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Title

***Investigating Teachers' Beliefs in Teaching and Assessing
Written Compositions***
Case of middle school teachers in Ouargla

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Master Degree in Linguistics**

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Dedication

I am pleased to dedicate this humble work and this scientific effort to the one who carried me in her womb and to the one who gave life fatigue and misery, so she guided me with kindness to the best women and the most beautiful mothers on the surface of the earth to my dear mother. I ask God for continued health and wellness.

To the face of adversity and to the one who bought me the first pen and pushed me strongly in the field of science and learning to whose character was and still is my symbol and motto in life. To my dear father's soul, may God grant him paradise with the righteous and make his grave a kindergarten from the gardens of Paradise.

To all the brothers and sisters: **Randa, Houssam, Yasser and Darine Shams Al-Huda.**

To my dear wife **Iman** I ask God to keep us always in good health. I also cannot forget my classmate, Mrs. **Lamia**, thanks for the spirit of brotherhood throughout the study period.

Abd El Madjid

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears.

My sisters **Raouia** and my husband **Abd el Kader** who have never left my side and are very special.

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Abstract

Abstract Beliefs form part of the process of understanding how teachers shape their work which is significant to the comprehending of their teaching methods and their decisions in the classroom. Teachers' beliefs have been an interesting topic for researchers due to the input they provide for the improvement of English language teaching and learning. Teachers' beliefs have a deep impact on their classroom principles. The realization of this relationship is very important for teachers to prepare and implement their new syllabus. Teachers' beliefs affect what they accomplish in their classroom, their attitudes, and their learner' beliefs. They guide teachers to adopt their teaching strategies for coping with their teaching challenges, shape language learners' learning environment, their motivation and their language ability. In this study, the researchers define the term belief, explain the nature of teachers' beliefs, express sources of teachers' beliefs, and finally mention some previous studies on teachers' beliefs. The review of related literature revealed that investigating teachers' beliefs will help them change their methods to teaching and learning over time in order to bring about more improvement for language learners.

Keywords: teachers' beliefs, teaching, learning, assessing, writing and compositions.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a foreign language

FL: Foreign language

Q : question

List of Figures

Figure3.1. Teachers Gender

Figure3.2. Teachers' Age

Figure3.3. Teachers' Teaching Experience

Figure3.4. Teachers' attitudes towards the difficulty of teaching the writing skill.

Figure 3.5. The Number of Sessions the Situation of Integration may take

Figure 3.6. The strategies used by teachers to attract pupils' attention to their mistakes

Figure 3.7. Following rubrics when assessing writing

Figure 3.8. Integrating or Separating the students' level in the other activities into correcting the written composition

List of Graphs

Graph 3.1. Students' performance depending on the type of work.

Graph 3.2. Teachers' attitudes towards the necessity of motivating students.

Graph 3.3. Considering the multilevel classes when choosing the motivational strategies.

Graph 3.4. Following the assessing criteria in correcting the students' written compositions.

Graph 3.5. Teachers' preference of self-assessment/ peer assessment.

Graph 3.6. The aspects assessed by teachers when correcting pupils' written productions.

Graph 3.7. The role experience in assessing students' written productions.

Graph 3.8. Teachers' focus on the organization or the content of the written product.

Graph 3.9. Valuing the handwriting style when assessing pupils' written work.

Table of content

Dedication

Dedication

Acknowledgements

Abstract

List of abbreviations

List of figures

List of tables

Table of Content

General introduction

- Background of the study
- Statement of the problem
- The objective of the study
- Research questions
- Research hypotheses
- Significance of the study
- Methodology
- Structure of the study
- Definition of key terms

Chapter one: teachers beliefs

Introduction

1. 1. Definition of Beliefs

1.2. Categories of Teachers beliefs

1.2.1. Beliefs about Learners

1.2.2. Beliefs about Learning

1.2.3. Beliefs about Teachers

1.3. Importance of teachers Beliefs

1.4. Sources of Teachers Beliefs

1.5. The influence of Teachers' Beliefs

1.6. Previous Studies on Teachers' Beliefs

Conclusion

Chapter two: teaching and assessing writing

Introduction

2.1. Definition of the writing skill

2.2 Importance of the writing skill

2.3. Types of writing

2.3.1. Expository

2.3.2. Descriptive

2.3.3. Narrative

2.3.4. Persuasive

2.3.5. Creative

2.4. Techniques for teaching writing

2.5. Approaches to writing

2.5.1. The product-based approach

2.5.1.1. Definition of the product-based approach

2.5.1.2. Stages of the product-based approach

2.5.2. The process-based approach

2.5.2.1. Definition of the process-based approach

2.5.2.2. Stages of the process-based approach

2.5.3. The genre-based approach

2.5.3.1. Definition of the genre-based approach

2.5.3.2. Stages of the genre-based approach

2.6. Assessment and the writing skill

2.6.1. Definition of assessment

2.6.2. Assessing written composition

2.6.2.1. Content

2.6.2.2. Form

2.7. Teachers beliefs in assessing writing

Conclusion

Chapter three: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

3.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.1 Aim of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.2 Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.3 Validating and Piloting the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.4 Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.5 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.6 Interpretation of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Conclusion

General Conclusion and Recommendations

General Conclusion

Recommendations

Limitations of the study

Bibliography

Questionnaire

Résumé

المخلص

General Introduction

General introduction

Background of the study
Statement of the problem
Objectives of the study
Research questions
Research Hypotheses
Significance of the study
Methodology
Structure of the study
Definition of the key terms

Background of the study

When new foreign language teaching methods and textbook are introduced , they are often said to be based on the last research in psychology, linguistics or pedagogy .Teachers are told

that they will be more effective than those that have gone before .In many cases , the new approaches are prescribed for immediate implementation in a school or region . sometimes , the new materials come with opportunities for extensive training in their implementation .sometimes , they are simply ordered and distributed to teachers who have to do their best to use them effectively . (**Lightbown & Spade , 2006,p.xv**).lightbown and spada's observation is a clear reflection of the recent curriculum reforms in Algerian educational system.a new approach – competency – based – approach – was prescribed for immediate implementation and new materials were ordered and distributed to teachers who had to do their best to use them effectively , though a large number of them do not have the required training .

In fact, the teaching of English as a foreign language (**EFL**) in middle and secondary school in Algeria is an issue that deserve special attention, as it is an area with a number of significant problems .the present study is step in this direction .it aims to shed light on the teaching of English as foreign language in middle school it attempts to canvas views about teaching and learning from teachers of English in middle schools. On the one hand, the study seeks to investigating and describe teachers' beliefs and perceptions about English language teaching and learning with a particular reference to current pedagogical trends. this would help to decide upon the measures needed as far as teacher training and development are concerned .on the other hand , it tries to explore the process of assessing pupils written compositions , and to provide practical and relevant solutions to some of the problems identified .

Statement of the problem:

Although the significant efforts that the national educational authorities have been doing since the curriculum reforms of **2016** to progress and support the quality of education in

Algeria the educational system in general and teaching of foreign languages in particular face a great number of problems that need to be investigated if these reforms are to be consolidated.

The national curriculum reforms of **2016** have underlined a more communicative syllabus with the adoption of the competency –based approach to language learning and teaching .in terms of research, the, the changes in the national curriculum should be reflected in the present –day teacher’s beliefs and practices. But what can be noticed is that a large number of teachers lack the compulsory training and qualification to teach English in an active way , particularly with the introduction of the new approach and the accompanying materials .and those who are relatively trained and qualified to teach believe that the educational reforms in the national curriculum with regard to English language teaching and writing were not accompanied by the necessary changes in the school system and that teachers find difficulty in implementing the new program (due to a number of problems such as large classes , work overload , lack of necessary equipment, difficult working conditions , etc.).

Teachers, influenced by what they know and by their environment at work , tend to teach in a way that matches their ideas and preferences about how languages are learned though these ideas and preferences may not agree with the principles of second language acquisition (**SLA**) theory and pedagogy . They even tend to adopt traditional ways of teaching and learning with materials (particularly course books) designed to match communicative approaches to language learning and teaching .this situation would lead to inconsistencies between **SLA** theoretical trends and classroom practices . And this difference between theory and practice would have a great impact on what and how teachers teach, and under what conditions students learn. it was clear that teachers did not have sufficient background knowledge to tackle the new curriculum .however , what the majority agreed on was that the educational reforms in the national curriculum were not accompanied by the necessary

changes in the school system , and that they find difficulty in the implementation of the new program.

Many researchers consider teaching beliefs to be one of the most important factors affecting the method of teaching, because it acts as a filter for new information, and explains the phenomenon **Zheng; 325: 1992 Pajares (74: 2009), and Baggers** in his review article on teacher beliefs, concludes that they are more influential than knowledge, and stronger in Practice **(311.p)** or the approaches he is trained in or imposed on him, He considered flamingos, bango**and philos (2011) Fellus&Bangou**, Fleming Teaching beliefs are the most important component of teacher knowledge **(43.p)**.

Understanding Beliefs about the nature of learning and teaching explain most of their attitudes. and their behavior in teaching foreign languages **(Magno, 73: 2009)**, a good predictor of teaching practices: **Kim 2005. (63)**So, what the teacher teaches is not what he receives or is commanded to follow, and it is not the official curriculum that is presented to him, and the beliefs It is one of the most important things that stand between the formal curriculum and the actual practices in the classroom.

In view of the great impact of the teacher's beliefs on the teaching method, researchers have addressed its problem in light of the reforms in modern education, the motive for studying teaching beliefs is what almost all studies agree on is that teachers do not apply the new approaches and refuse to teach according to them and interpret them in a different way from the concepts founding those approaches, but rather they apply them in a different way from the models on which they were trained, in a way that is different from the theoretical frameworks of the approaches Which came as a reform of educational systems, and these studies clearly indicate the role of teachers' beliefs in interpreting and translating these

approaches into practices (for example: Omar & Fayyez 202: 2014). Kumaravadivelu 2001: 537.

In Japan, for example, the teachers' beliefs were reviewed since they applied the communicative approach, considering it one of the first factors that must be changed (21: 2004 Yonesaka); In the same country, Nishino reached consensus and contradictions between the expected approach and the beliefs held by the teachers (Nishino 2008-40: 41); There is a growing consensus that the study of beliefs.

The teaching of EFL teachers is important for better understanding in foreign contexts, and in contexts that adopt reforms in the formation of EFL teachers, to know how those reforms are perceived and understood, the success of which depends on teachers' beliefs (2: 2010 Yook).

Although educational reforms in Algeria have been implemented for more than a decade, studies on the beliefs of English language teachers are still very rare, and to fill that knowledge void we find (BelalemBellalem 202: 2008), (Faqeeh 2009: 124) suggesting a study of teachers' beliefs, and the study responds current to that, as it aims to explore the beliefs of Middle school English teachers about teaching their subject.

Objectives of the study

The study aims primarily to explore teachers beliefs and practices about English language teaching and writing .by identifying the beliefs held by teachers about English language writing and teaching and contrasting these beliefs and insights with the principles of second language acquisition theory and pedagogy , we learn about what the present-day attitudes and approaches are towards learning a second language in Algeria .this would help to decide upon what measures to take as far as teacher training and development are concerned .in addition , implementation of the new program would help to provide practical solutions to the problems identified and consequently make the learning process achieve its goals and objectives.

The study also aims to explore some of the beliefs of middle school English language teachers about teaching their subject. Knowing its sources, in a qualitative way, in order to delve deeper into the cognitive aspects of the method that is preferred or not. It aims to find his own justifications for those opinions, and the reasons that motivate him to adopt one method rather than another or to use one technology instead of another.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

- 1) What beliefs about language teaching and assessing do teachers of English hold?
- 2) Are the actual teachers' ways of responding (evaluating / correcting) to the pupil's written production (such as circling, underlining the erroneous forms, or commenting) helping them to know about their disabilities or to overcome them?
- 3) Can the pedagogical beliefs of the teacher affect the attitudes of students towards the learning process?
- 4) What is the effect of teachers' beliefs on introducing the learning method in debate in the lesson?
- 5) Why do learners produce the same and / or frequent errors in written tasks?

Research Hypotheses:

In terms of research methodology, the following assumptions have been made:

- 1- Teacher's beliefs about language teaching and assessing have an influential role in determining their professional behavior. These beliefs underlie thought processes and instructional practices. On the other side, teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching affect their teaching methods and their selection of teaching materials which, in turn, affect their student's learning.

- 2- Teaching is greatly affected by the beliefs held by its practitioners and the investigation of these beliefs is necessary in conducting teacher's education designed to help pre-service and in-service teachers develop their thinking and practices.
- 3- Considering the competency-based- approach as expressed in the Algeria middle school English programs, it would appear that finds expression in actual classroom practice, in the importance that is left to writing activities.
- 4- Beside the writing product's components, other factors such as reading in English, motivation, practicing writing, and writing meditational tools are also discussed as potential features for improving oneself as a writer of English.

Significance of study

The current study is of considerable significance. first, it tends to give a pure investigation of teacher's beliefs toward teaching and learning processes of English as a second language. second, it offers the correct and the appropriate assessment strategy considering that assessment process has a great importance in both teaching and learning procedures .finally, since writing as a skill has come to play the eminent role and may be described as helping learners to gain proficiency in the foreign language , the study focuses on assessing the written compositions that are produced by learners. Otherwise, the writing skill gives foreign language learners a sense of command over the language being taught, and allows them to discover more about how English works. In addition, writing is the skill for mostly used to examine pupil's performances. This is particularly the case of the Algerian educational system where internal and external writing examinations are the means teachers and examiners use to determine learner's acceptance to upper classes.

Beliefs are an important issue in every area that is related to human behavior and learning (Ajzen, 1988; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Breen (2001) and Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) represented that the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes that learners bring with them to the learning situation are important factors in the learning process. Learners have strong beliefs about the nature of language, its acquisition process, the success of learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, and their own expectations about success and teaching methodologies. Recognition of these beliefs and their effects on language learning and teaching, the learners' expectations and strategies can help teachers design syllabus and their teaching practices. Zheng (2009) remarked that teachers' beliefs are significant ideas in comprehending teachers' thought processes, teaching methods, and learning to teach. Teacher beliefs are significant subjects in teacher education that have been designed to help teachers develop their thought and principles.

Li (2012) represented that beliefs have a key role in language teaching. They help persons make sense of the world, impacting how new information is understood, and whether it is accepted or rejected. Beliefs depict memories and adjust our understanding of occurrences. Teachers' beliefs have a greater effect than the teacher' knowledge on planning their lessons, on the types of decisions they adopt, and on classroom practice. Teachers' beliefs identify their real behavior towards their learners. If teachers can determine their learners' abilities, they will be able to choose and modify their behavior and educational choice appropriately (Li, 2012; Pajares, 1992).

Beliefs play a key role in teachers' classroom practices and their professional development. **Harste and Burke (1977) and Kuzborska (2011)** said that teachers make decisions about their classroom teaching regarding beliefs they have about language teaching and learning. They emphasized that teachers' beliefs have a great impact on their aims, procedures, their roles, and their learners. **Richards and Rodgers (2001)** asserted that teachers have beliefs about language learning and these helped them get a special approach to language teaching.

Teachers' beliefs strongly predict their decisions and classroom practices. Nation and **Macalister (2010) and Amiryousefi (2015)** asserted that what teachers do is identified by their beliefs. Similarly, **Williams and Burden (1997)** declared that teacher's beliefs about learning languages will have more impact on their class activities than a specific methodology they are told to follow. In addition, **Kagan (1992)** represented that teachers' practices indicate their beliefs about language teaching and learning. Understanding teachers' beliefs about various features of language teaching and learning and is also of great importance. **Riley (2009)** stated that if teachers and learners' beliefs match with each other, learning will be increased. Due to the need for the improvement of teacher education and the significance of teacher beliefs in teacher education, the aim of carrying this study is to examine themes pertinent to teachers' belief which helps to identify the role of teachers' beliefs in furthering teacher education.

Activating the competency approach, and bridging the gap between the planned and the actual practices, is an issue that many researchers question.

In Algeria, the study of **Khouni & Chelli (2013) 63.p**, revealed that the theoretical background of the Algerian teacher about the competency approach is not sufficient to be able to apply it, and alone is not sufficient to understand the behavior of the teacher.

The observer has to study the teacher's view and beliefs, and the number of researchers who are convinced of the necessity of examining the teacher's view and beliefs is increasing To understand the complex nature of processes (**educational learning; 84: 2010 Eyyam & Meneviş, Doğruer) (56:2013 Tekin)**, the research beyond the limits imposed by the practical transformation of the form that the teacher receives in the formation to a greater awareness of issues such as beliefs (**537: 2001Kumaravadivelu**).

The methodology of study

This research work aims to sample beliefs and practices about English language writing and teaching from teachers of English at middle school. In an attempt to accomplish the intended purpose of the research, a survey questionnaire will be administered to a representative sample of teachers and pupils from both sex. The participants are expected to complete the questionnaire regarding their beliefs in teaching and assessing their pupil's written work. The data gathered then to be analyzed using appropriate data analysis data techniques.

The main purpose of this study is to delve into the folds of the teacher's thinking, to extract his teaching beliefs. his own, and do not care about his knowledge about teaching the English language, which is imposed by the guardian, unless he deems it is appropriateIt is believed to be correct, and therefore the appropriate approach is the

case study, and the choice of this approach is consistent with the procedural definition .And the constructivist of the phenomenon under study as presented by Buraq (2001) and Bajars (1992), where he takes personal experience and private understanding.

The teacher is taken into account within the particular context in which those beliefs were formed.

Structure of the study:

The present study is divided into three main chapters. Chapter one chapter two represent the theoretical foundations of the research. They offer a review of related literature. chapter one sheds light on beliefs systems. It starts with defining the concept of beliefs. Teacher's beliefs, the relationship between teacher's beliefs and classroom practice, the role of teacher's beliefs in EFL teacher education , research approaches to language learning beliefs will also be discussed . Chapter two reviews literature on the assessment of written production theories. It is devoted to defining the writing product then its assessment aspect. Chapter three is devoted to the practical aspect of the research. The description of the methodology used will be presented first then, the data generated will be analysed. Yet, limitations of the study and recommendation for future research will be indicated.

Definition of the key terms:

Teachers' beliefs: are usually defined as personal constructs that can provide understandings, judgments, and evaluations of teachers' practices. It is also defined as: a set of strong feelings and attitudes of teachers about things that can affect the teaching-learning interaction. What teachers believe in have direct implication on the teaching-learning transaction.

TEFL: is the teaching of English to people whose first language is not English, especially people from a country where English is not spoken. TEFL is an abbreviation for 'teaching English as a foreign language'.

Assessment: is the systematic basis for making inferences about the learning and development of students. It is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analysing, interpreting, and using information to increase students' learning and development.

Writing a composition: is a complex activity that includes the mechanics of writing, including handwriting (or keyboarding, using an adaptive device, etc.), spelling, and the basics of language knowledge (i.e., word morphology, syntax, and vocabulary).

Chapter One:

TEACHERS' BELIEFS

Chapter one: Teachers beliefs

Introduction

1. 1 Definition of Beliefs

1.2 Categories of Teachers beliefs

1.2.1 Beliefs about Learners

1.2.2 Beliefs about Learning

1.2.3 Beliefs about Teachers

1.3 Importance of teachers Beliefs

1.4 Sources of Teachers Beliefs

1.5 The influence of Teachers' Beliefs

1.6 Previous Studies on Teachers' Beliefs

Conclusion

Introduction

Attention to the beliefs of teachers should be a focus of educational research, the difficulty of studying teachers' beliefs has been caused by definitional problems and poor conceptualizations. This chapter examines the meanings researchers gave to beliefs and beliefs structures in different domains, and offers a synthesis of previous research findings about the nature of teachers' beliefs. In addition, its importance as well as its influence on the teaching process were highlighted.

1.1 Definition of Beliefs

According to Pehkonen and Pietilä (2003), a belief is a kind of knowledge that is subjective and experience-based. Raymond (1997) defined the term belief as a personal judgment formed from experiences. According to Rokeach (1972) and PourhoseinGilakjani (2012), a belief is any premise that starts with the term "I believe that." Beliefs that are related to other beliefs are regarded as "core" or "central beliefs." If a belief is associated with other beliefs, it will have more outcomes to them. Beliefs are conceptual portrayals that signal a reality, truth, or trustworthiness to its holder to ensure reliance upon it as a guide to personal thought and action (Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000). According to Peacock (2001), beliefs are psychologically held appreciations, assumptions, or theorems about the world that are felt to be correct. Huang (1997) defined beliefs as preconceptions language learners have about learning a language. According to Kunt (1997) and Wang (1996), the terms "opinions" and "ideas" or "views" refer to "beliefs." Beliefs are judgments and evaluations that we make about ourselves, others, and the world around us. They are personal ideas based on observation or rational thinking (Khader, 2012). Beliefs are defined as a group of ideas which are shaped in persons by their experiences and the overlapping of notions during the learning processes (Ford, 1994; Khader, 2012). Beliefs are reflections that involve all subjects that we

do not have enough knowledge about them but we have enough confidence to work on them (Barcelos, 2003; Khader, 2012). Beliefs are defined as the teachers' arguments and their views on teaching and learning (Haney, Lumpe&Czerniak, 1996; Khader, 2012).

The Nature of Teachers' Beliefs Teachers' beliefs show a large number of knowledge and teachers understand their world by shaping a complicated system of personal and professional knowledge (Clark & Peterson, 1986). A lot of teachers' professional knowledge are appropriately considered as belief. As teachers' experiences in the profession enhance, this knowledge also develops more and forms a highly personalized belief system that limits the teachers' understanding, judgement, and behavior (Kagan, 1992). Beliefs are made slowly over time. Beliefs involve both subjective and objective aspects and act as the background to teachers' decision making and classroom actions (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Whether a belief is held consciously or unconsciously, it is regarded as true by the persons and guides thought and behavior (Borg, 2001). Beliefs are shaped early in life as a result of persons' education and experience (Johnson, 1994). Beliefs about learning and teaching are formed when students complete education. There are five main categories of teachers' beliefs – beliefs about learners and learning, teaching, curriculum, learning to teach, and about the self and the nature of teaching. These five categories are well connected with each other (Calderhead, 1996). Beliefs exist in connection to other beliefs, contradict one another, and indicate the complexity of belief systems (Breen et al. 2001). Woods (1996) demonstrated that beliefs are non-consensual, include the existence of abstract entities, are evaluative, have a high degree of episodic/anecdotal materials, have different degrees of strengths, range from strong to weak, and have a high degree of overlap. Richards (1998) said that an important source of teachers' practices is belief systems. That is, the information, views, values, anticipations, theories, and thoughts about teaching and learning that teachers make over time and bring with them to the classroom. According to Green (1971), Pajares (1992), and Abdi

and Asadi (2015), teachers' belief systems are divided into core and peripheral beliefs. Core beliefs are constant and use a more powerful impact on behavior than peripheral beliefs. Burns (1992) examined the beliefs of six teachers and indicated a core of some important beliefs that affect their approach to language teaching.

These beliefs are pertinent to the nature of language as it is related to beginning language learning, the relationship between written and spoken language in beginning language learning, the nature of beginning language learning and the strategies related to language learning, learners and their ability to learn English, and the nature of the language classroom and the teacher's role in it.

Phipps and Borg (2009) and Abdi and Asadi (2015) expressed that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are affected by their own experiences as learners and are established when they go to university, act as a filter through which teachers explain new information, exert a deep effect on teachers' instructional practices, are, not always indicated in what they do in the classroom, have a great impact on their teaching decisions, and greatly affect what and how they learn during language teaching education

1.2 Categories of Teachers 'beliefs:

According to Lan and Lam(2020), there are five main categories of teachers' beliefs; these categories are summarized in the following figure:

- Beliefs about language
- Beliefs about teaching
- Beliefs about learning
- Beliefs about teacher student roles



- Beliefs about profession

Figure: Categories of teachers' beliefs given by Lan and lam (2020)

In the same vein, Li Xu (2012) suggests three types of teachers' beliefs:

1.2.1 Beliefs about Learners:

Teachers may hold any one or a combination of beliefs about those whom they teach. The sociologist Roland Meighan (1990) has suggested that learners may be construed metaphorically as: resisters, receptacle, raw material, clients, partners, individual explorers, and democratic explorers.

Such constructions reflect individual teachers' views of the world and also have a profound influence on their classroom practices.

1.2.2 Beliefs about Learning:

Teachers' beliefs about what learning is will affect everything that they do in the classroom, whether these beliefs are implicit or explicit. What teaching approaches a teacher uses in the language classroom reflect his/her beliefs about learning. For the language teachers, establishing correct beliefs about learning is to learn that we must be clear about what the language is and how to study language.

1.2.3 Beliefs about teachers:

Advanced beliefs about teachers themselves, such as teacher self-efficacy and teacher emotions can be important ways for language teachers to enhance their overall quality.

a) Teacher self-efficacy:

It has been shown that a high self-efficacy teacher places higher expectation on learners, thinks himself/herself to be responsible for the learners 'development, and believes that s/he can teach learners well. S/he constantly explores new teaching methods, and instructs learners more democratically.

b) Teacher emotions:

Teachers 'emotions may influence not only teachers 'cognitions like attention, memory, categorizing, thinking and problem-solving, but also teachers 'motivation, attributions, efficacy beliefs and goals. At the same time, although teachers may often attempt to mask their feelings, students are often aware of teachers 'emotions, and students are often influenced by teachers 'expression of emotions.

1.3 Importance of Teachers' Beliefs

Beliefs form part of the process of understanding how teachers shape their work which is significant to the comprehending of their teaching methods and their decisions in the classroom. Teachers' beliefs have been an interesting topic for researchers due to the input they provide for the improvement of English language teaching and learning. Teachers' beliefs have a deep impact on their classroom principles. The realization of this relationship is very important for teachers to prepare and implement their new syllabus. Teachers' beliefs affect what they accomplish in their classroom, their attitudes, and their learner' beliefs. They

guide teachers to adopt their teaching strategies for coping with their teaching challenges, shape language learners' learning environment, their motivation and their language ability.

The importance of the teacher's beliefs lies in what Melati states that the teacher translates new approaches into practices that are consistent with With its own concepts (127: 2013 Motallebzadeh&Fatemi, Melati), (and not the conceptual framework that operates Theorists and researchers are within it and it is the critical factor for the success of language teaching, but rather the theories, beliefs and assumptions it holds.

The notion of teachers' beliefs is considered as a forming component of the teaching learning process. Director of the Melbourne Educational Research Institute John Hattie in his research highlights the importance of teacher beliefs. He considers that the lack of motivation, unproductive learning style, inability to concentrate, parents not supporting the students' learning process could be a barrier to the successful acquisition of knowledge. However, the most significant disturbing aspect in learning process is teacher's belief that they are unable to change the student's attitude towards learning. The teacher has to understand that he is a *change agent*. (Hattie, 2012).

Teacher beliefs are central to recent theories about teachers' identity. In their review about teachers' professional identity, Beijaard *et al.* (2004) state that beliefs are conceived as important constituents of teachers' professional identity formation. This implies that beliefs are of vital importance for teacher education since it determines the way the student teachers develop their meaning making and decision making. This suggests that beliefs are part of a complex set of variables and processes that determine teaching behaviour. The complex nature of teachers' beliefs implies that teacher education is critical to consider the development of a consistent belief system in teachers and student teachers.

1.4 Sources of Teachers' Beliefs

According to Kindsvatter, Willen, and Ishler (1988) and Abdi and Asadi (2011), the sources of teachers' beliefs are as follows:

1). Teachers' experience as language learners: A lot of teachers know that they were previously learners and how they were taught and these helped them form their beliefs about teaching.

2). Experience from teaching: Teaching experience is the main source of teachers' beliefs in that how a specific method is used for a specific group of learners may result in the beliefs about that method.

3). Teachers' personality: Some teachers prefer a particular method because it corresponds to their character.

4). Education-based or research-based principles: Teachers can get their beliefs from learning principles of second language acquisition research, education, or schools of thoughts like psychology.

Zhou Guotao and Liu Xiaoming (1997) and Li (2012) expressed that teachers' beliefs are shaped during their teaching processes and indicate the teachers' subjective knowledge of educational phenomenon, particularly towards their own teaching abilities and their learners. According to Xin Tao and Shen Juliang (1999) and Li (2012), the sources of teachers' beliefs are the result of social history and culture. Li (2012) emphasized that beliefs originate from teachers' experiences. Teacher have various processes of self-construction. Social

psychologists stated that social cultural has a great effect on teachers' beliefs. They state that these beliefs are shaped during accepting culture.

According to Richardson, (1996), three main sources of teacher beliefs are personal experience, experience with instruction, and experience with formal knowledge. Kukari (2004) demonstrated that there is a relation between cultural and religious practices of teaching and learning. These practices define the understanding of teaching and learning that teachers hold before becoming learners of teaching. Teachers' beliefs and understandings affect both the theoretical constituents of teacher training (Clark, 1988; Crow, 1987; Holt-Reynolds, 1992) and the teaching behaviors during experience (Goodman, 1988). Knowles (1992) said that teachers' beliefs are formed throughout their life and are impacted by different factors such happenings, experiences, and other people in their lives. McGillicuddy-De Lisi and Subramanian (1996) declared that some beliefs are taken from culture. Some are formed by experiences adjusted by culture. Persons have almost identical experiences as a child, as a member of a family, and as a parent or teacher. These experiences form their beliefs about learners and curriculum development.

Teachers' beliefs originate from four sources. They are content knowledge, educational materials, formal teacher education, and experience (Shulman, 1987). Mansour (2008a) expressed that teachers' teaching beliefs concerning their roles, learners' roles, the goals of science and their teaching methods were formed by personal religious beliefs obtained from the principles existing in religion. The researcher continued that teachers' religious beliefs worked as a 'schema' which affected on their perception. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994), past experience in learning or teaching is not the sole source of beliefs. Some other sources are involved in forming beliefs. They are established practice, teachers' personality factors, educational principles, research-based evidence, and principles originated from a method.

According to Mansour (2008b), there are two kinds of experiences; formal and informal. A formal experience is indicated in the formal education through which teachers have passed, either at school or at university level. The informal experience is indicated in teachers' everyday life contacts that may adjust, support, challenge, or change their beliefs and knowledge. In this regard, Zeichner (1980) represented that both informal and formal experiences are 'socialization influences,' saying that teachers' teaching at schools had more power in impacting teachers' beliefs than their formal university experiences.

1.5 The Influence of teachers' beliefs on Teaching

Teachers' beliefs affect what they say and do in classroom which forms their beliefs; thus, it helps defining the teaching attitudes, and teaching methods. Teachers' beliefs impact their teaching behavior, learner development, guide their decision-making and interactions with their learners. Beliefs help teachers form their planning, curricular decisions, and identify what should be taught in the classroom. On the whole, it can be concluded that teachers' beliefs will have a great effect on forming active teaching methods and will bring about a considerable amount of advance in learners' language capabilities.

1.6 Previous Studies on Teachers' Beliefs

Research has indicated that beliefs about teaching and learning restrict teachers' capability to be open to new opinions. Teachers enter the field of teaching with predetermined beliefs about teaching and learning that better their classroom practices (Johnson, 1992). Borg (2003) reviewed 64 works in the field of foreign and second language teaching and concluded there are a lot of differences in teachers' beliefs about language education. He continued that brave teachers believe grammar should be taught by explicit instruction while less

experienced teachers tended to teach grammar implicitly. The connection between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices have been reported by many researches (Attardo & Brown, 2005; Johnson, 1992; Jones & Fong, 2007; Poynor, 2005; Yook, 2010). Johnson (1992) applied studies and lesson plan analyses to examine teachers' beliefs about L2 teaching and learning. The results obtained from this study indicated that many teachers held determined theoretical beliefs which indicated one of the three methodological methods: function-based, skill-based, and rule-based approaches. A lot of instructors had theoretical beliefs pertinent to the function-based approach at the time of the research. Johnson observed three teachers' classroom teaching chosen from 30 participants based on their various beliefs. The obtained results showed that three teachers' teaching practices were consistent with their theoretical attitudes. Johnson concluded that teachers teach based on their theoretical beliefs.

Conclusion

To conclude, Teachers' beliefs influence teacher consciousness, teaching attitude, teaching methods and teaching policy. Teacher beliefs also strongly influence teaching behavior and, finally, learner development. i.e. their beliefs guide their decision-making, behavior, and interactions with students and, in turn, create an objective reality in the classroom,

The formation of a teacher's educational beliefs in the language teaching-learning process will exert an imperceptible influence on forming active language teaching methods and will bring about an improvement in students' language.

Chapter Two:

TEACHING AND ASSESSING WRITING

Chapter Two: Teaching and Assessing Writing

Introduction

2.1 Definition of the writing skill

2.2 Importance of the writing skill

2.3 Types of writing

2.3.1 Expository

2.3.2 Descriptive

2.3.3 Narrative

2.3.4 Persuasive

2.3.5 Creative

2.4 Techniques for teaching writing

2.5 Approaches to writing

2.5.1 The product-based approach

2.5.1.1 Definition of the product-based approach

2.5.1.2 Stages of the product-based approach

2.5.2 The process-based approach

2.5.2.1 Definition of the process-based approach

2.5.2.2 Stages of the process-based approach

2.5.3 The genre-based approach

2.5.3.1 Definition of the genre-based approach

2.5.3.2 Stages of the genre-based approach

2.6 Assessment and the writing skill

2.6.1 Definition of assessment

2.6.2 Assessing written composition

2.6.2.1 Content

2.6.1.2 Form

2.7 Teachers beliefs in assessing writing

Conclusion

Chapter Two: Assessing and Teaching writing

Introduction

The writing skill is considered as one of the central pillars of language learning. It is also seen as an indispensable means of communication that learners have to master with an appropriate level of linguistic competence that enables them to produce coherent and comprehensible written compositions. This chapter will be devoted to the writing skill, it deals with its definitions, importance, types and its commonly used types. It also tackles the different approaches to teach writing. And finally, it highlights the teacher's beliefs in assessing written compositions.

2.1. Definition of the Writing Skill

There is no agreement upon one single definition of writing. However, there are many definitions which differ according to the context in which they are delivered. Widdowson (2001,p.62) defines writing as “the use of visual medium to manifest the graphological and grammatical system of language”. Moreover, Pincas states that “writing is a system of graphic symbols, ie, letters or combination of letters which relate to sounds we produce while speaking” (1992, as cited in Homsy, p.20). According to Trumble (1996), “writing works as a type of discourse, a way of creating meaningful interaction between the writer and the possible reader” (p.10). Thus, writing is a tool for communication used to convey ideas and feelings via language symbols.

2.2. The Importance of the Writing Skill

Producing written compositions has always been considered as an important skill in ESL/EFL teaching and learning. Olshtain (1991, p.35) emphasised the integration of writing

in the teaching learning process. He stated that: “writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged, and nurtured during the language learner’s course of study”.

On the other hand, Maby (2009) stated the following benefits of writing:

1. It aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse; it requires learners to manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways.
2. It requires a willingness to play with the language.
3. It concentrates more on the right side of the brain, with a focus on feelings, physical sensations, intuition and musicality.
4. It also affords scope for learners who on the usual processes of formal instruction are therefore often at a disadvantage. That is to say, writing is also a necessary component of education and functional basics in our society.

2.3.Types of Writing

Since writing is a way to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings each individual has his own way of writing reflecting his way of thinking. Consequently, each piece of writing requires different style and tone that can decide on the basis of its content besides the purpose of the writer wants to attain. Therefore, there are mainly five types of writing that are identified by Callella (2001):

2.3.1. Expository writing

The author intends to inform, explain, describe or define their subject to your. This is the most common type of writing found in the text books. In this type the writer is mostly trying to give the readers information about the subject using facts and figures.

2.3.2. Descriptive Writing

In this type of writing, the writer uses a lot of visual words to help the readers see the person, thing, or place he is writing about. When regarding as a descriptive writing, the reader feels as if he is there or can actually pictures in mind what the writer is describing because of the use of metaphors, similes, and symbols.

2.3.3. Narrative Writing

Using this type of writing is very common in novels, poetry, and biographies, the author puts himself in the character, shoes ang writes as if he is that person. He tells life stories and involves plots and storylines.

2.3.4. Persuasive Writing

The essence of persuasive writings is to try to defend an opinion. This type is considered as a based material and it is often found in advertising.

2.3.5. Creative Writing

It is considered as the most fun type of writing since the writer can write about whatever comes to his mind in any way he creates.

2.3.6. Techniques for teaching writing

According to Brown and Douglas (1980, p.346) the specific principles for designing writing techniques emerge:

1. Incorporate practices of “good” writers.
2. Balance process and product.
3. Account for cultural/ literary background.
4. Connect reading and writing.
5. Provide as much authentic writing as possible.
6. Frame your techniques in terms of prewriting, drafting, and revising stages.

2.4. Approaches to Writing

When teaching writing, teachers may only use one approach or combine two approaches. This depends on the teach or skill is teaching writing. According to Raines (1983), there is not one only way to teach writing but many ways (p.11).

2.4.1. The Product-Based Approach

2.4.1.1. Definition

The product approach writing was of the very first approaches that emerged in the early eighties. It is basically the traditional way to teach writing which focuses on the final product that should be coherent, error, free text, and organized. (Nunan, 1999).

According to Hyland (2003), the main aim of this approach is teaching writing by imitating grammatical and syntactical structures of the patterns of the texts given by the teachers; then the students will be assessed on their ability to produce a well-structured piece of writing.

2.4.1.2. Stages

Pincas 1984 (as cited in Namoushi, 2008) identifies four stages in the product approach to writing that are as follows: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing.

- 1. Familiarization:** learners are taught certain grammar and vocabulary, usually through a text.
- 2. Controlled writing:** learners manipulate fixed patterns, often from substitution tables.
- 3. Guided writing:** learners imitate model texts.

4. **Free writing:** learners use the pattern they have developed to write an essay, letter, and so forth.

To conclude, it is undeniable that this approach is important in supplying linguistic knowledge to learners in terms of structures and rules.

2.4.2. The Process-based Approach

2.4.2.1. Definition

The process approach has emerged as a reaction to the product-based approach to writing, since it shifted the attention from the traditional view of looking at writing purely as a product to emphasize on the process of writing.

Marry (1992, p.16) defines the process approach as follows: “The process-oriented approach refers to a teaching approach that focuses on the process a writer engages when constructing meaning”. Additionally, this approach focuses on teaching writing within a variety of classroom activities which allow students work in collaborative writing and exchange drafts with each other which means that writing goes through several stages.

2.4.2.2. Stages

Iohenson (2008, p.179) suggests that the process of writing has five main elements that are: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing which further were explained by Coffin et al. (2003, p.33-34):

- a. **Prewriting:** It is to find the ideas, collect information, and organize the thoughts. Prewriting strategies include brainstorming, free-writing and journal writing. After that, the next stage is that learners begin to organize ideas by mind mapping, clustering, and branching.

- b. Drafting:** In drafting, the learner develops the meaning using ideas in pre-writing strategies, narrow down the broad focus, and remove or add information.
- c. Peer Review:** In this stage, learners seek and respond to others while a text is under development. Peer review can be in the form of oral or written comment by guidelines from the teacher.
- d. Reflection:** It means that letting the piece of writing sit for a while before coming to it with fresh mind. Reflection time allows the learners to find the gaps in the writing task.
- e. Editing and proofreading:** Learners should attend with the mechanic of writing. Including formatting and language accuracy. The final stages include polishing the text.

2.4.3. The Genre-based Approach

2.4.3.1. Definition

The genre-based approach to teaching writing has a specific interest because of two reasons: First, it helps learners replicate successfully a particular genre of writing. Second, these learners need to reproduce particular written genres. According to Byrne (1984), the genre-based approach is defined as a framework for language instructions following some examples of a certain genre. In the same view, Martin (1999) states that “genre is a communication activity having and orienting goals.

2.4.3.2. Stages

Cope and Kalantzis (1993; p.10-11) claim that a learner goes through three phases when following the genre approach which are: Modelling, joint construction, and independent construction.

- a. **Modelling:** in this phase the learner is exposed to a number of texts on the genre he has to produce.
- b. **Joint construction:** manipulating and modifying of the text given in terms of the relevant languages' usages.
- c. **Independent construction:** in this phase the learner independently produces his own text.

Despite the fact that this approach has been well received in EFL teaching, but it is not without critics. Badger and white (2000) state that following this approach learners may not have enough knowledge of linguistic usages and vocabulary to express themselves, in addition; this approach undervalues the writing skills the learners have in other areas.

2.4.3.3. Reasons for teaching writing

According to Byrne writing is mainly taught for pedagogical purposes:

1. The introduction and practice of some form of writing enables us to provide for different learning styles and needs. Some learners, especially those who do not learn easily through oral practice alone, feel more secure if they are allowed to read and write in the language. For such students, writing is likely to be an aid to retention, if only because they feel more at ease and relaxed.
2. Written work serves to provide the learners with some tangible evidence that they are making progress in the language. It is not likely to be true index of their attainment, but once again it satisfies a psychological need.
3. Exposure to the foreign language through more than one medium, especially if skills are properly integrated, appears to be more effective than relying on a single medium alone.

4. Writing provides variety in classroom activities, serving as a break from oral work (and is therefore a quieter and more relaxed time for both learners and teachers. At the same time, it increases the amount of language contact through work that can be set out of class.
5. Writing is also needed for formal and informal testing. Although in general oral ability should be measured through oral tests, in practice we are often obliged by circumstances, such as the amount of time we have at our disposal and the number of students there are in the class, to use some form of test. In some cases, a written test may even be appropriate.

2.5. Assessment and the writing skill

2.5.1. Definition of Assessment

Assessment is a vital process in both the teaching and learning processes because it gives the opportunity for teachers to track the progress of their learners, as well as, it improves their instructional methods adopted in teaching writing. According to Black and Williams (1998, p.1), assessment in any activity adopted by teachers that provides information to be used to give feedback to modify the teaching-learning process. In the same vein, Chapelle and Brinelly (2002) claim that assessment “is the act of collecting information and making judgements about the learner’s knowledge of language and the ability to use it” (p.265).

On the whole, assessment is seen as one of the crucial elements in teaching foreign language skills.

2.5.2. Assessing Written Compositions

In second language writing, assessment has traditionally focused on the written products. Assessing students writing is carried out for two main reasons: to make inferences

about the student's language ability and to make decisions in the teaching process based on these inferences (Weigle, 2002).

Since assessment is considered as the driving force of the teaching process, teachers should know what aspects should be assessed when correcting students written compositions.

2.5.2.1 Content

According to Jacobs et al. (1981, p.90), content is defined as the group of ideas and related statements that a writer presents as a unit in developing a subject.

To assess the content of a written composition, Hamilton (2009) suggests several questions that should be asked:

1. Does the composition effectively capture the interest?
2. Does the composition make sense?
3. Is the composition clear?
4. Are any parts confusing?
5. Are the ideas organized logically?
6. Does everything in the composition contribute to the main idea?

2.5.2.2 Form The form of composition is the way in which what it says is arranged. Everything from an essay to a paragraph to a punctuation mark is a way of arranging the content of a piece of writing.

According to Hess (2006), every written composition should be structured in a specific organizational structure that are summarized in the table below:

Text structure	Purpose
Sequence (process)	It used for giving steps of a process such as a recipe
Time order (chronology)	It is used in narrative texts
Description	It is useful for the elaboration of characteristics and features of a given subject.
Definition	It includes ways something is similar to or different from other things.
Compare/contrast	Showing similarities and dissimilarities between objects, ideas, or actions.
Cause/ effect	It may be found in a discussion of science investigation results or historical articles linking cause and effects.
Problem/ solution	This structure may take various forms leading to the resolution of an issue
Proposition/ support	Supporting a thesis statement using arguments
Judgement/ critique	Using a set of criteria to evaluate the information that have been presented
Instructive/ Deductive	A deductive structure moves from general to specific ideas, but in inductive structures follow the opposite way

Table: Text structures adopted from Hess, 2006

2.6 Teachers' beliefs in Assessing writing

It has been accepted that the teachers' way of thinking and understanding things is very crucial in the teaching practices. Language teachers may hold particular beliefs about

language learning that may influence their instructional practices therefore their students' production will be influenced.

According to Santi and Rohmah (2018), teachers' beliefs is a complicated phenomenon that involves five aspects:

1. The belief that writing is a formal system: the writing instruction focuses on students' application or grammatical and lexical knowledge.
2. The belief that writing is a cognitive process: this process contains prewriting, outlining, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing.
3. The belief that writing is a social activity: it is in the line with the premise that writing cannot be separated from social community.
4. The belief that writing focuses on the context: the substantive content of the essay in the main focus which must be academically accepted.
5. The belief that writing focuses on creative expression: since the aim of writing is sharing students' personal aspects, creative thinking is needed.

Conclusion

Writing in a foreign language is a complex task. It necessitates knowledge, attention, and commitment from both teachers and learners in order to reinforce and ease the teaching-learning process. Additionally, teachers should be aware of the various approaches to teaching writing as well as the effective methods that can help to increase learners' ability to writing. They should also select appropriate materials (texts) and guide their learners during the process of writing through the different stages; from brainstorming to organizing ideas, through drafting, to finally submitting their writing productions. Therefore, teachers offer for their learners the opportunity to take control and responsibility for their learning.

Chapter Three:

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

3.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.1 Aim of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.2 Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.3 Validating and Piloting the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.4 Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.5 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.6 Interpretation of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Conclusion

General Conclusion and Recommendations

General Conclusion

Recommendations

Limitations of the study

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

In order to figure out the feasibility and reliability of the problem faced by EFL teachers when correcting their students' written works and to test the hypothesis presented at the beginning of the theoretical part in this work, we used a survey questionnaire that was administered to a representative sample of teachers in

3.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1.1. Aim of The Teachers' questionnaire

The target aim behind the use of this data collection tool was to obtain the various opinions and attitudes that teachers have towards the influence of the teachers' beliefs in teaching and assessing students' written compositions.

3.1.2. Description of The Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for Ouargla EFL teachers in five different middle schools; it was divided into three sections containing 20 questions (open-ended, close-ended questions). The first section contains (2) questions that aimed to collect general information about the participants such as: the teachers' gender and age. The second section contains five questions also, (from 3 to 14), which focused on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and teaching the writing skill. The third section contains thirteen questions; aiming at investigating the effect of teachers' beliefs in assessing students' written compositions

3.1.3. Piloting and Validating the Teachers' Questionnaire

After designing the first draft of the teachers' questionnaire, it was sent to the supervisor and two teachers in the division of English at Ouargla University via email in order to check its

content and face validity. Apart from the teachers' feedback, the supervisor suggested some modifications to be made in order to add more precision to the questionnaire. Both the supervisor and the teachers' modifications have been taken into consideration while designing the final draft.

3.1.4. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

After the validation and piloting stages, the final draft was administered to the participants via the internet. The Facebook was used to contact some teachers; however, the email was the main digital platform to reach most of them. The online teachers' questionnaire was designed using the services of the survey software Google forms.

3.1.5. Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The collected data from the teachers' questionnaire were analysed, interpreted, and then used to support the study based on the teachers' views and perceptions.

Section One: General Information

Question One: Would you specify your gender?

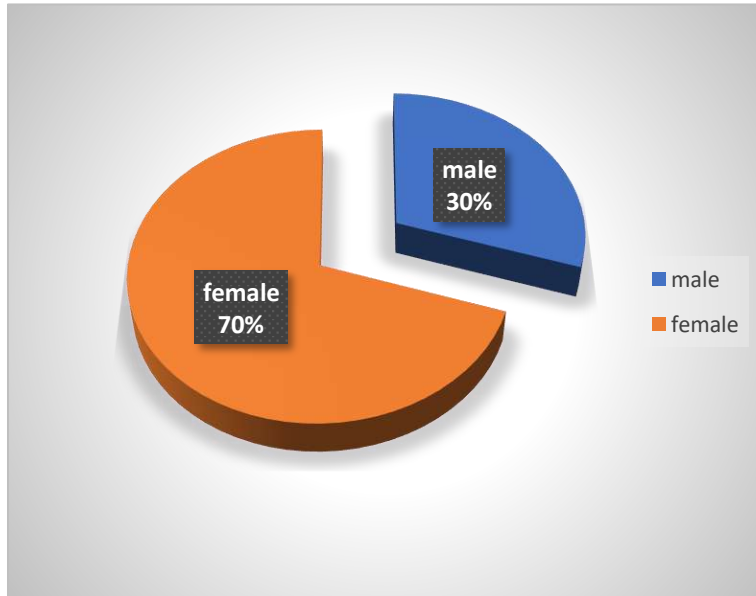


Figure 3.1: Teachers Gender

From the figure of results, the majority of the teachers (70%) are females and the minority (30%) is male. That means females are more interested in teaching the English language.

Question two: Would you specify your age?

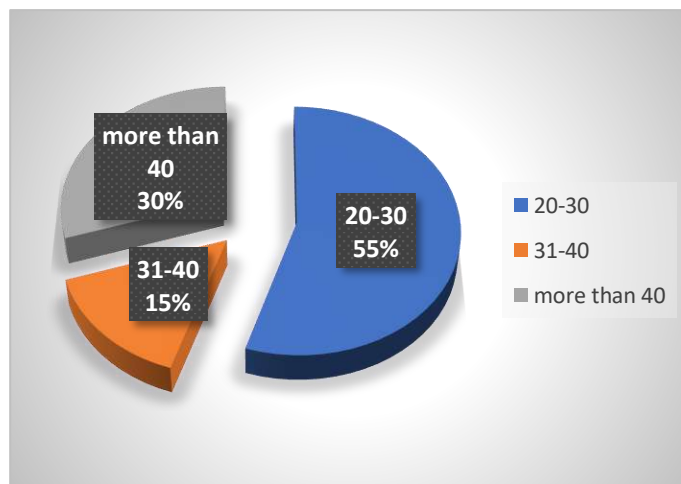


Figure 3.2: Teachers 'Age

Referring back to the above figure, the majority of the teachers are between 20 and 30 years old. 30 % of them are more than 40 years old while only 15% are between 31 and 4 years old.

Question Three: How many years have you been teaching EFL at middle school?

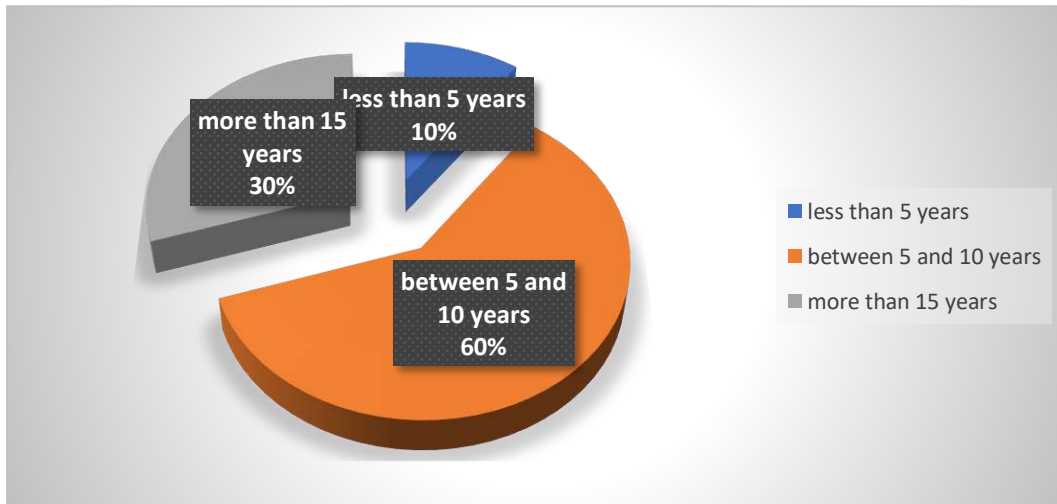


Figure 3.3: Teachers' Teaching Experience

Figure 3.3 indicates that there is a variety in the teacher's period in EFL teaching at middle school. It demonstrates that the dominant number of teachers are those who teach EFL from 5 to 10 years (60%), while (30%) teach EFL for more than 15 years, and only (10%) who teach EFL less than 5 years. This variety in the teaching period guarantees that the next responses will be varied and different.

Section Two: Teachers' beliefs in teaching written compositions

Question Four: As a teacher, do you see that writing is difficult to be taught?

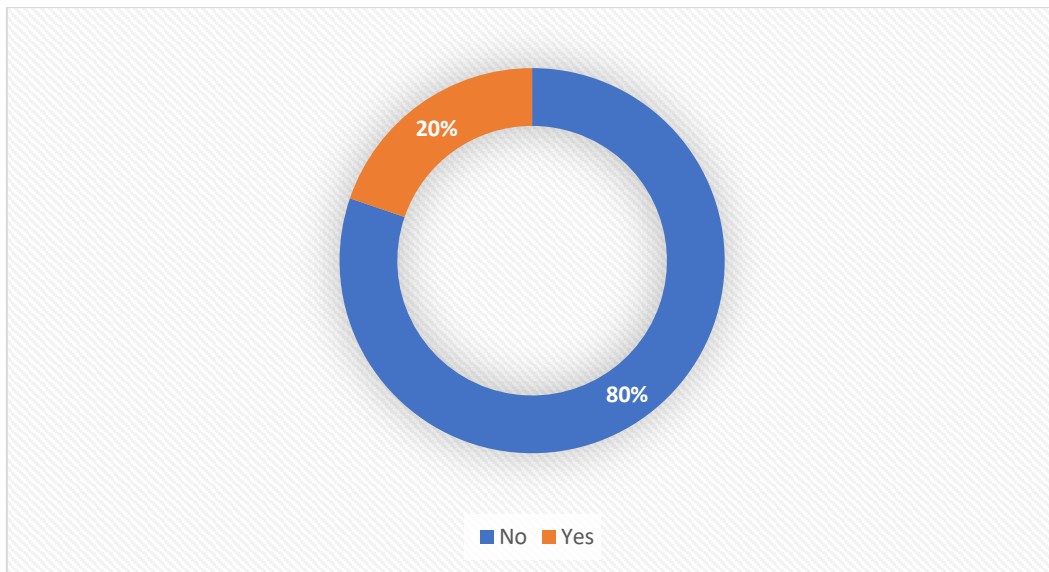


Figure 3.4: Teachers' attitudes towards the difficulty of teaching the writing skill

As the data reveals in the above figure, the majority of teachers (65%) agreed on the difficulty of teaching the writing skill for middle school students; however (25%) representing 7 teachers believed that it is an easy task.

Question Five: To what extent do training programme about teaching and assessing writing enhance your classroom practices?

All teachers agree on the effectiveness of the training programmes in enhancing classroom practices.

- ✚ **Teachers 1,5,8,14, and 20:** Training acts as a catalyst for teacher's effectiveness. It is also a way of updating teachers' skills and knowledge for improving teaching and learning which lead to better job performance.
- ✚ **Teachers 3,7,10,15, and 18:** In-service training is important for teachers to face new challenges and changes in the education world.

✚ **The rest of teachers:** In-service training is also a fundamental aspect to improve teacher professionalism.

Question Six: In your opinion, how many sessions does “the situation of integration” often take?

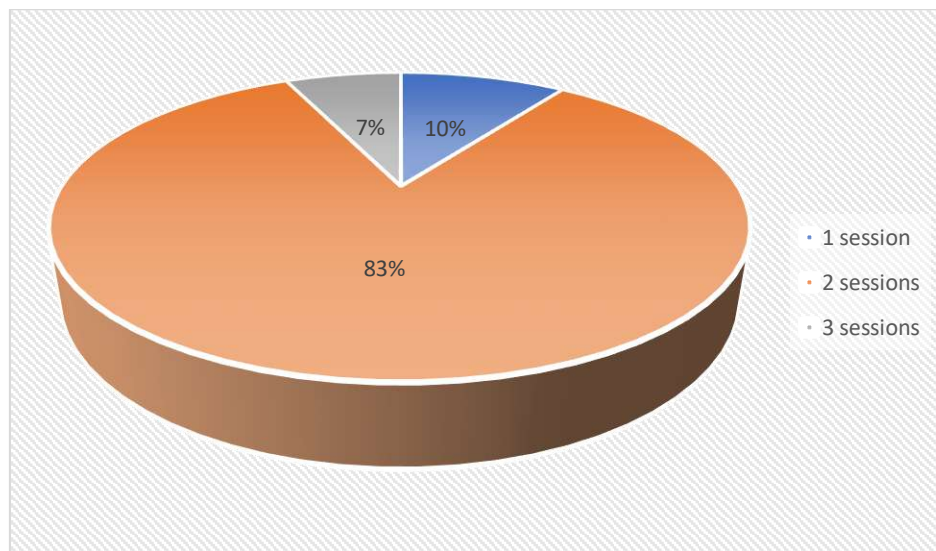
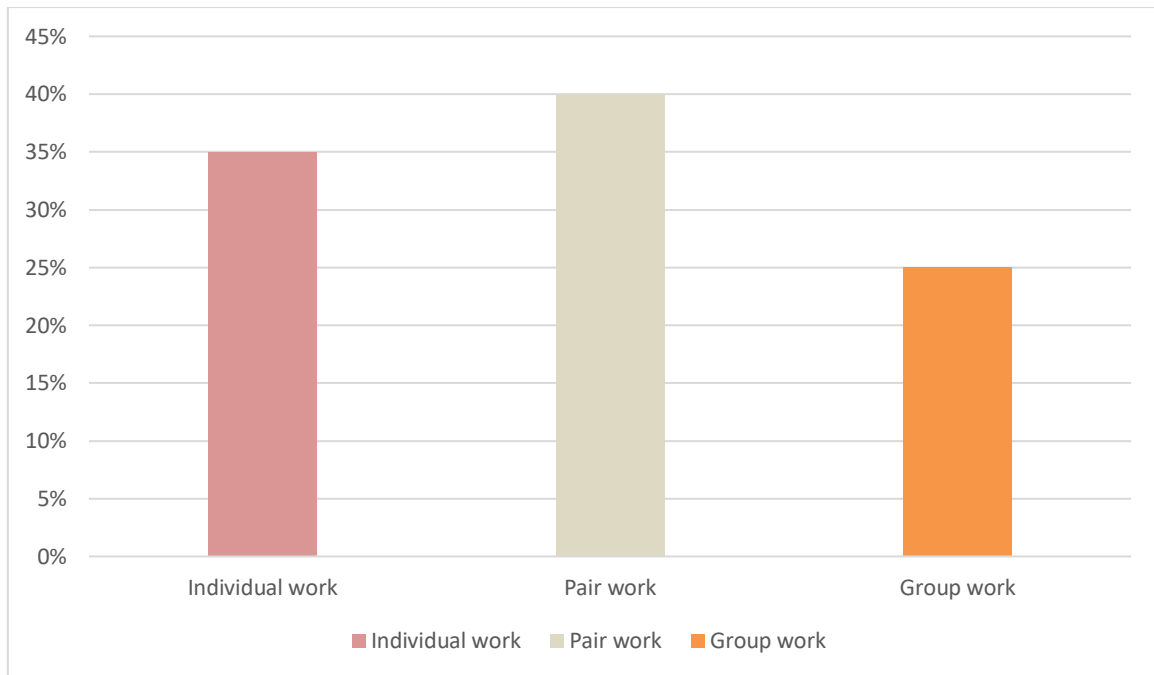


Figure 3.5: The Number of Sessions the Situation of Integration may take

As the data reveals in figure 3.5, the majority of participants (85%) think that the situation of integration must take 2 sessions per week however (10%) of them agree that one session per week is enough. Only 1 teacher (5%) who believe that 3 sessions per week will be good to teach the situation of integration.

Question seven: In your opinion, where do pupils perform well during the writing session?



Graph 3.1: Students' performance depending on the type of work

The results show that about (40%) of teachers argue that pupils perform better when working in pair during the writing session, while (35%) of them think that working individually helps pupils produce good written compositions. Only (25%) representing 5 teachers who believe that group work is beneficial in improving the pupils writing skill.

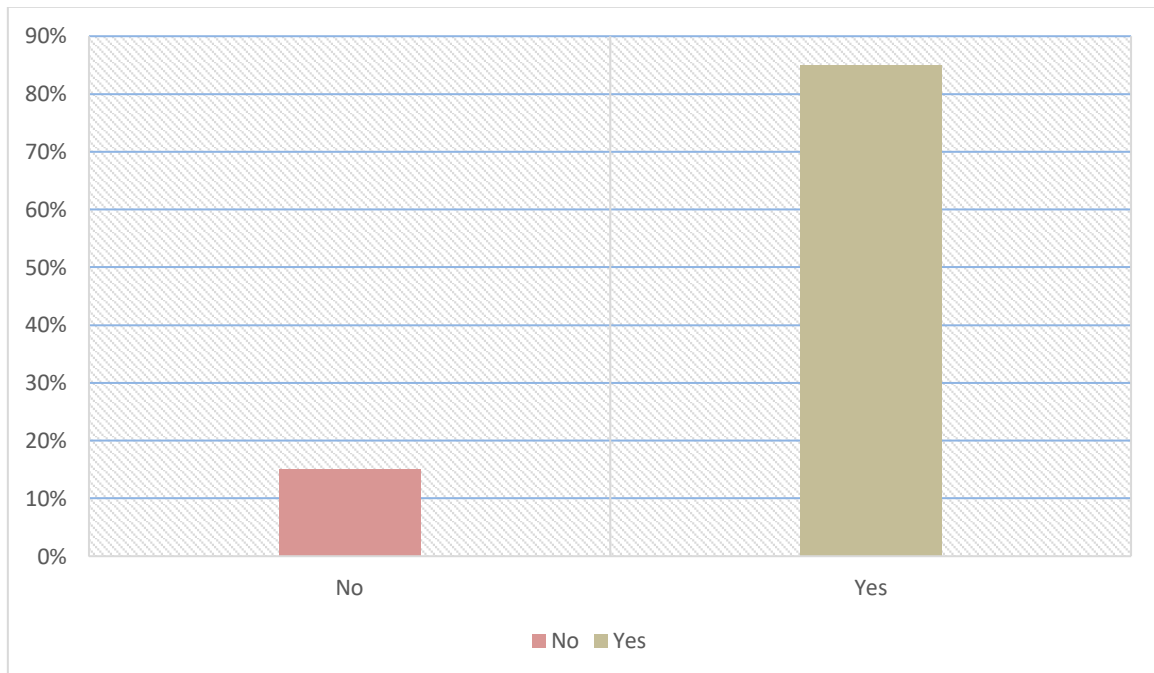
Question Eight: What are the most common mistakes that pupils used to make while writing?

EFL pupils make several mistakes and errors when writing their productions. According to the teachers' answers (100%), the most common mistakes that pupils do while writing are:

- Problems in the mechanics of writing.
- They still make mistakes in grammar such as: the misuse of personal pronouns, verb tenses, ill construction of sentences, etc.
- The lack of vocabulary and the mis choice of words.

- Punctuation and poor handwriting.
- Providing poor ideas, or not developed ones.

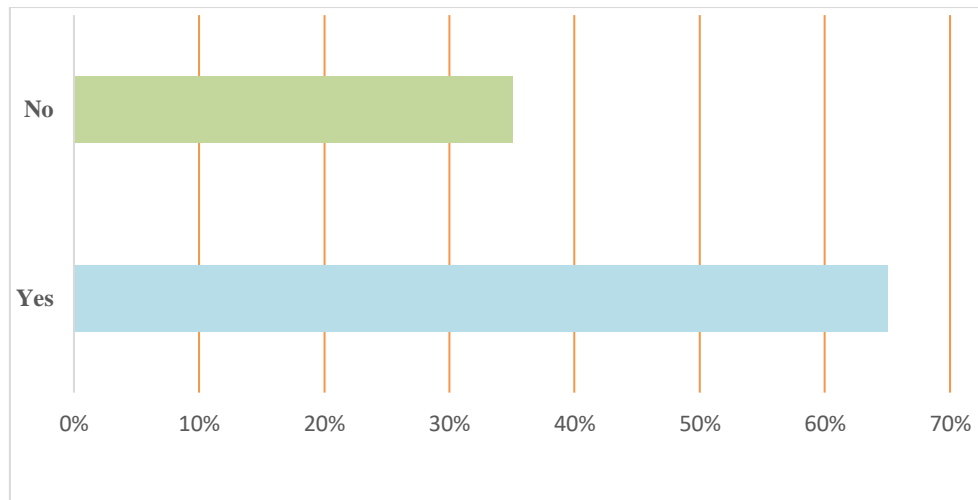
Question Nine: Do you think that pupils often need a support to be motivated in a writing task?



Graph 3.2: Teachers ‘attitudes towards the necessity of motivating students

As indicated in the graph 3.2, 17 teachers representing (85%) of the whole population find that motivating and supporting students is helpful to improve their writing potentials, while 5 teachers out of the 20 participants (25%) state the opposite.

Question Ten: Do you take into consideration the multilevel classes and what are the different motivational strategies used by you?



Graph 3.3: Considering the multilevel classes when choosing the motivational strategies

As graph 3.3 illustrates, the majority of respondents (65%) stated that they take into consideration the multilevel classes when choosing the motivational teaching strategies, however (35%) think that it is not important to pay attention to the multileveled classes.

According to the teachers' answers, there are various motivational strategies which will support the pupils during the writing sessions. From these strategies we mention the following:

1. Building strong emotional strategies with students; showing sensitivity and caring will enhance the effective climate of the classroom.
2. Promote students' sense of membership of the classroom and the school.
3. Elaborating on and clarifying students' responses and discussing the new knowledge students have developed.
4. Connect with students' goals, values and identities.
5. Give students autonomy and responsibility.

Question Eleven: As a teacher, which strategy (technique) you do use to attract the pupils' attention to their mistakes during correcting their written compositions?

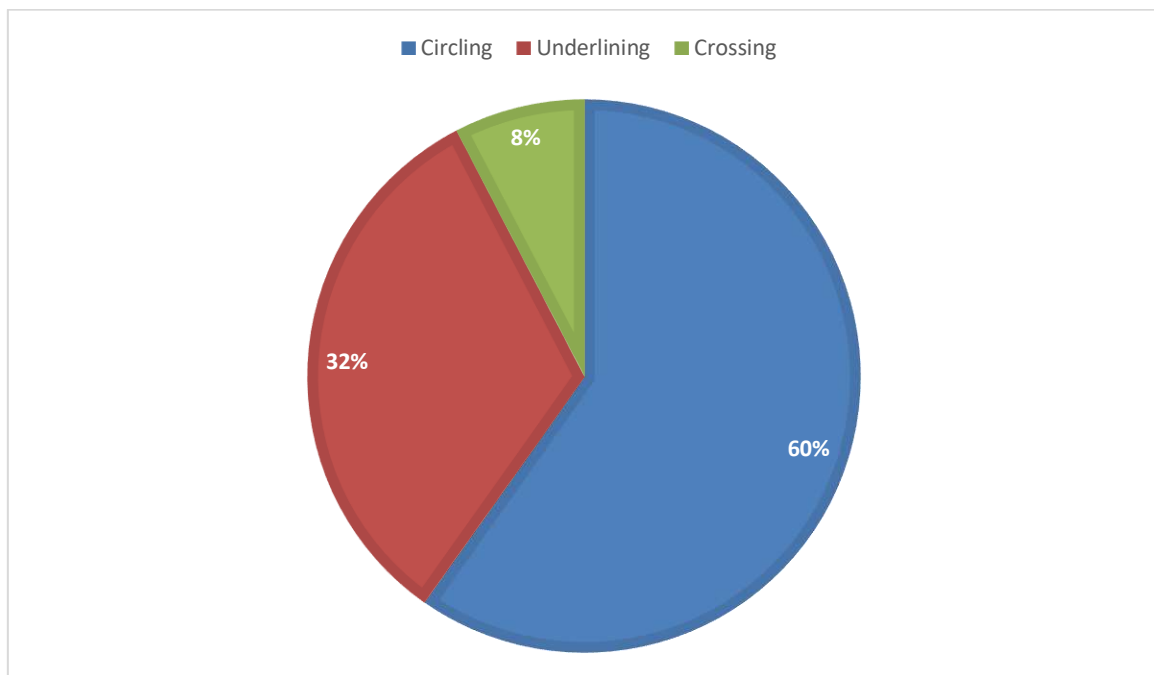
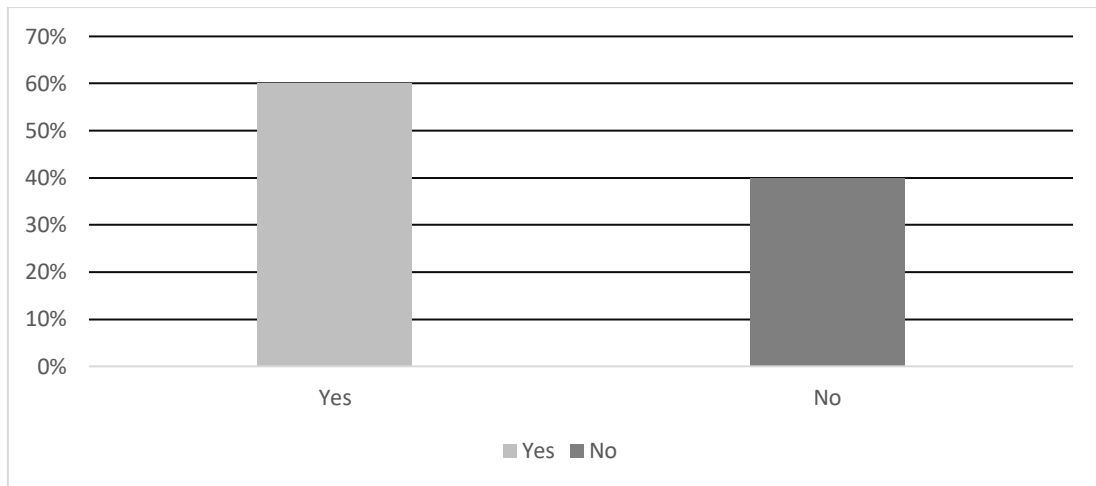


Figure 3.6: The strategies used by teachers to attract pupils 'attention to their mistakes

There are several strategies that the teachers use to attract the pupils to their mistakes during writing compositions. According to the above figure, circling is the most used strategy since (55%) have chosen it. 06 teachers out of the whole population (30%) think that underlying students 'mistakes is a helpful strategy and only (15%) of them who argue that crossing is beneficial.

Section Three: Teachers 'beliefs in assessing students 'written compositions

Question Twelve: Do you think that all teachers should follow the assessing criteria in correcting the students' written compositions?



Graph 3.4: Following the assessing criteria in correcting the students' written compositions

According to graph 3.4, the large majority of participants (60%) argued that all teachers should follow the assessing criteria in correcting the students' written compositions while (40%) of them stated the opposite.

Question Thirteen: Do you often follow some rubrics to assess writing?

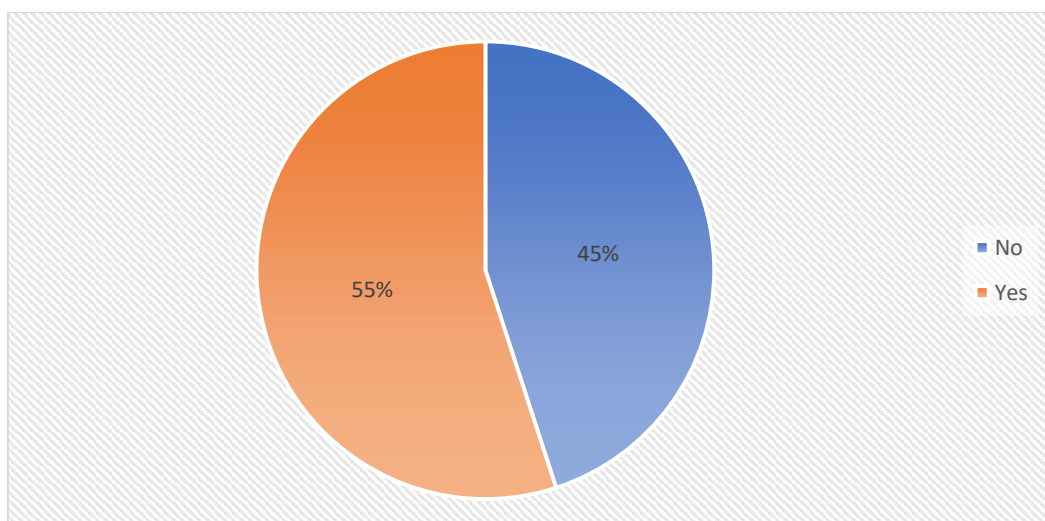
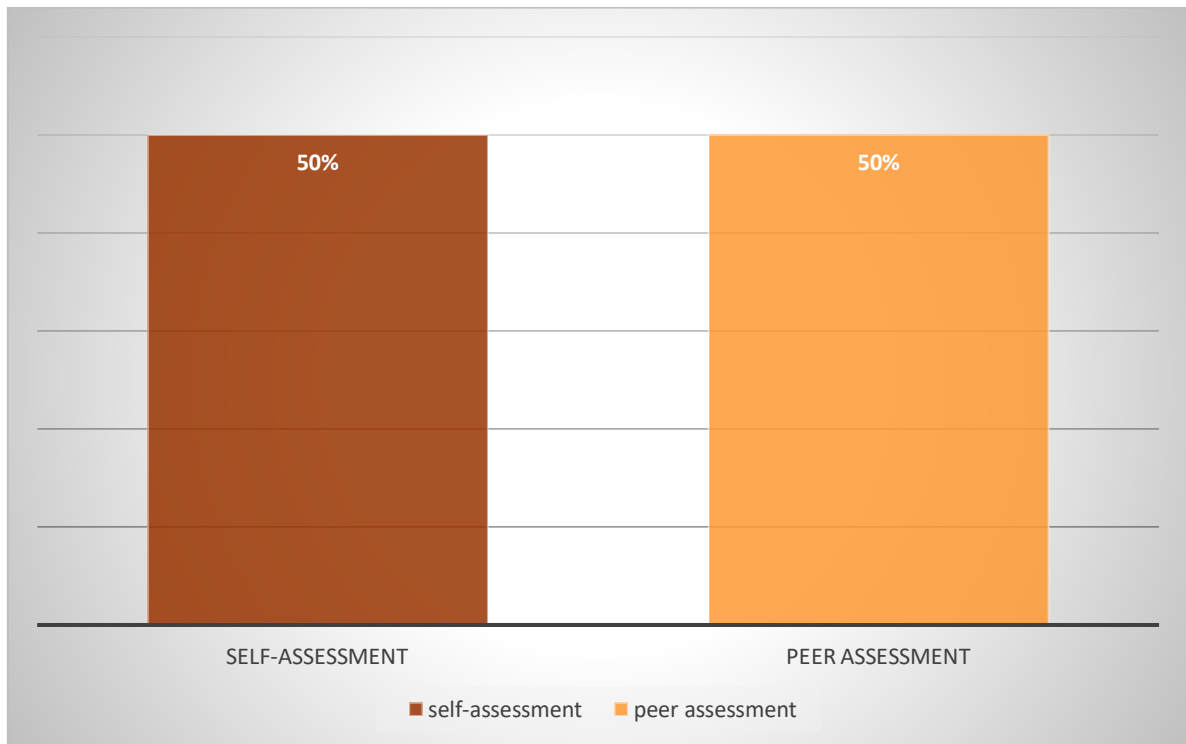


Figure 3.7: Following rubrics when assessing writing

According to the above figure, when assessing students 'written compositions (55%) of teachers follow the writing rubrics however (45%) of them do not follow the rubrics.

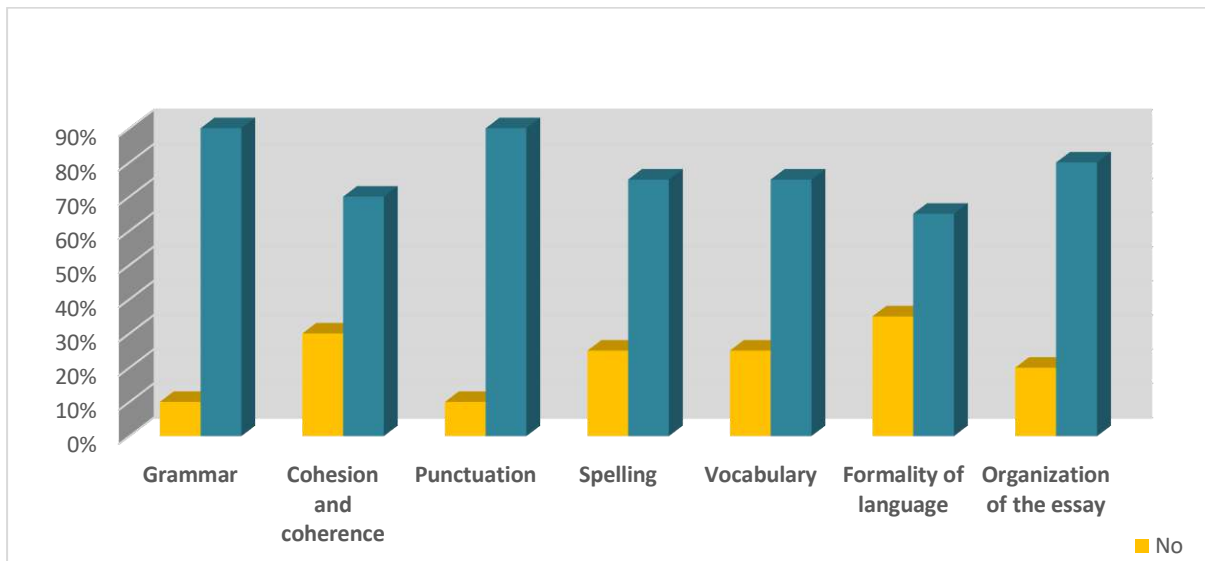
Question Fourteen: what do you support more self-assessment or peer assessment?



Graph 3.5: Teachers' preference of self-assessment/ peer assessment

Based on the statistics in the figure above, half of the teachers (50%) of the whole population argue that self-assessment is more beneficial than peer assessment because they think that self-assessment enables the students assess themselves and make corrections quickly. An equal percentage (50%) represents the 10 teachers who state the opposite idea, for them peer assessment is more effective since it provides more relevant feedback to students as it is generated by their peers.

Question Fifteen: while assessing a written composition, what are the most aspects you do pay attention to?

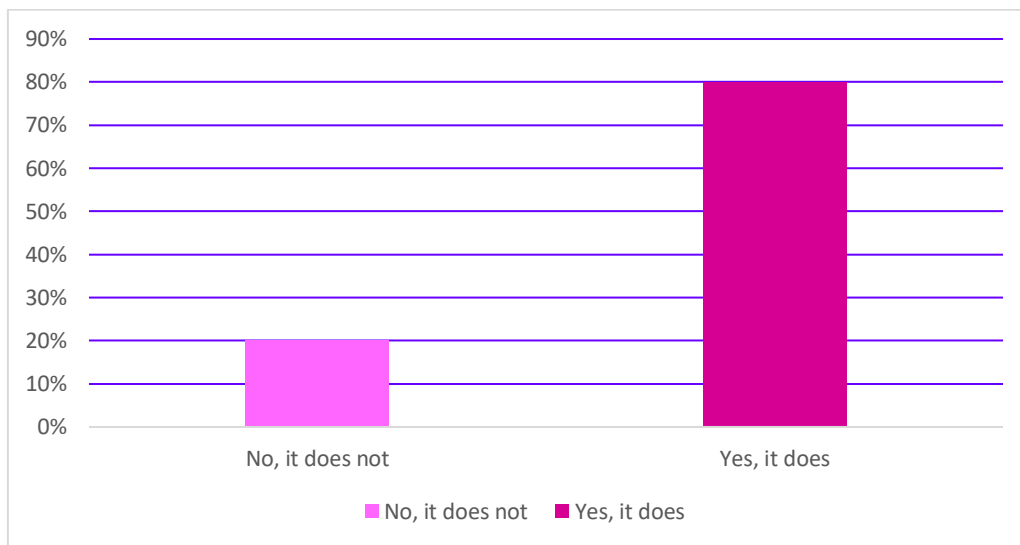


Graph 3.6: The aspects assessed by teachers when correcting pupils ‘written productions

- 1. Grammar:**The above results indicate that the large majority of teachers (90%) state that the grammatical mistakes are of great influence on the quality of the final draft thus teachers should pay attention to the grammar aspects when assessing students ‘written works. Only 10% of teachers out of the whole population think that assessing students’ grammatical mistakes is not necessary.
- 2. Cohesion and coherence:** As the data reveals, the percentage (70%) represents the 14 teachers who think that paying attention to “cohesion and coherence” is mandatory when correcting students ‘written compositions. However, (30%) out of the whole population state the contrary idea.

- 3. Punctuation:** According to the results above, the large majority of participants (90%) agree on the necessity of assessing the punctuation marks when correcting written works and only 2 teachers (10%) who think that the aspect of punctuation is not important.
- 4. Spelling:** Since pupils are not natives of the English language, the results affirm that the majority of teachers (75%) focused on the necessity of paying attention to the spelling when correcting the pupils written works. Only 5 teachers (25%) who neglect the importance of spelling and its effect on the quality of the final product.
- 5. Vocabulary (word choice):** Based on the statistics in the above figure, most of teachers (75%) advocate the necessity of assessing the words used by students in their written productions and the rest of participants (25%) claim that paying attention to the vocabulary used is not of great importance.
- 6. Formality of language:** Using formal expressions is obligatory in written compositions; thus (65%) of teachers agree on assessing the formality of the used expressions. On the hand, (35%) of them think that it is not obligatory to assess whether the used expressions are formal or informal.
- 7. Organization of the essay:** The results in the above figure show that the majority of teachers (80%) think that assessing the format of the essay (introduction, body, and conclusion) is a crucial element in the writing skill assessment. The rest of participants (20%) state that assessing the organization of the essay is not mandatory.

Question Sixteen: Do you believe that experience plays an important role in assessing the pupil's written compositions?



Graph 3.7: The role experience in assessing students 'written productions

According to the graph 3.7, the large majority of teachers (80%) believe that being an experienced teacher plays an important role in assessing pupils' written productions, while only (20%) of them state the opposite.

Question Seventeen: Do you sometimes overlook some spelling mistakes because the pupils are not native speakers?

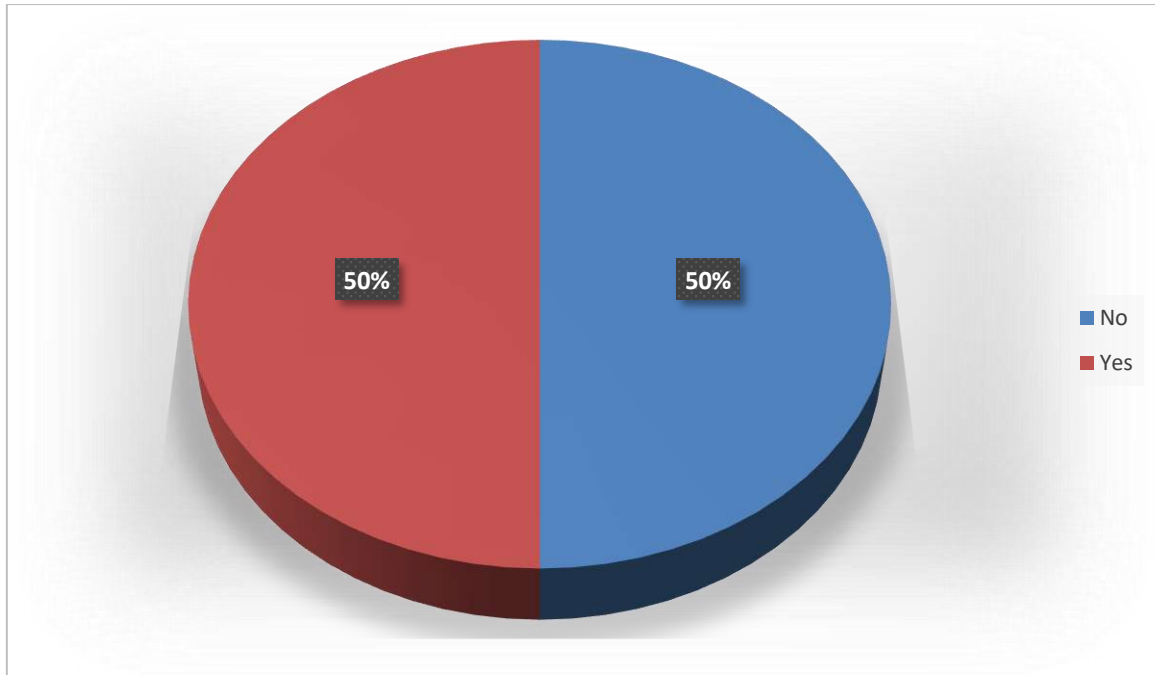
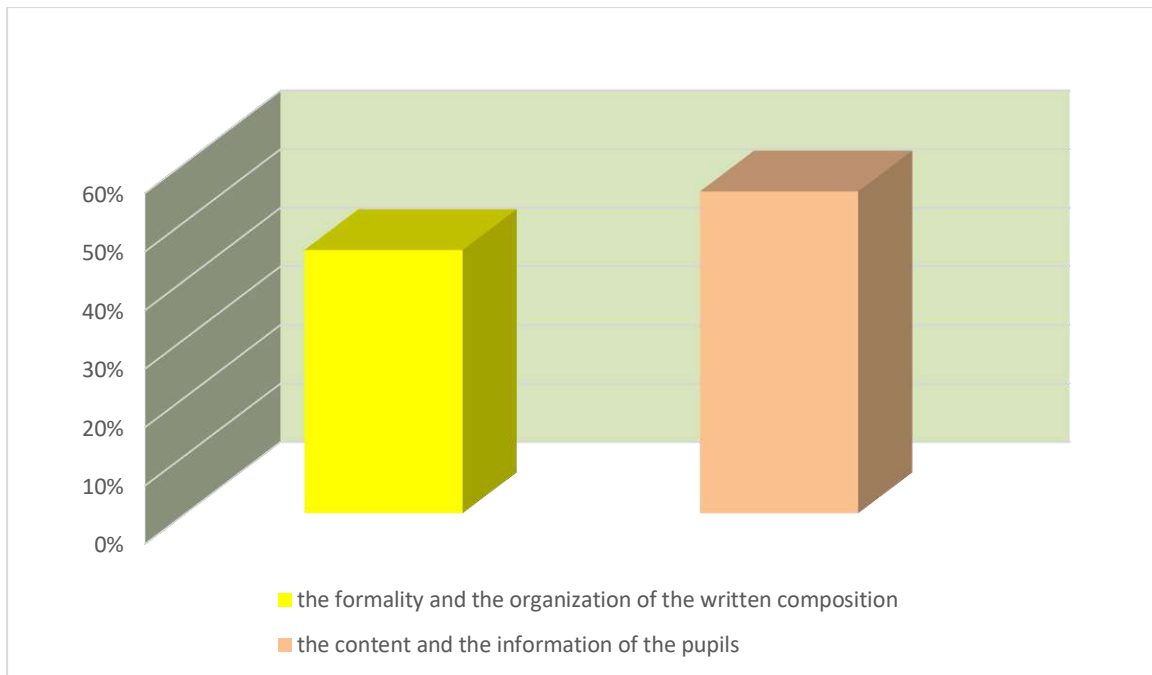


Figure 3.8: Teachers 'overlook of the non-native students spelling mistake

Spelling mistakes influence the quality of the written product even if the students are non-native speakers of the English language, thus; (50%) of teachers advocate the idea that spelling mistakes should not be overlooked. An equal percentage (50%) state the opposite idea, for them students must not be assessed on their spelling errors since English is not their mother tongue.

Question Eighteen: You as a teacher, do you focus more on the formality and the organization of the written composition or on the content and the information of the student?



Graph 3.8: Teachers' focus on the organization or the content of the written product

As the graph 3.8 shows (55%) of participants focus more on the content and the information given by students in their written production, on the other hand; (45%) of them pay much more attention to the organization of the piece of writing and how it is structured.

Question Nineteen: Some students are weak in the production part (written compositions), but their level in the presentation and the practice parts is very good. As a teacher, do you integrate your students' level in the other activities into correcting the written composition, or do you separate the level from the performance?

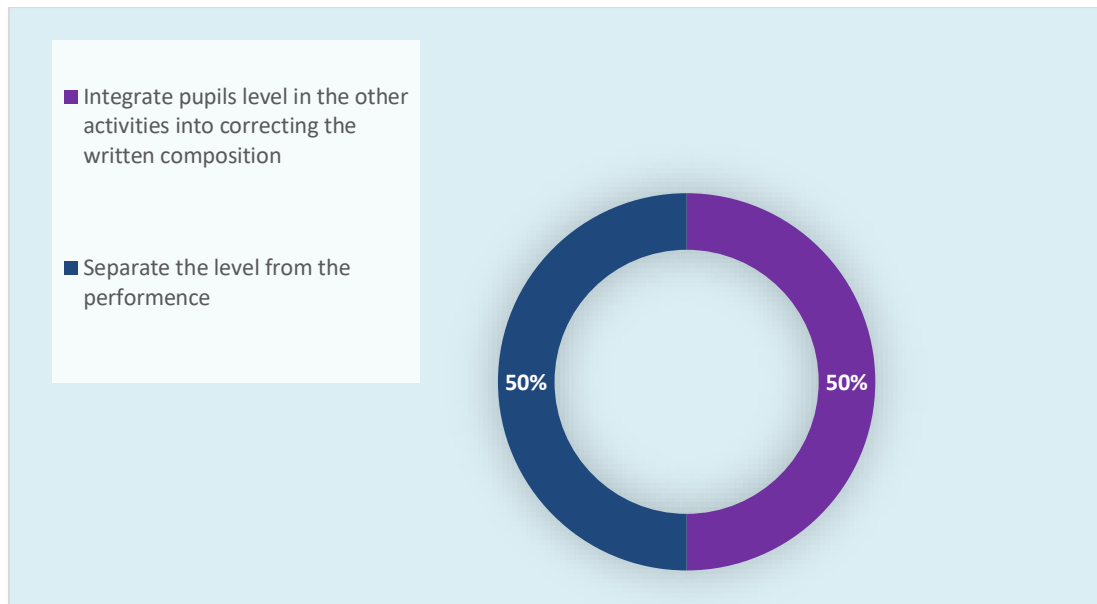
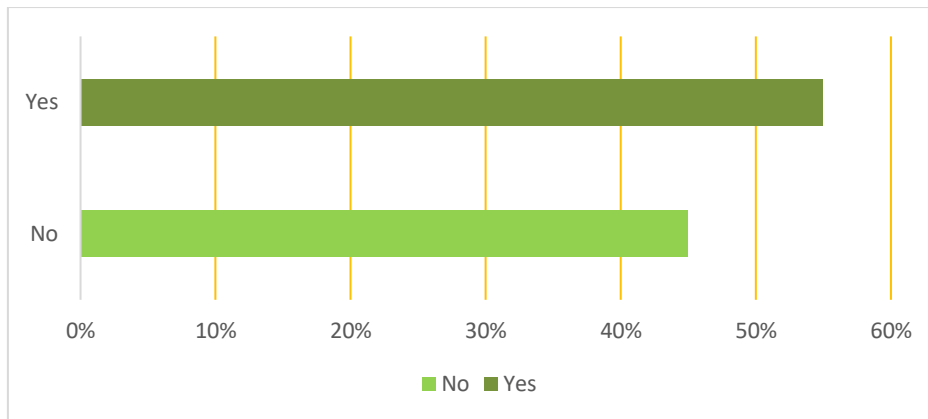


Figure 3.9: Integrating or Separating the students' level in the other activities into correcting the written composition

Depending on the results shown above, half of the population(50%) of teachers think that the students' level should be integrated when assessing their written compositions, however; the other half of the population state the opposite. For them, the students' level in the oral presentations and the practice parts must be separated from their level in the writing skill.

Question Twenty:In assessing your pupils' written product, do you account the handwriting style and value it?



Graph 3.9: Valuing the handwriting style when assessing pupils written work

According to the graph 3.9, the majority of teachers (55%) affirm that the students handwriting is very important and plays a crucial role in understanding what they want to pass as a message through their writing. However, (45%) of them representing 9 teachers out of the whole population think that assessing the handwriting style is not necessary and have no impact on the quality of the written work.

3.1.6 Interpretation of the Teachers' Questionnaire:

The analysis of teachers' questionnaire concerning with the first section reveals that the majority of teachers (70%) are woman; that means females are more interested in teaching the English language. Also, (55%) of them are between 20 and 30 years old. Moreover, (60%) of those participants have been teaching the English language in middle school between 5 and 10 years. That means that the majority of them are more qualified and competent in teaching this module which can help us to conduct reliable results.

The gained results in the second section indicate that the majority of teachers (65%) agree on the difficulty of teaching the writing skill because of the short time allocated to it in the

syllabus. Moreover, all teachers agree on the effectiveness of the training programmes in enhancing classroom practices. Furthermore, (85%) of teachers affirm that the situation of integration should take 2 sessions per week. (40%) of teachers state that students perform better when working in pairs rather than working in group or individually. Supporting and motivating students to practice the writing skill is a useful tool to enhance their competencies, this was the view advocated by (85%) of teachers. When correcting students' works, most teachers (55%) use the circling technique to attract the pupils' attention to their mistakes rather than underlying and crossing.

The collected answers in the third part indicate that most of the teachers (60%) argue that they should follow the assessing criteria in correcting the pupil's written compositions claiming that (55%) of them often follow some rubrics to assess writing. In addition, half of the population prefer self-assessment, however; the other half focus on peer assessment. Furthermore, all teachers (100%) asserted that students have difficulties in writing, they linked those difficulties to all aspects of writing, grammar, content, word choice, spelling, punctuation, and organization. Moreover, the majority of teachers (80%) believe that experience plays an important role in assessing the pupil's written compositions. Opposed to this view, (20%) of teachers think that being an experienced teacher has no impact on the assessment process. Therefore, assessing the spelling mistakes and overlooking it when correcting students' written works is a controversial notion. Half of the population (50%) affirm that the spelling mistakes must be overlooked since the students are non-natives although the other half state the opposite. Additionally, most of teachers (50%) focus more on the information stated in the written composition rather than the organization of the essay. Each student has different levels, being good or bad, according to the type of task. Thus, half of teachers (50%) confirm that the pupils' level should be integrated when assessing their written composition however the other half stated that it must be separated. Finally, the

majority of teachers (55%) take into consideration the handwriting style and value it because it facilitates the assessment process for the teachers.

Conclusion

The last chapter sought to finalize the present study with providing the research methodology of the study as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the teachers' questionnaires followed by the interpretation of findings. The final results of the presented work showed that the majority of teachers agreed on the effect of teachers' beliefs on teaching and assessing pupils' written compositions. However, some teachers considered the teachers' beliefs and attitudes as external factors that influence the students' writing skill, but they are not as pivotal as mastering the basics of academic writing. Based on the obtained results, the research hypothesis was proved and research questions were answered. That is to say, the teachers' beliefs play an important role in teaching and assessing students' written works.

General Conclusion and Recommendations

General conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the effects of teachers' beliefs in enhancing EFL students' writing skill at Ouargla middle schools. However, this study includes two main parts, the theoretical part, and the practical part. The theoretical part is divided into two chapters, the first one attempts to discuss the basic principles underlying the teaching of writing, while the second one deal with the investigation of the impact of teachers' beliefs on EFL writing. Whereas, the practical part, chapter three, concerns with the investigation of the teachers' questionnaires which is administered to Ouargla middle school teachers. The reason behind using this questionnaire is to seek information related to the teachers' attitude toward the impact of their beliefs on the classroom practices precisely teaching and assessing written compositions.

After the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, we found that all teachers agreed on the effective role that teachers' beliefs play inside the classroom. In additions, the results indicated that the attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about teaching the writing skill could help students to overcome many difficulties when writing their compositions such as grammatical accuracy, spelling and punctuation mistakes, word choice, and organization of ideas. Moreover, this study showed that the teachers' way of thinking and understanding things influence their instructional practices therefore their students' production will be influenced.

Since the findings have confirmed our hypothesis that the way teachers think about the teaching process influences the students' writing skill, teachers should know their beliefs and their role as an essential part of teaching writing inside the classroom. In addition, students should work according to the teachers' advices since they are based on the beliefs for learning writing.

To conclude, this study will provide both teachers and EFL students with a deepinsight into the impact of the teachers 'beliefs in developing EFL students'writing skill. Moreover, this research will provide some recommendations which can helpboth teachers and students to benefit from the teachers 'attitudes during the teaching-learning process.

Recommendations

From the findings obtained out of this study, the following recommendations have been drawn and directed to teachers, pupils and syllabus designers:

➤ For Teachers:

- EFL teachers should know their teaching beliefs.
- EFL teachers should be aware of the vital role that their beliefs play in education.
- EFL teachers need to know that change in their teaching practices requires them to experience a conceptual change in their beliefs about students learning.
- “Learning by doing” is the best way of teaching writing since the writing skill is a task-based process that needs practice rather than theory.
- Exposing students to various written models about different topics to make them familiar with new expressions, words, and structures.
- Prompting students' writing skills must be one of the teacher's priorities.
- Seminars and workshops that serve as source of inspiration and training have to be organized monthly to develop pupils 'knowledge about the writing skill.

➤ **For Pupils:**

- Pupils should practice writing more often in order to strengthen their fine motor skills.
- Cooperating and collaborating with classmates and working in groups helps exchanging ideas, learning new writing skills, and correcting mistakes for each other.
- Pupils have to be aware of the importance of writing in their educational career.
- Students should change their attitudes towards pair and group work. Accordingly, students will be more motivated to write better because they write for others.

➤ **For Syllabus designers**

- Syllabus designers should give some room for the writing skill within the syllabus.

Finally, the suggested recommendations can help both teachers and EFL learners. Moreover, further researches can be conducted to investigate the effect of teachers' beliefs in enhancing EFL learners' writing skill, giving more focus to the teachers' gender.

Limitations of the Study:

While conducting any research project, researchers face different obstacles and constraints that hinder the research process progress. The findings of this study have to be seen in light of some limitations. Initially, the lack of sources related to the teachers' beliefs variable was the main obstacle that affected our research progress; precisely, the unavailability of previous research studies on the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and teaching the writing skill. Moreover, due to the current sanitary situations (the spread of coronavirus), some

students did not answer the questionnaire. Thus, out of 30 participants needed sample only 20 teachers who answered the questionnaire. Also, the teachers' feedback was limited because they did not pay attention to their beliefs as an influential aspect in the teaching learning process.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers

In order to prepare our graduation thesis entitled "Investigating Teachers' beliefs in Teaching and Assessing composition writing", we call upon your help to fill in this questionnaire. The latter aims to investigate the beliefs teachers' usually hold when teaching and assessing written compositions.

You are kindly requested to tick (√) the appropriate box (es) or make a full statement when necessary. Your answers are crucial for the validity of this research.

Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation.

Section One: General information

1. **Gender:** Male Female

2. **Age:**

3. **Teaching experience:**

-Less than 5 years

-Between 5 and 10 years

-Between 10 and 15 years

-More than 15 years

Section Two: Teachers' beliefs in teaching written compositions.

4. **As a teacher, do you see that writing is difficult to be taught?**

Yes No

5. **To what extent do training programme about teaching and assessing writing enhance your classroom practices?**

.....

6. **In your opinion, how many sessions does "the situation of integration" often take?**

1 session

2 sessions

3 sessions

7. In your opinion, where do pupils perform well during the writing session?

Individual work

Pair work

group work

8. What are the most common mistakes that pupils used to make while writing?

.....

9. Do you think that pupils often need a support to be motivated in a writing task?

Yes

No

10. Do you take into consideration the multilevel classes, and what are the different motivational strategies used by you?

Yes

No

.....

11. As a teacher, which strategy (technique) you do use to attract the pupils' attention to their mistakes during correcting their written compositions?

Circling

Underlining

Crossing

Section Three: Teachers' beliefs in assessing written compositions.

12. Do you think that all teachers should follow the assessing criteria in correcting the students' written compositions? If yes tell why, if no tell why too.

.....

13. Do you often follow some rubrics to assess writing?

Yes

No

14. What do you support more: self-assessment or peer assessment?

.....

15. While assessing a written composition, what are the most aspects you do pay attention to? (Multiple choice)

Grammar	
Cohesion and coherence	
Punctuation	
Spelling	
Vocabulary (word choice)	
Formality of language	
Organization of the essay	
All of the above	

If others, please specify:

.....

16. Do you believe that experience plays an important role in assessing the students' written compositions? If yes tell why.

.....

17. Do you sometimes overlook some spelling mistakes because the students are not native speakers?

Yes No

18. You as a teacher, do you focus more on the formality and the organization of the written composition or on the content and the information of the student?

.....

19. Some students are weak in the production part (written compositions), but their level in the presentation and the practice parts is very good. As a teacher, do you integrate your students' level in the other activities into correcting the written composition, or do you separate the level from the performance?

.....

20. In assessing your pupils' written product, do you account the handwriting style and value it?

Yes No

Résumé

La compétence d'écriture est une compétence complexe, car elle comprend de nombreuses variables, telles que la grammaire et l'organisation des idées. La plupart de ces variables rendent la tâche difficile aux enseignants, spécialement les enseignants d'anglais qui enseignent cette compétence et l'évaluent en tant que langue étrangère. Cette étude vise à étudier les croyances des enseignants dans l'enseignement et l'évaluation des compositions écrites et tente également de faire la lumière sur les points les plus importants qui doivent être suivis lors de l'enseignement ou de l'évaluation de ces écritures. La méthode analytique descriptive a été adoptée comme méthode de collecte de données. Une vingtaine d'enseignants d'anglais de différentes écoles d'Ouargla ont participé à cette recherche en répondant à un questionnaire composé d'une vingtaine de questions. Les résultats obtenus ont révélé que la majorité des enseignants trouvent qu'il n'est pas facile d'enseigner et d'évaluer cette compétence. Ils suivent également certaines normes telles que la motivation, la formation et l'utilisation de différentes activités en classe, et ils conviennent également que la plupart des élèves rencontrent des difficultés dans la grammaire et l'orthographe. En outre, il a été constaté que le manque de pratique et le manque de lecture sont les principales sources des difficultés rencontrées par les étudiants EFL dans la rédaction de paragraphes.

Les mots- clés : compétences en écriture, croyances des enseignants, difficultés, productions écrites .

المخلص:

تعتبر مهارة الكتابة مهارة معقدة، لكونها تتضمن العديد من المتغيرات، مثل القواعد اللغوية و تنظيم الأفكار. تشكل معظم هذه المتغيرات صعوبة للأساتذة خاصة أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية الذين يدرسون هذه المهارة و يقومون بتقييمها كلغة أجنبية، لذلك تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقيق في معتقدات المعلمين في تدريس وتقييم المؤلفات الكتابية كما تحاول تسليط الضوء على أهم النقاط التي يجب إتباعها عند تعليم أو تقييم هذه المؤلفات. تم اعتماد المنهج التحليلي الوصفي كوسيلة لجمع البيانات. شارك في هذا البحث عشرين أستاذ لغة انجليزية في الطور المتوسط من مختلف المؤسسات بورقلة من خلال الإجابة على استبيان مكون من عشرين سؤال. كشفت النتائج المتحصل عليها أن اغلبية الأساتذة يجدون انه ليس من السهل تعليم وتقييم هذه المهارة كما أنهم يتبعون معايير معينة كالتحفيز والتدريب واستخدام مختلف النشاطات داخل الفصل، كما يتفقون أن معظم التلاميذ يواجهون صعوبات في التهجئة و القواعد. فضلا عن ذلك فقد تبين أن نقص الممارسة و قلة القراءة هما المصدران الأساسيان وراء الصعوبات التي يواجهها تلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في كتابة الفقرات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارات الكتابة. معتقدات المعلمين. الصعوبات. المؤلفات الكتابية. اساتذة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية