

# **An Interpretive Study into Elementary School English Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Turkey**

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## **Abstract**

This exploratory study seeks for understanding the relationship between Turkish elementary school English teachers' espoused beliefs about the effective ways of teaching English and their self-reported practices. 6 teachers, who were working at different state schools in a town located in the Northwestern part of Turkey, were interviewed. Interpretation of the data revealed inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and practices. Although there was a strong consensus that English should be taught communicatively, all participants reported that their teaching practices mainly focus on vocabulary and grammar. A number of factors hindering this consistency were mentioned such as exam-based educational policy, time constraints and overloaded syllabus. In the light of these, this study recommends changing the focus of current English testing system to using the language communicatively and implementing an adaptable curriculum where language learning objectives will be shifted from preparing students for the examinations to improving their competences in productive skills.

**Keywords:** *Teachers' beliefs and practices; English as a foreign language; English language teaching in Turkey*