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TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT MALAYSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Recent trends in Malaysian's educational policy have focused on meeting the challenges of globalization and internationalization. As English has achieved the status of a major international language, the government of Malaysia has been actively expanding the teaching of English as an essential part of the school curriculum. It is generally agreed that teaching is greatly affected by the belief systems of its practitioners. However, teachers' beliefs need to be probed before teachers can critically reflect on their teaching practices, and in turn facilitate changes to teach more effectively. In Malaysia, research is still at an early stage in terms of evaluating teachers' beliefs about teaching children English. In order to deepen our understanding of teachers' beliefs regarding teaching English to children, and discover the interplay between teachers' beliefs and instructional practices, this study aims to discuss English teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices.

Since English teachers bring their unique sets of beliefs to bear in situations and decisions related to language teaching, these beliefs are usually recognized as significant predictors for their actual teaching practices. Thus, understanding teachers' specific beliefs about English teaching can inform researchers and teacher trainers about how teachers are likely to implement their teaching, and how to provide appropriate teacher education programs.

keywords: teachers' beliefs, classroom practices, primary schools.