

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
School of Philosophy
Faculty of English Language and Literature

**EFL TEACHER EDUCATION FROM UNIVERSITY TO WORKPLACE:
INVESTIGATING EFL TEACHERS CONCERNS AND BELIEFS DURING
TEACHING PRACTICE AND IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING**

George Giotis

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2015

Advisory Committee: Professor Emerita Papaefthymiou – Lytra Sophia (Supervisor),

Assistant Professor Evdokia Karavas, Associate Professor Sifakis Nicos

ABSTRACT

This PhD thesis purports to examine pre-service and beginning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' concerns and beliefs. More specifically, this thesis attempts to investigate the EFL student and beginning teachers' beliefs and concerns focusing on a period spanning from their last year of studies in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece up to their completion of their first year as EFL teachers (a sixteen month research period). The researcher will try to identify a) if there is a developmental pattern or change during the research period in the EFL teachers' concerns, b) if the participants' teaching practices reflect their beliefs and c) if there is an association between the participants' target language competence and their beliefs.

Quantitative and qualitative measures were employed to gather data which provided the answers to the research questions posed. In terms of quantitative data, a questionnaire was developed in order to collect data about the participants' concerns and beliefs. It was administered at four times during the sixteen month research period: 1)March 2011, 2) June 2011, 3)March 2012 and 4) June 2012. A total of 212 questionnaires were collected and were statistically analysed by the use of SPSS v.20 statistical software. In terms of qualitative data, diaries, observation forms and interviews were employed and delivered a huge amount of data (404.389 words) which were submitted to analysis by the use of NVivo software.

Data analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data showed that the participants were mainly concerned about their target language competence, their ability to integrate ICT effectively in their teaching and about the impact of their teaching on their students' learning. Data analysis revealed that most of their beliefs remained stable during the research period and it can be argued that the participants'

beliefs promote the communicative language teaching approach to a great degree. Their teaching practices are consistent with their beliefs as long as error correction and teaching grammar are referred to. Considering pair/group work, data revealed an inconsistency between the reported beliefs and the relevant teaching practices, which was attributed to a number of tensions between their beliefs and the teaching reality they had to face. Finally, statistical tests indicated that the strongest supporters of the communicative language teaching approach were the participants with the highest target language competence. The main implications of the thesis are that language should be reinstated in EFL teacher education programmes and that concerns and beliefs should be investigated in a context specific manner.