge (8) was mentioned, as were several areas relating to professional practice, including the teacher's desire to continue learning (14), to reflect (8) and innovate (8), as well as care for their learners (9):

> An effective teacher knows that he/she has to work systematically. He needs to be a goal setter and motivator. He understands the importance of CPD. He knows and understands how the learners learn and what comes in the way of their learning. He is friendly, professional, and understanding. He is a good human being.

Distinguishing the Effective Teacher from the 'Normal' Teacher
When asked to contrast the ET with a 'normal' teacher, respondents focused on two areas: an engagement in continuing professional development (18) and various aspects of pedagogic practice, including considering learners' needs or nature (9), and the ability to build rapport (7), engage learners (6), teach interactively and facilitate learning. There were also references to personal attributes, including caring for learners (8) and supporting every child (7):

> Keep himself/herself updated with the latest in his/her own field and also with a bit in other fields also. S/he makes sure s/he 'knows' every student completely and individually and respects their individuality as learners.

The Effective Teacher's Sense of Purpose and Beliefs

When asked to consider the ET's perceived purpose/goal of their job, most respondents referenced a clear moral imperative driving the ET, such as a belief in building 'good citizens' or 'human beings' (15), and preparing learners for the future (8). Language used often implied empowerment of learners:

> An effective teacher's purpose or goal would be to ensure that each and every learner is able to understand and avail the knowledge related to life skill so that they can fit in the society with their head high.

A number of respondents noted that the ET would believe in teaching English 'as a language and not as a subject' (14), reflecting influential Indian policy documents (e.g. NCERT 2011) by stressing the importance of prioritising skills over knowledge about language or literature:

> English is a language; and not a subject to teach, learners need skills (LSRWC) first then gradually to develop aesthetic sense towards literature

Related to this, 18 respondents perceived that the ET would see English as a practical tool for use 'in day-to-day life'. Eleven also made specific reference to the role of English as a global language:

> English is globe language for the effective communication, understanding, employment, and research and it's a need of 21st century.

Dealing with Contextual Challenges

In discussion of how the ET deals with the challenges presented by working in an Indian government secondary school, specific strategies were most evident, including the need to use a variety of resources (6), work hard (6), solve problems (5) and to make creative use of technology (4). Resourcefulness (6), positivity and resilience were three notable personal characteristics mentioned by several respondents each:

> 1. Resources – make best use of the resources available, use alternate resources. 2. Technology – Try to make it possible as per the need of the lesson and the skill to be developed….

> I feel the two strong weapons which every Indian teacher in government sector should carry with her are: Be able to Camouflage & learn the art of resilience.

A 'Shared Beliefs' Prototype of the Effective Indian Secondary Teacher

In order to answer my second research question, I drew upon a construct developed by Sternberg and Horvath (1995), in which they produced a 'prototype' of an 'expert teacher' based on a 'family resemblance' that emerged from their dataset. In a similar fashion, I here provide a summary prototype of the effective Indian secondary teacher of English based on the broad consensus of beliefs among respondents to my survey. It attempts to balance among the most frequently mentioned features of the ET above, while also retaining some of the terminology and expressions that were used by respondents, to ensure it is as transparent as possible to readers working within Indian ELT:

> The effective secondary English teacher is dedicated both to her learners and her profession. She is a morally responsible individual who cares for all her learners and recognises the importance of developing their moral awareness and building their self-confidence. She also perceives it important to develop the necessary practical skills that the learners will need to function in the world, balancing the more general transferable skills (specifically, thinking skills and interpersonal skills) with the subject-specific knowledge (including vocabulary and grammar knowledge) and skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) required to learn and make use of English in the future. She plans for teaching carefully, aware of her learners' needs and her intended outcomes. In the classroom she is a facilitator of learning more than a transmitter of knowledge, who is friendly, engages and interacts with the class, and encourages collaboration when possible through the use of pairwork and groupwork. Her learners value their teacher and enjoy their English lessons. As a professional she has an 'unquenchable thirst' for learning, is interested in 'updating' her practice and in innovating in her own classroom, especially when context-specific challenges require resourcefulness or flexibility. She works hard, reflects on her practice, engages with the local community around the school, and is often willing to help learners whenever needed.

Discussion

Similarities between my findings and those of recent research conducted in India are many. Most notable are parallels to the beliefs of teachers that Brinkmann (2015) categorised as 'high-LCE', including a vision of a teacher with high moral integrity and a belief in developing learners as future citizens. Brinkmann's high-LCE teachers also convey constructivist, teacher-as-facilitator perceptions of effective practice, and emphasise the friendly, caring nature of a teacher with a high level of professional commitment. Comparing the prototype with Sriprakash's (2012) findings, three

of the four dimensions she identifies are evident; the strong emphasis on friendliness and engagement in her Personable dimension, the caring role in her Maternal dimension, and the emphases on self-awareness (i.e. reflection), moral standards and 'learning continuously' (Sriprakash 2012: 74) in her Reflexive dimension. The fourth dimension (Democratic) is less evident in the prototype.

A number of similarities can also be seen to the wider international literature, including four of the most commonly shared features identified in the literature review: care for one's learners, consideration of learners' needs, engaging lessons and careful planning (e.g. Meng et al. 2016; Shishavan & Sadeghi 2009). Beliefs in dedication to one's work and the importance of motivating learners were also frequently found in the international literature (e.g. Alqahtani et al. 2016; Bozkus & Tastan 2016).

Comparing the prototype to prior studies of beliefs among language teachers, two areas of similarity are notable; a belief in collaborative learning, and (some) recognition of the importance of skills practice (e.g. Brown 2006; Clark-Gareca & Gui 2019). However, in contrast to this literature, none of my respondents mentioned CLT, and, while a number described lessons broadly consistent with the "weak' version' of CLT (Howatt 1984: 279), there was no reference to stronger versions of CLT, such as task-based language teaching. A larger number of respondents described lessons more consistent with frameworks from mainstream teaching (e.g. Naegle 2002). It is thus notable that perceptions of the effective English language teacher within this CoP have more in common with those in the non-subject specific literature than those in the language teaching literature. This may be explained by the strong literature focus in India (EaS) and the comparative lack of awareness of language learning (ESL/EFL) theory and practice among many English teachers in India. As Chattopadhyay (2020: 21) notes,

> In India, 'ELT' is a slippery term. Only a few universities offer courses in English language teaching. Almost all teachers of English have studied British, American, Indian and other literatures in English; as a result, they have no understanding of theories of language learning and language skills development techniques when they come to teach English, whether in primary or secondary schools.

The strong moral imperative in the prototype, both in the teacher's own personality and behaviour, and in their role in developing such 'moral awareness' in their learners, while notable in other studies from India (discussed above), is less evident in the international literature, where only two studies reported beliefs in a clear moral role for the ET (Devine et al. 2013; Liu & Meng 2009). This moral imperative may originate in recent policy initiatives—Sriprakash (2012: 183) discusses a 'Hindu revivalist agenda' in curriculum reforms in the early 2000s as one possible source—or may trace its origins further back to colonial and even Brahmanical conceptions of the role of the teacher (Kumar 2005).

Likewise, flexibility is only occasionally mentioned as a characteristic of the ET in the international literature (e.g. Perry & Rog 1992), and both resourcefulness and resilience rarely. As such, the emphasis in the present study's findings on resourcefulness, flexibility, resilience and innovation as responses to contextual issues is also worthy of note, and likely to result from the specific challenges of a developing country such as India. Frequent references to 'keeping calm', 'being positive', and even 'be[ing] able to camouflage' among responses all indicate a perceived need for effective Indian teachers to 'learn the art of resilience' to cope with the challenges involved. As another respondent put it, 'Think positive. Use resources in the best possible way. Focus on result.'

The most noticeable feature of the prototype teacher that is not prominent in the wider literature on teachers' beliefs regarding effective teaching, yet was also noted by Brinkmann (2015) is the prototype teacher's awareness of the importance of practical, transferable skills that the learners will need to function in the future. This emphasis may originate in an awareness of the importance of going beyond the predominantly exam-focused instruction often documented in India (e.g. Padwad & Dixit 2018) to enable learners to function effectively in future work environments after school, a challenge frequently mentioned in contemporary debates on education in India (see Mohanraj 2017).

Implications for teacher education and development

As has often been noted (e.g. Borg 2018; Richardson 1996), teachers' beliefs and opinions are important influences on their classroom practice, and should be taken into careful consideration in the design of any teacher education initiative (Lamb 1995), particularly those that intend to bring about change directly in the classroom (e.g. through training workshops) or indirectly (e.g. through curriculum reform, action research projects or new qualification curricula), of which

there are many in India today (e.g. British Council 2016; TEJAS 2019; Smith 2020).

The above findings demonstrate that at least some Indian English language teachers are aware of and able to describe a range of practices within a constructivist, learner-centred pedagogy. While there is evidence of a discrepancy between espoused beliefs and classroom practice from prior studies (e.g. British Council 2016), this espoused belief *in* such approaches suggests that these teachers would be receptive to education initiatives founded on constructivism, such as cooperative learning, discovery learning, and project-based learning. Irrespective of whether initiatives are top-down (e.g. cascade projects) or bottom-up (e.g. teacher research projects), this finding is of significance and could provide guidance on potential areas of exploration for such projects.

The fact that neither CLT nor the theories of learning underpinning it were mentioned by respondents suggests that there is comparatively little awareness of it in contemporary Indian ELT, despite a large number of prior CLT initiatives stretching back to Prabhu's "Communicational Teaching Project" in the 1970s (Prabhu 1987; also see Mathew 2012). This potentially suggests that what Holliday calls "tissue rejection" (1994: 134) may have occurred with regard to such initiatives due to the incompatibility of CLT to Indian secondary contexts, where specific sociocultural practices (e.g. the strong focuses on literacy and literature) may make CLT partly or largely inappropriate. Two potential alternative means to achieve comparable outcomes that have been little explored in Indian contexts are Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and project-based learning (PBL). Given the strong literature focus in many Indian English curricula, teaching materials and exams, it may be that 'soft CLIL' (i.e. in English language classrooms; Ball et al. 2016) may be more compatible with both beliefs and current materials than CLT *per se*, and would enable teachers to build on the strong lexical focus in their teaching referenced above. Likewise, PBL, through its predominantly constructivist focus on content-oriented enquiry is potentially compatible to the beliefs and literature focus documented above, and has been shown to lead to appropriate learning gains in comparable contexts (e.g. Shafaei & Rahim 2015).

A final implication of this study is that teacher qualification courses, both pre-service and at higher levels (e.g. MA), may benefit from including a stronger focus on aspects of language learning theory and practice, as Chattopadhyay (2020) suggests, to enable teachers to better understand such processes in the classroom, and be able to implement appropriate practices to facilitate them.

Limitations of this Study
It should be noted that respondents to this survey, as members of the AINET community, should not be assumed to be representative of Indian teachers in general. They are likely to be more committed, better informed practitioners than the majority of Indian English teachers, for whom 'efforts to initiate and support their own CPD are quite rare' (Bolitho & Padwad 2013: 8). Secondly, as an 'espoused beliefs' survey, responses should not be seen as indicative of actual classroom practices (Borg 2018). Finally, while my choice to use a qualitative survey is likely to have reduced the influence of my survey instrument on responses, the absence of items focusing specifically on the knowledge base or the language-use practices of the ET many have reduced references to these two areas among responses.

Conclusion
There has been extensive discussion of 'cultural' differences with regard to teacher beliefs in both comparative pedagogy literature (Alexander 2000) and language teaching research (Hu 2002). This survey found evidence that the espoused beliefs of English language teachers in one active CoP in India regarding the nature, practices and cognition of an effective teacher are broadly consistent with models of learner-centred, constructivist pedagogy common in the international development literature (Schweisfurth 2013), and found in a range of studies in the mainstream teaching literature. Strong parallels also emerge with other studies from India, particularly concerning a strong moral imperative, a focus on practical transferrable skills, and resourcefulness and flexibility as attributes of the effective teacher, all of which may be more India-specific beliefs about effective teaching. This study also documents little awareness of CLT among Indian English teachers, which has potential implications for teacher education initiatives involving this approach. However, insomuch as it documents context-specific beliefs regarding what English is, and how it might be taught effectively, this study further underpins the importance of INSET initiatives in developing country contexts that allow teachers to reflect upon, compare, explore and examine their own beliefs and practices in ways that are likely to lead to sustainable change, particularly through bottom-up, teacher-led projects involving teacher research (Smith 2020) and professional learning communities at grass-roots level (Padwad & Dixit 2008).

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Appendix A: The survey questionnaire

Effective teachers of English in India: An exploratory questionnaire

Introduction
The aim of this questionnaire is to find out how teachers of English in India understand effective teaching and effective teachers. The intended focus is secondary education in government schools in India, so please bear this in mind in your answers, even if you're not a secondary teacher.

Most of the questions in this survey are open. This is because I do not want to influence your answers. I would like to know *your* personal opinions and ideas. You can write as much as you like; one sentence for each answer is fine, but two or three would be very useful. It should take you about 20-30 minutes to complete.

A) Imagine an effective teacher's lesson
Imagine we could observe a typical lesson of an effective secondary teacher working in a government school in India together. Tell me what we would see:
A1. Please describe the context you have imagined (e.g. class size; age of learners; resources available; is it rural or urban?):
A2. What happens during the effective teacher's lesson? Describe the activities in the lesson.
A3. What do the students learn in this lesson?
A4. What do the students value about this teacher? What would they say if we interviewed them?

B) Describe an effective teacher
Now imagine the teacher. Tell me all about her/him:
B1. What is the effective teacher like as a person? (e.g. personality, roles, outside school)
B2. What does she/he do that a 'normal' teacher does not do?
B3. How would an effective teacher describe the purpose or goal of her/his job?
B4. What are her/his beliefs about teaching and learning English?
B5. How does she/he deal with the challenges of working as a teacher in a typical Indian government secondary school?

Finally, tell me a little about you and your context
Write 'Y' for 'Yes' next to your answer to each question in this section:
1. How many years of experience do you have teaching English?
___0-1   ___2-3   ___4-10   ___Over 10
2. What level do you work at?
___primary/pre-primary ___secondary/higher secondary ___tertiary ___teacher educator
3. What type of institution do you work in?
___government   ___government-aided ___private
4. Is your school in an urban or rural setting?
___urban   ___semi-urban   ___rural
5. What is the main medium of instruction in your school?
___English ___a different language (e.g. Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, etc.) ___a combination
6. Would you be happy to participate in follow-up research?
___Yes. ___No.
If yes, please provide your name and email address, so I can contact you if I have any questions about your answers. These will be kept confidential and only used for this study:
Name: Email address:
Is there any part of being an effective teacher that I have not asked you about that you think is important to discuss? If so, please do so here:
Thank you so much for your time and your opinions.
If you are interested in the findings of this stage of my research, write 'Yes' here _____ and provide your email address above, so I can share these with you.