

Teachers' Beliefs on Foreign Language Teaching Practices in Early Phases of Primary Education: A case study

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine whether teacher beliefs would play a role in their actual practices while teaching target language in early phases of primary education, principally, in kindergarten and first grades in a state school. As it is a very broad research area, the researchers exclusively analyzed teaching practices and teaching activities of two teachers and their beliefs about teaching English to young children within the frame of early childhood education principles.

One of the data gathering instruments in this case study was a questionnaire that inquires the participants beliefs related to the classroom practices and how these beliefs influence their classroom practices in early childhood education. In addition to the questionnaire, semi structured interviews with participants were held to examine their beliefs in detail. Finally, in order to see whether participants' beliefs matched with their actual practices in their classrooms or not, the sample courses of the participants were observed and video-recorded for triangulation for the data. The classroom observations of the courses as well as video recordings of those courses were also examined by the researchers, and the findings were verified by another co-rater in order to increase the trustworthiness of the data. The analysis of responses of participants to the questionnaire, video-recorded classroom observations and interviews were presented qualitatively in the findings section.

The results showed that both of the teachers took into account how their students could learn best with regards to their age, level and interest through using different activities and materials suitable for teaching English to young learners. It was also observed that teachers placed room for repetition, role-play, singing songs, picture drawings and coloring in their classes with young learners.

Keywords: *Teaching English to young learners; early foreign language education; teacher's beliefs, illustrative case study; young learners.*