Students' Beliefs about Teachers' Roles in Vietnamese Classrooms

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Abstract

This study explored non-English major students' beliefs about teachers' roles in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Vietnam. To that end, a sample of 1565 EFL learners who had completed at least one semester of formally learning English at universities were chosen to participate in the study. The data was gleaned employing the Belief about Teachers' Role scale (BTR), and semi-structured interviews. The descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics along with the interview data revealed that the participants' beliefs typified a tendency toward teacher-centeredness, and that teachers played a really important role in the students' learning of English. They provided guidance, explanations, corrected all the mistakes, and ensured students' progress. Also, they were goal setters, decision-makers in objectives, activities, materials and numerous other roles. The results showed significant differences in genders' beliefs. Male students' views tended to be more teacher-centered than those of female students. There was also a difference in beliefs between high achievers, who are less likely to depend on teachers, and their lower achieving counterparts. The findings offered several implications for future research, teachers, educators, and stakeholders in the field.

1 Introduction

Internationalization in higher education has brought about many changes in Asian countries, including Vietnam. One of them is the adoption of credit systems and another one is the transformation from theory-based and teacher-centered curricula to student-centeredness with a focus on practice (L.Tran et al., 2019). We believe that students need to take control of their own learning (Benson, 2011). In other words, they should be autonomous in their language learning. One of the prerequisites for learner autonomy (LA) is the rational beliefs of their teachers' roles (Alrabai, 2017; Bekleyen & Selimoğlu, 2016; Cotterall, 1995, 1999; Chan et al., 2002; Hsu, 2005; Le, 2013; Razeq, 2014; Üstünlüoğlu, 2009).

Despite numerous studies that address teachers' beliefs on language learning, teaching, and on their students, very few, have ever approached students' beliefs of their teacher's roles, not to mention in the Vietnamese context. Meanwhile, there is widespread recognition that these beliefs are of importance in guiding their behaviors and their experience interpretation (Mercer, 2011). Also, they are significant factors that mediate the students' classroom experience (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The primary purpose of the current study is to explore that void which has not been under-explored. Using a psychometrically sound scale of eight items and semi-structured interviews, this study

investigated which beliefs the students have about the role of their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in students' learning process and examined the differences between genders' and student groups' beliefs about teachers' responsibilities. This study is derived from a larger research project on students' perceptions of learner autonomy (LA).

2 Research background

2.1 Theoretical background

Learners' beliefs are conceptualized as 'the opinions and ideas that learners have about the task of learning a second/foreign language' (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006, p. 1). According to Wesely (2012), they are considered to be more important and pervasive than perceptions and can be classified into three tenets: beliefs about the self, about the learning situation, and about the target community. The second category refers to attitudes towards formal or informal learning settings, teachers, and other learners (Thompson & Aslan, 2015). A growing body of research suggests that the examination of learners' beliefs is necessary because they facilitate learners' formulating tasks, selecting and construing information, and play a pivotal role in determining learning behaviors (Buehl & Beck, 2015; Cephe & Yalcin, 2015; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). Specifically, they 'have been recognised as learner characteristics to count with when explaining learning outcomes' (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 187) (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 214). Learners' beliefs, although initially not seen as an individual difference proper, play a role in the psychology of the language learners (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; White, 2008) and are found to be related to other personal factors such as strategy use (Navarro & Thornton 2011; Yang, 1999), motivation (Kim-Yoon, 2001), proficiency (Peacock, 1999), or emotions and identities (Barcelos, 2015). Also, they affect the learning process, and have a dynamic and situated nature (Ellis, 2008). In other words, it is unreasonable to conclude that learners' beliefs in a specific context represent those in other contexts (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). That is, context plays an important role in the study of learners' beliefs. The context in which this study took place will be presented in subsection 2.2. "The growth of autonomy requires the stimulus, insight and guidance of a good teacher" (Little, 2000, p. 4), and such a teacher should perform 'the key role of explaining and justifying these constraints to his or her learners' (Benson, 2000, p. 116). Notwithstanding these constraints, LA will possibly exist if teachers can justify those constraining factors (Huang, 2006). In the autonomous language learning community, the role of teachers is becoming more and more important. However, we concur with Little (1990, 1991), who believes that because they are traditionally trained in the expository mode, teachers talk most of the time during the lessons and they maintain that not talking means not teaching. Additionally, not only are they problem setters, they are also problem solvers. It is also challenging for them not to intervene when their learners have troubles. Therefore, it is not an easy task to switch from a knowledge provider to a counsellor or learning resource manager. More notably, teachers' behaviors underpin students' beliefs about language learning. Students who believe that teachers are facilitators of learning are ready for autonomous learning. By contrast, those who think teachers should explain everything, tell them what to do, offer help are not yet ready for LA (Cotterall, 1995; Riley, 1996; Rungwaraphong, 2012). Their expectations of teacher authority can hinder teachers from transferring responsibility to them (Cotterall, 1995). Learners' beliefs about their teachers' roles or theirs will remarkably contribute to their readiness for LA.

2.2 Contextual background

In many Asian countries, and Vietnam in particular, where English is more at the foreign language end of the continuum between foreign language and second language, EFL teachers/instructors play an important role in the language classroom. That classroom environment is delineated as follows:

> … a family, in which supportiveness, politeness, and warmth both inside and outside the classroom is obvious. Students and teachers tend to construct knowledge together. Or students work together as a class while the teacher is the mentor. This is practiced with regard to both knowledge and moral values.

Additionally, because students come from different parts of Vietnam, ranging from remote areas to big cities, their English proficiency varies hugely. Hence, teachers of English, no matter what methodology they use, have to consider all these features in order not to provide a disservice to their students. (Phan, 2004, p. 53).

According to Trinh and Mai (2018), although much progress has been made in English language teaching and learning, classroom practices are facing a lot of difficulties. Some of these are discussed in this paper. The first one is the teaching and learning culture in Asian education where teachers are regarded as knowledge transmitters, whereas constructivist western education sees teachers as facilitators of communication. Non-English major students who depend heavily on lecturing are not familiar with pedagogies such as discussion, group work, and presentation, and are reluctant to raise their voices in classes. Secondly, EFL classes are large, ranging from 30 to as many as 80 students, which can be a challenge for teachers to manage. The third obstacle is the inadequacy of the conditions including a shortage of teaching facilities and supplementary materials. As teachers of English for years at non-English major universities, we agree with Trinh and Mai (2018) that many classes are not equipped with computers, or projectors and the facilities for language education only include textbooks, cassette players, chalk and boards. Hence, students are given few opportunities to engage in technology-based learning activities. They mainly get involved in lectures or peer discussions. In addition, students' low English proficiency is a barrier. They are assigned to EFL classes without any considerations for the uneven levels, which may negatively affect both teachers and learners. The above depiction is a critical overview of Vietnamese non-English major tertiary education that facilitates the discussion part.

3 Literature review

Although discussions on learners' beliefs can be traced back to the 1980s (Horwitz, 1988), scant attention has been paid to how they view their teachers' roles in EFL classes. A summary of the conducted studies is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Review of the previous study

Source	Country	Context	Participants	Methods	Key findings
Cotterall (1995)	New Zealand	One university	131 learners of English	Questionnaires	Students' acceptance of shared responsibility with teachers, the teachers' ability to guide students on how to learn as a key attribute of a teacher, their own efforts responsible for language learning success
Chan (2001)	Hong Kong	One university	20 sophomores of language major	Questionnaires	Teachers giving students opportunities and scopes to learn, dominant role of teachers in language learning process
Chan et al. (2002)	Hong Kong	One university	508 undergraduates	Questionnaires, follow-up interviews	Teachers' responsibilities for external areas related to course planning and classroom management
Januin (2007)	Malaysia	One higher education institution	72 distance learners	Questionnaires	Teacher as an authority, a goal setter, planner, test-giver, progress-indicator, opportunity, and help provider
Yan (2007)	China	Seven universities	292 postgraduate students	Questionnaires	A strong negative attitude to the traditional teachers' role, participants' acceptance of responsibility shift from teachers to themselves, no gender

					difference found in attitudes towards teachers' role
Édes (2009)	Hungary	One university	One class of 11 first-year students	Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews	Teachers seen as the providers of knowledge
Üstünlüoğlu (2009)	Turkey	One university	320 freshmen	Questionnaires, interviews	Teachers taking charge of allocating time, choosing activities, selecting materials; no significant difference between genders in the perceptions of roles
Vieira & Barbosa (2009)	Portugal	Secondary schools	464 students	Questionnaires	Central role of teachers in the learning process
Dişlen (2011)	Turkey	One university	210 non-English major freshmen	Questionnaires, interviews	The importance of teachers' guidance and presence; the dependency on teachers, teachers' roles of giving lectures, motivating learners, facilitating and guiding learning process
Hozayen (2011)	Egypt	One university	265 first-year students	Questionnaires	The vital role of teachers' guidance, teachers' different roles: mentor, guide, evaluate, lead, transmit knowledge, facilitate
Joshi (2011)	Nepal	One university	80 master's level students	Questionnaires	An important role of teachers (making students understand English, indicating their errors, teaching what and how of English, giving notes and materials for exams); most students' awareness that a lot of learning can be done without teachers, and the students' failure is not directly due to the teachers' classroom work
V. T. Nguyen (2011)	Vietnam	24 universities	481 non-English major undergraduates; 150 master students	Questionnaires	Teachers' and students' shared responsibilities for students' progress in class, interest stimulation course aims, content, and assessment
Rungwarap hong (2012)	Thailand	One university	91 students	Questionnaires	Teachers as knowledge transmitters and tellers (explaining, selecting materials, and determining course content); students' uncertainty of their roles
Le (2013)	Vietnam	One university	213 students	Questionnaires	High expectations of teachers' responsibility: motivating, directing, explaining, informing, raising awareness
Razeq (2014)	Palestine	One university	140 freshmen	Questionnaires, interviews	Teachers' primary responsibilities for ensuring progress during the lessons, deciding the objectives of the courses, deciding what students should learn next, choosing the activities used, deciding the time

					for each activity, choosing learning materials, stimulating students' interests, and evaluating students' learning; no significance difference between perception of roles among gender and level of achievement
Bekleyen & Selimoğlu (2016)	Turkey	One university	171 students majoring in English language and Literature	Questionnaires	Teachers' being mainly in charge of courses and course planning (students' progress during lessons, choosing materials, deciding what they should learn in lessons, selecting activities, evaluating learning, deciding how much time for activities), shared responsibilities for stimulating interests in English and identifying weaknesses
V. Nguyen (2016)	Vietnam	Nine universities	1258 students	Questionnaires	Students' dependence on teachers' choosing learning resources, and assessments; students' beliefs that they should identify weaknesses and determine learning goals
Sönmez (2016)	Turkey	One university	100 students	Questionnaires	Teacher's roles in deciding what to learn and how much time spent on activities; students' wishes to share responsibility for stimulating their interest, evaluating performances and deciding on their progress
Alrabai (2017)	Saudi Arabia	Intermediate schools to universities	319 EFL students	Questionnaires, interviews	Roles surrendered to teachers: determining objectives, times, activities, making students' progress and pointing out their weaknesses; most learners' reliance on teachers
Mehrin (2017)	Bangladesh	One university	80 undergraduates of the Department of English	Questionnaires, focus group interviews	Students' dependence on teachers despite their awareness of their responsibilities
Okay & Balçıkanlı (2017)	Turkey	One preparatory school of a state university	144 EFL students	Open-ended and close-ended questionnaires	Teachers' responsibilities for materials, times and activities in classes; teachers' shared responsibilities with students for making progress, evaluating progress, identifying weaknesses, and stimulating interests
Yao & Li (2017)	China	One university	229 non-English major freshmen	Questionnaires, follow-up semi-structured interviews	The most effectiveness of learning with teachers' guidance; students' need of help: supervision, guidance, providing appropriate materials, introducing listening tactics

					methods (the study is specified to learning English listening)
Bozkurt & Arslan (2018)	Turkey	Four refugees' schools	214 Syrian students from 6th, 7th, and 8th groups	Questionnaires, interviews	High scores of agreement and strong agreement on the dominant roles of teachers; no significant difference among grades students are in, but a difference between genders in the perceptions of responsibilities (males' greater dependence on teachers)
Cirocki et al.(2019)	Indonesia	Secondary schools	361 students	Questionnaires, focus group interviews	A medium level of teacher dependence, preferences to teachers giving activities, telling exactly what to do, not asking students to involve in reflection; the male students' being more dependent on teachers
Lin & Reinders (2019)	China	Seven universities	668 students	Questionnaires	Teachers as guides, monitors and facilitators
Şenbayrak et al. (2019)	Turkey	One preparatory language school	250 EFL learners	Questionnaires	Teacher; an important figure, stronger roles: offering help, providing feedback, deciding how long to spend in each activity

A number of researchers have investigated students' beliefs about teachers' roles among diverse groups of learners, including secondary school students, intermediate school students, preparatory school students, undergraduates and postgraduates. There are several common points among the studies. Firstly, with regard to research sites, these investigations were conducted mainly at one school or institution with several observed exceptions (Alrabai, 2017; Bozkurt & Arslan, 2018; Cirocki, Anam & Retnaningdyah, 2019; Lin & Reinders, 2019; V. T. Nguyen, 2011; V. Nguyen, 2016; Vieira, & Barbosa, 2009; Yan, 2007). This was criticized by Rifkin (2000), who contends that those studies' results were likely limited by the institution's local conditions. Secondly, in terms of research context, the studies reviewed were carried out mostly in Turkey and Asian countries. We could only gain access to three of these that took place in different regions in Vietnam. Thirdly, methodologically, the aforementioned studies employed surveys, most of which were adapted from Chan et al. (2002). Several of them used both interviews and surveys to collect data. Fourthly, in relation to the research findings, the majority of the studies showed that EFL teachers were deemed to be pivotal figures in their students' language learning process. The students really need their guidance and support in areas such as selecting materials, deciding content, explaining points and determining how much time allocated for each activity.

Therefore, it seems there exists a gap for studies on beliefs of non-English major learners in higher education, where the learning and teaching methods are totally different from those at high schools. Moreover, due to the dearth of research on learners' beliefs in the Vietnamese context, we strongly believe that the current study is of great significance. Specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:
1. How are the students' beliefs about their teachers' role described?
2. Are their beliefs more teacher-centered or more student-centered?
3. Does gender affect their beliefs about teachers' role?
4. Do different English grades (A, B, C, or D) affect their beliefs about teachers' role?

4   Methodology

4.1   Participants

At first, we attempted to contact the universities whose majors were not English and emailed their rectors and heads of English language departments in Hanoi, Vietnam. We created a network of ten target institutions which responded to our emails and seven of them accepted our request. However, when the study was being conducted, not every non-English major was studying English due to the employment of credit systems that enabled students to register for preferred courses. Moreover, the questionnaires were only circulated to those who agreed to participate in the study. As a result, the research sample in this mixed-method study comprised 1565 non-English major students from seven universities in Hanoi, Vietnam. Among these undergraduates, 62.2% (N = 974) were male, and 37.8% (N = 591) were female. The most popular city from which 28.7% (N = 449) of the students came from is Hanoi. The second most popular was Nam Dinh province 11% (N = 172), followed by Thai Binh province with 7% (N = 109). The participants came from 34 out of 64 provinces in Vietnam. 62% of them were second year students (N = 971), 23.7% were third year students (N = 371), 11.9% were fourth year students (N =186), and 2.4% were in their final year (N = 37). All the participants were non-English majors as follows: information technology at 21.7% (N = 339), economics at 11.8% (N = 184), civil engineering at 7.9% (N = 124), electrical and electronic engineering at 16.5% (N = 259), mechanical engineering at 12.2% (N = 191), law at 12% (N = 188), and other majors at 17.9% (N = 280). According to the students, the grades in the previous English course were A, which is the best grade (14.9%; N = 233); B (30%; N = 469); C (26.9%, N = 421); and D (18.2%, N = 285). Of the participants, 157 (10%) did not provide this information. The description of the grades and equivalencies is presented in Table 2. All the participants reported more than 11 years of learning English at formal educational institutions (11.7, SD = 1.4) and they have had at least one semester of learning English at the tertiary level. Therefore, they are more experienced with higher education than their first-year fellows.

Table 2. Grades and their equivalences

Grade	Out of 10.0	Out of 4.0
A	8.5 – 10.10	4.0
B	7.0 – 8.4	3.0
C	5.5 – 6.9	2.0
D	4.0 – 5.4	1.0

4.2   Instruments

Two instruments were utilized to collect the data: the BTR Scale from Learner Autonomy Perception Questionnaire by Nguyen and Habók (2019) and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The BTR scale was piloted and validated prior to this study. The items had been previously adapted from Chan et al. (2002); Hsu (2005); Ming & Alias (2007); and Le (2013). The scale had a sound psychometric property. According to Nguyen & Habók (2019), the reported internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha, was 0.767; Rho_A reliability value reached 0.798; and composite reliability achieved at 0.821. The reliability analyses indicate that the scale is reliable (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). There were eight items designed with a 5-point Likert scale ranking from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) (see Table 3).

Table 3. The 8-item BTR scale

Number	Item
1	The teachers should set my learning goals.
2	The teachers should choose what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons.
3	The teachers should correct all my mistakes.
4	The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English.
5	I need a lot of guidance in my learning English.

6	The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity.
7	The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.
8	The teachers should explain everything to us.

In order to explore the students' views of teachers' roles in more depth, individual semi-structured interviews with 13 randomly selected students from the sample were conducted. The interview comprised three main questions. The first question focused on their views of their teachers' roles and their own in classes. The second one explored which specific responsibilities teachers took on from the students' perspectives. The last question investigated what should be done more or less by teachers. Each interview lasted 10 minutes on average.

4.3   Data collecting procedure

At first, we applied for ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board of the university and asked for permission to reach out to lecturers, staff, students, and other resources from participating universities. After getting the permissions, we went to the EFL classrooms and shared our research projects with regard to aims, objectives, significance, methods, and, more importantly, ethical issues. The students were informed that their answers would be kept confidential and would not bring any harm to them. Thereafter, the BTR scale in the paper-and-pencil LAPQ in Vietnamese was distributed among a total of 1600 non-English major students at seven higher education institutions in Vietnam. From this sample, 35 questionnaires were discarded because of the partial completeness and of the students' preferences, so this spoke for approximately a 98% response rate.

The second stage of the data collection process involved the administration of semi-structured interviews. We randomly selected 50 participants who provided us with their email addresses at the end of the questionnaire and invited them for interviews. Thirty-one out of those invited replied to our email and thirteen accepted our invitation to voluntarily participate in the interviews. Then we sent another email to the interviewees to reach agreements on the interviews' time and place. It was a coincidence that the interviewees came from six out of seven participating universities. Nearly 85% of the students interviewed were male (n = 11). The interviews were audiotaped in Vietnamese with the participant's consent. This allowed us to collect in-depth information of their beliefs about teacher's roles and responsibilities

4.4   Data analysis procedure

The convergent parallel design was employed to analyze data. This entailed a separation of analysis between quantitative and qualitative data and then a combination of results to interpret and discuss findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The data obtained from the questionnaires were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 24. They were quantitatively analyzed to provide descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics from statistical tests such as Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis tests. We gave each interviewed student a code: S1 to S13. Next, we transcribed the data from the semi-structured interviews, made translations of transcripts into English, had them proofread by language experts, and looked for the themes that emerged from the answers. Then, we used ATLAS.ti software to compare, contrast, refine, and subcategorize those themes based on the responses' frequency. We did the coding independently and checked for inter-rater reliability together with nearly 90% of consistency, which meant a high level of inter-rater reliability. After that, we combined and compared the results of data from two strands with regard to themes such as beliefs about responsibilities, doing more or less in class, teacher-centeredness or student-centeredness

5   Results

5.1   From the BTR scale

During the data analyses, we first produced the descriptive statistics pertaining to the correspondents' stated beliefs about teacher's roles, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for students' beliefs about teachers' roles

No.	Item	Means	*Sd*
1	The teachers should set my learning goals.	3.52	0.93
2	The teachers should choose what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons.	3.84	0.75
3	The teachers should correct all my mistakes.	3.67	0.96
4	The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English.	3.47	0.93
5	I need a lot of guidance in my learning English.	3.88	0.81
6	The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity.	3.36	0.91
7	The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.	3.25	1.04
8	The teachers should explain everything to us.	3.77	0.92
	The whole scale	3.6	0.55
Note:	*Sd = Standard deviation*		

Table 4 provides information on the agreement level of all the eight items and the whole scale. It, taken as a whole, shows that the students regarded their teachers as holders of multiple responsibilities (M = 3.6, Sd = 0.55), especially selecting materials (M = 3.84, Sd = 0.75), explaining everything to them (M = 3.77, Sd = 0.92), and correcting all their mistakes (M = 3.67, Sd = 0.96). Item 5 had the highest mean (M = 3.88, Sd = 0.81), which shows that a lot of guidance went into their learning English. Table 5 summarizes the detailed results in terms of the students' views of their English teachers' roles.

Table 5. Students' perceptions of their English teachers' responsibilities (in %)

	SD	D	Total (SD & D)	Neutral	A	SA	Total (A & SA)
1. The teachers should set my learning goals.	2.0	10.7	12.7	34.0	39.6	13.7	53.3
2. The teachers should choose what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons.	0.8	2.6	3.4	24.9	54.6	17.2	71.8
3. The teachers should correct all my mistakes.	1.6	9.4	11.0	30.8	37.0	21.2	58.2
4. The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English.	2.5	11.2	13.7	35.7	38.3	12.3	50.6
5. I need a lot of guidance in my learning English.	0.6	3.9	4.5	24.4	48.9	22.2	71.1
6. The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity.	3.1	2.1	15.2	38.5	37.8	8.5	46.3
7. The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.	4.7	19.2	23.9	34.1	30.2	11.8	42.0
8. The teachers should explain everything to us.	0.6	7.9	8.5	29.2	38.7	23.6	62.3

The participants' responses clustered on strongly agree, agree, and neutral. The majority of the respondents (71.1%; item 5) concurred that the presence and guidance of their EFL teachers were of great importance to them as they were unable to study without their teachers' support. Most students strongly agreed or agreed that their teachers were responsible for some aspects of their foreign language learning. Generally, they regarded their EFL teachers as being more responsible for the external areas of the learning process. There were five main fields that most participants believed that their language instructors should take charge of. They included:

- Choose what materials to use to learn in my English lessons (71.8% agree or strongly agree)
- Explain everything to us (62.3% agree or strongly agree)
- Correct all my mistakes (58.2% agree or strongly agree)
- Set my learning goals (53.3% agree or strongly agree)
- Ensure my progress in learning English (50.6% agree or strongly agree)

The other two aspects, 'decide how long to spend on each activity' and 'decide the objectives of my English courses', had high proportions of strongly agree or agree (46.3% and 42% respectively). The table above also shows that a large number of the participants stayed neutral on the issues of teachers' roles, especially in deciding how long for each activity and the objectives of English courses.

In order to answer the third and the fourth research questions, inferential statistics were utilized. The data did not show a normal distribution with skewness of −0.182 (SE = 0.062), Kurtosis of 0.244 (SE = 0.124), and Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests with p < 0.05. Therefore, a non-parametric Mann–Whitney U test was run to compare the responses of male and female students. The non-parametric Kruskal–Wallis test facilitated our comparison of students with different English grades. The effect size (r) was calculated with Z and N, which is the number of observations, with the equation $r = Z/\sqrt{N}$ (Larson-Hall, 2010). A Mann–Whitney U test (see Tables 6 and 7) showed that there was a significant difference in beliefs about teachers' role among male and female students (U = 260818.5, p = 0.002 < 0.05, r = 0.1). The views on teachers' responsibilities between both groups are also significantly different in item 1 (setting learning goals: U = 253503, p < 0.01, r = 0.2), item 7 (deciding objectives of courses: U = 256272.5, p < 0.01, r = 0.1), and item 8 (explaining everything: U = 258101, p < 0.01, r = 0.1). Specifically, the mean ranks of the male group were higher than those of their female counterparts on the whole scale, setting goals, deciding objectives, and explaining everything to them. There is no significant gap in their responses to the other items.

Table 6. Ranks: Mann–Whitney U test

Student's gender		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks
The whole scale	Male	974	810.72	789640789,640.50
	Female	591	737.32	435754435,754.50
	Total	1565		
1.The teachers should set my learning goals	Male	974	818.23	796956796,956.00
	Female	591	724.94	428439428,439.00
2.The teachers should choose what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons.	Male	974	791.16	770594770,594.50
	Female	591	769.54	454800454,800.50
The teachers should correct all my mistakes.	Male	974	798.51	777748777,748.50
	Female	591	757.44	447646447,646.50
The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English.	Male	974	785.88	765447765,447.00
	Female	591	778.25	459948459,948.00
I need a lot of guidance in my learning English.	Male	974	781.37	761052761,052.00
	Female	591	785.69	464343464,343.00
The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity.	Male	974	795.03	774361774,361.00
	Female	591	763.17	451034451,034.00
The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.	Male	974	815.39	794186794,186.50
	Female	591	729.63	431208431,208.50
The teachers should explain everything to us.	Male	974	813.51	792358792,358.00
	Female	591	732.72	433037433,037.00

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Table 7: Mann–Whitney U test: male/female students' beliefs

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Whole scale
Mann-Whitney U	25350325 3,503.000	27986427 9,864.500	27271027 2,710.500	28501228 5,012.000	28622728 6,227.000	27609827 6,098.000	25627225 6,272.500	25810125 8,101.000	260818260,818.500
Wilcoxon W	42843942 8,439.000	45480045 4,800.500	44764644 7,646.500	45994845 9,948.000	76105276 1,052.000	45103445 1,034.000	43120843 1,208.500	43303743 3,037.000	435754435,754.500
Z	−4.186	−1.015	−1.827	−0.342	−0.198	−1.436	−3.786	−3.607	−3.123
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.310	0.068	0.732	0.843	0.151	0.000	0.000	0.002

Tables 8 and 9 show the differences in beliefs about teachers' roles among respondents with different English test grades. The highest ranking is for the mark C group at 767.16, followed by 767.55 for marks D and B. The lowest ranking is for mark A at 589.92. The output, shown in Table 8, returned a chi-square statistics test value that had a probability of $p < 0.01$ at three degrees of freedom. There were therefore statistically significant differences among the four groups. Results of the Kruskal–Wallis H test were also significant in all items, except for items 2 and 6.

Table 8. Ranks: Kruskal–Wallis test

Student's grade in the last English course		N	Mean Rank
The whole scale	D	285	767.16
	C	421	767.55
	B	469	666.95
	A	233	589.52
	Total	1408	
Item 1	D	285	763.61
	C	421	753.49
	B	469	676.34
	A	233	600.36
Item 2	D	285	711.76
	C	421	701.74
	B	469	706.63
	A	233	696.30
Item 3	D	285	717.56
	C	421	751.78
	B	469	675.86
	A	233	660.74

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Item 4	D	747.39	285
	C	732.44	421
	B	679.79	469
	A	651.29	233
Item 5	D	797.10	285
	C	730.45	421
	B	681.88	469
	A	589.88	233
Item 6	D	715.30	285
	C	732.45	421
	B	692.64	469
	A	664.64	233
Item 7	D	730.92	285
	C	757.24	421
	B	679.40	469
	A	627.41	233
Item 8	D	766.66	285
	C	735.00	421
	B	676.83	469
	A	629.07	233

Table 9. Kruskal–Wallis test statistics

	Whole scale	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8
Chi-Square	39.725	33.192	0.267	12.072	12.177	42.803	5.442	19.924	21.265
df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.966	0.007	0.007	0.000	0.142	0.000	0.000

However, there was a problem as the Kruskal–Wallis test did not conduct post-hoc tests. So, we could not be sure of which groups are different from the others (Larson-Hall, 2010). Employing Mann–Whitney U tests separately is a solution (Field, 2005). As there were four groups, we needed to carry out six more Mann–Whitney U tests. The results showed that there was a difference between mark A and mark B groups ($p = 0.016$, $r = 0.1$), mark A and mark C groups ($p = 0.00$, $r = 0.21$), mark A and mark D groups ($p = 0.00$, $r = 0.23$), mark B and mark C groups ($p = 0.00$, $r = 0.12$), mark B and mark D groups ($p = 0.001$, $r = 0.12$), but not between mark C and mark D groups ($p = 0.989$, $r < 0.01$ - a small effect size). The statistical tests also indicate that the differences found varied between groups based on the items of the scale. The details can be found in Table 10.

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Table 10. The statistical differences between groups of marks (n.s.: no significant difference)

Marks	Whole scale	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8
A – B	$p = 0.016$, $r = 0.1$	$p = 0.011$, $r = 0.1$	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.004$, $r = 0.11$	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
A – C	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.21$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.12$	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.005$, $r = 0.11$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.18$	$p = 0.032$, $r = 0.08$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.16$	$p = 0.001$, $r = 0.13$
A – D	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.23$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.21$	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.006$, $r = 0.12$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.28$	n.s.	$p = 0.003$, $r = 0.13$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.18$
B – C	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.12$	$p = 0.002$, $r = 0.1$	n.s.	$p = 0.003$, $r = 0.1$	$p = 0.038$, $r = 0.07$	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.003$, $r = 0.1$	$p = 0.025$, $r = 0.075$
B – D	$p = 0.001$, $r = 0.12$	$p = 0.002$, $r = 0.11$	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.017$, $r = 0.09$	$p = 0.000$, $r = 0.15$	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.002$, $r = 0.11$
C – D	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	$p = 0.015$, $r = 0.09$	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

There was no significant difference between the groups in item 2, i.e., choosing what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons). Almost no difference exists among groups in item 3, i.e., correcting all the mistakes except for mark B and mark C groups, and in item 6, i.e., deciding how long to spend on each activity except for mark A and mark C groups. Item 1, i.e., setting goals showed a significant difference in response between mark A and mark B, mark A and mark C, mark A and mark D, mark B and mark D groups, but not between mark C and mark D groups. A significant difference could be found among most groups, but not between mark B and mark C groups in item 5—needing a lot of guidance. Items 4 and 8 witnessed a significant difference among four groups (mark A – mark C, mark A – mark D, mark B – mark C, and mark B – mark D). Item 7 was significantly different among half of the groups including mark A – mark C, mark A – mark D, and mark B – mark C).

5.2 *From the interview*

In the interviews, 13 students were asked to share their views on which roles teachers had in their EFL classes, the specific responsibilities the teachers should take over in classes, and what they should do more or less in the class. There were more questions that arose in relation to specific conditions of the interviews.

All the students gave their opinion on teachers' roles in the EFL classroom. Eleven of the 13 students said teachers were guidance providers in EFL classes. As S1 affirmed, "the teacher's guide us". S2 regarded his/her teacher as a guide giver who helped his/her learning. S3 viewed teachers' roles as 'giving directions.' This was corroborated by S6 who said teachers guided their students towards excellent study of the English language. S8 said:

Their roles, in my opinion, are very important. They will give us guidance and tell us how to learn English effectively, rather than our self-studying. Of course, we need to self-study, but it is necessary to have a teacher to help us. (S8)

S11 postulated that English teachers occupied a really important role in guiding students to learn English well. This student added that, "I believe that without teachers' guidance, students would not be successful even though they can use technological devices and the Internet."

The kind of guidance also varied. 'Guiding how to learn' was reiterated nine times, 'guiding what to learn' seven times, and 'guiding setting objectives' four times. For example, S13 clearly stated that it was the teachers' role to give students directions and guidance based on their experience with learning languages. The 'how-to' could be a short-cut, a tip on how to pronounce a word, vocabulary development, grammar, and so on. S7 agreed that the teacher's role was to guide, adding that s/he needed much guidance from and relied on the teachers to learn what s/he did not know. S/he was aware of his/her role in learning what was taught. S4 said, "an English teacher is a person who sets the goals and helps students to achieve those goals." S11 added: "Why? Well, they have learned English for many years, they studied pedagogy and then have been they teaching English to others for a long time. Therefore, they are very experienced. They can tell students the way to learn better different parts of English such as vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, and so on; and what to learn in class and at home from the textbook, the supplementary materials, and the Internet. They also aid their students in establishing objectives and guide them to attain those objectives." (S11)

The students tended to conflate 'guidance' and 'orientation/direction'. Some of them asserted that their teachers needed to provide them with direction and guidance. For S12, "they only need to provide students with precise directions of what to know and what to learn." The other two students concurred that they should inspire or motivate them to learn the English language well. According to S9, an EFL teacher is a motivator.

S10 went on to explain what s/he thinks about inspiration/motivation: "You need to be inspired by learning that language because you learned a language a long time ago. When you talk to your parents, if you feel happy, you talk to them. If you are bored, you do not want to talk. I think the teachers have to bring students with motivation/inspiration in EFL classes." (S10).

However, it should be pointed out that some of the interviewees were aware of their own responsibilities. They said "You [students] must be mainly responsible for your learning." (S1), "Teachers contribute a small part, and you [students] need to self-study" (S2), and "I have to study English on my own, but it is important that a teacher is there to guide me." (S8). This mindset recurred in the views of other respondents:

> Students need to actively prepare the lessons and find out the things in advance to check whether teachers say something correctly or not […] If people do things by themselves, they will know that they need to correct these things. If teachers do everything already, students will be passive and think that teachers will help them. (S12)

For the second interview question concerning teachers' specific duties in class, along with the agreements on teachers as guides and motivation providers, there were quite a few roles that the students assigned to their teachers. They perceived their English language teachers as those who teach knowledge, set objectives for them, give them English exercises, revise lessons, create games/activities, answer their questions, and assess their learning. S1 put it as follows, "I ask the teachers what I do not know. The teachers give guidance. The study is mainly my responsibility. They are friends. They teach knowledge, guide me in what I do not know, and assign us English exercises." S4 said, 'During that process [achieving goals], if the students have any questions or difficulties, the teachers can explain them. The teachers are guides. The students go to class, acquire knowledge, and use it'. S5 accentuated the belief that teachers were only instructors and activity designers who encouraged students to get involved, communicate with each other, and with the teachers. S2 believed teachers gave instructions and helped with lesson revisions because they were university students and most of the knowledge had been learned previously. S13 added that teachers could assess their learning, but merely indicate what and where mistakes/errors are. This student said the tasks of correcting them and making improvements were their responsibilities. However, this question was a challenge for some students who raised questions and remarks like 'how to say?', 'it is a difficult question for me', or 'what a hard question!'

They could not find any particular responsibility of their teachers in class, except for 'teaching', 'telling us', or 'guiding'. Interestingly, the beliefs about learners' role were also presented. The majority of the interviewees (11 out of 13) had the same viewpoint that students followed their teachers' guide and instructions, completed all the tasks assigned, paid attention to the lessons, absorbed the knowledge and used it.

Turning to the third interview question, which asked the interviewees what teachers should do more or less in class. The responses were really diverse, some of which seemed contradictory. Three main themes emerged from the data. They signified the use of instructional language, pedagogical issues, and affective issues. Firstly, three opinions were expressed concerning instructional language. Two of them expected the teachers to speak English more, "the teacher should speak English more." [S1], "I expect my teacher to speak English more." [S2]). Meanwhile, the other called for the use of more Vietnamese "There is an imbalance in English levels in class, so the teacher must speak Vietnamese a little bit more." [S7]). The two explained that they need to improve their English environment, and the other said weak students could not keep track in the English-dominant environment. Secondly, the majority of the views focused on the teachers' pedagogy. Four ideas were proposed asking the teachers to create a stimulating environment for their students to develop their English knowledge and skills. That environment can be promoted by more discussions, more free talks, more listening and speaking activities, more games or more knowledge. Some interviewees (S9, S11) emphasized the need for updated textbooks, supplementary materials and an improvement in the way teachers deliver their lessons. "If they [the teachers] want us to learn English better, they need to have newer books compared to the outdated ones which will make us bored." (S9). "The way they [the teachers] teach and explain the points must be more interesting and livelier. We know some of those points already, so we need something fun." (S11). According to S6, the teachers should pay more attention to weak students in class. Besides, they should stay focused on the lesson content rather than talking about irrelevant issues (S5 and S6) and going out too much (S12). Thirdly, three students were into the affective aspects of their teachers' teaching. S13 shared that: The teachers should be more open-minded and more approachable so that the students can have more chances to talk and share. If the teachers are more friendly, we will share what we need, what we want, and what we achieved. (S13). S10 hoped that the teachers would provide an environment where the students can feel comfortable enough to listen to, speak, communicate in English and share their views. S5 posited that the teachers can encourage and help their students.

6   Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the beliefs about EFL teachers' roles from Vietnamese university students' perspectives. The results show that undergraduates in the Vietnamese sample of this study had a widely held but not-clear-cut view of their EFL teachers' role and responsibilities. As for the sample in this study, to some extent, gender and previous English marks affected their beliefs about teacher's roles.

6.1   Research questions 1 & 2

The findings of the first research question and the second question showed that the teachers were considered dominant figures in setting the learning objectives and process in the classroom. It was also evident that the sample in this study held more teacher-centered beliefs about teaching roles. Specifically, in the teacher-centered classroom, to be successful, students adapt to and depend on teachers (Fatt, 2000; Kahl Jr. & Venette, 2010) and the instruction as well as management of the learning process is done by teachers (Chen & Yu, 2019; Schuh, 2004). In the scale data, the participants scored high on all the aspects surveyed in descending order:

- I need a lot of guidance in my learning English.
- The teachers should choose what materials to use.
- The teachers should explain everything to us.
- The teachers should correct all my mistakes.
- The teachers should set my learning goals.

- The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English.
- The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity.
- The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.

Nearly three-quarters of the participants believed that lots of guidance was vital to their learning, and materials should be selected by the teachers. A high proportion of students strongly agreed that the teachers should explain everything to them and correct their mistakes. Also, other aspects revealed substantial levels of 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. The interview data clearly indicates the participants' wish for teacher's support and guidance. They believe themselves to be guide followers and knowledge absorbers. These interview results contributed to strengthening the results of the quantitative strand. There were a number of indications from the statistics and thematic data that some of the students are aware of their own learning. However, most of them hold high expectations for their teachers, and assign numerous responsibilities to them such as guide, motivate, facilitate, transmit knowledge and so forth. This echoes the findings of Trinh and Mai (2018) that students expect teachers to know everything and to manage the class. The data analysis revealed that during the learning process, the students appeared not to be able to learn English well without much guidance from the teachers, and they seemingly relied on the teachers who would explain everything to them and provide them with a guide in their English learning. At this point, both the quantitative and qualitative strands show a remarkable consistency in responses. Although to some extent, some students reported a sense of responsibility for learning, the teachers were seen as decision-makers with regards to the materials used during the lessons, and feeders to indicate and correct all their mistakes (Chan et al., 2002). They showed a marked preference for crucial teachers' roles in setting goals and ensuring their English learning progress. Besides this, quite a few students believed that their teachers played an important role in deciding the objectives of the English courses and how long to spend on each activity. However, the number of students who remained neutral in these two issues was considerable. In addition, some students in the interviews found the question of responsibilities difficult for them. This meant that those participants were not entirely sure about the roles of teachers and learners in some aspects.

The findings from this present study are in line with those from previous studies (Alrabai, 2017; Bekleyen & Selimoğlu, 2016; Bozkurt & Arslan, 2018; Chan, 2001; Chan et al., 2002; Cirocki et al., 2019; Édes, 2009; Dişlen, 2011; Hozayen, 2011; Januin, 2007; Joshi, 2011; Le, 2013; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Mehrin, 2017; Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017; Razeq, 2014; Rungwaraphong, 2012; Şenbayrak et., 2019; Sönmez, 2016; Üstünlüoğlu, 2009; Vieira & Barbosa, 2009; Yao & Li, 2017). The commonality is that most participants viewed their EFL teachers as an important person to their English language learning. Those teachers were expected to guide, support, and teach the students to make them better English learners. They should explain the points to the students, select learning materials for classes, correct all their mistakes, set learning goals, guarantee their students make progress, decide the length of class activities, determine the objectives of courses, motivate their students, and teach what they do not know.

Intriguingly, these results do not support Cotterall (1995)'s, V. T. Nguyen (2011)'s, and Yan (2007)'s findings in the way that their participants did not show a heavy reliance on their teachers. They accepted the shared responsibilities with the teachers (Cotteral, 1995; V. T. Nguyen, 2011), and they had a negative attitude toward the teachers' traditional roles (Yan, 2007). The discrepancies can be explicated by the fact that the participants of the studies themselves came from different backgrounds. Cotterall (1995) conducted her study on students in an English-speaking country (New Zealand) whose students were supposed to be independent of the teachers. V. T. Nguyen (2011) and Yan (2007) surveyed postgraduate students who no longer appeared to prefer teacher-centeredness. Also, V. T. Nguyen (2011) did not specify the majors and the universities from which the students came.

In general, this study generated a student profile that resembled that of other studies, mostly in Asian contexts (Pratt et al., 1999; Subramaniam, 2008; Tran, 2012). These studies propose that Asian students in general and Vietnamese students in particular tend to be oriented to accepting power and authority (Chan et al., 2002; Littlewood, 1999; Loh & Teo, 2017; Zhang, 2015). This point reveals the

dimension of power distance by Hofstede et al., (2010). Accordingly, Vietnam got high scores on the Power Distance Index, so there is inequality in the teacher-student relationship, and teachers are the only knowledge source (Bui, 2018). They enjoy listening and complying to teachers (Lee & Carrasquillo, 2006; Pham, 2010). This can be explained by the socio-cultural context under the deep influence of Confucianism (Le, 2013; Nguyen et al., 2006; Tran, 2012; Truong et al., 2017). One of its principal features is 'teachers are expected to be at the center of authority in terms of both knowledge and power; they are expected to be responsible in every aspect of studying and to be decision-makers in almost all academic matters' (Bui, 2018, p. 160). Moreover, the participants are non-English major students who are required to learn English as one component of their degree (Ngo et al., 2017), so their level of English proficiency is limited in spite of having nearly 10 years of secondary education (Trinh & Mai, 2018). Besides, as stated in the contextual background, the students are in large-sized classes, and there is a lack of facilities for learning and teaching, so the main methods are lectures and discussions (Chen & Yu, 2019; Hansen & Stephens, 2000; Plessis, 2020). As such, it is understandable that students regard their teachers as pivotal figures in ELT classes who would help them better their English. Those teachers give the students guidance and explanations for everything, choose the learning materials, correct all the mistakes, and so forth. Therefore, the majority of participants in this study appeared not to be ready for LA (see more in Cotterall, 1995; Riley, 1996; Rungwaraphong, 2012). Thanks to westernization and technological advances, the learning modes may be more diverse. For example, in western countries, different approaches (e.g., student-centered approach) have been taken for a long time (de la Sablonnièrea et al., 2009) and exerted influences on such countries like Vietnam (Le & Chen, 2018; Phan, 2021). Moreover, the availability of technological devices may facilitate language education beyond classrooms (Bond & Bedenlier, 2019). Consequently, the views of teachers' dominant role may change, but from the students' viewpoint, the teachers remain an indispensably important role in their learning processes. It is also noteworthy that the teachers' roles now are expected to be counselors, facilitators, and resources (Bui, 2018; Fumin & Li, 2012; Mousavi Arfae, 2017; Voller, 2013) to promote LA efficiently and effectively, rather than what students believed including knowledge transmitters who explain everything and rectify students' mistakes.

6.3   Research question 3

Regarding the third question, there was a significant difference between males and females in beliefs about teachers' roles in the whole scale, and these aspects as the following:
- The teachers should set my learning goals.
- The teachers should decide the objectives of my English courses.
- The teachers should explain everything to us.

The mean ranks of the female students were lower than those of the male group. This points out to the fact that male students in this sample were more dependent on the teachers than their female counterparts. The male participants' beliefs about the three aspects aforementioned were stronger than those of the female students. This was reasonably consistent with Aldosari (2014), Ehrman & Oxford (1995), and Kobayashi (2002), who contended that female learners tend to take more positive attitudes towards aspects of language learning than males. However, the other areas ('I need a lot of guidance in my learning English', 'The teachers should choose what materials to use', 'The teachers should correct all my mistakes', 'The teachers should ensure my progress in learning English', and 'The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity') were not significantly different between two genders. Arguably, the participants, regardless of genders, shared the same views that both males and females needed the teachers to involve in those facets of language learning.

The findings confirm Bozkurt & Arslan's (2018) in Turkey, and Cirocki et al. (2019) in Indonesia that male students depend more on the teachers than female students. The difference was that the researchers conducted their studies on secondary school students. However, they were not aligned with Razeq (2014) and Üstünlüoğlu (2009), who found no gender difference in beliefs about teachers' roles. The explanation can be that Yan (2007) investigated postgraduate participants, and the other two conducted research on the freshmen who appeared not to be familiar with responsibilities at higher education.

6.4   Research question 4

The fourth question sought to identify any differences in beliefs about teachers' roles among different groups of mark achievements. It bears noting that there was a significant statistical difference among the groups of marks, except for mark C and mark D groups. There was not a difference between mark C and mark D groups probably because the numerical distance between these two marks was not too far. The mean ranks of the groups with higher marks were lower than those of the groups with lower marks. As a result, the low-achieving students were more likely to report a dependence on teachers than those with higher marks. Although the differences among groups were varied, the participants with lower marks tended to need more guidance and explanations in learning English. They expected the teachers to set their learning goals, ensure their progress, and determine the objectives of English courses more than the high-achieving counterparts. This inference agreed with Musa et al. (2012), who concluded that low achievers are more dependent on the teacher as an authority. Future research is advised to focus more on this prospect for further comparisons. However, it was also worth mentioning that we found no difference in the aspect of 'choosing what materials to use to learn English in my English lessons', almost no difference in the aspects of 'The teachers should correct all my mistakes', and 'The teachers should decide how long to spend on each activity'. This demonstrates that students of any marks saw their teachers as major decision-makers in choosing materials as well as in time spent in the activities, and as mistake correctors. It reflects the general wishes and beliefs of the majority of learners.

7   Limitations

There are several limitations in this study. Firstly, the subjects of this research were limited to undergraduates at universities in Hanoi, Vietnam, so the results cannot be generalized to all undergraduates in other groups and contexts. We highly recommend that more studies be conducted so that those who are interested will have a more comprehensive overview of the topic. Also, the future studies should consider the inclusion of teachers so that their views can be triangulated and represented. Secondly, the survey and the interview questions only covered several aspects of learning English, so more aspects and issues of the beliefs about teacher's roles should be added and more high-quality findings should be announced. Thirdly, we did not take other individual variables such as age, motivation, year of study, and so forth into consideration. The purpose is to make more comparisons among different groups. This study only compared groups of genders and marks. Finally, we could not ask the interviewees questions about their gender and mark differences in beliefs about teachers' roles because there was an imbalance between the numbers of male and female students interviewed. Additionally, we reviewed the literature and did not find any studies that employed qualitative data to investigate differences between genders and achievements. Therefore, we did not have any interview data to support the quantitative data for research questions 3 and 4, unlike what we did with the first and second research questions.

8   Conclusion and implications

The current study scrutinized students' beliefs about teachers' roles in EFL classes. The participants were nearly 1600 non-English major undergraduates from seven higher education institutions in Hanoi, Vietnam. They voluntarily participated in the study and completed the survey. Thirteen of them were involved in semi-structured interviews. Our results highlighted the students' views of their teachers' responsibilities, such as a guidance provider, a person who would explain everything to them, and a feeder to correct all their mistakes. The teachers, from their students' perspective, were in charge of choosing materials for the classes, setting learning goals for learners, making sure they make progress, deciding the length of class activities, and determining the objectives of English courses. Besides, they assigned many other roles to their teachers such as a motivator, an exercise giver, an activity creator, and the like. They also demonstrated an uncertainty of the roles, and sometimes a sense of responsibility, but in general, evidently, their beliefs about teachers' roles were more inclined to being teacher centered. The study indicated a statistical

teachers' roles were more inclined to being teacher centered. The study indicated a statistical difference among males and females in the whole scale and some aspects that show male students tend to depend on teachers more than females. There is a likelihood that those with high previous marks do not hold.

This study provides a Vietnamese perspective to the national and international bulk of research on learners' beliefs. Firstly, the beliefs of the subjects in this investigation show a remarkable degree of consistency with many previous studies. Future research needs to extend to other aspects of language learning, other groups of students, and other research sites, so that the findings can be generalized. Secondly, the results can be used as references for teachers. The teachers should be more friendly when sharing, and understand more about their learners' beliefs so that they may take transferring responsibilities into account when necessary to promote LA. Indeed, if their students' beliefs are not student-centered, they are not ready for autonomous learning. Moreover, teachers need to be well-informed about their roles as facilitators, counselors, and resources in their students' learning process because if teachers keep working as knowledge providers, students themselves will be more likely to stick to teacher-centered beliefs (see more in McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Schuh, 2004). Thirdly, the stakeholders such as researchers, educators, and program developers may delve into learners' beliefs, thoughts, and needs so that they can adjust the current teaching activities, and design appropriate English learning programs. It is advisable that from the very beginning of the courses, EFL students should be well aware of the teachers' and their own roles in the learning process. Therefore, the stakeholders should insert training sessions on roles and LA into the curriculum, which will contribute to the enhancement of LA and student-centeredness.

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