

# The role of teacher knowledge and beliefs in classroom practices: A study of one fourth grade teacher's writing instruction



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Abstract

The study focused on one teacher's knowledge and beliefs about writing and how that knowledge and beliefs impacted her classroom writing instruction. One fourth grade teacher in an urban low SES elementary school participated in the study. Using a qualitative research methodology, multiple sources of data including teacher interviews and classroom observations were collected and analyzed. Sources of teacher knowledge and beliefs were documented and findings suggest that the sources are varied and diverse. At the same time knowledge and beliefs were not always aligned with instruction. Factors such as demands of assessment, professional development availability, challenges of the classroom context, and level of preparation for teaching writing influenced the practices that were implemented. Factors notwithstanding, the introduction of authentic writing by the researcher as participant observer improved teacher's self-efficacy in teaching writing and students' achievement. Findings have implications for preservice teacher preparation and inservice teacher professional development, the impact of high stakes assessment on classroom writing instructional practices, and understanding and promoting the importance of authentic writing activities.

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Teachers are best known for the role of educating the students that are placed in their care. Beyond that, teachers serve many other roles in the classroom. Teachers set the tone of their classrooms, build a warm environment, mentor and nurture students, become role models, and listen and look for signs of trouble. Teaching Knowledge. The most common role a teacher plays in the classroom is to teach knowledge to children. Teachers are given a curriculum they must follow that meets state guidelines. This curriculum is followed by the teacher so that throughout the year, all pertinent knowledge Research into teachers' beliefs in language teaching has been flourishing for the past few decades. However, the notion of belief as a term is still relatively confusing (Savasci-Acikalin, 2009). Pajares (1992) noted that the term belief is one of the most difficult construct to define. convergence of beliefs and classroom practices. Like what previous studies have shown, however, occasions where teaching beliefs diverge with practices were also discovered. Reasons for the.

occurrence of divergence were attributed to the programme prospects, the need to sustain the instructional flow of the class, and the novice teacher's insufficiency of teaching experiences in an EAP programme.

### 3.3. Teachers' Beliefs and Classroom Practices in L2 Academic Writing.

Most teachers take on a variety of roles within the classroom, which role do you think most defines your role in the ESL classroom? Read to find out. There are a variety of ways we can grade learners, the role of an assessor gives teachers an opportunity to correct learners. However, if it is not communicated with sensitivity and support it could prove counter-productive to a student's self-esteem and confidence in learning the target language.

### 5. The Organizer:

Perhaps the most difficult and important role the teacher has to play. The success of many activities depends on good organization and on the students knowing exactly what they are to do next. Giving instructions is vital in this role as well as setting up activities. The teacher analyzes the way of teaching, observes what is going on in the classroom and investigates the ways students learn, with the aim to develop his/her methods of teaching (Investigator). (Harmer 1991, 242). The last role is the role model which goes beyond the classroom influencing children throughout their whole life. As I said the role as a controller, standing in front of the class, talking to the students and giving instructions, might be the most common role of a teacher. Harmer (1991, 236) points out that teachers, fulfilling this role, "[...] control not only what the students do, but also when they speak and what language they use." Everything what happens in the class is controlled by the teacher and is in his/her responsibility.