Berlitz Teachers Motivations and Teaching Beliefs

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Abstract

This is a mixed-method study, which has the main purpose of helping us understand the teaching motivations and beliefs of the Berlitz instructors. This material summarizes the data collected after surveying and interviewing over the phone some of the teachers who volunteered on this study. Furthermore, in the conclusion and discussion section some ideas are presented on how to use this information, and what is also needed to continue the process of improving the hiring, interviewing, and developing of the Berlitz teachers.

For the last 135 years, Berlitz has hired, trained and developed instructors to teach more than 50 languages around the world. As any company, we strive to hire the best employees we can find, but we are unsure whether our teachers are in the right work path. Several reports around the world and including the United States have expressed a decrease in the number of teachers and the quality that they bring to their classes (Thomson, Turner, & Nietfeld, 2012). Furthermore, Antoncic (2011) proposes that businesses don’t only depend on their organizational entrepreneurship for growth and development to move the company forward, but they also need to take into account their employee’s own satisfactions and motivations.

**Background and Rationale**

In the process of selecting qualified teachers whom we can retain and develop, we need to keep several factors in mind. First of all, when we hire new teachers, it is important to understand their motivations for doing this type of work. Secondly, the development and retention of these employees will lay under the skills of a manager, who can identify the employee’s needs and career goals, which are usually strongly combined with their motivations to teach. Lastly, understanding what type of rewards teachers expect to receive will also help us to maintain a strong and reliable instruction team.

Therefore, it is important to start by clarifying that motivation is a key element on the different activities that a person, on our case, a teacher, does in their daily routines. The factors that help us to move forward with our tasks can take us to achieve our goals, or could easily take us away from the path we are going on. This concept can be explained by Deci and Ryan’s (2000) study on the content and the process of goal pursuits by analyzing the self-determination theory (SDT).

The SDT mentions that there are three psychological needs for goal pursuit: competence, relatedness and autonomy. The first one is described as “a propensity to have an effect on the environment as well as to attain valued outcomes within it” (p.231). Relatedness is the “desire to feel connected to others” (p.231). And the last one, autonomy, refers to “the organismic desire to self-organize experience and behavior and to have activity be concordant with one’s integrated sense of self” (p.231). Deci and Ryan (2000) mentioned that “…in SDT, needs specify *innate psychological nutrients that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being”* (p. 229). In other words, the needs related to SDT are psychological needs and not physiological as the case of the need to eat. Although there might be a degree of difference between individual’s needs, we all have the need for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Not even our different cultures can change our innate needs described by SDT.

Deci and Ryan (2000) saw the needs humans have as the basis of our intrinsic motivations. In other words, the activities we do intrinsically are based on our “needs to feel *competent and self-determined*” (p.233).The authors proposed that “the *why* of goal pursuit does indeed matter, and … this is because autonomous regulation involves greater need satisfaction” (p.243). In other words, the most important point of the relation of goals and motivations has to do with the reason behind the main goal that person has. If the activities done to achieve a goal are autonomous, the results are usually positive. Going back to our discussion on teacher’s motivation, we can assume from the SDT theory that, in our case, managers, should not push the teachers to do activities to achieve their career goals, since by allowing them to individually take charge for the task themselves, they will usually be successful.

Since people are generally goal-oriented for their work careers, motivation has its fair share in our study. Sansone (2000) created a great summary of knowledge about motivation. In this summary, it is stated that in the early 1900s Thorndike, and later on, Skinner worked on experiments related to motivation from working with rats to working with children in school. The main idea during that time was that to motivate someone to work, incentives needed to be given as in the case of a rat pressing a bar to obtain the reward of food. In the second half of the 1900s the theory of intrinsic motivation became popular. The concept was explained as the incentive that someone would have for doing activities “regardless of the subsequent ‘extrinsic’ rewards or punishments to which those activities might lead in particular situations” (p.258). In the 1950s, four different types of intrinsic motivations were described: “challenge, curiosity, control, and context” (p. 258). Furthermore, Hunt (1961, 1965) stated that humans find very motivating to be able to control the environment without expecting rewards for it. In the 1970s controversy became an issue when theorists began stating that extrinsic rewards could eliminate intrinsic motivations. Nowadays, there is a more open idea that extrinsic rewards do not diminish intrinsic motivations as it had been described in earlier years.

This last point of controversy between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic rewards can be understood in a better light under the following explanations: Deci and Ryan (2000) stated that when people are extrinsically rewarded for activities that were intrinsically motivated, they can feel as they are being controlled, and those rewards can change the person’s view of the activity itself. There have been several studies that have mentioned that activities such as evaluations and deadlines can be threatening to the performance and motivation of the person. Moreover, positive feedback can enhance intrinsic motivation. On the other side of the coin, Covington and Mueller (2001) pointed out that: “…we know one thing for certain about intrinsic motivation: it does not operate in a reward vacuum. Human beings always anticipate some payoff for their actions, intrinsically driven or not.” (p.162). In other words, by giving the learner extrinsic rewards, we would not be modifying their love or curiosity for the task or topic. They concluded by saying, “students are likely to value what they are learning, and to enjoy the process more (1) when the dominant reasons for learning are task-oriented, not self-aggrandizing or failure avoiding; (2) when they are achieving their grade goals: and (3) when what they are studying is of personal interest” (p.173).

Teachers do not teach because they have to eat; they can easily do any other job and earn enough money to satisfy this biological need. They do not teach because they want to earn the title of “Teacher of the Year” either; they can receive this extrinsic reward in some other position. Neither have they decided to teach because they are trying to avoid some type of punishment. This task or behavior that they take on, while they teach, seems to be motivated by other factors. In several studies done on teacher motivation, three categories of factors are being mentioned: altruistic, intrinsic and extrinsic. In one study in particular, Thomson and Turner (2013) stated that the altruistic factors that motivate people to teach are primarily the social benefits of the task. In other words, teachers want to help their students, and they feel this job allows them to do that. Intrinsic motivation is particularly the love and passion for the task itself. Lastly, extrinsic factors relate to “long holidays, level of pay, or job benefits” (p.2).

Teaching is a job and could be a career for many people, but not everyone is fit to do this type of work or has the right motivations to do it. Brunetti (2001) found that the teachers were primarily motivated by the love and passion for the subject they taught, and the excitement from the daily work in the classroom, which stimulates them intellectually. They also enjoyed the freedom and autonomy of the activities in their classrooms, and their work with colleagues. Thomson and Turner (2013) had similar responses on their surveys, where teachers mentioned self-improvement, having the opportunity to teach in other countries and social incentives as motivators. Thomson and McIntyre (2013) found that the most enthusiastic teacher candidates considered education to be extremely important, they had a high work ethic, and they were enthusiastic for the teaching profession. They wanted to work with children, and in general, they mentioned the “desire to serve” (p.8). They also believed that by teaching, this career will help them to gain access to other opportunities. The teacher candidates also believed in a “student-oriented approach” (p.8). They stated that they felt accountable for what they did, and if they were good teachers, they knew that they would be able to help their students. “They had positive academic experiences,” and they wanted to model their own teachers. Lastly, they mentioned, they saw themselves working in education in their future as well.

Another important element of the discussion to retain teachers is the satisfaction that they feel at their job. In the dissertation, *Teacher Satisfaction*, Neuman (1997) studied 333 teachers to understand their job satisfaction. Neuman stated that the main factors for being satisfied with their job were related to intrinsic motivation. Neuman used as a base of her research the Theory of Work Adjustment developed by Dawis, Lofquist and Weirs. In this theory, the employee is satisfied with their work when they have a positive relationship with their work environment. In this relationship, the employee will provide their skills to the work, and in return they will be rewarded. If the compensation matches the needs of the employee, they will continue in this job; otherwise, they will find a different place where they can feel satisfied. Brunetti (2001) studied the job satisfaction of long term teachers in California, and he also concluded that the sources of satisfaction were mainly around the students. The teachers enjoyed working with young people; seeing the students grow up; and when the students came back to see them. They also mentioned feeling motivated when they helped children that were failing. Nonetheless, some of the teachers also mentioned that they felt disappointed when they were not able to help those struggling students.

When people set as a career goal to become a teacher, there are different factors that they take into consideration. There are teachers that knew since they were children that this is the path they wanted to follow, and there are others that have made a change of career later on in life. Our job as teacher recruiters is to find the most qualified employees. Knowing what the interviewee’s motivations to become a teacher are, can help us to start a positive employment relationship with them, since we can take and educative guess that this person will stay in the job for a long period of time if the rest of the environment that we present to them, fulfills their needs and helps them to achieve their goals. Moreover, knowing if they are intrinsically, altruistically and/ or extrinsically motivated, will guide us on what type of rewards we should use to keep them motivated in their work.

**Research Questions**

The purpose to this study is to examine the connections of motivation, beliefs and commitment to teaching of the Berlitz teachers; therefore, the company’s managers of instructions can better understand what the teachers’ motivations are according to their goals in their careers. With this awareness, leadership and managerial decisions can be made to increase quality and productivity in our lessons. Furthermore, this research can also guide us to find better strategies for recruitment and retention of instructors in our Learning Centers.

As Berlitz managers, we must take in consideration the quality and efficiency of our lessons by supporting and hiring the right instructors. To do that, we can start by primarily understanding who our teachers are and what their level of motivation is while they are teaching. The research questions addressed in this mixed methods study, based on Thomson and Turner (2013) and Thomson, Turner, and Nietfeld (2012), were the following:

1. “What specific reasons for continuing teaching were indicated by [the Berlitz teachers surveyed and how do they differed depending on their commitment]?”
2. “What specific beliefs about teaching do [the Berlitz teachers surveyed] hold and how these beliefs differed [depending on their commitment]?”

**Method**

The method utilized for this study was a combination of an online survey and two phone interviews with teachers employed by Berlitz in the states of Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri and Pennsylvania. The process was divided in two phases to utilize a mixed method approach. By doing this, I ensured that the quantitative and qualitative data received was studied in different forms, and gained a better understanding of the teaching motivations and beliefs of the Berlitz instructors.

*Participants*

An email requesting participation for this study was sent to the Berlitz instructors of Indianapolis, IN, St Louis, MO, Pittsburgh, PA, Cincinnati, OH, Independence, OH and Bingham Farms, MI. In the opening of the survey sent to the teachers, they were also asked to let me know by email if they were interested in participating in a one on one phone interview to complete the qualitative part of the study. In the first section of the survey, demographic data was collected by asking the teachers their gender and age to determine some correlations with the time they have been working for Berlitz and a generalized idea of their stage in life according to the information provided.

*Data Sources and Procedure*

The information collected for this study was received in two different phases. On the first phase of the study, a survey was completed by the participants to obtain quantitative data. As mentioned previously, in the first section of this instrument, the participants gave information on their gender and age, and years working for Berlitz. Secondly, they were approached with two options on teaching as a career choice to later on dive them into two different groups. Group 1 was “teachers who wanted to become a teacher from childhood and became a teacher” and Group 2, “teachers who came to teach from other professions or teach part-time in conjunction with their regular job.” This division was a modification of the proposed categorization in teaching commitment in Thomson (2013).

The second section of the survey was based on reasons for being and continuing working as a teacher at Berlitz. In here, there were 18 questions modified from the studies done by Kyriacou (1999) and Thomson (2013). Those questions were divided in three categories: altruistic reasons, intrinsic reasons and extrinsic reasons. The teachers were asked to rate the items on the scale of 1 to 5 (1=Very Unimportant and 5=Very Important). With this information, I was able to understand the reasons for teaching for both groups, those who wanted to become teachers since they were children, and those in the group of teachers who selected teaching as a second career or as a part-time job to complement their first career.

The third section of the survey asked the participants about their teaching beliefs. The instrument used in here was a modification of the items used in Thomson, Turner and Nietfield (2012) and Saban (2003). The instructors were asked to either agree (1) or disagree (2) with the statement presented. The statements were also categorized in factors related to career dedication, student development, and learning approach. This section was also helpful to understand the teaching beliefs of both groups.

On the second phase of the study, a qualitative approach was taken. By using some of the sample interview questions from Thomson, Turner and Nietfield (2012), the instructors were asked about their beliefs and motivations for teaching (questionnaire in Appendix A). The interviews were done with two teachers that volunteered to do this activity. Some of the questions asked focused on the teacher’s personal thoughts about their skills and motivations for teaching. Some of the other questions were related to the teacher’s beliefs of the profession itself, and the advantages and disadvantages they perceived of the teaching career. To understand more in depth their train of thoughts and beliefs, questions about their school years and role models were also included. The conversations were audio taped and transcribed to analyze them and look for common characteristics among the teachers by using the coding scheme from Thomson, Turner and Nietfield (2012). The coding introduced common categories as the case of the main motives for teaching, personal and professional experiences, positive and negative perceptions of the profession among others, and the subcategories were, for example, salary, recognition, knowledge, etc. (coding in Appendix B).

The mixed-method used for this study brought a very detailed report on the motives and beliefs that the teachers had for teaching in general and specifically with Berlitz. The instruments used for the survey and the interviews created correlations among the groups made depending on their options on teaching as a career choice. In a nut shell, the method used was a sounded decision for the type of study done.

**Results**

*Demographic and clusters*

From the total of participants (N =35), 32 (91.4%) of them were females and 3 (8.6%) males. They ranged in age between their 20’s and 80’s. The majority of the instructors were on their 40’s (26%) and the minority was on their 80’s (3 %). As mentioned in the Method section of this study, Group 1 was formed by the answers received from “teachers who wanted to become a teacher from childhood and became a teacher” and Group 2, “teachers who came to teach from other professions or teach part-time in conjunction with their regular job.” Those teachers who have always been in this profession were all females, 5 (100%); in their 20’s, 2 (40%); 40’s, 2 (40%) and 50’s, 1 (20%). This information for all participants is detailed in Table 1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Table 1** | **Participants Demographics (N= 35)** | | | |  |  |
|  |  | Total (N= 35) | | Group 1 (N=5) | | Group 2 (N=30) | |
| *Characteristics* | | n | % | N | % | n | % |
| Gender | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | | 3 | 8.6 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 10 |
| Female | | 32 | 91.4 | 5 | 100 | 27 | 90 |
| Age | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20's | | 6 | 17 | 2 | 40 | 4 | 13 |
| 30's | | 5 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 17 |
| 40's | | 9 | 26 | 2 | 40 | 7 | 23 |
| 50's | | 4 | 11 | 1 | 20 | 3 | 10 |
| 60's | | 8 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 27 |
| 70's | | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 |
| 80's | | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |

Most teachers have been working with Berlitz a year or less, 15 (42.9%), and only 2 (5.7%) of them have been working with the company between 16 and 20 years. The teachers from Group 1 have been with the company between less than a year and 10 years. Most of the teachers from Group 2 also have been working for 1 year or less, 13 (43.3%). This information is summarized in Table 2.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Table 2** | **Years worked at Berlitz** | | |  |  |  |
|  |  | Total (N= 35) | | Group 1 (N=5) | | Group 2 (N=30) | |
| *Characteristics* | | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 0-1 |  | 15 | 42.9 | 2 | 40 | 13 | 43.3 |
| 2 to 5 |  | 10 | 28.6 | 1 | 20 | 9 | 30 |
| 6 to 10 |  | 7 | 20 | 2 | 40 | 5 | 16.7 |
| 11 to 15 |  | 1 | 2.9 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.3 |
| 16-20 |  | 2 | 5.7 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6.7 |

When studying the intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivations for teaching, the instructors were showed 18 statements. From those, any reasons showed as 4 or higher represented that the teachers found that point important (4) or very important (5). From all of the participants’ answers, the most important reason for teaching was that they want to help their students succeed (M=4.8). Since our question was related to staying with Berlitz, I also looked at the answers provided from those teachers who have been working for Berlitz between 11 and 20 years. This last group showed a similar answer to the whole group of 35 participants, but in here there was not deviation. 100% of the teachers with seniority mentioned to be motivated first of all by the altruistic reason of wanting to help their students succeed.

The least important reason for teaching was coded under the extrinsic reasons. For the whole group, the reason was that “other people influencing them to do this type of work” (M=2.686). These results were also similar for the seniority teachers (M=2); however, this last group also added as the least important reason that “teachers have a respectable status” (M=2). This information has been detailed on Table 3.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 3** | **Reasons for continuing teaching (\*)** | | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 11-20 years | |
|  | Reasons |  | All (N=35) | | Seniority (N=3) | |
|  | *Altruistic* |  | M | SD | M | SD |
| 6 | I want to help my students succeed | | 4.8 | 0.4728 | 5 | 0 |
| 7 | Teaching is a noble profession | | 4.143 | 1.004 | 3 | 1 |
| 15 | Being a teacher can help improve society | | 4.171 | 0.954 | 3 | 0 |
|  | *Intrinsic* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | I like the activity of classroom teaching | | 4.229 | 0.942 | 3 | 1.73 |
| 10 | I have a personality that is suited for teaching | | 4.486 | 0.853 | 3.33 | 2.08 |
| 13 | Language teaching is important to me | | 4.229 | 0.942 | 3.333333 | 1.527525 |
| 14 | The language I teach is important to my students | | 4.486 | 0.818 | 4.333333 | 0.57735 |
| 4 | I enjoy the Berlitz method | | 3.914 | 1.095 | 3.667 | 0.577 |
| 5 | I am a good teacher | | 4.486 | 0.658 | 4.333 | 1.155 |
|  | *Extrinsic* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | Teaching provides extra income | | 3.657 | 1.083 | 3.333 | 0.577 |
| 2 | The job offers opportunities to socialize with colleagues | | 3.171 | 1.083 | 3.667 | 1.155 |
| 8 | Teachers have a respectable status | | 3.514 | 1.292 | 2 | 1 |
| 16 | Being a teacher can lead to other jobs in the future | | 3.457 | 1.039 | 3 | 1 |
| 17 | Other people influenced me to become a teacher | | 2.686 | 1.278 | 2 | 1 |
| 18 | I can get a job as a teacher in another country | | 3.429 | 1.335 | 3 | 2 |
| 12 | I can get a job as a teacher in another part of the country | | 3.343 | 1.235 | 2.666667 | 2.081666 |
| 11 | Teaching is better than previous jobs I had | | 3.657 | 1.235 | 2.667 | 1.528 |
| 3 | There is flexibility on time | | 4.343 | 0.684 | 4 | 1 |

\* = p < 0.005

As part of the questions for motivation factors, I also looked at the answers according to the groups formed depending on the teachers desire to become teachers since childhood. Both groups were still in agreement that the most important reason for teaching was that “they want to help their student’s succeed”. As in the other comparison done for reasoning, the least important motivation was “being influenced by other person.” However, there was a slightly smaller deviation on the answers from Group 2.

In terms of differences among both groups, it was observed that Group 2 preferred more than Group 1 “the flexibility” (M=4.43) of the job and that “they can get a job in another country” (M=3.46). On the other hand, Group 1 valued more than Group 2 that “teaching is a noble profession” (M=4.4) and they “like the activity of classroom teaching” (M= 4.6). This information is summarized in Table 4.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 4** | **Reasons for continuing teaching by Groups (\*)** | |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | Group 1 | | Group 2 | |
|  | Reasons |  | M | SD | M | SD |
|  | *Altruistic* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | I want to help my students succeed | | 4.8 | 0.447214 | 4.8 | 0.484234 |
| 7 | Teaching is a noble profession | | 4.4 | 0.547723 | 4.1 | 1.061879 |
| 15 | Being a teacher can help improve society | | 3.8 | 0.447214 | 4.233333 | 1.006302 |
|  | *Intrinsic* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | I like the activity of classroom teaching | | 4.6 | 0.547723 | 4.166667 | 0.985527 |
| 10 | I have a personality that is suited for teaching | | 4.4 | 0.547723 | 4.5 | 0.900192 |
| 13 | Language teaching is important to me | | 4.2 | 0.83666 | 4.233333 | 0.971431 |
| 14 | The language I teach is important to my students | | 4 | 0.707107 | 4.566667 | 0.8172 |
| 4 | I enjoy the Berlitz method | | 3.4 | 0.547723 | 4 | 1.144703 |
| 5 | I am a good teacher | | 4.4 | 0.547723 | 4.5 | 0.682288 |
|  | *Extrinsic* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | Teaching provides extra income | | 3.6 | 0.547723 | 3.666667 | 1.154701 |
| 2 | The job offers opportunities to socialize with colleagues | | 3.4 | 0.894427 | 3.133333 | 1.074255 |
| 8 | Teachers have a respectable status | | 4.2 | 0.447214 | 3.4 | 1.354431 |
| 16 | Being a teacher can lead to other jobs in the future | | 3.2 | 0.83666 | 3.5 | 1.074789 |
| 17 | Other people influenced me to become a teacher | | 2.6 | 1.341641 | 2.7 | 1.290549 |
| 18 | I can get a job as a teacher in another country | | 3.2 | 1.643168 | 3.466667 | 1.306043 |
| 12 | I can get a job as a teacher in another part of the country | | 3.6 | 0.894427 | 3.3 | 1.290549 |
| 11 | Teaching is better than previous jobs I had | | 3 | 1.581139 | 3.766667 | 1.165106 |
| 3 | There is flexibility on time | | 3.8 | 0.83666 | 4.433333 | 0.626062 |

\* = p < 0.005

To understand what our instructors’ teaching beliefs are, they were presented with ten items to agree or disagree with the statement. From the whole group, they mostly believed in “looking forward to meeting their student on their first day of class” (93%), that “the most important role as a teacher is to facilitate learning” (93%) and that “students learn best through active participation in cooperative learning activities” (91%). Group 1, mostly believed that “if they had to start all over, they would choose teaching again without any hesitation” (100%), that “one of the most important roles as a teacher is to dispense knowledge” (100%), “foster student's social growth” (100%), “foster student's moral growth” (100%), and that “students learn more from asking questions than from listening to the teacher” (100%). As on the results of the whole group, Group 2, mostly believed “looking forward to meeting their student on their first day of class” (96.7%) and that “the most important role as a teacher is to facilitate learning” (96.7%).

The belief that the whole group disagreed with the most was that “if they had to start all over, they would choose teaching again without any hesitation” (60%). Group 1, disagreed the most with the belief that “the most important role as a teacher is to facilitate learning” (60%). Lastly, Group 2, disagreed that “one of the most important roles as a teacher is to foster student's moral growth” (46.7%) and “that one of the most important roles as a teacher is to foster student's emotional growth” (46.7%). All this information is detailed in Table 5.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 5** | **Participants' Beliefs on Teaching** |  | Total (N=35) | | | Group 1 (N=5) | | | | Group 2 (N=30) | | | |
|  |  | Agree | | Disagree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Agree | | Disagree | |
| Item | Beliefs | n | % | n | % | N | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 1 | If I had to start all over I would choose teaching again without any hesitation | 21 | 40 | 14 | 60 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 60 | 12 | 40 |
| 2 | For me teaching is a lifelong career | 20 | 57 | 15 | 43 | 3 | 60 | 2 | 40 | 17 | 56.7 | 13 | 43.3 |
| 3 | I look forward to meeting my students on their first day of class | 34 | 93 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 60 | 2 | 40 | 29 | 96.7 | 1 | 3.33 |
| 4 | I believe that one of the most important roles as a teacher is to dispense knowledge | 26 | 74 | 9 | 26 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 80 | 6 | 20 |
| 5 | I believe that one of the most important roles as a teacher is to facilitate learning | 34 | 93 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 3 | 60 | 29 | 96.7 | 1 | 3.33 |
| 6 | I believe that one of the most important roles as a teacher is to foster student's social growth | 29 | 83 | 6 | 17 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 80 | 6 | 20 |
| 7 | I believe that one of the most important roles as a teacher roles is to foster student's moral growth | 21 | 60 | 14 | 40 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 53.3 | 14 | 46.7 |
| 8 | I believe that students learn more from asking questions than from listening to the teacher | 28 | 80 | 7 | 20 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 83.3 | 5 | 16.7 |
| 9 | I believe that students learn best through active participation in cooperative learning activities | 32 | 91 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 60 | 2 | 40 | 28 | 93.3 | 2 | 6.67 |
| 10 | I believe that one of the most important roles as a teacher is to foster student's emotional growth | 20 | 57 | 15 | 43 | 4 | 80 | 1 | 20 | 16 | 53.3 | 14 | 46.7 |

*Narrative Accounts*

2 instructors volunteered to be interviewed over the phone and they answered several questions to allow me to understand their motives and beliefs for teaching:

One of the teachers answered the question, “what would you say were the factors that influenced you to go into teaching?” this way:

Of course, being very blunt. It was another income…and the love for [teaching]. I don't know if I would have done it as a full time career. I hear that is very frustrating for some teachers. I know that I would have put all my heart into it. I just love the communication and the satisfaction of knowing that I was reaching out and helping people.

Both teachers interviewed stated to have interesting and different personal k-12 experiences. However, none of those experiences were believed to have made them decide to go into this job. One of the teachers explained:

What happened to me [is that] I had good teachers, but they were not in my head when I made the decision to move to Berlitz. They were role models when I was a child.

Although, neither of them mentioned to have been influenced by a teacher, both have a strong relationship with their father, and they described them as people who wanted to help, and taught them to do exactly that. One of the teachers said the following:

My father was my teacher. He taught me the first seven years of my violin playing. He was my teacher and I, I, was inspired to be like him. I, I inherited all my teaching qualities from him. I was incredibly inspired by my father. That was the first teacher that comes to my mind musically. I think I inherited the love of teaching from my father. Making the lesson fun, and at the same time being serious. I owe all that to him really.

The other teacher interviewed, also mentioned her father:

The real role model has been my father, and he was not a teacher. He taught me about helping people. He got me involved in things to help people, giving back. Things like that.

The teachers also gave specific information on what they think a good teacher should be like and how they see themselves as teachers:

This is in reference with Berlitz: I share experiences, but I really pull from the students. I let them talk. I think I am really a good teacher. I make friends easily with my clients. I am able to keep it professional. I am friendly. I am outgoing. I am compassionated. And I know my English.

Another teacher stated:

Enthusiasm, anything from the heart it is what really counts in any profession. So, characteristics: number one is enthusiasm, second is knowledge, skill to deliver. Maybe, when you enter a room to teach, you want to be already a very giving person because of your job. Communication is another characteristic. The first ingredient is the love for teaching.

When it comes to advantages and disadvantages, the teachers interviewed provided very specific details that administrators should also keep in mind:

Advantages are the satisfaction you receive from the students. Disadvantages are focused on the financial aspect of it.

The other teacher also reflected on this topic:

Now, from what I have learned from teachers, the parents are blaming the teachers for everything. And it is not their child's fault. I hear teacher's complaint a lot; they have to work for the test. They don't have much flexibility in their classroom, as once did. Teachers are unhappy with that. Me, I feel with Berlitz, I have some flexibility with my students. And I gave you an example earlier. The books were put away because my client needed something different. I put myself aside, and I said ok, let's get you through this. I feel I still have flexibility; even I am working in between the parameters from Berlitz. The advantages, as a teacher, you have to go into wanting to teach. If you go into with the attitude of I have the summer off and I have all this time off for vacation, it is the wrong reason to go into teaching. You have to be very compassionated, and excited. You have to really have that desired to teach. If you don't, it is a big negative.

Lastly, the question of commitment and the desire to continue teaching with Berlitz was explored with both teachers, and they answered that they absolutely wanted to continue teaching. One of them mentioned the following:

Yes. I will still teach. If there is a Berlitz, I will absolutely still teach with Berlitz. I am head over hills about my job. I really am. I won teacher of the year for Independence last year. I am always getting great review. And I am making lasting friendships. So, I absolutely will stay with Berlitz.

The other instructor also responded positively:

Oh most definitely, it is something I love to do. I think I am skilled at, so why wouldn’t I? I will be 60 in 10 years. That is scary. I would still love to. Yes.

Overall, the teachers interviewed expressed on their own accounts how they felt about teaching in general and with Berlitz. They vividly represented the information obtained from the teachers surveyed on the quantitative study, and they explained their reasons, motivations and beliefs for teaching. It was also very exciting to hear that both of them are committed to stay with Berlitz and teach for the next ten years.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The topics of teacher motivation and teaching beliefs have been well studied in k-12 settings. The characteristics of those teachers are similar to the ones we encountered on our teachers survey at Berlitz. As on the literature presented, our teachers’ main reason for being teachers at Berlitz is because they want to help people, making this the most common answer for the whole group, for those under the category of Group 1, Group 2, and for those who have been working for the company for more than 10 years. However, while studying the answers of the teachers interviewed, one can see that the most important reason for teaching at Berlitz was the need of an extra income, and secondly, they mentioned the altruistic reason of wanting to help people. When comparing the three motives, the teachers interviewed valued them following these percentages, extrinsic factors, 50%, altruistic factors, 33.1% and intrinsic factors, 16.9%.

As the least important reason for teaching, the whole group, Group 1, Group 2, and the seniority group mentioned “being influenced by someone else to do this type of work”. This answer correlates to the answers of the qualitative study where the instructors said not to be influenced by anyone in particular; not even a teacher role model, which many times was presented as a reason for teaching by the background literature read. However, both teachers interviewed mentioned being influenced by their fathers to help people. A few intrinsic factors that are interesting to bring up are that the teachers in Group 2 feel more than Group 1 that they have a personality that is suited to teach. Group 2 also think that they are good teachers and they enjoy the Berlitz method more than the teachers from Group 1.

The instructors showed a clear cut on their beliefs according to the groups they belong to. Group 1 strongly believed that they should foster the student’s social and moral growth. They also believed that the students should ask questions and the teachers should not lecture them, which follows the guidelines of the Berlitz method. Although, Group 2 did not comment on the belief of the student learning by asking questions, the instructors on the interviews did mention this characteristic of teaching of a good teacher. It is important to clarify that since the surveys were anonymous; I assumed that both instructors were part of Group 2, since neither of them mentioned to have selected teaching as a first career.

It is not surprising that the whole group of teachers did not believe in selecting the teaching career as a first option if they had to start all over again, since only 5 of the participants were part of Group 1, which agreed with this belief 100%. What is a big contrast in beliefs is that Group 2 did not believe on fostering student’s moral growth and Group 1 strongly believed on this statement. This area could be an interesting section to continue studying since I could not defend this belief by saying that Group 1 intensely beliefs on fostering student’s moral growth because it relates closely to the need of wanting to help people, since Group 2 also mentioned to strongly care for this altruistic motive.

From the interviews, other points were conveyed about the characteristics of good teachers, which it is my belief that we should keep them in mind while identifying new instructors during interviews. Characteristics as enthusiastic, knowledgeable, friendly, outgoing, compassionate and professional are some of the ones that were brought up. As in the literature review, the teachers mentioned as advantages of the job, the satisfaction received from the student’s achievement, and the flexibility that Berlitz offers in terms of curriculum and schedule. Also similar to the background information, the teachers saw as disadvantages the financial reimbursement that they receive.

The teachers interviewed have been working for Berlitz for 4 or more years, and they both believe that they will still wok for Berlitz in 10 years. They mentioned to be in their 50’s and 60’s, but this characteristic did not stop them from wanting to keep teaching. One detailed that should be taken in consideration is that when asked about commitment to Berlitz they both mentioned to be happy with the company, to have the skills to teach and the recognition they have gotten by the company’s administration. This last information should be considered for our guidelines as managers to retain instructors and understand that those comments are essential for the teachers that stay with us.

Although, the results were comparable to the background information of the study, it is important to recognize that Berlitz in the United States have 50 schools, and the number of instructors is large. Therefore, it would be interesting to magnify this study, and allow the rest of the instruction team in the country participate in the survey and possibly in phone interviews as well. Hence, a more appropriate result can be acquired for the team as a whole.

Once the results have been attained for the whole country, the next step would be to research new interview questions and techniques to find instructors that match the motivations and teaching beliefs of those teachers who have been working for Berlitz for several years and have shown quality instruction. Furthermore, this information can also be used for future studies in rewards for teachers and teacher development for long term retention.

**Appendix A: Sample interview questions from Thomson, Turner & Nietfield, 2013 (p.333)**

1. Please tell me a little bit about yourself and your career plans.
2. Please tell me, in your case, what particular factors have influenced your decision to become a teacher? How did you come to this choice?
3. Thinking back to your school years, how would you describe your K-12 school experience? (Probe: your experience as a student, the schooling style, and school atmosphere)
4. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
5. What is quality teaching in your opinion and how would you describe an effective teacher?
6. In general, what do you think about the teaching profession?
7. What advantages and disadvantages do you think the teaching career has?

8. How do you see yourself and your life, ten years from now?

**Appendix B: Coding scheme and major categories from Thomson, Turner & Nietfield, 2013 (p.333-334)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Cod/subcategories** |
| 1. Main motives | 1.1  Altruistic reasons (e.g., wanted to help children succeed) |
|  | 1.2  Intrinsic reasons (e.g., enjoy the activity of teaching) |
|  | 1.3  Extrinsic reasons (e.g., job benefits) |
| 2. School and Personal experiences | 2.1  Experiences as a K-12 student |
|  | 2.2  Personal experiences |
| 3. Professional experiences | 3.1  Previous academic or professional experience as moti­vation for teaching |
|  | 3.2  Previous teaching experience, or related experience |
| 4. Relationships | 4.1  With children/youth |
|  | 4.2  With previous teachers |
|  | 4.3  With family members |
|  | 4.4. Other social relations (e.g., friends, community) |
| 5. Life stage issues | 5.1  Marital status |
|  | 5.2  Age |
|  | 5.3  Parental experience |
|  | 5.4  life events (crucial events) |
| 6. Emotions | 6.1 Positive Emotions |
|  | 6.2 Negative Emotions |
| 7. Perception of schooling (teaching and learning) | 7.1 Teacher oriented style |

Appendix (continued)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Cod/subcategories** |
|  | 7.2 Student-oriented style |
| 8. Perception of teacher's roles | 8.1   Provide knowledge |
|  | 8.2   Provide advising/counseling (i.e., emotional growth for students) |
|  | 8.3   Provide social and moral growth for students |
| 9. Perception of quality teaching | 9.1  Interactive style |
|  | 9.2  Relevance |
| 10. Positive perception of the teaching | 10.1   Value the teaching profession (e.g.. important, noble profession) |
|  | 10.2   Positive social perception of teaching (e.g.. society and others value the teaching profession) |
|  | 10.3   High social status |
|  | 10.4   High financial status |
| 11. Negative perception of the teaching profession | 11.1   Not value the teaching profession (e.g., teaching is not important) |
|  | 11.2   Negative social perception of teaching (e.g., society and others do not value the teaching profession) |
|  | 11.3   Low social status |
|  | 11.4   Low financial status |
| 12. Teaching disadvantages | 12.1.  Students' misbehavior |
|  | 12.2.  Unfavorable public perception of teachers |
|  | 12.3   Salary |
|  | 12.4   Lack of power (e.g.. because of bureaucracy, adminis­tration etc) |
| 13. Teaching advantages | 13.1  Student's progress |
|  | 13.2  Recognition |
|  | 13.3  Links to other fields |
| 14. Teacher self perception (Personal and professional characteristics) | 14.1  Caring for student/empathy |
|  | 14.2  Sociable |
|  | 14.3  Patience |
|  | 14.4  Confident |
|  | 14.5  Creative |
| 15. Teacher perception of themselves as teachers (teaching style) | 15.1  Knowledgeable (PCK) |
|  | 15.2  Disciplinarian |
|  | 15.3  Friendly |
|  | 15.4  Engaging |
|  | 15.5  Lifelong learners |
| 16. Commitment to teaching | 16.1  Early committed to teaching |
|  | 16.2  Committed to teaching for a life |
|  | 16.3  Committed temporarily to teaching |

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