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What Writing Teachers Say and What They Actually Do: The Mismatch between Theory and Practice

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***Abstract*—Investigating the correspondece between beliefs and actual practices can help understand the nature of many success or failure stories in education. This study aimed at investigating the compatibility between what English language writing teachers theoretically assert and what they practically practice in teaching language. It also intended to find out factors that constrain the enactment of teachers' stated beliefs in the actual classroom context. The participants in this study were six university teachers as well as 32 students from whom 1150 writing samples were obtained. Juxtaposing teachers' actual classroom practices (obtained from university students' write-ups) beside their theoretical beliefs, elicited through the use of a survey questionnaire, instances of mismatch were conspicuous. It was revealed that contextual factors, contrary to what teachers asserted, played no significant part in this incompatibility and other factors such as experience were at work. Further findings and implications are discussed in the paper.**

***Index Terms*—stated beliefs, actual classroom practice, experience, technical knowledge, theoretical knowledge**

I. Introductİon

The last two decades could best be characterized as a period in which the study of teachers' beliefs has been awarded considerable attention on the part of researchers in the field of language education. "One strand of this work has focused on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 380 see also Melketo, 2012; Lee, 2008); more precisely, there has been an interest to figure out to what extent teachers' stated belifes and perceptions accord with their classroom practices and performance. There is wealth of evidence to show that the two do not laways correspond (Melketo, 2012; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Cain & Cain, 2012; Kuzborska, 2011). "Such differences have been viewed as an undesirable or negative phenomenon and described using terms such as incongruence, mismatch, inconsistency, and discrepancy" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 380 see also Melketo, 2012).

A great number of feedback-oriented studies address the act of teacher feedback solely to the approximate exclusion of teachers' beliefs that are translated into practice (Lee, 2008 see also Farrokhi, 2007; Khader, 2012). Research on teachers' beliefs has indicated that teachers' beliefs are incredibly effective on teachers' actual classroom performance as "teachers are thinking beings who construct their own personal and workable theories of teaching" (Lee, 2008, p. 2 see also Farrel & Lim, 2005). Maxion (1996 as cited in Mansour, 2009) asseverates that teachers' beliefs are an inseparable part of classroom practice. The assumption implicit in this study and the like is that individual teacher's beliefs or convictions are a major determiner of his/her instructional classroom practices. These beliefs are assumed as guiding tenets that teachers assume to be true and that act as spectacles through which fresh experiences can be perceived.

When people believe something is true, they perceive information supporting that belief. What teachers do in the classroom is said to be governed by what they believe, and these beliefs often serve to act as a filter through which instructional judgments and decisions are made (Khader, 2012 see also Farrel & Lim, 2005). Teachers' beliefs and actual classroom practices have a central role in the classroom, as they have a direct impinge upon the teaching and learning process. Researchers have put forth abundance of evidence that teachers' beliefs influence their classroom performance (Melketo, 2012; Phipps & Borg, 2009).

II. Revİew of Lİterature

Pajares (1992 cited in Khader, 2012 see also Melketo, 2012) gives a brief summary of the results of research on teachers' beliefs by demonstrating that there is a staunch bond between instructional beliefs of teachers, their planning for teaching, teaching decisions and classroom practices (see Farrel & Lim, 2005). Besides, he asserts that, the educational beliefs of teachers prior to the service play a pivotal role in the justification of knowledge and instructional behavior when entering into the teaching career. In his opinion, these beliefs are viewed as windows into the teaching

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behavior (Phipps & Borg, 2009). Ernest (1998 in Khader, 2012 see also Mansour, 2009) also contends that teachers' beliefs can strongly influence the teaching practices by transforming those beliefs into a practical reality (cf. Truscott, 1996).

It is an all-agreed-upon fact in the field of teacher education that teachers' beliefs about teaching, learning and schooling are deeply ingrained in their life experiences (Cain & Cain, 2012). Richardson (1996 cited in Cain & Cain, 2012) has recognized three forms of experience that are believed to impact the evolution of beliefs about teaching: personal experience, experience with schooling and instruction and experience with formal knowledge. Cain and Cain (2012, p. 99) contend that "teachers beliefs about teaching and learning seem to be shaped by their unique educational experiences. That is, teachers' beliefs seem to be shaped in large part by their recollections of teachers who had taught them in school and who served as role models in their lives" (see also Phipps and Borg, 2009). By the same token, Khader (2012) contends that teachers hold a wide array of complex beliefs about pedagogical issues such as beliefs about students and classroom practices. These beliefs, he argues, are thought to form a structured set of principles and are derived from a teacher's prior experiences, school practices and a teacher's individual personality (see also Farrel & Lim, 2005; Shahini & Daftarifard, 2011; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Furthermore, teachers' beliefs play a pivotal role in how information on teaching is translated into classroom practice (Farrel & Lim, 2005 see also Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001; Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Qingmei, Wenhua & Yang, 2011). Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning may "outweigh the effects of teacher education in influencing what teachers do in the classroom and interact bi-directionally with experience -- beliefs influence practices and practices can also lead to changes in beliefs" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 381 see also Cain & Cain, 2012).

This study inquires discrepancies between what a smaple of Iranian English language teachers theoretically assert and practically practice in teaching language, and, by finding out the reasons for these, also gains insight into deeper conflicts among competing beliefs that teachers hold (Melketo, 2012; Khader, 2012). Conflicts or clashes between what teachers declare and practice are a repercussion of "their belief sub-systems, and of the different forces which influence their thinking and behavior. Studying the underlying reasons behind such tensions can enable both researchers and teacher educators to better understand the process of teaching" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 380 see also Melketo, 2012).

A. *Purpose of the Study*

This study was an attempt to inquire what factors constrain the enactment of teachers' stated beliefs in the actual classroom context. To this end, the answers to the following research questions were sought.

1- How do teachers know what students expect from them?

2-What is the cause of tension or incompatibility between teachers' self-report beliefs and their actual classroom practice?

III. METHOD

A. *Participants*

The purpose of this quantitative study was to figure out what factors constrain teachers from translating their stated beliefs into practice. To this end, the participants in this study were chiefly and exclusively university instructors who taught writing courses. An attempt was made to include more participants in the study, however, owing to some practical constraints, the researchers' aspiration was not satisfactorily met.

Six university English language teachers took part in this study. Their selection was guided by their availabilty, willingness and convenience. The participating teachers taught writing courses in Azad and Payam Noor Universities in the Northern part of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran. Their ages ranged from 40 to 55. Their qualification degrees were as follows: four held PhD degrees, one an MA and one was a PhD student. Their teaching experience ranged from a minimum of seventeen years to a maximum of thirty three years. In addition to these teachers, 32 university students also provided data for analysis as explined below.

B. *Instruments*

Data for the present study came from various sources: firstly, six university instructors' 1200 marginal, interlinear and end comments written on the first drafts of 32 university English students, exploring the pragmatic goals for and linguistic characteristics of each comment. Secondly, an opinion survey questionnaire containing Likert items to seek whether there exists any disanance between teachers' stated beliefs about various features of language such as organization, content, idea, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. and their actual classroom practice. Furthermore, to validate and trangulate the data for the current study, through the application of an open-ended question in the form of a short interview, the participants' perspectives and attitudes were solicited as to the existing belief-practice crash.

C. *Procedure*

As mentioned above, the leading source of data for the current study was the university students' first drafts. That is, the bulk of data was gathered from the teachers' written comments on the students' papers. At the researchers' request, the students put at the researchers' disposal a collection of random samples of their term written work/papers which the

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above participating teachers had provided feedback or commented on the quality of their writing. Random samples of the students' marked composition scripts were collected and analyzed to find out the ways the teachers approached the task of writing. Overall, the researchers collected 20 papers, but not all of them proved to be of use. That is, because an overwhelming majority of the papers had been assigned a score only (with no comment provided by the teacher), on a small portion of them only had the teachers provided feedback or comments on various languge features inlcuding organization, content, vocabulary and the like.

Also, an opinion survey questionnaire was utilized to have an in-depth understanding of teachers' appraisal of relative weight of the above language features. The questionnaire items were extracted from instruments used in previous studies (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Diab, 2005, 2006; Hamouda, 2011). The researchers necessarily modified and added items to make the questionnaire relevant and appropriate for the study's purpose. Because the original questionnaire underwent some modifications, and to make sure that the questionnaire was ambiguity free, it was pilot-tested with a small number, yet more or less similar to the target group, of subjects before applying it to the target and actual group. Pilot testing of the questionnaire during which the researchers amended some difficulties in wording, was followed by testing the reliability of the questionnaire. Using Cronbach's alpha (the most common measure of internal consistency), the reliability of the questionnaire was determined and the reliability index of 0.719 was obtained. Of course, the reliabilty index of the questionnaire would have been higher, had the researchers not omitted certain items intended to seek students' viewpoints as to the teachers' comments. Obtaining an acceptable internal consistency index of 0.719 further refrained the researchers to run the items in the survey through an exploratory factor analysis to weed out those variables that failed to show high correlation.

The questionnaire inlcuded demograghic information and Likert-type items. Respondents were asked to express their opinions freely by completing the questionnaire individually. This quality adds to the reliability of the questionnaire, for the researchers along with two other persons had them filled out by the respondents individually whenever and wherever it was convenient for them, thus thwarting the cross-fertilization effect which usually occurs when a group or a class of respondents fill out a questionnaire simutaneously in one place, say, in a classroom.

Apart from questionnaires, the participants (i.e. teachers), in this study, were given an open-ended question aimed at exploring the reason for the existing incongruity between teachers' self report beliefs and their actual clasroom performance. The rationale for employing this supplementary information eliciting tool was to vaildate the results of questionnaire by citing evidence, reasons, or explantions from the participants whenever necessary. In the interest of anonymity, teachers are given pseudonyms as T1, T2, etc. in the analysis below.

D. Data Analysis

To analyze the data obtained from the participants, in the present study, an attempt was made to juxtapose university teachers' actual classroom practices (i.e. comments they inscribed on the students' first drafts with the aim of helping them to revise their papers in response to the teachers' comments) with their stated beliefs (elicited through the utilization of a questionnaire) to demonstrate whether there existed any incongruity between their actual classroom enactment and their self-report beliefs. The data analysis embodies three distinct parts: the first being the analysis of teachers' comments on students' papers; the second teachers' self-report beliefs; and the third, teachers' evaluations of the nature of mis-match between theory and practice. Each stage of analysis is fully decscibed next.

IV. FİNDİNGS

A. Analysis of Teachers' Actual Classroom Comments on Students' Written Papers

To analyse teachers' comments, a need for a simple yet rigorous categorisation system is felt to identify what features of language the teachers' comments address and what value or weight the teachers award to global issues such as content, organization, and idea, etc. and local issues such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, etc. In plain language, whether teachers' comments on the students' papers called for macrostructural changes or microstructural changes is to be clarified using the right calssification system. This need was met by the taxonomy provided by Faigley and Witte (1981). This taxonomy has two subdivisions: 'surface changes' which "are changes that do not bring new information to a text or remove old information" and 'text-based changes' that "involve the adding of new content or deletion of existing content" (Faigley & Witte, 1981, p. 402). The former (i.e. surface changes) is itself divided into 'formal changes' which "include conventional copy-editing operations" and 'meaning preserving changes' which "include changes that paraphrase the concepts in the text but do not alter them". The latter (text-based changes) is divided into 'microstructure changes' or "changes which are simple adjustments or elaboration of existing text" and 'macrostructure changes' which "make more sweeping alterations" (Faigley & Witte, 1981, p. 404). This taxonomy embodies both those changes caused by teachers' comments and those which students make independently of teachers' comments. What is left outside of this taxonomy is a great number of comments (about 50) on the students' papers which do not call for the students to make textual changes, such as 'good', 'well down', 'good English sentence', 'good handwriting', 'ok' and the like. Since the taxonomy in question is change-oriented, there is no room for these types of comments. Thus, docking these so-called neutral comments (50 in number) off the total number of comments (1200) on the students' papers, it leaves us with 1150 comments which require student-writers to make textual changes. Through independent classification of teachers' comments by the researchers and another proficient university professor, we

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obtained a higher a degree of agreement (more than ninety five percent of the time, we agreed on subsuming the teachers' comments under appropriate categories).

It is worth mentioning that as with other classification systems, in this classification, too, an element of subjectivity is evident since one cannot place, with one hundred percent of certainty, the comments under the appropriate groupings. This high degree of agreement is because of the fact that an overwhelming majority of teachers' comments, that is about 97 percent (1116 out of 1150) targeted and addressed surface changes. For ease of observation and classification, Faigley and Witte's taxonomy of revision changes is given below.

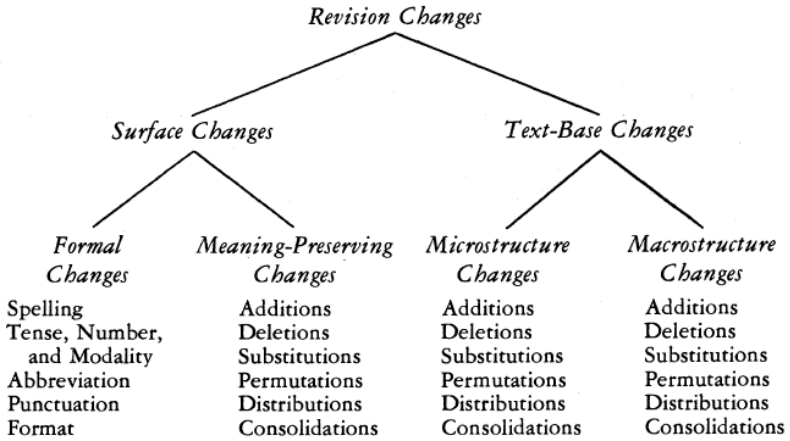

Figure 1. A Taxonomy of Revision Changes (adopted from Faigley & Witte, 1981, p. 403).

Using Faigley and Witte's classification system as the criterion, teachers' comments can be tabulated as in table 1.

TABLE 1
TEACHERS' COMMENTS

Formal Changes	F	%	Meaning Preserving Changes	F	%
Capitalization	110	9.5 *	Reword	73	6.5
Spelling	74	6.5	Rewrite	87	7.5
Punctuation	63	5.5	Redundant	43	3.7
Wrong Word	91	8	Underlining	23	2
Grammatically Wrong	123	10.70	Circling	24	2
Wrong Tense	92	8	Add	27	2.5
Wrong Word Order	53	4.6	Delete	28	2.5
Subject-Verb Agreement	41	3.5	Incomplete Sentence	30	2.6
Wrong Sentence	55	4.8	Non-Sense Word	17	1.5
Wrong Verb	44	3.8	Awkward Word	18	1.56
Total	746	65		370	32

Micro - Structural Changes	F	%
Ambiguous Sentences	11	0.95

Macro - Structural Changes	F	%
Not Clear Paragraph	10	0.87
No Conclusion	9	0.78
Not Good Paragraphing	4	0.35
Total	23	2

*Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add to 100.

An analysis of teachers' comments reveals that a great majority of teachers' comments (1116 out 1150; that is about 97%) focused on surface changes. In other words, over 746 (about 65%) out of 1150 comments directed students' attention to formal changes (spelling, punctuation, tense, number, abbreviation, capitalization) and only about 370 (about 32%) out of the total number of comments addressed meaning preserving changes (addition, deletion, substitution, permutation, distribution, consolidation). A very negligible number of the comments, 11 (that is about 1%) directed students' attention to microstructural changes and just a very small fraction of comments 23 (that is about 2%) concentrated on macrostructural changes.

B. Analysis of Teachers' Self-report Beliefs

The data obtained from the participants through the utilization a questionnaire containing Likert type items seeking the participating teachers' beliefs on the relative importance of various language features are presented as in the table below.

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TABLE 2
TEACHERS' SELF REPORT BELİEF ON THE RELATİVE İMPORTANCE OF VARİOUS FEATURES OF LANGUAGE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organization errors	6	4.47	1.042
Grammatical errors	6	3.07	1.280
Content or ideas errors	6	4.43	1.037
Punctuation errors	5	1.90	1.235
Spelling errors	6	1.87	1.224
Vocabulary errors	6	2.73	1.264

The items in the questionnaire were Likert type items in which the respondents were intsrcucted to indicate their preference or opinion by circling one of the scales (1 = not useful at all, 2 = not useful, 3 = doesn't matter, 4 = quite useful and 5 = very useful). As shown in table 2, the mean responses for *organization* and *content or ideas* errors are 4.47 and 4.43, respectively. Teachers' responses showed that teachers were more positively inclined to provide feedback or comment on *organization* and *content* errors. To put it differently, teachers stated that providing comments on the organization errors were their top priority and that their next most favored option in the descending order of popularity was giving comments on errors of content or idea in the students' drafts. In contrast, mean responses for *grammatical errors* (3.07) and *vocabulary errors* (2.73) showed that teachers displayed an overall neutral preference for the correction of grammatical errors and negative attitude towards the correction of vocabulary errors. The correction of *punctuation errors* (1.90) and *spelling errors* (1.87) are negatively perceived by the teachers. Not only is there a difference between teachers as regards the relative imprtance of various features of writing listed in the above table, there exists a slight variation amongst teachers themselves as well.

V. DİSCUSSİON

Prior to answering the research questions, a few points need to be uttered about the contextual factors that seem to constrain the teachers from translating their stated beliefs into actual practices in the classroom context. The results of this study reveal that the contexts in which the teachers operate may tend to constrain the teachers from proceduralising their stated beliefs, a problem which leads to the teaching practice not reflecting the teaching beliefs. A growing body of studies has found that teachers' beliefs and practices are inextricably intertwined and cannot be explored without attending to the role of context. This indicates that the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practices is complicated and context-bound (Mansur, 2009). In a similar vein, Fang (1996 cited in Mansur, 2009) argues that there may exist a large rift between teachers' beliefs and practices owing to the complexities of classroom life, which may constrain teachers' abilities to ensue their beliefs and offer instruction that is in harmony with their thoretical beliefs. Conextual factors such as "prescribed curriculum, time constraints, and high-stakes examinations, mediate the extent to which teachers can act in accordance with their beliefs" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 381 see also Melketo, 2012). Phipps and Borg's position is well echoed in the words of a teacher in this study while being interviewed. *The classroom context robs us of our ability to enact on or exhibit our deep beliefs about the writing task in actual classroom practice* (T3). Melketo (2012) corroborating the viewpoint of T3 contends that writing classrooms are not a standard place where every teacher can be hoped to congruously employ practices that directly mirror his or her beliefs.

Situational factors such as time constaints for lesson delivery, classroom management concerns and the pressure or need to comply with program requirements are taken as the leading impediments to translation of beliefs about treaching and learning into practice (Cain & Cain, 2012 see also Khader, 2012; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Two teachers, in this study, conceded that *students' expectations might have a great impact on their teaching. To put it differently, they may have compromised their own beliefs to do what they perceived students expected from their classes* (T4 and T5). The pertinent question that needs to be asked, here, is 'How do teachers know what students expect from them?' as our first research question.

Teachers are permanently busy with interpreting their worlds; they interpret their subject- matter, their classroom context, and the people in it. These interpretations are pivotal to their reflection and actions. "Classroom and students are not just settings for implementing ideas; they are framework of interpretation that teachers use for knowing: knowing when and how to act and read, what information to present and explain, and how and when to respond" (Freeman, 1996 in Barcelos, 2000, p. 299).

Breen (1985 in Barcelos, 2000) stipulated that three factors seemed to be the origin of teachers' interpretations of students' beliefs. First, teachers' own experience as students assisted them to conjecture students' beliefs. For, once, they themselves were students. They know that their students may believe the same thing. Secondly, teachers' feeling of "students' actions in class and their interpretations of students' comments to them influenced what they believed students believed" (Breen, 1985 in Barcelos, 2000, p. 300). Lastly, teachers' studying the theories in the field and their collation with students' beliefs and behavior in class had a great impact on their interpretations.

Students' language learning belief (LLB) seemed to impress teachers' LLB and practice. This effect was accomplished through teachers' interpretations of students' LLB. Teachers' interpretations of students' beliefs framed or shaped their classroom practice which, in turn, moulded students' conceptions and beliefs about the class. "Teachers' beliefs about students' beliefs and expectations exerted an important role in what and how they taught. Myriad of

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factors influence teachers' actions in class, such as teachers' previous experiences, their learning experience as students, the type of students in class and students actions in class" (Barcelos, 2000, p. 302).

Based on Dewey's (1938 in Barcelos, 2000) principle of interaction, teachers and students interact and impact each other in different ways. Teachers interpreted students' beliefs and behaved according to those interpretations. Students, in turn, interpreted teachers' beliefs and actions and behaved based on those interpretations and beliefs. Teachers and students were moulded and remoulded by this interactive relationship. In brief, teachers' interpretations of students beliefs impressed teachers. Teachers' actions, in turn, impacted students' actions and beliefs. Phipps and Borg (2009) conducted a study in which they investigated the tension or incongruity between teachers' stated beliefs on teaching grammar and their actual classroom enactment of those beliefs. In one case, one teacher (participant in the study) upon justifying a tension between her belief and her classroom practice asseverated that she approached grammar through exposition not because she felt this was ideal but because she felt it was what her higher level students expected. It seems that teachers' perceptions of students' expectations override their beliefs about how best to teach grammar.

Regarding the second research question (i.e., What is the cause of tension or incompatibility between teachers' self-report beliefs and their actual classroom practice?), juxtaposing the above teachers' actual classroom practices (table 1) beside their self-report beliefs (table 2), one consipicuously notices instances of incompatibility between what teachers say and do. Explanations [such as *I think students, parents, and teachers are all used to or expect comments on grammar, spelling, vocabulary, etc*. (T2); *It is partly because it is easy to write comments addressing local issues than writing comments for the global issues* (T1); *Contextual factors, such as prescribed curriculum, time constraints, complying with school and educational policies, mixed ability level classes, school administration and parents expectations and so many others are the factors that stand in the way of teachers' beliefs to be translated into practice* (T3)] that were put forward by teachers are far from being true and, indeed, mere pretexts to justify the mismatch between their beliefs and practices.

It seems that there are other things such as experience at work of which teachers are unwary. It would seem that beliefs which exerted most influence on the teacher's work were ones deeply ingrained in experience. The opposite is of sure possibility. Beliefs in ideas which had not been deeply "established through positive first-hand experience, ... remained unimplemented ideals" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 388). In plain language, teachers hold a wide array of complex beliefs about pedagogical issues which compete with each other in manifesting their influence in practice. It seems that those beliefs that are firmly grounded in experience exert the most influence on practice. Phipps and Borg's (2009) reasoning is well upheld by a teacher who contended that *many foreign language teachers are reluctant about shifting from traditional instruction to new approaches, especially if they represent a significant departure from their consolidated set of teaching practices* (T4). Truscott (1996, p. 369) holding the same viewpoint as Phipps and Borg contends that "tradition, no doubt, plays a role. There is a natural reluctance to abandon a practice that has always been a mainstay of teaching". Having been in classrooms for many years, the teachers have internalized and shaped, through an apprentice of observation, many of the values, beliefs and practices of their teachers. They frequently do not understand the importance of challenging their beliefs. What is more, these conservative beliefs are so strong that they remain latent during formal training in pedagogy at the university and become a major source once the candidate is in his or her own classroom (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Incompatibility between what teachers preach and practice is a reflection of their belief sub-systems and of competing forces which influence their meditation and actions (Phipps & Borg, 2009). The incompatibility between teachers' perceived belief and their classroom practices, as Qingmein, Wenhuan and Yang (2011) contend, may emanate from the distinction between technical and practical knowledge during the teachers' professional development. To put it differently, being interviewed, the teachers reformulated their answers based on their technical knowledge. Faced with actual classroom problems, however, they unconsciously utilize their practical knowledge about language learning.

Similarly, Ellis (2013) makes a distinction between pedagogic discourse (practical discourse) and theoretical discourse (research-based discourse). By the former, he meant the step by step decisions that teachers make in the process of lesson delivery or dissemination and step by step decisions that demonstrate themselves in teaching as interaction. In making these decisions, teachers typically make use of their practical knowledge of what is suitable in a particular teaching context -- knowledge formed more by experience than study. In other words, "pedagogic discourse draws on authors' prior knowledge of such discourse and on their own practical experience of teaching a language" (p. 2). The latter (theoretical discourse) constitutes the technical knowledge that is accessible in expository explanation of instructional process. It includes accounts about what and how to teach and the theoretical justification for these. Language teachers may apply this technical knowledge both in planning a lesson and fulfilling it in the classroom though teachers' prime interest with practical action does not easily permit for the use of technical knowledge. However, Technical knowledge is worthwhile. It yields a bulk of knowledge that teachers can utilize to ponder over their teaching and to try out with new possibilities (Ellis, 2013 see also Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Teachers hold an array of beliefs about themselves, the nature of writing, the individual students, the nature of the course they teach, the social context which they operate in, the school setting in which they work, and the constaints they have to confront. "These beliefs, in turn, work through the lens of past experiences, since they are translated into teacher practices within the complex context of the classroom" (Mansour, 2009, p. 37). By the same token, Richards,

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Gallo and Renandya (2001, p. 42 see also Melketo, 2012; Mansour, 2009; Phipps & Borg, 2009) asseverate that "the most resilient or core teachers' beliefs are formed on the basis of teachers' own schooling as young students while observing teachers who taught them. Subsequent teacher education appears not to disturb these early beliefs, not least, perhaps, because it rarely addresses them". Correspondingly, Stuart and Thurlow (2000) assert that the individual teacher is acted upon by vigorous, energetic, permeable school culture in such a way that individual teaching philosophies are subsumed into the existing school culture.

VI. CONCLUSİON

Teachers' beliefs exist as a system in which certain beliefs are core, and characterized as the most resilient and experientially ingrained and exert the most influence on teachers' practice than peripheral ones. Peripheral beliefs "though theoretically embraced, will not be held with the same level of conviction" (Phipps & Borg, 2009, p. 388 see also Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001). Based on the above line of discussion, one can claim that if a teacher in our study failed to provide feedback on global issues such as content, idea, and text organization and if he failed to adopt a process approach to writing, despite acknowledging its acquisitional value, vis-a-vis a product approach, it is not because *students, parents, and teachers are all used to providing comments on grammar, spelling, vocabulary* (T1). It is not because *it is easy to write comments addressing local issues than writing comments for the global issues* (T1). It is not because *contextual factors, such as prescribed curriculum, time constraints, complying with school policies, mixed ability level classes, school administration and parents expectations and so many others are the factors that stand in the way of teachers' beliefs to be translated into practice* (T3). It is because they have not experienced them themselves once they were students. Freeman and Johnson (1988 in Barcelos, 2000, p. 70) endorsing the above argument contend that "what teachers know about teaching is largely socially constructed out of experiences and classroom from which teachers have come".

To sum up, it seems cogent to state that teachers' core beliefs serve as filters for new information in such a way that culturally-held and experientially-obtained beliefs are frequently confirmed rather than confronted, but culturally- and experientially-devoid beliefs are rejected.

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