

Kindergarten Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching English in Jordan
Asma'a Abu Qbeita

معتقدات معلمات رياض الأطفال حول تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية

Asma'a Qbeita

أسماء أبو قبيطه

Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Educational
Science, AL-Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan

E-mail: Asmaasaleh16@hotmail.com

Received: (20/2/2010), Accepted: (23/5/2011)

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the level of teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching. It also aimed to investigate if there were significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to affiliation , major ,experience, and academic level. The sample included (100) kindergarten teachers in Ma'an out of (150) population. A questionnaire (Wang, 2009) was administrated. The results of T-test at ($\alpha=0.05$) revealed that the level of teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching was low. Also tow-sample T-test and (ANOVA) were conducted and showed that there were significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to experience, major, and affiliation, but there were no significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to academic level. Further results and recommendations were included.

Keywords: Kindergarten teachers, Beliefs, Teaching English.

ملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن مستوى معتقدات معلمات رياض الأطفال حول تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية، وفيما إذا كان هناك فروق دالة إحصائية في معتقدات المعلمات تُعزى إلى طبيعة الروضة، والتخصص، والخبرة، والمستوى الأكاديمي. وتكونت عينة الدراسة من

المعلمات اللاتي يدرّسن رياض الأطفال في معان، وبلغ عددهن (١٠٠) معلمة، وتم اختيارهن بالطريقة العشوائية من مجتمع الدراسة الذي تكون من (١٥٠) معلمة. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة استخدمت استبانة (Wang, 2009) بعد التأكد من دلالات الصدق والثبات. وقد أشارت نتائج اختبار (ت) عند مستوى الدلالة ($\alpha=0.05$) إلى أن معتقدات معلمات رياض الأطفال حول تدريس اللغة الانجليزية كانت منخفضة، وأن هناك فروقاً ذات دلالة إحصائية في معتقدات المعلمات تُعزى إلى الخبرة، والتخصص، وطبيعة الروضة، ولم يكن هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في معتقدات المعلمات تُعزى إلى مستوى المعلمات الأكاديمي.

الكلمات الدالة: معلمات رياض الأطفال، المعتقدات، تدريس اللغة الانجليزية.

Introduction

The growing importance of English as an international language is observed in all countries of the world, including Jordan, where the government recognized the growing importance of teaching English, so it is taught in all stages as a basic subject from the kindergarten to university level (www.moe.edu.jo, 2011).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is recognized as one of the approaches in teaching native language as well as Foreign and second language. There has been a growing interest in communicative language teaching both in second and in foreign language contexts (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Savignon, 1991). It was indicated that the adoption of CLT in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries has generally been difficult (Li, 1998). Though it is difficult, a number of countries are trying to promote CLT as a language teaching approach (Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999).

A general concern has raised among early childhood educators concerning the policies, content of kindergarten, and early primary education programs. This new concern is highly related to the capabilities of young learners in primary school education areas. Previously, educators were more interested in what children cannot do and less interested in what they are able to do in learning. This concern has been revolutionized through the innovations in primary education (Hoose, Pietrofesa & Carlson, 1973).

Consequently, it would be a waste not to use a child's natural ability to learn during his/her most vital years, when learning a foreign language is as easy as learning mother tongue. Vos, "Can preschool children be taught a second language", 2004. http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleId=60. confirmed that almost 50 percent of the ability to learn is developed in the first years of life and another 30 percent by age eight. Therefore, it is suggested that early childhood development programs should have the opportunity to encourage early learning and development. Considering the research on child's language development and foreign language education, Muro and Kottman (1995) pointed out that, primary school children have the high ability to learn a foreign language.

As it is a case for new implementations in any field, the outcomes of functionalizing foreign language courses in the early phases of primary education should be examined for further implications. In this respect, this examination can be held through analysis of scrutinizing the teachers' beliefs who teach young learners in these classes. When the related literature was reviewed, it was observed that there has been scarce number of research studies dealing with the beliefs of the teachers who teach English language in the kindergarten. However, this factual detail was also valid for the other contexts which were stressed by several researchers (Maxwell, et al, 2001; Chiang, 2003; Lara-Cinisomo, et al, 2008).

Therefore, the researcher of the present study intended to examine the level of kindergarten teachers' beliefs and the effect of major, affiliation, experience, and educational level on these beliefs.

Theoretical Background

1. Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching English

Richards and Lockhart (1996) stated that "teachers' belief systems are founded on the goals, values, and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it" (p. 30). These

beliefs and values serve as the background of the teachers' activities inside the classroom.

Beliefs are defined as judgments and evaluations that people make about themselves, others, and about the world around them (Dilts 1999). Pajares (1992, pp: 307-316) suggested that beliefs are formed early. In fact, the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter. He also explained that they tend to be preserved even against contradiction caused by reason, time, schooling, or experience. In addition, individuals tend to hold on to beliefs based on incorrect or incomplete knowledge even after scientifically correct explanations are presented to them. This is the reason why beliefs appear to be static, resistant to change and are generally not affected by reading and applying the findings of educational research. Pajares also specified the role of beliefs in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding such tasks. Therefore beliefs play a critical role in defining behavior and organizing knowledge and information.

The role that teacher's beliefs play in actual classroom practice is that teachers come to the classroom with their own system of beliefs and, to some extent, these beliefs determine many of the choices they make in relation to what and how they teach. Richards and Lockhart (1996) summarized that teachers' belief systems are derived from a number of different sources; their own experience as language learners, their experience of what works best-established practice, personality factors, educational based or research based principles, and principles derived from an approach or method.

Murphy, "Strangers in a strange land: Teachers' beliefs about Teaching and Learning French as a Second or Foreign Language in Online Learning Environments", 2000. <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/stranger.htm>. defined teachers' beliefs as the representation of a complex and inter-related system of personal and professional knowledge that serves as implicit theories and cognitive maps for experiencing and responding to reality. Beliefs rely on cognitive and affective components, and are often tacitly held.

Basturkmen, H., Loewen, S., & Ellis, R. (2004) described teachers' beliefs as a thinking activity in which teachers as people construct their own personal and workable theories of teaching. Once teachers have identified these aspects and how they can benefit from them, it can be easier to build upon their own teaching experiences on a daily basis.

Teaching beliefs are viewed as the "culture" of teaching (Richards, C, Tung, P., Ng, P, 1992) and a "filter through which a host of instructional judgments and decisions are made" (Johnson, 1992). The essential role of teacher beliefs is also well recognized in the central role of a teacher's "cognitive world" which teaching is grounded in (Richards, 1998). Though there is not much empirical evidence showing a causal relationship between teachers' beliefs and their actual teaching practice (Altan, 2006), some empirical studies have suggested that there is a close connection between the two. It is a fact that teachers are involved in helping individuals make sense of the world, influencing how new information is perceived, and whether it is accepted or rejected. (Borg, 2001).

All definitions concentrated on inherited beliefs and environmental role, which leads the researcher to view beliefs as conceptions that could be adjusted.

2. Using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Kindergarten

It is necessary to implement a CLT-based instruction at preschool English classrooms, as it is believed there will be potential benefits resulting from the advantages of CLT. What's more, this seems to be in conformity to little children's general characteristics, which include being curious, loving to move around freely and being interested in playing games. Through engaging in various activities organized in the class, they may enjoy playing with their peers and practice the language in the meanwhile. Some people may worry that CLT would not be suitable for preschool children because limited English they have acquired may hinder them from engaging in communicative activities effectively. This problem can be lessened by the use of some first language (Wang, 2009).

Richards & Rodgers (1986) synthesized the characteristics of CLT and state that the characteristics common to all versions of CLT is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, materials, teacher, learner roles, behaviors, classroom activities, and techniques.

The most common characteristics of CLT; meaning is the most important function for communication. Second, contextualization is the basic premise of CLT. Students use language a great deal through communicative activities (e.g., games, role playing, and problem – solving tasks). Another characteristic of CLT is the introduction of authentic materials. In CLT, students are exposed to appropriate samples of English and given relevant activities to help them learn. In communicative approach, students must adapt themselves to learn in authentic situations and develop strategies of communication to help themselves learn English informally in a natural setting (Stern, 1992).

Activities in the communicative approach are often carried out by students in small groups. Students are expected to interact with one another, either through group work or in their writings. CLT favors interaction among small numbers of students in order to maximize the time each student has to learn through meaning negotiation (Savignon, 1991). This, however, does not lead to the conclusion that there is no role played by the teacher in this approach. To the contrary, a highly competent and imaginative teacher is a major requirement for the successful application of the approach. Therefore, a teacher's and learner's motivation and positive attitude are crucial for effective teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers are to develop materials based on the needs of a particular class. Students are made to feel secure, unthreatened, and non-defensive in a CLT classroom, so teachers using CLT should avoid adopting a teacher-centered, authoritarian posture (Taylor, 1983).

3. The Traditional Approach (Grammar Translation method) (GTM) in Teaching Kindergarteners

Johnson (1992) pointed out that, "teachers' beliefs make up an important part of prior knowledge through which teachers perceive, process, and act upon information in the classroom" (p.83). So teachers decide which method to use according to their belief systems.

The traditional approach (Grammar Translation method) has been used for centuries. It stresses reading ability, the study of grammar as an aid to reading comprehension. It emphasizes reading, writing, translation, and grammatical rules, but it ignores the listening and reading skills. Consequently, students who learn using this method can read and write well, but they face a problem with speaking and listening (Palmer, 1987). The traditional method aims at teaching English by word-for word, phrase-for phrase or sentence-for sentence equivalents in the mother tongue for English words, phrases or sentences and visa versa (Nazir, 1992).

Richards & Rodgers (1986) mentioned some characteristics of Grammar Translation method,

1. The way of studying a language is through the analysis of its grammar rules and through translating sentences into and out of the target language.
2. The major focus is on reading and writing. Little attention is given to listening and speaking
3. A list of vocabulary items is presented with their translation equivalent.
4. The sentence is the basic unit of teaching.
5. Accuracy is emphasized.
6. The grammar rules are presented then are practiced through translation exercises.
7. The native language is the medium of instruction.

4. Significance of the Study

The researcher hope that the findings of this study will provide insight into the belief system of kindergarten teachers on teaching English in Jordan in order to gain some indication as to whether and to what extent there is awareness of the role of English language and how such awareness affects their teaching.

Since teachers play a central role in language instruction and are also responsible for motivating their students to learn, it is essential that teachers themselves are aware of their beliefs. Through this awareness, teachers can reflect if their current beliefs and teaching practices are worth maintaining, or should be adjusted. This is the main reason for conducting this research.

This study can help us to obtain vivid insight into early English bilingual education in Jordan, but how early English instruction is being conducted in Jordan and particularly how preschool teachers perceive early English instruction are unknown yet. This is the issue that falls into the focus of this study.

5. Definitions of Terms

The study identifies the following term definitions where they are used:

a) Teachers' beliefs

The convictions about language and the teaching and learning of it. Also these beliefs are manifested in teachers' teaching approaches, selection of materials, activities, judgments, and behaviours in the classroom (Borg, 2001).

b) Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL)

Teaching English to students whose first language is not English. TEFL usually occurs in the student's own country, either within the government or private school system (Thornton, 2009).

c) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Method which is used when learners are involved in real communication, so their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used and this will allow them to learn to use the language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986)

d) Traditional Approach (Grammar Translation Method)

A foreign language teaching method derived from the classical (sometimes called traditional) method of teaching Greek and Latin. The method requires students to translate whole texts word for word and memorize numerous grammatical rules and exceptions as well as enormous vocabulary lists. The goal of this method is to be able to read and translate literary masterpieces and classics (Wang, 2009).

e) Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

A trend in early childhood education encourages child-centered practices. The core notion of developmentally appropriate practice has always been the belief that children's development should be taken into account as adults interact with children. Also adults should structure children's time, space, and plan activities upon their level of development (Erdiller & McMullen, 2004).

f) Beliefs about Early Childhood English Language Teaching (BECELT)

Teachers' beliefs about teaching English for kindergartners and how these beliefs are reflected on teachers' practices and methods inside the classroom.

6. Problem of the Study

Although the essential role that kindergarten teacher plays in foreign language learning, few studies have been conducted to discuss how kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English influence their practices inside classroom. Thus this study attempts to explore the kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English in Ma'an\Jordan.

7. Objectives of the Study

This study aims at investigating the level of teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching. It also aims to investigate if there are significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to affiliation, major, experience, and academic level.

8. Questions of the Study

To achieve the aims of the study, the following questions were addressed:

- 1) What is the level of teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching?
- 2) Are there significant differences on teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching due to experience?
- 3) Are there significant differences on teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching due to affiliation?
- 4) Are there significant differences on teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching due to major?
- 5) Are there significant differences on teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English teaching due to educational level?

9. Limitations of the Study

The Study was limited to the following:-

1. The study findings were limited to the nature of the sample which consisted of the kindergarten teachers in Ma'an.
2. The findings were limited to the measuring tool included within the study.
3. The study findings were limited to the time where the study was conducted. The study was conducted in the first semester for the year 2010/2011.

Literature Review

Charlesworth (1991) study aimed at developing a questionnaire based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood education and to use this questionnaire for obtaining information regarding kindergarten teachers' beliefs and practices. The Teacher Questionnaire containing two subscales, the Teachers' Beliefs Scale and the Instructional Activities Scale, was constructed and administered to (113) kindergarten teachers from four Southern states. The findings showed that the teachers with higher ratings on developmentally appropriate beliefs felt more in control of planning and implementation of instruction than did the teachers with lower ratings.

Karavas -Doukas (1996) designed an attitude survey on fourteen Greek teachers of English to assess teachers' beliefs about CLT. She found that the survey results leaned toward agreement with CLT principles, but when she observed the classroom teaching environments, the classroom practices deviated considerably from the principles of communicative approaches. Teachers tended to follow an eclectic approach, exhibiting features of both traditional and communicative approach in their classroom practices. Most lessons were teacher-fronted and exhibited an explicit focus on form, showing that teachers do not focus on the usage of language as they believe.

Choi (1999) investigated the communicative language teaching of English as a foreign language from teachers' perspectives in Korea middle school classrooms. The result showed that Korean EFL teachers have positive beliefs about the concepts of CLT. It also reported that there are some discrepancies between teachers' beliefs about CLT and their practices of CLT.

Vartuli (1999) reported the findings of her five-year study. The study included interviewing and surveying early childhood teachers as well as observing their classrooms in order to examine the correlation between beliefs and practices as well as looking at the(44)variance of beliefs and practices over the grade levels of kindergarten to third grade. The results

showed that reported beliefs and practices tended to be closer to observed practices in kindergarten and preschool programs than in primary grade classrooms. While beliefs may have, at times, been closed to observed practice.

Erdiller & McMullen (2004) study examined the self reported beliefs of Turkish in-service early childhood education teachers living in Turkey in order to develop an understanding of the beliefs held by Turkish teachers about appropriate early childhood education practices, to get a sense of the perceived barriers to effective practice. (12) teachers participated in in-depth interviews from early childhood centers serving children ages (3 to 6) years located in Ankara and Istanbul. Results revealed that Turkish teachers' beliefs were closer to the developmentally appropriate side versus developmentally inappropriate continuum considering the main points of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) curriculum such as active, hands on learning, dramatic play, and activities related to children's needs and interests. Teachers' perceived barriers to effective practice include physical conditions and resources (class size, materials etc.), lack of teacher-parent partnership, and low status of teaching profession in Turkey.

Chávez (2006) aimed at exploring and analyzing the teachers' knowledge, beliefs and perceptions concerning the teaching-learning process of EFL, and the influence these elements exert on the teachers' performance and behavior in the classroom. The sample included (15) in-service teachers of Saturday English Program. Findings showed that teachers' beliefs were perceived to stem from different sources. The culture of their particular institution and the degree of involvement that teachers were given in the organization of the instructional processes were considered to exert great influence. On the other hand, teachers' beliefs were also perceived as being influenced by their experience of what works best and by their tendency to stick to "ritual behavior" and performance in the classrooms.

Parker & Neuharth-Pritchett, " Developmentally appropriate practice in kindergarten: factors shaping teacher beliefs and practice", 2006. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb1439/is_1_21/ai_n29298149

/ study was to examine the beliefs of (34) kindergarten teachers in relation to developmentally appropriate instruction, and the role of such external influences as peer pressure, high-stakes testing, and curriculum constraints in shaping their beliefs. Surveys, interviews, and observations were used. Findings indicated that regardless of teachers' instructional approaches, teachers perceived that kindergarten was becoming more academic in nature. Also Teachers who endorsed a more child-centered perspective noted that they felt more pressure from 1st-grade teachers than did teachers who were classified as teacher-directed.

Mecham (2007) examined kindergarten teachers' developmentally appropriate beliefs, practices, and kindergarten teachers' perceived problems of children entering kindergarten. Participants included kindergarten teachers from eight Utah school districts. Teachers were surveyed using both the Transition Practices, and the Teachers' Beliefs and Practices Survey. Findings indicated that overall the kindergarten teachers were considered developmentally appropriate, but teachers' reported developmentally appropriate beliefs were higher than their reported developmentally appropriate practices. The highest reported beliefs consisted of reading daily with children, helping children development self-esteem, helping children develop social skills, guiding children's behavior in positive ways, and using individualized plans with children who have major behavior problems. The highest reported practices consisted of using music in the classroom, integrating various subjects, allowing children to experiment with writing, and not using time-out as a means of discipline. The findings also showed a trend in which teachers with higher beliefs reported that "lack of academic skills" was a problem less often than the teachers with lower reported practices. Findings also indicated a trend in which teachers with higher beliefs reported a smaller percentage of children having a "difficult or very difficult" entry into kindergarten than did teachers who reported lower developmentally appropriate beliefs.

Wang (2009) study investigated Chinese preschool teachers' beliefs about second language teaching. A questionnaire of Beliefs about Early Childhood English Language Teaching (BECFLT) and two open-ended

questions were administered. The sample included (35) participants. The results appeared to indicate that teachers surveyed were in a "belief conflict" between a traditional and communicative teaching approach, a conflicting situation which seemed to be further reflected in their answers to the two open-ended questions about roles of teachers and young learners.

Caner, Subaşı & Kara (2010) investigated 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. The researchers used questionnaire, semi structured interviews. Also the sample courses of the participants were observed and video-recorded for triangulation. 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.

Bedira (2010) focused on teachers' beliefs on language learning strategies and strategies based instructions in EFL classes. The participants of the study were (120) teachers (81 female and 29 male) from 86 primary schools. Their ages ranged from (26 to 38) and the number of years the teachers had been teaching ranged from (3 to 16). A questionnaire was used. The study revealed that teachers are generally holding positive beliefs on some aspects of the general characteristics, and aims/outcomes of the strategies and strategies based instruction. In addition, the high mean scores of almost all of the items regarding the implementation of the strategies and strategy based instruction showed that a larger group of teachers were holding very optimistic beliefs on the strategies and strategy based instruction.

The majority of research studies strongly suggest that early childhood teachers' implicit beliefs are a predictor of their in-class behaviors practices, or instruction, and thus beliefs are considered a reliable tool for examining practice (Charlesworth, 1991; Vartuli, 1999; Erdiller&McMullen, 2004). However, a study found discrepancy between the beliefs teachers hold and their practices (Mecham, 2007). But it has been shown that there are contextual factors that may affect classroom practices and these factors contribute to the discrepancy between beliefs and practices that should be considered when using beliefs to infer what is going on in the classroom (Chávez, 2006; Parker& Neuharth-Pritchett, 2006).

Concerning the relation between teachers' beliefs on teaching English for kindergarten and their practices, it seems that beliefs are a predictor of their in-class behaviors practices or instruction (Caner, Subaşı& Kara, 2010) As well as teachers' beliefs on language learning strategies and strategies based instructions in EFL classes (Bedira, 2010).Whereas some teachers were in a "belief conflict" between a traditional and communicative teaching approach (Wang, 2009).

This study comes to reveal the kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English in the early childhood. It also investigates if there are differences on teachers' beliefs due to affiliation, major, experience, and educational level.

Research Methodology

Population

The population of the study included (150) early childhood education teachers from various early childhood programs located in Ma'an (government, private) serving children ages four- to six-years.

Sample

The sample of the study included (100) early childhood education teachers who were randomly selected from various early childhood programs located in Ma'an (government, private) serving children ages four- to six-years participated in the study.

Instrument

In order to investigate kindergarten teachers' beliefs about early childhood language teaching, a questionnaire of Beliefs about Early Childhood English Language Teaching (BECELT) was used (Wang, 2009). It consisted of (17) items on 4-point Likert-type scale, which were distributed into three domains:

1. **Age:** the items which examine this domain are: (1, 2, 4, 8, 12, and 15).
2. **Traditional Approach:** the items which examine this domain are: (3, 7, 10, 11, 14, and 16).
3. **Communicative Approach:** the items which examine this domain are: (5, 6, 9, 13, and 17).

Validity of the study tool

The instrument validity was drawn from PhDs holders in English curriculum and Instruction, Educational Research, and Educational Psychology. Their recommendations were taken in consideration.

Reliability of the study tool

The reliability of the instrument was calculated by using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients which showed that there was significant correlation coefficients domains' range from (0.298) to (0.997).The total coefficient was (0.915).

Results and Discussion

To answer the first question of the study, the researcher calculated means and standard deviations for the sample performance on teachers' beliefs questionnaire. Table (1) shows the results of these descriptive statistics.

Table (1): Means and standard deviations for the sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire.

Domain	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	2.17	0.216
Traditional Approach	1.87	0.821
Communicative Approach	1.86	0.901
Total	1.97	0.554

Table (1) shows that total mean was (1.97) with standard deviation (0.55). This means that the level of teachers' beliefs about the early childhood English language teaching was low. This result agrees with (Charlesworth's, 1991; Parker & Neuharth-Pritchett's, 2006) studies. However, it disagrees with the results of (Choi, 1999; Mecham, 2007; Bedira, 2010).

To answer the second, third, fourth, and fifth questions, the researcher used One-Way ANOVA and T-Test. The tables (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) present the results.

Table (2): Means and standards deviations of the teachers' beliefs scale due to experience.

Years		Total	Age	Traditional Approach	Communicative Approach
Less than 5	Mean	30.060	12.780	9.520	7.760
	Std. Deviation	6.573	1.218	3.406	3.217
From 6 to 10	Mean	33.065	13.161	10.903	9.000
	Std. Deviation	8.230	1.267	4.585	3.560
From 11 and more	Mean	43.526	13.421	16.211	13.898
	Std. Deviation	10.834	1.465	5.702	5.763
Total	Mean	33.550	13.020	11.220	9.310
	Std. Deviation	9.411	1.295	4.929	4.503

Table (2): shows the results of One-Way ANOVA for the sample performance on beliefs scale due to experience.

Table (3): One-Way ANOVA results for sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire.

Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2507.322	2	1253.661	19.421	0.000
Within Groups	6261.428	97	64.551		
Total	8768.750	99			

Table (3) shows that there were significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to experience. To explore the significant differences, the researcher used Bonferroni Test in Table (4).

Table (4): Results of Bonferroni Test for sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire due to level of experience.

Experience	Less than 5	From 6 to 10	From 11 and more
Less than 5		3.005	*13.466
From 6 to 10			*10.462

Table (4) shows that there were significant differences between (less than 5) and (from 11 and more), in favor of (from 11 and more). Also (from 6 to 10) and (from 11 and more), in favor of (from 11 and more). This confirms Chávez's (2006) results, but contradicts Bedira's (2010) results.

Table (5): Results of T-Test for sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire due to affiliation.

Affiliation	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig.
Government	31.636	7.965	2.940	0.004
Private	37.265	10.920		

Table (5): shows that there were significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to affiliation, in favor of private kindergarten.

Table (6): Results of T-Test for sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire due to major.

Major	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig.
Kindergarten	36.600	11.720	3.821	0.000
Class Teacher	29.822	2.208		

Table (6) shows that there were significant differences between kindergarten and class teacher, in favor of kindergarten major. This result supports (Vartuli's, 1999; Parker & Neuharth-Pritchett's, 2006) results.

Table (7): Results of T-Test for sample performance on the teachers' beliefs questionnaire due to academic level.

Education	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig.
Diploma	51.650	2.978	37.249	0.000
Bachelor	29.025	2.278		

Table (7) shows that there were no significant differences on teachers' beliefs due to the academic level. This agrees with Bedira's (2010) results, and disagree with (Chávez's, 2006; Mecham's, 2007).

The result of the first question could be interpreted by the failure of teachers' recognition of the importance of teaching English to the kindergarteners. It also could be referred to the ineffective role of training courses held by the Ministry of Education for its members. In the other hand, the general belief that learning English is difficult negatively reflected on the teachers' beliefs. It seems that teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of the desired benefits from learning this language as a basic demand to cope with the developments of scientific and practical life.

The researcher attributes the previous result to the lack of requirements needed to learn this language in classroom situations as equipping the study room with modern tools and aids such as; concrete materials and audio visual aids. Chávez (2006) and Parker & Neuharth-

Pritchett (2006) identified that there are contextual factors influence the teachers' beliefs as the culture of the teachers' institution. In addition, it could be said that most of kindergarten and classroom teachers lack the ability to teach English to kindergarten children. As it is shown that teaching experiences, whether at the obligatory or optional requirements in the study plan, acquired in college do not help in formulating positive beliefs about English language teaching.

Also, the negative attitudes that kindergarten and classroom teachers bear about teaching profession are reflected negatively on their beliefs about teaching English to kindergarten children. Considering that this profession is a social product determined by the direction of society and this, in turn, leads to the formulation of negative beliefs about teaching English.

According to the result of having statistically significant differences in kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English due to experience in favor of (11 years and more) , it could be said that teachers' beliefs grow and develop by the accumulation of teaching experiences, including their beliefs about teaching English for kindergarteners. This leads to the development of teachers' knowledge about the content of English material and the best ways to teach, which is achieved by participating in the training courses held by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of each academic year. Chávez (2006) reported similar findings in his study showing the role of the teachers' experience in forming their beliefs which emphasizes the importance of teachers' experience.

The result about the existence of statistically significant differences in kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English due to affiliation in favor of private kindergartens is logical. Considering that, most of the students in the private kindergarten have a knowledge base about English language learning in terms of words and their meanings. They also grow up in families who have positive beliefs about English language learning. Furthermore, private kindergartens are regarded as suitable environment for teaching English language in terms of teaching staff and classroom environment including appropriate equipment and materials. The result

agreed with Erdiller & McMullen's (2004) results which indicated that kindergarten resources affect the teachers' beliefs and their practices inside the classroom.

Regarding the existence of statistically significant differences in the kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English due to major in favor of kindergarten specialization, it could be said that kindergarten teachers have the necessary theoretical background to understand the early childhood stage in terms of language and cognitive development. This is reflected in the teachers' specialized experiences which provide them with more knowledge about early childhood stage in terms of developmental characteristics according to the study plan for granting the bachelor degree in kindergarten, while class teachers are more specialized with the children in the first three grades. This was consistent with Vartuli's (1999) study in indicating that teachers' beliefs and practices tend to be closer to observed practices in kindergarten and preschool programs than in primary grade classrooms.

The result that there are not statistically significant differences in the kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English due to academic level (Diploma, Bachelor) could be interpreted that teachers' beliefs are not determined by the educational level, but they are convictions determined by the general trend toward English language teaching. These convictions, in turn, lead to the formulation of beliefs, as a matter related to the teachers themselves, where their behavior comes at the end toward situation (English language teaching). According to Karavas –Doukas's (1996) study, teachers' beliefs may be derived from students and teachers themselves. This confirms the idea that teachers' beliefs about teaching English may not be directly related to the academic level, which may depend on the mental images teachers form about language through their personal experience.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the light of the study results, the researcher presents following recommendations:

1. The necessity of adopting a clear vision toward the kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English and putting it among the priorities in the Jordanian universities in order to improve learning quality.
2. Considering the formulation and development of positive beliefs about English language a goal for any program for kindergarten and class teacher major, whether at the pre-service stage, or during service.
3. Conducting further studies to reveal the relationship between kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English, ambition level, and personal patterns of teachers.
4. Conducting further experimental studies to reveal the effect of specialized training program in the development of kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English.

The researcher concluded that there was a significant effect of experience, affiliation, and major on kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching English.

References

- Altan, Z. (2006). "Beliefs about language learning of foreign language major university students". The Australian Journal of Teacher Education. 31(2). 45-52.
- Anderson, J. (1991). "Individual differences in strategy use in second language reading and testing". Modern Language Journal. (75). 460-472.
- Basturkmen, H. Loewen, S. & Ellis, R. (2004). "Teachers' Stated Beliefs about Incidental Focus on Form and their Classroom Practices". Applied Linguistics. 25 (2). 243-272.
- Bedira, H. (2010). "Teachers' beliefs on strategies based instruction in EFL classes of young learners". Procedia -Social and Behavioral Sciences. 2(2). 5208-5211.

- Borg, M. (2001) "Key concepts in ELT. Teachers' beliefs". ELT Journal. 55(2). 186-187.
- Breen, P. & Candlin, N. (1980). "The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching". Applied Linguistics. 1 (2). 89-112.
- Caner, M. Subaşı, G. & Kara, S. (2010). "Teachers' Beliefs on Foreign Language Teaching Practices in Early Phases of Primary Education. A case study". Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry. 1(1). 62-76.
- Charlesworth, H. (1991). "Kindergarten teachers' beliefs and practices". Early Child Development and Care. 70(1). 17 – 35.
- Chávez, E. (2006). "In-service teachers' beliefs. perceptions and knowledge in the Nicaraguan EFL context". Journal of Research and Innovation in the Language Classroom. (16). 27–39.
- Chiang, L. (2003). "EFL teachers' beliefs and practices at an exemplary Taiwanese elementary school". Unpublished PhD. Thesis. Retrieved from Proquest database ID number. AAT 3116283.
- Choi, S. (1999). "Teaching English as a foreign language in Korean middle schools. Exploration of communicative language teaching through teachers' beliefs and self -reported classroom teaching practices". Doctoral dissertation. The Ohio State University. Ohio. U. S. A.
- Dilts, B. (1999). Sleight of Mouth. The Magic of Conversational Belief Change. Capitola. C. A. Meta Publications.
- Erdiller, Z. & McMullen, B. (2004). "Turkish teachers' beliefs about developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education". Hacettepe University Journal of Education. (25). 84-93.
- Hoose, V. Pietrofesa, J. & Carlson, J. (1973). Elementary school guidance and counseling. A composite view. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Co.

- Johnson, E. (1992). "The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices during literacy instruction for non-native speakers of English". Journal of Reading Behavior. (24). 83-108.
- Karavas –Doukas, E. (1996). "Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the communicative approach". ELT Journal. 50 (3). 187-198.
- Lara-Cinisomo, S. Fuligni, S. Ritchie, S. Howes, C. & Karoly, L. (2008). "Getting ready for the school. An examination of early childhood educators' belief systems". Early childhood education Journal. 35(4). 343-349.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). Techniques and principles in language teaching. New York. Oxford University Press.
- Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine". Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. TESOL Quarterly. 32 (4). 677-702.
- Maxwell, L. McWilliam, A. Hemmeter, L. Ault, J. & Schuster, W. (2001). "Predictors of developmentally appropriate classroom practices in kindergarten through third grade". Early Childhood Research Quarterly. (16). 431–452.
- Mecham, K. (2007) "Kindergarten Teacher's Developmentally Appropriate Beliefs and Practices and Perceived Problems of Kindergarten Transition". Unpublished PhD Thesis. Utah State University. U. S. A.
- Meijer, C. Verloop, N. & Beijaard, D. (1999). "Exploring language teachers' practical knowledge about teaching reading comprehension". Teaching and Teacher Education. 15 (1). 59-84.
- Ministry of Education in Jordan. (2011). Available at. www. moe. edu. jo.

- Muro, J. & Kottman, T. (1995). Guidance and counseling in the elementary and middle schools. Iowa. Brown and Benchmark.
- Murphy, E. (2000). "Strangers in a strange land. Teachers' beliefs about Teaching and Learning French as a Second or Foreign Language in Online Learning Environments". <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/stranger.htm>.
- Nazir, J. (1992). Teaching of English as a Second Language. The Carvan Book House. Kutcery Road Lahore. Pakistan.
- Pajares, F. (1992) "Teachers' beliefs and educational research. Cleaning up a messy construct". Review of Educational Research. 70. 509-517.
- Palmer, H. (1987). Quality before Quantity in Second Language Comprehension. In Raimes. A TEFL Anthology. ICA. Washington. UK.
- Palmer, J. (1998). The Courage to Teach. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.
- Parker, A. & Neuharth-Pritchett, S. (2006). "Developmentally appropriate practice in kindergarten. factors shaping teacher beliefs and practice". Journal of Research in Childhood Education. Available online. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb1439/is_1_21/ai_n29298149/
- Richards, C. & Rodgers, T. (1986). Approaches and methods in language teaching. New York. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, C. Tung, P. Ng, P. (1992). "The culture of the English language teacher. a Hong Kong example". RELC Journal. 23(1). 81-102.
- Richards, C. & Lockhart, C. (1996). Reflective teaching in second language classrooms. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, C. (1998). Beyond Training. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

- Sato, K. & Kleinsasser, C. (1999). "Communicative language teaching. Practical understanding". The Modern Language Journal. 83 (4). 494-517.
- Savignon, J. (1991). "Communicative language teaching. State of the art". TESOL Quarterly. 25 (2). 261-277.
- Stern, H. (1992). Issues and Options in Language Teaching. (Ed) by Allen. Patrick and Birgit Harley. U. S. A. Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, P. (1983). "Teaching ESL. Incorporating a communicative. student centered component". TESOL Quarterly. 17 (1). 69-88.
- Thornton, J. (2009). "Learning English as a second language in South Korea. Perceptions of 2nd year college and university students and their English speaking instructors". Unpublished PhD Thesis. The University of Southern Queensland. Australia.
- Vartuli, S. (1999). "How early childhood teacher beliefs vary across grade level". Early Childhood Research Quarterly. 14(1). 489-514.
- Vos, J. (2004). "Can preschool children be taught a second language. Early childhood News". Retrieved 24 October. 2009. from http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleId=60
- Wang, X. (2009). "Second Language Theories and Their influences on EFL in China". English Language Teaching. 2(4). 149-153.
- Wang, Y. (2009). An Exploration of English Teaching in Kindergartens in Guangzhou. China. In Zhang. L. J. Rubdy. R. & Alsagoff. L. (Eds.) Englises and Literatures-in-English in a Globalised World. Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on English in Southeast Asia (pp. 280-292).

Appendix (1)**Dear Colleagues,**

I am interested at investigating the teachers' beliefs and how these beliefs are reflected in the teaching practices in the English classroom. Your participation in this survey will help me to complete my research. Please kindly spare a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Sincerely,
Researcher.**

Part One

Please fill in your personal information. All information here will be kept confidentially and used only in the present study.

- * **Years of Experience: -**
Less than 5 6-10 11-15 More than 16
- * **The Kindergarten (institution) you are working in: -**
Public Private
- * **Your Major: -**
Early childhood education Classroom teacher other; please specify
- * **Academic Qualifications: -**
Diploma Bachelor's degree Master's degree other; please specify

Part Two**Questionnaire****Beliefs about Early Childhood English Language Teaching (BECELT)**

Indicate your opinion after each statement by circle the number that best indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement (strongly agree=4; agree=3; disagree=2; strongly disagree=1).

No.	Statement	Agreement degree			
		strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
1	The earlier for a child to learn a foreign language, the better.				
2	Children can acquire good English				

	pronunciation if they learn it at early age.				
3	When I teach English, I want my students to listen to me quietly.				
4	The most important thing is to teach children to pronounce English correctly.				
5	I correct children's errors when they are doing activities.				
6	It is important to design some tasks to enable children to use the foreign language.				
7	In learning a foreign language, it is important to repeat and practice a lot.				
8	A child can learn a foreign language faster than an adult.				
9	Children should be guided to speak to each other in simple English.				
10	I often play English songs for little children to listen to.				
11	I like to sit in front of children when teaching them English.				
12	A child can learn a foreign language much easier than an adult.				
13	Children should be given opportunities to move around in the English classroom.				
14	I like to play English videos for little children to imitate.				
15	It is best for children to learn English from as early as the kindergarten.				
16	When a child pronounces a word wrongly, I would correct him/her at once.				
17	Children learn English easily when they are engaging in role plays.				